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Unwanted Becomings: Post-Socialist Mongolians in Settler-Colonial Los Angeles

DISSERTATION

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by

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DEDICATION

To

Francis, Keith, Nlemadim, and Muriel

continually with me in spirit if not present in flesh.

“So I, because of all the buried men
in Ulster clay, because of rock and glen
and mist and cloud and quality of air
as native in my thought as any here,
who now would seek a native mode to tell
our stubborn wisdom individual,
yet lacking skill in either scale of song,
the graver English, lyric Irish tongue,
must let this rich earth so enhance the blood
with steady pulse where now is plunging mood
till thought and image may, identified,
find easy voice to utter each aright”.
—“Once Alien Here” by John Hewitt

“I scratch a living, it ain't easy
You know it's a drag
I'm always paying, never make it
But you can't look back
I wonder if I'll ever get
To where I want to be
Better believe it
I'm working for the cash machine”
—“Cash Machine” by Hard-Fi

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ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

Unwanted Becomings: Post-Socialist Mongolians in Settler Colonial Los Angeles

By

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This study focuses on a thoroughly post-socialist phenomenon—the becomings that contemporary Mongolian immigrants who are moving to Los Angeles in the wake of the socialist world's 'collapse' undergo as a result of dwelling and creating new landscapes in the city. Specifically, it considers what some members of Los Angeles's Mongolian population regarded as unwanted becomings, that is those things that some deemed as likely to make them less Mongolian, and the practices they engage in to minimize harm, like attempting to create a municipally recognized neighborhood with a Mongolian toponym.

This ethnographic account draws on data gathered through two years of participant observation, archival research, and life-history interviews largely focused on the city's Koreatown— where the bulk of the Mongolian population reside. Analyzing data gathered on Mongolian life in Los Angeles reveals how the post-socialist experience of migration, and the unwanted becomings it inflicts, is indelibly shaped by not just by Los Angeles's settler-colonial past but by the city's settler-colonial present.

If even Mongolians—a population whose post-socialist national identity is firmly rooted in mobility— are influenced by settler-colonialism's emphasis on occupying space and creating landscapes through the elimination of the native and their landscapes then this study argues that comprehending and accounting for settler-colonialism is essential for anthropologists studying and seeking to understand life in the United States. It stresses the necessity for anthropologists studying the United States to make common cause with the anthropologists studying Native North America.

Introduction

"Twenty million dollars" a well-dressed, young, Mongolian woman sitting in the row in front of me volunteered. It was a warm Saturday morning in June and I was sitting in the Los Angeles Mongolian Association's (LAMA) office observing two dozen Mongolians, largely women, being introduced to a Multi-level marketing enterprise that sold a form of life insurance. The young woman was responding to a question from Vahe, a portly, smartly suited Armenian man, who was attempting to convince the audience to become salespeople for the scheme. Vahe had asked the audience how much money each of them felt they needed to achieve their ambitions. Undaunted by the volunteer's answer, Vahe assured her and the rest of the audience that their desires were attainable. Vahe's assurances to the Mongolian audience over the viability of the enterprise included invoking no less an authority than Einstein, that 20th century icon of intellect, on the merits of compound interest. He also shamelessly appealed to the history and experience of socialism that he, as an Armenian, felt he shared with his audience, as Mongolians. In the event that such invocations and appeals failed then Dari, Vahe's Mongolian colleague and a former nurse, was present. Dari translated those portions of the pitch people found incomprehensible and her status as a co-national of good-standing was a further source of credibility.

A key feature of multi-level marketing schemes is derivation of value from the monetization of their salespeople's existing social networks. This is accomplished by recruiting members of one's network into the the company's network as salespeople. The formation of this new company network—the downline—is encouraged through paying commissions for

recruitment (Cahn 2011, 7). At this event Vahe and Dari were seeking to monetize a network built upon the shared experiences of having lived through the centralized economies of socialism and the economic liberalization that accompanied post-socialism. The substantial literature exploring the links between bribery, favours, loans and respect demonstrates that the monetization of one's social networks is a seemingly common phenomena in post-socialist nations, like Russia, China, and Mongolia, and those who signed up saw this as just such an opportunity (Ledeneva 1998; Yang 2002; Humphrey 2012). Thus this vignette calls attention to one of the central foci of this dissertation, how Mongolians experiences and historical awareness of socialism and post-socialism shape the ways in which they dwell in Los Angeles.

While the lives of Mongolians dwelling in Los Angeles are in part a case study for the implications of socialism and post-socialism for immigrant experience they are also an example of how settler colonial values shapes the possibilities and potentialities of immigrant populations' existences. Much of the research on settler colonial states focuses on the nation state, however this dissertation remains focused on a city. I thus adopt the position that Los Angeles as a city is not merely subordinate to the other scales of governance within the United States, but instead the municipal government works to govern their population's lives through their ability to regulate space. As some socio-legal scholars have ably demonstrated in relation to people's lives this administration of spatial rights can trump human rights (Valverde 2009). Thus for example during my time in Los Angeles there was an ongoing attempt to regulate the spatial presence of the homeless by depriving them of their property—a clear violation of their rights. This was of course only the latest in a litany of attempts to contain the homeless in Los Angeles—in the late 20th century they were prevented from erecting structures of any sort to protect them from the

elements and until 2007 anyone sitting on the sidewalk was fined a $1000 (Davis 1991; Gerry 2007). It is not my claim that such practices are unique to Los Angeles instead what I am asserting is that a municipal government is a particular structural formation with a unique history and qualities. Thus it was Los Angeles's unique settler colonial history that informed the specific ways in which the techniques of governance employed against the homeless were implemented.

The overarching argument of this thesis is that in Los Angeles settler colonialism continues to be an all-pervasive force with significant consequences for recent immigrants. My study focuses on Mongolians who have undergone the specific experiences of socialism and post-socialism and then immigrated to dwell in Los Angeles, a city founded by Spanish colonists and whose form and infrastructure continue to be shaped by American colonizers who largely began to arrive in the late 19th century. Living in Los Angeles these Mongolians are shaped by the city's settler colonial logics that impact everything from the possibilities of political recognition to the dream of suburbanized living. These logics derive from an ongoing concern with eliminating native claims to the area. However, the Mongolians that I study are not just shaped by Los Angeles they also concurrently shape the settler colonial city's continued existence through dwelling in it.

My interest in Mongolians dwelling in Los Angeles grew out of fieldwork conducted in Ulaanbaatar in 2007. I discovered, while investigating the entanglement of Mongolian nationalism and Mongolian Hip-Hop, that some of my interlocutors were touring the United States and earning far more there than in Mongolia. Intrigued, I resolved to study Mongolian lives in the United States. I wanted to answer the question of how international migration would affect a population whose national identity was premised on their mobility. Then in the summer

of 2011, several years prior to commencing doctoral fieldwork, I attended a cultural festival organized by the Los Angeles Mongolian Association (LAMA) that took place in the Los Angeles City Hall's grounds. LAMA's then-President addressed the audience and she mentioned that one of the Association's goals was renaming an Los Angeles neighborhood to reflect its Mongolian presence. Piqued by this unusual proposal, I resolved to focus my attention on the various groups and places who would be involved in the process: Los Angeles's Mongolian population, Koreatown—the neighborhood in which LAMA was based, and the city's government. My goal was to explain why some Mongolians and other Angelenos placed such deep significance on toponymy, and why the municipal government encouraged this. To that end I spent my two years of fieldwork engaging with LAMA and the Wilshire Koreatown Neighborhood Council (WCKNC). Inspired by scholars who have called for taking the city seriously as a legal site such as Nick Blomley, Irus Braverman, and Mariana Valverde, I also attended City Council meetings, conducted research into Los Angeles's municipal codes at the city archives, and interviewed Mongolians dwelling in Los Angeles, local politicians, city workers and community organizers.

I conducted fieldwork between September 2013 and August 2015, during this period, the county of Los Angeles—where the City of Los Angeles is located— was creating a multi-modal transportation system and the municipal government was developing neighborhoods to attract tech workers and other members of the "creative class." However, Los Angeles was also a city that cut its municipal services to the bone, suffered from spiraling housing costs, had high levels of homelessness, and had exceedingly low voter turnout in municipal elections. The county's Mongolian population was extremely dispersed. They lived in settlements as varied as Palmdale,

sixty odd miles north-east of downtown Los Angeles at the edge of the Mojave Desert, and Torrance, 21 miles south of downtown Los Angeles, with a seafront. I chanced on this fact through snowball sampling; it led to me traversing a jurisdiction of more 10,000 square km to perform interviews. This dispersal meant that both LAMA's members and the county's long-term Mongolians residents were uncertain of the population's size. "I meet new people at every event I attend," an interlocutor informed me, when I asked why it was so difficult to talk about the community's size with any degree of exactness. During the first year of my fieldwork, one community organizer suggested conducting a census. However, the proposal was mooted in the planning stages. Thus the figure most interlocutors quoted, 4,000 people, was derived from voter registration figures for the Mongolian parliamentary election in 2012.

My interlocutors might have been uncertain about their population's size, but they were much clearer about its chronology. The Mongolian presence in Los Angeles dated to the late 1990s—a time when the Mongolian economy was in the doldrums. The few hundred Mongolians who migrated to Los Angeles in this period were quite familiar with one another. However, midway through the first decade of the 2000s the population grew swiftly and familiarity declined. According to my interlocutors, this larger population began to take on a distinct shape, with the majority being single students who attended institutions of higher education, like UCLA, the local California State Universities, Los Angeles's community colleges, and Korean evangelical universities. LAMA was founded to serve these kinds of students in 2004. However, a sizable minority of Mongolians in Los Angeles were families with green cards; they invested more time in LAMA and came to dominate the organization, which became increasingly concerned with forging a community, preserving Mongolian culture, and being the political

representatives of Mongolians in Los Angeles. These green card holders were initially employed in menial service professions as kitchen hands, valets, and nail technicians. However, while I was conducting my research one of the fastest growing professions amongst male Mongolians was long-distance trucking. Mongolian men told me that being a *joloch* (driver) offered freedom and far better wages. The hours involved with all the aforementioned professions and the population's youthfulness led many of my interlocutors to argue that Los Angeles was distinct from the other areas, such as the the Bay Area, Arlington, and Chicago, that had large Mongolian populations. They felt it lacked the mutual-aid and communitas one reputedly found in these other places.

Despite the dispersal of Mongolians throughout the Los Angeles metropolis, Koreatown continued to be the epicenter of Mongolian activity. It was where many tournaments (football, table tennis, and chess), concerts, and cultural events and festivals (like *Tsagaan sar*—the Mongolian New Year's Celebration) were held. LAMA, two congregations of Mongolian evangelicals, leading members of the Mongolian Buddhist Church, the Los Angeles Mongolian school, and a privately run Mongolian library were all based in the neighborhood. So too were three Mongolian shipping companies and the city's only Mongolian restaurant. However, despite Koreatown's small size, roughly 7km^2, its more than 100,000 people made it the densest neighborhood in the Southlands, and consequently Mongolian activity was largely invisible. It was the presence of Central Americans, Korean-Americans, and Bangladeshis that one associated with the area.

The Central American population were the neighborhood's largest group, but Korean-Americans dominated WCKNC's board. WCKNC was part of the city's system of 90-odd

neighborhood councils. The system was created through the 1999 Los Angeles City Charter, the city's first new charter since 1925, along with five regional planning boards. Both measures were designed to prevent further secession attempts by unhappy neighborhoods on the city's periphery (Purcell 2002b). The council system was intended as a means to connect the municipal government to city stakeholders, so that the latter could share their opinions with the former. As much of Koreatown was continually being redeveloped, with new mixed-use apartment buildings, restaurants, and nightclubs, WCKNC's board tended to focus on communicating concerns about urban planning to the city council. Initially, I attended WCKNC's meetings because LAMA's then president was a member and also because the council had played an important role in controversies over toponymic ambitions. In 2004, WCKNC had strongly opposed Bangladeshi efforts to rename an area Little Bangladesh. The ill-will lingered over this decision. Thus, even after LAMA's president left, WCKNC was a productive site to observe how the neighborhoods various ethnic populations interacted with one another and the alliances and enmities born of that engagement.

This brief overview hopefully provides some insight into how I stumbled into the study of diasporic Mongolians living in settler colonial Los Angeles, what sort of places Los Angeles and Koreatown were at the time of my research, the methods I employed during fieldwork, and the questions I was and am concerned with. I will spend the rest of this introductory chapter defining my three key terms—post-socialism, settler colonialism, and becomings—with reference to both pre-existing bodies of literature and fieldwork experiences, and outlining my four chapters and the specific contributions that I hope to make in each of them.

Post-Socialism

One way of characterizing Mongolian immigration to Los Angeles is as a post-socialist phenomenon. Superficially, post-socialism seems a straightforward enough concept; formerly a considerable number of the world's nations structured their existence in accordance with Leninist interpretations of Marxist thought, and now few do. Indeed, even those nations who still proclaim themselves socialist have had to accept elements of capitalism. In effect, the narrative of economists, political scientists and business elite holds, the second world has vanished leaving us with only the first world and the third world (Buchowski 2006, 467). One of the ideological tenets of this variant of analysis was that post-socialism would create new regimes of mobility, radically altering the flow of ideas, beings, and goods for the better. However, there is an inherent tension in the term. This tension exists because of the difference between post-socialism as an actual historical event and as an analytical concept deployed by academics and analysts. Hence I now go on to consider how anthropologists and European ethnologists have discussed it. Then I will conclude by explaining how I employ the term and will illustrate this with examples from my fieldwork.

Two decades of anthropological study have considerably complicated the concept of post-socialism. Western anthropologists have critiqued the notion of the transition deployed by political and economic consultants after communism's "fall" as overly path-dependent—akin to the unilinear evolutionary models anthropology had created in the past (Buyandelgeriyn 2008). Furthermore, many contemporary Central and Eastern European anthropologists and ethnologists suggested that western anthropologists were themselves not blameless, as they participated in the creation of an orientalizing discourse about the socialist world. This they argued then continued

with the creation of the concept of post-socialism (Owczarzak 2009). Michal Buchowski, for example, observed that "The 'new order' that emerged in the 1990s has allowed orientalism, understood as a way of thinking about and the practices of making the Other, to escape the confines of space and time" (Buchowski 2006, 465). Similarly Tatjana Thelen has argued "As a result of growing contradictions in the wake of postsocialist reforms that made institutions seem more similar to capitalist ones, the actors, formerly thought of as 'similar' and rational, have now become 'others'" (Thelen 2011, 54). Due to its geographical position in Inner Asia and its history Mongolia is not often featured in these conversations about the orientalizing effects of post-socialism. However, even in Mongolia various international financial institutions and an indigenous elite have sought to "develop" the nation in particular by advocating for land privatization (Rossabi 2005). Furthermore the consequences of developments have been documented assiduously by anthropologists and other social scientists. They have documented the disastrous overgrazing and mass livestock deaths that resulted from the privatization of the *negdels* (the socialist state organized agricultural collectives) (Humphrey and Sneath 1999), the revival of shamanism (Pedersen 2007; Buyandelgeriyn 2007), the increasing significance of extractive industries (High 2007; Jackson and Dear 2016), changing ethical attitudes (Humphrey 1993; Sneath 2006), and the forging of new Mongolian identities (Bulag 1998; Billé 2008). As with their contemporaries studying Central and Eastern Europe, the representation of life after socialism's "end" complicates what was the received wisdom about the ease of economic and social transition.

Central and Eastern European anthropologists' and ethnologists' criticisms of post-socialism as orientalizing borrows heavily from post-colonial studies. Katherine Verdery has also

advocated for post-socialist scholars to engage in conversation with post-colonial studies. Initially she argued that "Just as postcolonial studies examines the colonial pasts that shaped societies in present-day Africa . . . so we might now explore these same processes for Soviet imperialism" (Verdery 2004, 15-16). However, more recently her position has shifted slightly and become more nuanced. In an article she and Sharad Chari co-authored they argued for merging postcolonial and post-socialist studies "The liberatory path we propose is to jettison our two posts in favor of a single overarching one: the post-Cold War" (Chari and Verdery 2008, 29). They argue that this analytical move would amongst other things extend to understanding how notions of metropole and periphery have shifted with the war's end. My own usage of the term, post-socialism, owes much to this line of thinking. Specifically, I am interested in how ideas, practices, and infrastructure that developed in Mongolia during and after the Cold War are of continuing salience for Mongolians migrating to Los Angeles. In the rest of this section I will for argue for the relevance of this specific post-socialist lens by discussing events I observed in the field. Particularly, I will focus on nostalgia for certain forms of popular culture and the continued existence of certain forms of Cold War infrastructure and their implications Mongolian life in Los Angeles.

"Cheri cheri lady, going through emotion" sang Thomas Anders and his backing singers as my Mongolian interlocutors danced joyously to vintage 1980s Europop. It was a late evening in the August of 2015 and several middle-aged Mongolian friends and I were attending an open-air Modern Talking concert in Burbank's Starlight Bowl. The particular focus of the evening's entertainment had been emphasized earlier in the evening by Pop Gun Rerun, the supporting act, who billed themselves as the ultimate 80s band. They played a medley of 1980s hits to the

delight of my interlocutors and the wider audience. While my interlocutors were all Mongolian, it swiftly became apparent that a sizable proportion of the audience crammed onto the concert venue's hillside were also originally from formerly socialist states. A sense of a shared cultural history was further underscored when Malchin, one of our group, engaged in a conversation in English with a man sitting on a blanket nearby. The man explained that he was originally from Hungary and that he, his wife, and their friends had specifically travelled from San Diego to attend this concert. When he discovered that Malchin was from Mongolia, not China as he had initially thought, the Hungarian man and Malchin began a conversation about the historical relationship between the two nations that culminated in a discussion of their respective blue spots —a bluish birthmark common in North Asia that usually disappears by puberty, and that Mongolians and Hungarians strongly associate with a shared biological heritage.

Caroline Humphrey once argued that "Sooner or later, as the generations brought up under socialist regimes disappear from the political scene, the category of post-socialism is likely to break apart and disappear" (Humphrey 2004, 13). It was possible to detect traces of this in the musical tastes of my interlocutors. When I attended the community dances LAMA members organized for the benefit of those largely in their 40s, 50s, 60s, and 70s the music played reflected a Cold War orientation towards Europe. In addition to Modern Talking one was likely to hear Boney M's Rasputin and selections of Mongolian and Russian pop music from the period. During the late socialist period when much of this music was being produced it arrived in Mongolia via networks that often originated in Berlin and involved those Mongolians privileged enough to study there. This contrasted greatly with younger Mongolians who had grown up in the 1990s. Indeed, at a *Naadam* after-party organized by LAMA members I witnessed the same

adults in their 40s enter into something of a panic. They were uncertain about what sort of music should be played. Eventually, they largely settled on West Coast Hip-Hop—a good choice as by the late 1990s many young Mongolians living in the capital had been exposed to Hip-Hop via MTV and other cable channels. Musical tastes had shifted as Mongolian post-socialism orientated itself to newly accessible cultural goods and to the metropole (Marsh 2010).

If a post-socialist consideration of popular cultural might focus on both nostalgia and the assemblages that distinguish different patterns of consumption and their relationship to the metropole it also needs to consider the role of infrastructure as well. To illustrate this point I will briefly discuss a book exchange project that LAMA's board sought to establish in 2015. "How long will it take for them to arrive?" an Angeleno volunteers involved in the book exchange project enquired. "It depends on when they are sent" my Mongolian interlocutor replied. We were packing books for the book exchange project. The project was the result of a conversation between LAMA's vice-president and the Ulaanbaatar Central Library. It was agreed that the library would send Mongolian-language books to be held by the branch of the Los Angeles public library in Koreatown and in return LAMA members would purchase second-hand English-language books from the public library system in Los Angeles. Volunteers associated with the library were quite excited about the project. One of them even went so far as to create a teddy bear—the rationale being that the bear is the state animal of California—to be sent to Ulaanbaatar as a token of this new reciprocal relationship. LAMA members then arranged for one of the several Mongolian-Angeleno shipping companies to transport the books. The books weighed so much that the transportation would have to be by sea rather than air. They would be shipped to the Northern Chinese port of Tianjin and then taken to Ulaanbaatar by rail. This was

the only practicable route for trans-Pacific freight. Vladivostok, the closest other port, lacked a direct freight connection and involved a three-month rail journey (Akatsuka and Murray 1993).

My interlocutor was not being vague just because of the length of the journey, but because the speed of the trans-oceanic shipping route between Long Beach and Tianjin varies with the season. Moreover, the overland journey by rail was quite complex as well. When the train arrived at the Chinese-Mongolian border it would need to be lifted up and its wheels removed and changed. The gauges used on the Trans-Mongolian are 5 feet, a legacy of the railway being built by the Russians, who adopted a 5 foot gauge under the guidance of an American engineer (Siddall 1969, 40). However, China and much of the rest of the world employs what are called standard gauges these are 4 foot 8 in width (Siddall 1969, 42). During the 1950s the Chinese government saw this difference as a means of restraining Russian influence, which became increasingly important with the Sino-Soviet split (Juntunen 1991, 184). Thus despite the "death" of the socialist world freight continued to be affected by its legacies. Infrastructural systems shaped by Cold War ideologies continue to have salience (Rogers 2010; Collier and Kemoklidze 2014).

In conclusion, scholars of post-socialism like Humphrey, Verdery and Hann are correct that the generation that remembers living under socialism and is nostalgic for the forms of cultural mobility that it created will not endure. However, just as much of Ulaanbaatar's housing stock, constructed according to socialist ideas about apartment size and places for non-familial socialization continues exist, so to do other infrastructural systems that specifically allowed for the circulation of socialist goods and ideas. In the end these various systems are subject to

distinctly different temporalities than those humans who remember socialism. This is also true of the material culture produced during that period such as books, LPs, and chotskies.

Settler Colonialism

Chari and Verdery have advocated for drawing connections between postcolonial studies and post-socialism. A key aspect of their proposal was the proposition that such an investigation could prove fruitful in illuminating heretofore unexamined aspects of modernity (Chari and Verdery 2008). In this dissertation I build upon this position by incorporating a further important dimension—my second key term, settler colonialism—distinct from postcolonialism because it focuses on settler societies. Although unacknowledged in Chari and Verdery's article, settler colonialism has played an essential role in the development of socialism. Not only did Marx and Engels draw upon Lewis Henry Morgan's ideas concerning the distinctions between savagery, barbarism and civilization but Morgan's work influenced Russian attitudes to various populations within the USSR.

A number of political scientists and historians have emphasized that settler colonialism is distinct from colonialism (Goldstein 2008; Veracini 2015; Wolfe 2006). Settler colonialism seeks to eliminate the native population (Wolfe 2006). It achieves this by placing them in the role of *homo sacer*—literally translated as the sacred man, but specifically referring to a party regarded by the state as lying outside the monopoly the state had on violence and thus vulnerable to attacks from citizens (Morgensen 2011). Colonialism on the other hand is not concerned with elimination, but about the management of indigenous populations' labour so as to extract wealth. It sought to not to plant settlers, but to insert a top level of bureaucracy. And above all

colonialism did not question the worthiness of the colonial subjects' existence as settler colonialism did with indigenous populations from Australia to Ireland by either claiming they were in danger or dying out or placing bounties on their heads. Instead colonialism worked to denigrate its subjects ways of life through narratives like orientalism. Its successful achievement relegated the colonies to a perceived periphery subordinated to the metropole and in need of development.

An important distinction that some of the settler colonial literature makes is between settlers and migrants. "Settlers", we are told, "come to stay" (Wolfe 2006). Moreover, they seek to create a new socio-political system (Veracini 2015). Migrants by comparison are forced to adapt to the socio-political system of the nation they enter. However, reality is complex and one of the purposes of my dissertation is to demonstrate that in Los Angeles Mongolian-Angelenos are enrolled in the perpetuation of settler colonial structures in a variety of ways.

In choosing to examine the experience of immigrants using a settler colonial lens I am answering the call of scholars like Jessica Cattelino and Audra Simpson for anthropologists of the United States to bridge the gap between Native North American Studies and the anthropology of the United States (Cattelino 2010; Simpson 2014). Cattelino, in particular, has focused on trying "to critically reclaim the discipline's foundations as built in, on, and with Indian Country", and this approach especially influences my examination of American ideas about the transformations they expect migrants to undergo, as opposed to the becomings that do happen (Cattelino 2011, 5). However, I also attempt to extend Cattelino's argument that the current circumstances of the United States are inherently settler colonial by suggesting that achieving political recognition in contemporary Los Angeles is contingent on the acceptance of settler

colonialism's logics and values. In practice what this means is that new immigrants have to be willing to eliminate the other—the other here being a quality that both immigrants and natives possess when defined against settlers—if they wish to be recognized as existing. Here I will briefly illustrate this phenomena by discussing one of my Mongolian interlocutor's attitudes to native American labor and then following that with a discussion of Mongolian practices of tourism.

On the second day of a five-day trip that I made with Gantulga, a *joloch* (trucker), in his truck we had driven along the Interstate 40—a route that took us through the Hopi and Navajo reservations in Arizona and New Mexico. The landscape was both spectacular and entirely foreign to me and as we pressed on it appeared to my unskilled city dweller's eye as though the space beside the road was endless, unused, and uninhabited. However, as we closed in on the border Arizona-New Mexico border I saw signs that my unskilled eyes recognized as human habitation. It was the tiny settlement of Lupton. I was surprised by its buildings that nestled against the looming, sheer, reddish cliffs. One of these buildings was the appropriately named Giant Teepee. Its advertising identified it as a general store of sorts. It sold all things of a Native nature, including cigars. The buildings nestled against the cliffside were not the only sign of human habitation I could interpret: someone had also created curious artistic displays that, along with a few sheep grazing, were at such a sheer angle on the cliff that they seemed to defy the earth's gravitational pull. This visible native presence prompted a rather problematic reflection by Gantulga. He unfavorably contrasted Native American life, as he understood it, with the lives of Mongolians dwelling in the United States. While Mongolians were, he felt, hard at work, the

Natives were either living off of money that the state provided them or profiting from their casinos.

Gantulga's opinions are not that unusual in the United States. They reflect what Jessica Cattelino has referred to as the double-bind of Native American sovereignty (Cattelino 2010). Native Americans are seen as incapable, primitives living off the fruits of others' labour if they require federal assistance. Alternatively, if they manage their affairs successfully then it is suggested that they should be denied sovereignty and incorporated into the body politic. In both cases their rights to self-determination are rejected. Acknowledgement of one's rights was premised upon the elimination of distinctiveness, as both Goldstein and Veracini have discussed. There is a clear example of this in the history of Los Angeles's indigenous people—the Tongva. In the mid-19th century their mission agent called for their assimilation so that settlers could gain access to their land (Singleton 2004, 55). At the beginning of the 20th century the Tongva went unexamined by Alfred Kroeber and other anthropologists. In thinking back, I have come to regard Gantulga's perspective on what he perceived to be contemporary Native American life as emblematic of the divisive changes wrought by assimilating within a settler colonial state. In order to justify one's presence it was necessary to denigrate the native who stood as an eternal rebuke to it.

Gantulga and other *joloch* like him traversed much of the United States, one of them told me quite proudly that he had driven through all of the 48 contiguous states. However, a *joloch's* mode of engagement with the landscape was quite specific. They did not spend much time in the places they visited nor did they necessarily seek to learn much about the people who inhabited them. Moreover, they were limited by their pursuit of a location. Thus their engagement with the

landscape could be contrasted with that of other Mongolians for whom travel within the United States was very much an enjoyable past-time as opposed to labour. One such person was Malchin, who I have already discussed in relation to the Modern Talking concert, every summer he took a vacation with his family and visited a series of canyons in Utah. His enthusiasm when we discussed these trips was palpable, and it was clear that he very much enjoyed visiting these locations. Many of my other interlocutors were similarly minded; they enjoyed nothing more than going to the countryside to hike and see nature. In this respect, it might seem that they were no different than the considerable number of urban Mongolians who in the summer will leave Ulaanbaatar and to go to visit the countryside. For many this is regarded as beneficial in a variety of ways, and an opportunity to partake in what is considered "traditional" life.

However, there is in fact a considerable difference. When urban Mongolians visit the countryside they are engaging in a problematic form of romanticized tourism. A romanticization that derives from a national identity constructed only recently (Bulag 1998). By contrast when Mongolians living in Los Angeles visit the countryside they are unwittingly engaging in a re-wilding practice which represents such locations, free as they largely are of native people, as pristine wilderness. In doing so they are also recreating the practices of settler colonialism which represented the frontier as untouched by its native inhabitants (Clarsen and Veracini 2012). The automobile plays a key role in allowing for this sort of behavior, as Clarsen and Veracini argue "settler automobilities participated in narratives of peaceful settlement, as the car enabled easy access to the landscape in a mass touristic re-enactment of the settler colonial relationship" (Clarsen and Veracini 2012, 894).

Becomings

It was early in the summer of 2015 and a Mongolian acquaintance and I were driving the several miles south from Koreatown to her home just north of the Santa Monica freeway. As we drove we ended up having a discussion about what I think is best called "becomings," my third key term. I opt for "becomings" rather than "transformations" because it was a discussion both about coming to a place and of change over time, and these are qualities that are both associated with becomings in its original form as the old English word *becuman*. Additionally, becomings conveys more effectively the slow accretionary nature of the phenomenon we were discussing. Transformation, meanwhile, can suggest a swift, almost mystical, change and it also makes no reference to the idea of a place, which was so central to our discussion. At one point in the discussion my acquaintance recounted the story of a Mongolian pre-pubescent child who had returned to Mongolia with his parents. Initially, the child's command of the Mongolian language was so obviously inferior that the other children at school referred to it as an *erliiz* (half-breed). *Erliiz* is an interesting word, as Uradyn Bulag explains, not only because it is not present in Mongolian dictionaries prior to the 1950s, but also because even in those dictionaries in which it is present its lacks an etymology (Bulag 1998, 140). Furthermore, the word spans both the biological and social worlds. *Erliiz* may refer to: the cross-species breeding of animals, a child of parents from two different nationalities, or an idea or concept that is not entirely Mongolian in origin. *Erliiz* when used with reference to humans or ideas is often used as an insult. Thus calling this recently returned child *erliiz* indexed the fact that its speech marked it out as something other than truly Mongolian. Thankfully for the child, my acquaintance observed, its Mongolian improved over time to the point where it was no longer identified as *erliiz*.

The becomings that oneself and one's family members might experience whilst in Los Angeles was a recurring, deeply concerning, and often emotive subject for some of the Mongolians that I encountered while conducting my fieldwork. The thought of either themselves or their children being identified as something other than Mongolian was an ongoing worry. For some it was so overpowering that their solution was to send their children to live with their relatives in Mongolia. By doing this they ensured that such an event would not come to pass. The child would come into being in the right place.

When I questioned people about the nature of these unwanted changes they mentioned a whole host of attributes from the physiological to the psychological. However, it was the social that seemed to concern them the most. Indeed, many of these concerns centered on questions of linguistic ability. Some of my interlocutors were concerned not just about being mistaken for an *erliiz* but that their children might lose their Mongolian-ness entirely. Meanwhile, others who had committed themselves to remaining in the United States worried about their inability to articulate themselves in English in a fashion which was commensurate with the futures that they desired. Over the course of this dissertation I explore a variety of different becomings from the political to the ethical tracing their relationships to post-socialist and settler colonial ideas, but here I want to focus on describing and illustrating, using some fieldwork anecdotes, the methodological approaches—the processual, the phenomenological and the practice-based—that have informed my thinking.

In late 2014 I entered what was then the Los Angeles Mongolian school's office space to find Nancy, the mother of John—one of the school's younger and more boisterous students, having a conversation with my friend Anya. I was surprised to discover that they were discussing

bed bugs. Bed bugs were endemic in Koreatown. The apartment building that I lived in during the course of my first year of fieldwork was sprayed by pest-control on a weekly-basis with little to no success. Nancy explained that she had noticed something had bitten him. At first she thought it was fleas, but later, after she too was bitten, she realized that it was bed bugs. At first she washed and cleaned everything, but that failed. Eventually she decided to move, she said, after the apartment superintendent had been unable to rectify the problem. She had lost the deposit, but felt safer. Now she was living in a building that did not seem to have bugs. Despite living in Los Angeles for more than a decade Anya was both surprised and uncertain as to how to respond as she had never encountered a bed bug.

Nancy's encounter with bed bugs and discovery of the difficulty of renting affordable accommodation is illustrative of both the phenomenological and processual qualities that I ascribe to the term becomings. Becomings in one sense refers to the ongoing nature of life as experienced in contact between a variety of species (Kirksey and Helmreich 2010, 546). In such a situation all beings possess agency and enact consequential relations with one another. However, becomings extends beyond this position as it also implies a series of relations with the very atmosphere we breath and the weather world that we inhabit (Ingold 2010). Weather worlds are radically specific things. John and the other young Mongolians were coming of age in Los Angeles—a city that had almost year round sunshine and was in perpetual drought. Their parents by comparison were largely from Ulaanbaatar. They grew up in the coldest capital city on earth. In the winter the many people who lived in the gers that ring Ulaanbaatar would burn coal to stave off the cold. Increasingly there are reports that the air pollution is affecting people's respiratory systems. All of this is to say we become in very particular places and, to paraphrase

Jean Lave's work on British expatriates in Portugal, a Mongolian who wiles away some time in Los Angeles is never entirely the same as a Mongolian who has spent their life dwelling in Mongolia (Lave 2003). These differences amount to more than just socialization they also include the very divergent natures of these places. Indeed as Trevor Marchand observes making knowledge requires an engagement with one's total environment, which minimally includes ". . . artefacts, tools-to-hand, and raw materials; space, place, and architecture; paths and boundaries; time-frames and temporal rhythms; light, darkness, and weather" (Marchand 2010, S2).

This is of course not to deny that socialization is an important aspect of becomings. Indeed, for those Mongolians who were worried about their children becoming Angelenos, "just Asians", or *erliiz* socialization was terribly important. While language was by far the most significant aspect it was far from the only one. The curriculum of the Los Angeles Mongolian School also ensured that there was time for them to be introduced to important Mongolian pastimes like playing chess, learning Mongolian poetry, music, and dance. The emphasis on socialization was most evident though in the insistence that young Mongolians were better off getting to know one another and socializing with each other. This it was believed by staff was the most efficacious means to preserve a Mongolian identity. However, it was also apparent at Mongolian community events where young children were encouraged to perform poetry, sing songs, play chess, wrestle, and otherwise engage in small tasks while wearing Mongolian traditional dress. Carrying out these activities created a sense of Mongolian-ness.

One way of framing and understanding this approach to socialization would be through the work of Lave, Étienne Wenger, Dorothy Holland, and other scholars who have drawn on a combination of Bourdieu's notion of practice, Vygotsky's social interaction theory, and Bakhtin's

concept of the dialogic to challenge what were established theories of learning. In particular, Lave and Wenger formulated the notion of communities of practice—people who engage in collective learning through a shared activity (Lave and Wenger 2008). The menial tasks that children are asked to perform serve as a form of legitimate peripheral participation—a way of slowly becoming Mongolian through doing. An apprenticeship as Lave and Wenger would have it. Indeed, several of my interlocutors indicated that becoming Mongolian was a matter of effort and choice as opposed to simply a result of one's ancestry. Of course as with the *erliiz* student or Lave's British expatriates in Portugal the extent to which participation in such a community of practice can make one the same as a person who has been socialized in the country in question is debatable. Ultimately the social environment in which they are schooled and mature is just as distinct as the environment more broadly that they dwell in. Hence, the response some had of sending their children back to Mongolia.

Synopsis

Throughout this dissertation, I will explore how Mongolians live in Los Angeles through these key terms of post-socialism, settler colonialism, and becomings. This examination of post-socialist Mongolians lives in settler colonial Los Angeles's Koreatown focuses on the various forms of becomings that they and their neighbors undergo as they dwell in the landscape. Many of these becomings are regarded by Mongolians as unwanted or undesirable. This perception and distaste stems from the belief that how one is forced to dwell in Los Angeles can be of significance for one's Mongolianness; one might be less Mongolian either than one would have been prior to migrating, or in the case of those born in Los Angeles less Mongolian than one

would have been had they been birthed in their own *uls* (nation) and raised amongst other Mongolians. The settler colonial logics that continue to shape both the Los Angeles landscape and socio-political system also create the undesirable becomings that Mongolians experience. Furthermore, while Lorenzo Veracini, a settler colonial studies scholars, has sought to distinguish between settlers and migrants—the former create political orders while the latter merely live with them—I contend that in Los Angeles such a distinction is tenuous at best (Veracini 2015). Indeed migrating to Los Angeles and attempting to resist unwanted becomings requires an acquiescence to certain settler colonial logics regarding presence, occupation, and recognition. In exploring this phenomena my four chapters examine Mongolian and American ideas concerning migrant transformations, alterations in ethical beliefs that have occurred both as a result of post-socialism and from moving and becoming in a settler city like Los Angeles, the equation of political recognition with presence, and the development of expertise in the city's socio-political system.

What are the essential elements of American ideas about being, existence, and becoming, and how have they become consequential for contemporary Mongolian migrants to LA? In Unfortunate Becomings, my first chapter, I start by following the development of ideas about of becoming, at the level of a group, in the work of anthropologists studying the United States. Specifically, I consider the development of what would become key conceptual terms for describing migrant lives—acculturation, assimilation, and Americanization. Moreover, contrary to a dominant tendency within the contemporary anthropology of the United States to present these developments as if they were unrelated to the lives of indigenous North Americans I reveal instead their entwined histories (Cattelino 2010). In examining these American transformations I

treat them as ontological concepts—theories about what can exist—as opposed to epistemological notions—theories about what can known. In doing so I have been largely influenced by a wealth of material that has its origins in the study of Amazonians and Inner Asians (Viveiros de Castro 2007; Pedersen 2007; Blaser 2009a). Having mapped this conceptual history, I then explore contemporary Mongolian concerns about the temporality of these becomings, which I frame with reference to Mongolian ontological notions about fortune. I suggest that Mongolian uncertainty is in many cases driven by the vagaries of their own nation's economic development in *zah zeeliin üye* (the age of the market), as opposed to particularly resulting from being in Los Angeles. Specifically, I note that as Mongolian economic growth has stalled in recent years some Mongolians living in Los Angeles have wrestled with the uncertainty of whether they should stay longer than they initially envisaged, and risk these American transformations. I argue that for those that do remain in limbo practices of sending and receiving become a means of resistance. Thus one of my foci is a Mongolian Informal Value Transfer System. Mongolians living in Los Angeles and Mongolia move money around, enact relationships, and transfer fortune using this informal value transfer system. I also consider the sending of goods purchased in the United States. I discuss how unlike the transformations wrought by Los Angeles upon people which are considered problematic those changes that the border has upon goods are considered beneficial. This despite the fact that those same goods may then themselves may have transformative potential—they serve to further create inequality and social tension.

While the majority of my Mongolian interlocutors were most concerned about the linguistic and cultural becomings that they experienced whilst dwelling in Los Angeles many of

them were also worried about morality. Particularly, they worried about how consumer goods were altering people's behavior in problematic ways. In my second chapter I explore these concerns about ethical becomings through the lens of the automobility. I argue that the automobility system in Los Angeles is a settler colonial one that is at odds with the socialist practices of many older Mongolians residing in Los Angeles. I first examine the history of this automobility system as it developed and birthed contemporary Los Angeles. While Los Angeles has attempted to birth a new green politics that makes Los Angeles a multimodal city I reveal how settler colonial ideals have rendered such developments problematic. Against this background I contend that some Mongolians have become concerned both by the use of luxury cars in Los Angeles and the ethical degradation they are felt to index and their emerging exportation from Los Angeles to Ulaanbaatar. While luxury cars are regarded as a problem by contrast long-distance trucking jobs are viewed positively by many Mongolians because of the economic and ethical opportunities they offer. However, trucking, I suggest, is not without its dilemmas. The opportunities it creates are contingent upon the perpetuation of settler colonialism.

While the first two chapters address practices of resistance they are largely concerned with establishing the unwanted aspects of becomings, and their relationship to broader trends occurring in Mongolia. By comparison, my third and fourth chapters consider forms of resistance and their entanglement with settler colonialism in greater detail. Specifically, they deal with both the creation of ownership of the landscape and the formation of selves bearing municipal rights. Fleeting Recognition, the third chapter, draws on social scientific literature on landscape creation and the relationship between humans, objects, and non-human-beings (Ingold 1993; Kirksey and

Helmreich 2010; Hodder 2011).I begin by examining how since the Spaniards arrival in the 17th century the occupation of land in specific ways became central to municipal political recognition in Los Angeles. Overtime these practices have only strengthened in significance, so much so that even mundane practices like tree-planting in Koreatown are informed by them. This history informs my examination of the desire of some Mongolian community activists to develop a named area of their own. Something that they felt would aid them in preserving their senses of self. In short I suggest that in contemporary Los Angeles the recognition of persons continues to be bound up with settler colonialism. For immigrants to achieve any form of political recognition it is necessary for them to visibly occupy a landscape, and displace its previous residents.

Unstable Politics, my fourth chapter, explores the development of municipal political expertise by both the Mongolian population and their neighbors, and its relationship to the rights of municipal stakeholders. I build upon the work by scholars examining learning (Lave and Wenger 2008; Lave et al. 2003; Holland et al. 1998), expertise (Wynne 1991; Collins and Evans 2015), and language ideology (Irvine and Gal 2000) to suggest that theoretically it is necessary to complicate ideas of the right to the city that anthropologists and other social scientists have adopted from the work of Henri Lefebvre. I argue that there is a strong irony here as those most willing to act to preserve a sense of Mongolian identity by claiming rights are required to become less Mongolian in order to effectively engage with the Los Angeles's municipal government. The chapter begins by tracing the history of the right to political participation in Los Angeles from the Spanish presence to the present and contrasting it to Mongolia. I then consider the production of Mongolian stakeholders through a basketball tournament and the sorts of expertise necessary to create such an event. Drawing in particular on the work of Jean Lave and

cognitive anthropologists interested in the notion of communities of practice I suggest that securing access to facilities, a right in the Lefebvrian scholarship, requires legitimate peripheral participation in local government. The relationship between expertise and rights is further explored by examining the role of expertise in relation to Koreatown's neighborhood council. In that context I follow in the footsteps of Collins and Evans by considering the sort of knowledge that the council is meant to provide and the form in which it is meant to be conveyed. Finally, I discuss the right to testify, and how that too is seemingly informed by expertise about language. Specifically, I argue that there is a linguistic ideology, which favors certain forms of communication over others. I demonstrate this tendency by analyzing how the city council enforce particular rules regarding public comment and testimony.

Chapter 1: Unfortunate Becomings

In the early 21st century, as part of a broader trend in cross-border studies some scholars studying migration criticized migration studies' overall focus (Wimmer and Glick-Schiller 2003, Amelina et al. 2012). These scholars argued that migration studies has tended to naturalize nations and ethnic groups as units of analysis and that this methodological nationalism, their term for this practice, has led to "the multiple sources and dynamics of migrant agencies, sociabilities and belongings . . . of those identified as being from the 'same' group being overlooked" (Vertovec 2007; Çaglar 2016, 953). This chapter takes inspiration from this critique and attempts to complicate migration studies received wisdom through asserting the value of studying populations' differing conceptions of movement, and their resultant becomings, for the field. I suggest these divergent ideas about movement result from creating, dwelling, and navigating particular landscapes, with specific affordances. Moreover, such perspectives are significant for both migrants and the non-immigrants they encounter. I explore this dynamic through contrasting the ontologies of Mongolians immigrating to Los Angeles with those of early anthropologists studying American immigration. With respect to the latter, I consider how US settler colonialism, with its focus on eliminating ontological difference, has shaped an association of immigrant becomings with ledger-esque losses and gains. By contrast Mongolians regard migratory becomings as a beneficial activity that potentially improves one's fortune.

While Mongolian migrants do talk about loss, for them such unfortunate becomings are not produced by migratory movement, but are a transnational consequence of *zah zeeliin üye* (the Age of the Market).

Ontology, fortune, and becoming are central to my analysis and require defining. Ontology concerns ideas about existence—the "basic commitments and assumptions about what things are, and what they could be" (Holbraad and Pedersen 2017, 5). To exemplify such basic commitments and assumptions, I will briefly discuss Mongolian mountains' politics. The Mongolian state traces mountain worship to Chinggis Khan, but in the 19th century Mongolian princes and Qing officials began to use a newly conceived Buddhist rite to communicate with a variety of deities and spirits, including the *gazaryn ezed* (land masters), through *ovoo* (stone cairns) on mountains (Humphrey 1995, Sneath 2014). Through *ovoo* they asked *gazaryn ezed* to grant the nation, its people, and their herds fortune (Tatár 1976; Humphrey 1995). Under the Qing important mountains possessed official titles and were paid from the Imperial treasury (Sneath 2014, 461). While buddhism was outlawed during the socialist period *ovoos* remained and were surreptitiously visited (Humphrey 1993; Sneath 2014). In 1994 the Mongolian state began mountain rites anew, with the president annually attending a *takhilga* (sacrificial rite) (Sneath 2010, 259). Mongolian politics is once again cosmopolitical; non-humans are part of the nation's "political structures and processes" (Sneath 2014, 465).

I bore this mind when Baatar, a middle-aged, socialist-era civil servant, informed me, in a life-history interview, that he had an *ovoo* on a Southern California mountain that his family visited every *tsagaan sar* (Mongolian New Year). Later, I discovered that Mongolian-Angeleno male elders also visited the region's mountains to observe *tsagaan sar*. I was not surprised

because mountains are sites of patrilineal power in both Mongolian Buddhism and shamanism (Humphrey 1995; Murphy 2014). Indeed, as Pedersen observed, "Like mountains, ideal old men are . . . the epitomes of solidity, and they constitute focal points in whose vicinity human as well as nonhuman life-forms are supposed to gather" (Pedersen 2001, 93). This stillness was evident at the *tsagaan sar* celebrations in Los Angeles; the oldest men were always visited and never visitors.

Amongst Mongolians *tsagaan sar* was considered auspicious. Mongolian ontologies stress several different types of fortune. *Hishig*, a form existing in limited quantities, is external to humans and associated with the land. Animals and other being gather *hishig* as they interact to create a landscape, and it is eventually is contained in non-human beings and objects (Empson 2012). By contrast *sülde* is a fluctuating form of fortune "related to . . . 'personal brilliance' (*chog*) or 'strong-heartedness' (*zirüken tamir*)", and associated with risk-taking (Humphrey and Ujeed 2012, 154). *Sülde* resides in spirits or objects. Mongolian ontologies also embrace: karma and astrological fortune (Humphrey and Ujeed 2012, 153). My concern is not so much with typologies though as with fortune being "what motivates action and the form that action takes" (Empson 2012, 127).

Finally, my understanding of becomings is shaped by an interdisciplinary literature that stresses that the totality of one's engagement with an environment shapes one (Bender 2001; Jackson 2008; Shubin 2015). A number of scholars within Mongolian studies have drawn upon such approaches in characterizing different populations' attitudes to becomings and their relationships to movement and fortune (Fijn 2011; Murphy 2014; Wright 2016). For example *sülde* is associated with the plains, patrilineal power's reproduction, and the construction of a

stable “ego-centered universe” with a “movable center”—the *ger* (felt tent) (Humphrey 1995, 142). In the *ger* space is ordered by a hierarchy based on age, gender, species, and whether or not one is material culture (Humphrey 1974). Both the *ger* and the *ovoo* project this ordered stability, which was perhaps why Baatar also erected a ger in his yard. These places are bulwarks against the uncertainty of the undifferentiated space that surrounds them (Pedersen 2003). Under state socialism new forms of spatiality were introduced which “moved Mongolia further away from its nomadic heritage” (Myadar 2017, 19). Later *zah zeeliin uye's* chaos brought new forms of migratory becomings, including international migration—regarded as having the potential to increase *hishig* (Benwell 2013).

In this chapter I scrutinize the ontological presuppositions of late 19th century and early 20th century anthropologists and demonstrate they were unified with regard to their attitudes on migration’s consequences. They envisaged such consequences as the loss of immigrant or native culture and the estrangement from one’s history. Having considered loss and estrangement I then discuss how Mongolians becomings in Los Angeles are not simply a result of their immediate physical environment but are tied to the Mongolian economy via flows of fortune. To consider the Mongolian response to economic downturn I examine the various ways Mongolians in Mongolia and Los Angeles attempt to actively influence fortune and preserve their sense of self by moving money. I conclude by discussing another set of sending practices; the shipping of Chinese goods to Mongolia via Los Angeles. Specifically, I focus on the perception that this route sanitized goods and prevented ill-fortune.

When Mongolian mobile pastoralists pack up their camp and move they enter an extremely risky liminal phase, which is offset by the hospitality of others *gers* and visiting *ovoos*.

If the risk succeeds they will have moved their herd to fresh pastures where they will gather fortune. This chapter's central claim is that such ideas about fortune, so different from American ones discussed in the chapter's first section, have entwined with the post-socialist possibilities of international movement and the market itself. These entwined forms have created unprecedented, unpredictable, and unimaginable risks, which sometimes result in unfortunate becomings. Specifically, the potential of oneself or one's children losing a Mongolian identity.

The Ontological Assumptions of Early American Anthropology

I began to think about the links between incorporation, ontology, elimination, and becomings, due to Anna—one of my middle-aged Mongolian interlocutors. After a Mongolian class, as we walked to her car, we discussed the community's linguistic changes. Her outlook was pessimistic; if the community did not act, Mongolians would be assimilated. As her usage indicates assimilation is no longer merely part of academic parlance but is now a common word. However, following scholars who have advocated for "slow down reasoning" I do not want to allow this word's history to pass me by (Stengers 2005; de la Cadena 2010). Her usage creates "an opportunity to arouse a slightly different awareness of the problems and situations mobilizing us" (Stengers 2005, 994). The us being scholars studying American immigration and the slightly different awareness being the enduring connections between native elimination and other racialized others— immigrants and African-Americans—incorporation. For as scholars working on settler colonialism and liberal multiculturalism have observed liberal

multiculturalism's seeming tolerance of is built on settler colonialism's intolerance (Povinelli 1998; Morgenson 2011).

The history, and epistemologies, of "the attitudes of prejudice and acts of discrimination" racialized others have suffered in Southern California has been well-studied (Heizer and Almquist 1999). However, the approach I have opted for offers a different perspective. I focus on the ontological suppositions underpinning the work of anthropologists who coined terms like assimilation, acculturation, amalgamation, and Americanization and wrote about their consequences. Between 1880-1942 anthropologists they played an active role in the federal government's management of these racialized others through laws like the Dawes Act and the Mexican Farm Labour Agreement (Mark 1988; Walsh 2004).

Contemporary anthropological work on ontologies often counterposes indigenous ontologies with western modernity (Descola 2013; Blaser 2009b). Many scholars argue that western modernity normalizes the nature and culture binary, that it reduces the indigenous to the non-western other lacking in the sophistication and culture of the West (Latour 1993; Ingold 1995). My approach to studying this relationship, which underlies anthropologists use of terms like assimilation, is deeply indebted to Yates-Doerr and Mol's argument that Western nature is multitudinous. They argue that western nature is composed of repertoires specifying different meanings for the same object rather than grounded in a singular continuity between human and animal (Yates-Doerr and Mol 2012, 56). This is helpful for tracing out the distinctions between various anthropologists' positions on how the process of becoming an American functioned and the implications of these positions for both natives and other racialized others. Despite these

anthropologists varied ontological assumptions, about how culture is changed, one commonality is the framing of such becomings in terms of losses and gains.

Late 19th century American anthropologists—mostly salvaging Native knowledge—often spoke of acculturation. This term described the transformations they saw and sometimes sought. J.W. Powell, the Smithsonian Institution's Bureau of Ethnology (BoE) first director, coined the term in 1880. He argued "The force of acculturation under the overwhelming presence of millions of civilized people has wrought great changes . . . Indian society has either been modified or supplanted" (Powell 1880, 46). Powell was referring to Europeans' effect on Native life's totality, in fields as varied as religions and arts. Lewis Henry Morgan's unilinear evolutionism had influenced his ordering of the world's peoples: firstly into kingdoms based on — "the aggregate of human activities" and then into the cultural stages—savagery, barbarism, and civilization (Powell 1888, 98). Powell rejected degeneration arguing Natives progressed evolutionarily by being forced to acquire new humanities. His ontological position was that the world consisted of a singular nature and a multiplicity of cultures; switching between cultures was irreversible. Alice Fletcher Cunningham, a BoE anthropologist, would draw on Powell's notion of acculturation in advocating for the reservation system's destruction. She argued that reservations slowed Native Americans forcible civilization. Instead Fletcher Cunningham advocated for parceling individual lots, because she felt it was more effective as a mechanism for acculturating Native Americans (Mark 1988). Her advocacy resulted in the Dawes Act, which some have characterized as "methods of regaining that land back for the use of white settlers" (Ellinghaus 2007, 206).

Concurrent with this elimination of native American ways of life was a growing anxiety about immigration. In Los Angeles, Chinese people were already regarded by local authorities and the medical profession as biologically problematic and culturally distinct, “By the 1870s, . . . being 'Chinese' meant . . . dirty, depraved, and disease ridden” (Molina 2006, 26). This perception resulted in the Chinese Exclusion Act in 1892 barring Chinese labor migration. Meanwhile on the East Coast, European immigrants and African-Americans also encountered hostility (Molina 2006).

The anthropological contribution to this debate over immigration initially focused on European migration. Increasingly, it was university-based scholars who argued over racial amalgamation—whether people from distinct races could meld without biological degeneration (Darnell 1998). Franz Boas, a German Jewish immigrant and monogenist, who studied both immigrant incorporation and Native elimination was a key figure in these discussions. Boas had been trained by the biologist Rudolf Virchow and the ethnologist Adolf Bastian at the Royal Museum of Berlin. The introduced him to Germany’s Humboldtian tradition, with its emphasis on the co-dependence of man and his environment, and the Herderian romantic perspective, which stressed that each culture possessed its own *geist* (spirit) of genius (Bunzl 1996). From Boas’ perspective people had a singular biological nature and culture was the only meaningfully divider. Consistent with his Humboldtian heritage, Boas did not regard cultures as socio-evolutionarily rankable, but unique to each population. As culture could change it was necessary to salvage Native culture before its inevitable elimination. Boas’ claims regarding race were based on anthropometric data gathered from measuring European immigrants. He argued the distinct differences between immigrant parents and their American progeny resulted from

improved socio-economic circumstances. Boas contended that European immigrants and African-Americans could become Americans through physical amalgamation with WASPs (Boas 1916).

Madison Grant, a patrician New Yorker, conservationist, and polygenist, fervently disagreed. He regarded man as no different than other American megafauna—as with the buffalo it was necessary to conserve noble "Nordic" natives, preventing extinction (Spiro 2009). The solution was miscegenation laws and immigration controls. Grant saw a world populated by humans divided into many different "natural" racial types with different origins. Culture was merely an expression of biological differences. Contact between racial types would result in the superior type's degeneration. He argued, "Boas naturally does not take stock in any anthropology which relegates him and his race to the inferior position" (Spiro 2010, 37). Grant's position helped influence the 1924 Immigration Act's passage, which established European migrant quotas and banned migrants from other racial groups (Spiro 2009).

Few Boasians focused on studying other racialized others (Spiro 1955, 1240). Manuel Gamio, who like fellow Latin American anthropologists—Fernando Ortiz and Gilberto Freyre—contributed to the notion that their *mestizo* nations benefited from indigenous people and settlers amalgamation, did. In the 1920s, he investigated the significant increase in Mexican migration to the United States and found the numbers overstated (Gamio 1929). Gamio noted many migrants were seasonal laborers, and advocated that immigration policy reflect this. He regarded short-term migration to the US as an invaluable rite of passage which would help mold Mexico's future, "This effective and invaluable experience which the immigrants cannot obtain in Mexico

will effectively contribute to national reconstruction when they return permanently to their own country" (Gamio 1929, 469).

Melville Herskovits, another Boasian, studied ethnic minorities. His interest grew out of anthropometric research into New York's African-American community and centered on acculturation (Gershenhorn 2004). Initially, he defined acculturation as "a body of people accepting in toto the culture of an alien group"— a definition in line with how we now think about assimilation (Herskovits 1927, 215). Herskovits claimed that "The African negro may be of the same racial stock as . . . his American brothers. But culturally, they are . . . widely separated" (Herskovits 1927, 224). He thus regarded African-Americans as fully acculturated. However, research in Suriname transformed his perspective (Gershenhorn, 2004). This was reflected in his 1936 redefinition of acculturation which stated:

> Acculturation comprehends those phenomena which result when groups of individuals having different cultures come into continuous first-hand contact, with subsequent changes in the original cultural patterns of either or both groups (Redfield et al. 1936, 149).

This definition suggested the possibility of mutual transformation and enrichment rather than cultural domination. The ontological assumptions underpinning this argument, with the emphasis on change through first-hand contact, tended to regard cultural change rather like a transaction. It emphasized the trait, as a unit of culture to be analyzed by both parties in relation to a series of relevant criteria.

Americanization, by comparison with these other concepts, had a brief anthropological history. It first appeared in the 1920s; a period in which industrialization had forced smallholders into cities where they were increasingly paranoid about foreigners' presence. Progressives

convinced themselves that the most effective solution to the perceived problem of foreignness was immigrant assimilation through Americanization (Soderstrom 2010). Immigrants were trained in American cultural values and elements of their pre-existing culture deemed economically beneficial were preserved. This was largely applied to European migrants, but in California it was Mexicans who were initially its subjects (Ziegler-McPherson 2009). Mexican women, in particular were subjected to an array of health programs designed to help them become hygienic Americans, such as teaching them how to cook American foods (Molina 2010). Albert E. Jenks—who founded the University of Minnesota's Anthropology Department— was an exponent of this particular form of transformation. He saw Americanization as a "field of national endeavor" that would allow anthropologists to serve the nation (Jenks 1914, 245). Anthropology, Jenks felt, could perform this service by training specialists in Americanization with the goal to "hasten the assimilation of the various peoples in America toward the highest common standards and ideals of America practicable for each generation" (Jenks 1914, 243). This hastening was about psychically absorbing people, with each 'breed' possessing different psychic qualities stemming from germinal, racial differences. Thus, for the nation's benefit, an immigrant had both to be both biologically amalgamated and psychically assimilated. However, not all peoples could appropriately become amalgamated and assimilated.

Cursed into Limbo

If the ontological assumptions of anthropologists of the US about the consequences of migration had been largely framed in terms of book-keeping losses and gains—gained Swedish

Lutheranism, lost Tongva religious practice for example—they contrasted strongly with those of Mongolians, for whom risk was associated with fortune. However, for Mongolians there was still a risk of unfortunate becomings and that risk needs to be contextualized with regard to the unforeseen changes *zah zeeliin uye* had caused to motility and dwelling. Specifically, I focus here on the resource curse, which under *zah zeeliin uye* transformed Mongolian fortunes, thus reducing people to an interminable limbo.

Richard Auty, an economist, coined the phrase "resource curse" to describe a situation where "a favorable natural resource endowment may be less beneficial to countries at low-and mid-income levels of development than the conventional wisdom" supposed (Auty 2003, 1). One such example of this phenomena, according to Auty, was that China, India, Brazil and Mexico underwent industrial diversification with considerably less alacrity than the small, resource poor nations of South Korea and Taiwan. Other supported his findings arguing this "has been a constant motif of economic history" (Sachs and Warner 1995, 2). These discussions might have black-boxed the resource curse's consequences for environments and individuals, but here I attend to them. My approach has been inspired by those who have regarded the resource curse as an economic curse consequential for both people's and nation's fortunes (DiMuzio 2010, 96). Specifically, I examine the curse's disruption of Mongolian's lives and how they seek to minimize its consequences.

Industrial mining has been an emotional issue in Mongolia since the 19th century (High and Schlesinger 2010). It was during this period that the Chinese government and Russian investors had formed a joint-stock company to develop Mongolia's goldfields, but Mongolian protests halted the venture (Serebrennikov 1931; Jackson and Dear 2016). During the socialist

period Communism held *gazaryn ezed* at bay, and mining helped convert Mongolia into an industrial economy (Delaplace 2012). Commercial mining was the nation's largest economic sector by the millennium's end (Bulag 2009, 132). And then in 2009 Hurgat, a Mongolian vice-Finance minister, coined the term Wolf Economy to describe an idealized future where Mongolia managed to harness mining to develop human capital (Hutgat 2011; Empson and Webb 2014, 238). Many Mongolians consider the wolf a teacher, because of its abilities to survive on the steppe, and Hutgat argued economic success would similarly require lupine qualities (High 2017, 108). Economic growth led many Mongolians to return from Los Angeles to reap the rewards their international education seemed to promised. However, an economic downturn began in 2012 and many who had come back attempted to return. Meanwhile those who had remained were advised to stay.

One evening in mid-2015 I sat in a Mongolian pastor's office watching several men shoot play *shagai* (ankle bone shooting)—a Mongolian national pastime. This variant involved kneeling several feet away with one knee on the ground and the other drawn below the neck while trying to knock down *khasaa* (targets carved from animal anklebones) placed on an *aravch* (an intricately decorated wooden box) using *sum* (smoothed deer horn pieces resembling arrowheads). The *sum* was flicked with the middle finger of their rights hands off a *khashlaga* (a wooden ruler-like implement that acted as a bow) balanced on the knee and supported by their left hand. Anklebones can be used to divine fortunes and some of these men believed the game's riskiness helped to reveal *sülde* (Bawden 2002; Birtilan 2003). They played for several hours, and only broke to smoke menthol cigarettes, drink light beer, and gossip. When the game finished I interviewed Baavgai—a Christian in his late 30s. He was among the best players, but

rarely present since becoming a long-distance trucker. Baavgai and his family had come to Los Angeles in the late aughts so that his wife could train in accountancy and improve her English at one of the area's several Korean evangelical universities. Now they were ready to return, but they were in limbo. The economic uncertainty caused by the resource curse contributed to Baavgai's uncertainty, "Every time I am ready to go back things get worse". He did not believe in *sülde* and *shagai* offered him no means to divine his future.

Baavgai was not alone, many Mongolians shared his concern. Through training they become better business people equipped with skills to improve their fortunes back home. Now they were worried that if they returned home they would be trapped and their earning power would be considerably less than it had been in Los Angeles. Equally, by staying in Los Angeles they became increasingly detached from the Mongolian job market, as Lucy—a young woman working as a lab manager—remarked to me "the longer I stay the less chance I have of catching up professionally with my friends who remained in Mongolia." Thus, for many Mongolians in Los Angeles, the power of the resource curse extended to trapping them in economic uncertainty. The resource curse was consequential for their senses of self and their access to cultural resources. To improve their fortunes, some consulted with a Mongolian fortune-teller, while others engaged in Buddhist ritual.

The curse's power went well beyond creating uncertainty about fortune. People might have felt time was broken, but it did pass. And for those who felt stuck what they noticed were a series of unwanted physiological and psychological changes. Prominent amongst these was a loss of their ability to employ the Mongolian language. Over time they found it was harder and harder for their relatives in Mongolia to understand them. June, attending college in Los Angeles,

said “When I write to my grandparents in Mongolia they don’t understand me”. Her Mongolian had declined so much from a lack of use that it was very difficult to communicate. She said that she felt as if pieces of her were slipping away. She was far from alone. Mongolians of all ages felt the loss inflicted by unfortunate becomings. This was significant not just because people felt increasingly disconnected from friends and relatives, but because they felt disconnected from the nation. Benedict Anderson argued that the printing press helped create the nation as textual bonds allowed people to imagine themselves part of a vast collective (Anderson, 2016, 45). And on Facebook and other digital places one could see Los Angeles’s Mongolians occasionally struggling to communicate, and as a result feeling like they could no longer imagine themselves as Mongolian. There was overwhelming textual diversity as some used the English Alphabet to communicate in Mongolian, others used the Cyrillic alphabet, and still others interspersed English and Mongolian words. People misunderstood what others typed and as a result arguments took place. The situation was compounded because many in the community regarded facility in the Mongolian language as the product of individual choice. If you couldn’t speak Mongolian it was because you hadn’t tried hard enough to fight the curse, and you were no longer Mongolian merely, as one interlocutor said derisively, Asian.

Mongolians’ concerns about language retention were reflected in the Los Angeles Mongolian Association’s (LAMA) educational goals. LAMA instituted a policy that focused on language learning and turned its office into a space where young Mongolian children could familiarize themselves with Mongolian objects and people. The Mongolian teacher’s house exemplified this philosophy. Mongolian objects covered its walls, and mundane objects were labelled with Mongolian terms, so that children would regard Mongolian as quotidian. *Khool*

(food) and *Suutei tsai* (Mongolian milky tea) were prepared regularly to promote Mongolian identity. Even American holidays like Thanksgiving played a role in Mongolian identity preservation. When I attended one Mongolian Thanksgiving the hostess made much of the presence of *jimc* (fruit) from her homeland—a Western Mongolian *aimag* (province). However, despite the *aimag's* economy being dominated by agriculture its *jimc* was not exempt from the resource curse. There was a proposal to begin more aggressive mining in her natal *aimag*. This was an activity the hostess felt would have only negative consequences for its beauty and the purity of its bounty.

Jimc was not alone in being both entangled with the resource curse, and pivotal to arresting its effects on Los Angeles's Mongolian population. Cars also played an important role. Amongst Los Angeles's largest Mongolian businesses were export companies, largely dedicated to selling and shipping cars. They were vital to the preservation of Mongolian culture, as they export companies sponsored cultural events, like *Naadam* (the festival of the three manly games). The resource curse concerned these companies as well. They relied on well-to-do Mongolians buying imported luxury cars. This practice that declined when the economy was troubled, and made it difficult for such companies to act as sponsors for events dedicated to preserving Mongolian culture.

Export was also a crucial vector for the diffusion of other objects intended to stave off unwanted becomings—specifically Mongolian books. While holidaying in Ulaanbaatar one community organizer met with Ulaanbaatar City Central Library and discussed setting up a book exchange. An Los Angeles library would hold Mongolian books for the community's benefit. In

return, LAMA would buy and ship secondhand library books to Ulaanbaatar. It was through such means that the resource curse's deleterious effects were resisted and better fortunes shaped.

Mongolifying Money

Zah zeeliin uye has substantially altered Mongolian becomings by, amongst other things, creating the possibility of movement in a fashion not known to Mongolians for centuries. However, the economic restructuring that *zah zeeliin uye* wrought also exposed Mongolia to a resource curse, which has negatively affected the fortunes of both those Mongolians who remained and those who have come to dwell internationally. Amongst its consequences for some Mongolian-Angelenos has been language loss and sense of severed networks. I now wish to consider how Mongolians resisted these consequences through their usage of transnational, informal value transfer systems to transfer fortune. In considering how practices of moving value connect Los Angeles and Mongolia and shape fortunes I attend to a socio-material assemblages composed both of technologies—cash, smartphones, Social Networking Systems (SNS), and airports—and people. Indeed, I argue that it is not just the human parts of the network that resist the unfortunate becomings, but that the way these informal value transfer systems configure infrastructures that might be regarded as particularly Mongolian.

Value transfer systems' infrastructures were highly visible and plentiful in my field site. One could find Western Union offices and a variety of more ethnically specific networks throughout Koreatown. All these systems required payment to access their networks, but one Mongolian informal value transfer system was different because it was not transactional and

lacked a middle-man. In this respect this value-sending system was distinct from many of the new forms of mobile money and value transfer system that have emerged in recent years, like M-Pesa and Paypal that charge fees (Taylor and Horst 2013). The Mongolian system was also different from systems of far greater antiquity like *hundi* and *hawala* that rely on a middleman and have received renewed attention since the US began its war on terrorism (de Goede 2003; Martin 2008). Instead, this system of sending money bore more of a resemblance to the online currency Bitcoin whose guiding spirit was "no inherent transaction fees" (Lustig and Nardi 2015, 744).

My introduction to Mongolian informal value transfer systems was innocuous; I met an interlocutor one spring day for coffee. We had been talking for several minutes when her phone interrupted. It was a call from Mongolia; she was trying to arrange a summer flight on MIAT (Mongolia's National Airline) that would allow her family to be in Ulaanbaatar for *Naadam*. Relatives in Ulaanbaatar had helped, but now it was time to transfer payment. She considered how to best accomplish that, before opting for interbank transfer—expensive but reliable. Curiosity piqued I asked about sending money. She mentioned that a couple of the Mongolian export companies with offices in the area had informal value transfer systems—for a fee they would act as a middleman with their office in Ulaanbaatar paying out to relatives who came to collect. Then, almost as an afterthought, she mentioned some people occasionally met to exchange money. However, she claimed not to know much about this last method. Indeed, initially, I was unclear if this was distinct from the courier companies.

A week later while conducting an interview with Jerome, a garrulous, middle-aged, Southern Mongolian, air-conditioning installer, I asked about informal value transfer systems. He

discussed several methods. Firstly, he said in an absolute emergency some people would simply go to the airport to try to find a fellow Mongolian traveling to Mongolia. In return for a fee their co-national would act as a courier physically transporting the money. When the flight arrived at Chinggis Khan International and the courier disembarked the sender's family would meet them and take receipt of the cash. He acknowledged his was an extremely risky—the sender could disguise themselves and simply disappear. A considerably less risky, but altogether more expensive, system that required connections was setting up a Mongolian bank account to transfer money into. LAMA had used this method earlier in the year, he noted, when they helped an indigent Mongolian man return home. In addition to buying him a ticket home, the board had used their connections to set up a Mongolian account where they placed some funds for when he returned. Finally, he mentioned some people would exchange money between each other. Jerome argued that the risks of these informal value transfer systems became more acceptable when ceremonial obligations had to be fulfilled, such as *daahi avah yoslol* (a child's first haircut).

The mention of obligations is fitting in the context of my attempt to talk about how the transfer of fortune might bolster one's connection to Mongolia. A number of anthropologists have observed, in their discussions of value transfer system in post-socialist Mongolia, that what a variety of INGOs and the press increasingly regard as corruption is often something else, "a network that is based upon the rough principle - in the words of another - supply to each according to their need, and expect from each according to their ability" (Sneath 1993, 196; Zimmermann 2012). Furthermore, fulfilling obligations by transferring appropriate gifts or money to family members or friends is not transactional but is instead governed by the logic of enactment, 'transfers of goods and assistance are better viewed as materializations of various

types of social relations' (Sneath 2006, 90). And such matters were considerable importance in both rural and urban Mongolia during economic upheaval (Pedersen 2016). Thus fulfilling these obligations in a timely manner ensured that Mongolians residing overseas remained connected to their families and materialized their Mongolian-ness.

Jerome's discussion of these various systems still left me with questions about the exchanging of money. From other interviewees I managed to obtain scant details. Then that summer I finally observed part of the process myself. One afternoon in mid-August I arrived at a Korean-American cafe near Vermont in a hurry. I was late to meet Russell—a Mongolian man in his mid-20s studying business at one of the city's universities—for lunch. Russell and I had met through an amateur basketball league that LAMA had set up that year. I had interviewed him before and even attended his birthday party. When I arrived I found him fully engrossed in his phone. He explained that he was arranging a meeting, so that he could send some money back to his family in Mongolia. That morning he had posted in a public Facebook group for Mongolians living in Los Angeles explaining that he needed to send money to Mongolia, and asking if anyone in Los Angeles needed to receive money. Then just as I was arriving someone had got in touch with him via Facebook chat. Now they were agreeing the details of the meeting. Once that was done they would contact their respective relatives in in Ulaanbaatar to arrange concurrent meetings. When the meetings finally occur, both parties would text each other explaining the cash is exchanged. In Russell's case this all happened within the course of the same day.

I would describe both sending money via courier and using Facebook as mongolifyed informal value transfer system. Mongolify is an Angeleno-Mongolian neologism meaning to achieve a goal in a non-standard manner. The word was coined by a Mongolian mechanic who

used it to describe the makeshift way he had repaired a client's car. A local Mongolian businessman then briefly flirted with the idea of creating Mongolify Movement party to campaign for a new, uncorrupted Mongolia—that is to mongolify the political system and make it less corrupt. The informal value transfer system that Russell used was mongolifyed because it is did not appear to be a transactional arrangement. Unlike the usage of a courier to take money to Ulaanbaatar there is no obvious middleman, beyond Facebook. However, the system of sending money was also not an enacting of ties nor did it imply that the two parties in Los Angeles were meant to develop a long-standing relationship with one another. Nor was this sending of money what Sahlins once termed negative reciprocity, "an attempt to get something for nothing with impunity" (Sahlins, 1974, 195). In the case of the courier based system the mongolifying created a particular socio-material assemblage unique to Mongolians, because of aeromobility. Aeromobility renders flying a lateral point-to-point movement across a surface (Ingold 2011). Thus only one airport in Mongolia, Chinggis Khaan International, indirectly connects to Los Angeles. Provided the courier boarded the plane they would have to arrive at the airport, and they would inevitably be greeted when they did. Mongolia's socialist heritage and position in the geopolitical world-order had led to quite restricted aeromobility, with no other international airports connected to the US and limited indirect flights via Russia, China, South Korea, and Japan. It was thus relatively straightforward to work out when a flight was coming in and who was on it. Thus this method of sending money and fortune employed those limitations to its advantage, transforming them into security measures.

While few members of the community actually used the term "mongolify" many not only embraced the practice of undertaking things in a non-standard manner, but also saw it as an

inherently Mongolian approach. Late one evening I interviewed Anna, a young woman studying for a business degree at a community college, as part of a broader discussion about identity-loss she mentioned a young Mongolian mother who had attempted to take a different route on a charity walk in Griffith Park to raise funds for charitable causes in Mongolia. As she attempted to diverge from the correct route she was loudly corrected by her young son. “That is the problem with being in the US”, Anna said pointing to her head and by implication her brain. She meant that the child did not think like a Mongolian. Americans were literal in their obedience to the law, as she said this she made a gesture of a straight line with her hand. Mongolians by comparison were malleable she asserted bending her arm. As we were walking she further acted out the national neuro-cultural distinctions she perceived by jay-walking, giggling gleefully as she did so. Being Mongolian in this sense was about bending, not breaking, rules to achieve goals. In Russia, China and Mongolia, such practices have been labelled as informal economies by some western academics and associated with corruption (Ledeneva 1998). However, Humphrey contends that in both Russia and Mongolia, “there is a long-standing set of ideas about “veering” ways of doing things” (Humphrey 2012, 24). And I would argue that in sending money using these informal value transfer systems my interlocutors were veering and adhering to their idea of what it was to be Mongolian.

Standardizing Goods

I have suggested that using the socio-material assemblages of informal value transfer system could be regarded as a way of trying to preserve Mongolian identity in the face of the

unfortunate becomings associated specifically with the resource curse and more broadly with *zah zeeliin uye*. Building on that discussion about material culture's role in becomings, I examine the Americanization of goods, so as to make them acceptable to the Mongolian market. This interest is not without precedent, as Manuel Gamio regarded Mexican short-term workers importation of American goods, with their superior standards, as a way of promoting Mexican modernization. His position accords with sociologists of standards' claims that "standards shape not only the physical world around us but our social lives and even our very selves" (Busch 2011, 2; Bowker and Star 2000; Lampland and Star 2009). I am interested in goods and standards relationship to reality, but for different reasons. Specifically, I am interested in how some of my interlocutors regarded American border regimes and the standards these regimes imposed as providing a buttress against Chinese goods' perceived flaws and the potential *buzar* (pollution) they brought. I consider this border work in the light of Pedersen and Bunkenborg's notion of technologies of distantiation and James Frazer's idea of contagious magic (Pedersen and Bunkenborg 2012; Frazer 2016).

Early one Saturday morning I sat in the darkened office of a small single-storey, box-like building. Its size all the more remarkable because its grounds were quite spacious and entirely composed of parking spaces. This inversion of spatial logics somehow seemed quite fitting as the building was occupied by a shipping company, specifically, a Mongolian shipping company. I sat on a well-worn couch and talked to Eric—a short, well-muscled Mongolian man in his early twenties who I had met through attending various sporting events. Eric was sitting at a desk that dominated the room through both its size and central location. Aside from the desk, the objects in the room—industrial scales, a hand-cart, bags of *boortsog* (fried dough), and t-shirts with

Chinggis on them—left one in no doubt about both the company's function and its owners' and clients' origins.

While we talked about his personal history and how the shipping company functioned, Eric skillfully sliced open a series of packages and parcels with a box-cutter. He inspected their contents before resealing and preparing them for shipping to Mongolia. At one point he pulled a small, white soap dish out of a parcel. It was the sort that you could find on sale at any supermarket. I could see the label on the dish that bore the text "made in China." I remarked to him on the irony of Mongolia being both China's next door neighbor, and a significant importer of its goods, and yet someone had bought an object made there from a US website and was going to have it shipped back to Mongolia possibly via China.

My comment had been intended as a passing witticism. Eric did not take it in that spirit. He looked at me as if I was ignorant, which I was, and explained patiently that that people were willing to pay for quality. He then entered into greater detail and clarified that the reason someone had decided to ship a soap dish that had been made in China to Mongolia via the United States and then back through China was all about standards. Chinese goods directly imported to Mongolia could potentially be full of flaws and problems, he said. By comparison Chinese goods that had to passed through the United States border inspection and biosecurity regime would be subject to a series of tests and measures that they simply wouldn't receive in either China or Mongolia. To confirm his argument's strength and to exemplify these American standards, Eric approvingly quoted a section of regulations from a Food and Drug Administration document. Then finally he talked about how he had once fallen ill from eating Chinese produce.

I was not surprised by this attitude; Mongolians' sinophobia has been well documented (Bulag 1998; Delaplace 2012; Jackson and Dear 2016). Some have located its origins in the adversarial relationship that one often finds between herding and agricultural peoples (Lattimore 1962). Others have suggested that the roots of this "rather than being a product of . . . purely socioeconomic factors, may in fact draw some of its current inspiration from . . . depictions of history filtered through Marxist ideology" (Billé 2008, 55). Whatever its origins, this loathing has colored Mongolian attitudes to trading. Chinese businessmen in Mongolia are often represented as being deceitful and immoral people intent on swindling their customers (Lattimore 1962; Wheeler 2004). Indeed to this day Mongolians who behave in a deceitful manner are often accused of being *erliz* (a derogative for people of mixed background) Chinese (Billé 2015).

Eric's discussion of food was also unsurprising. Rumors about Chinese food's quality date back to the socialist period (Batbayar 1999 in Billé 2015). Billé argues that contemporary concerns derive not from worries about Chinese farming practices, but that the "the Chinese government is believed to be actively trying to poison Mongols and drive them to extinction" (Billé 2015, 24). However, this does not explain the purchase of items, like the soap dish. Returning to food, Uradyn Bulag contends that the cause is diverging Chinese and Mongolian food standards (Bulag 1998, 199). China is a largely agricultural nation and in Northern China night soil is often used as fertilizer. The Mongolian diet in contrast centers on meat, and night soil is considered *buzar*. *Buzar* is more than physical pollution though, it is also "negative, fortune-destroying energy" (Humphrey and Ujeed 2012, 156). Furthermore,

Mongolian animals are free-range, whereas as Chinese animals are penned and fed scraps. The former consume nature and gather *hishig* while the latter gather *buzar* (Empson 2012).

One particular infrastructural response to such problems has been to employ technologies of distantiation, these are "carefully crafted social tools that ensure that people can remain minimally connected over time and thereby continue to partake in highly circumscribed but also profitable mutual engagements" (Pedersen and Bunkenborg 2012, 558). Examples of such social tools like this were to be found at mines, building sites, and factories across Mongolia, where Chinese laborers were kept apart from Mongolians and supplied with food from China that was cooked by Chinese chefs. Such technologies of distantiation have a long history in Mongolia being employed by both the Soviets and during the Qing period to ensure that contact between populations was limited (Delaplace 2012; Schlesinger 2017). For similar reasons Chinese mining companies' roads in Mongolia did not connect to Mongolian settlements. They reflected attitudes about the dangers of mixing that were present amongst Mongolians living in Los Angeles as well. On one particularly memorable occasion I was informed by a 1.5 generation interlocutor that Inner Mongolians could not possibly be biologically related to Mongolians as they lived in China. While from the perspective of some such social tools might seem like segregation there is an important distinction to be made between technologies of distantiation and segregation that is rooted in the former's emphasis on mutual profit and benefit.

From an analytical perspective I came to realize that while I had initially thought about the shipping company merely as dealing with what Kathy Burrell called the recalcitrance of distance—our tendency to speak of the world as if distance had been annihilated when it has not—they were in fact engaged in at least one other sort of work (Burrell 2016). They were

participating in the performance of an alchemical work of sorts. That is, they were aiding in the creation of a technology of distantiation that rendered Chinese goods American and thus acceptable to the Mongolian public.

These practices might sound similar to other ethnographic accounts of post-colonial and post-socialist populations developing an attachment to goods that have originated in the center and not the periphery (Burke 1999; Hansen 2000; Berdahl 2000). A good example of this is Lily Nguyen's account of infrastructural politics in Vietnam where she draws attention to the Vietnamese desire for products perceived as having originated in the right location. She argues that "The entanglement of quality with notions of geographical proximity made it such that all globally branded products sold within Vietnamese markets were seen as illegitimately global and therefore suspect" (Nguyen 2016, 643). However, the difference here lies in the fact that in this specific instance the Mongolian desire is determined by their animus, that is a mistrust of the Chinese. The Mongolian evaluation of what constitutes quality is marked by long standing concerns about the Chinese, whereas Nguyen provides no indicator of the equivalent phenomena in Vietnam of goods being shunned on the basis of ethnic enmity.

As a way of further framing the alchemical labor that the US border and the Mongolian shipping companies are performing on these Chinese goods by subjecting them to standards I want to draw upon James Frazer's notion of contagious magic. According to Frazer, contagious magic refers to a branch of sympathetic magic which is a system of thought that assumes that "things act on each at a distance through a secret sympathy" (Frazer 2016). For example, contagious magic is produced through contact, and sustained through what Frazer theorized was "a material medium . . . which, like the ether of modern physics, is assumed to unite distant

objects and to convey impressions from one to the other" (Frazer 2016). Absent Frazer's theorizing such ideas are already part of some Mongolian ontologies. Rebecca Empson has observed based on her research with the Buriad Mongols of North-Eastern Mongolia, that "by containing a piece of the animal when it leaves, fortune is retained as a collective resource for the herds that remain" (Empson 2012, 120). Thus from a Mongolian perspective American border checks enact a form of sympathetic magic. Their imposition of American standards serves to provide peace of mind by disrupting the previous sympathetic association that such goods, manufactured in China and bound for Mongolia, had with China. Indeed, so powerful is this distancing technology of contagious border magic that even though some of these goods have to re-enter China they are proofed against *buzar*.

Ultimately what underlies the necessity of contagious border magic in the Mongolian context is a Mongolian fear that Chinese goods potentially represent an unfortunate future in which Mongolians will become Chinese. This is an ontological proposition contingent on the belief that for a Mongolian to engage in an act of mimesis, with regard to China, creates the possibility of them becoming Chinese. In this instance the American border prevents such unwanted becomings.

Conclusion

This chapter clearly demonstrates that there exists a link between settlers need to eliminate natives, and their ontologies, and attitudes to immigrant incorporation. In both cases there is an expectation that becoming involves losing any form of self that might be perceived as

threatening the settler colonial state's existence. Thus, to give an example from the history of the United States, in the 1830s when the majority of Cherokee were forcibly removed from Georgia to reservations in Oklahoma territory those Cherokee who stayed were permitted to do because they owned property, and thus had changed themselves in accordance with the demands of settler law. Furthermore, the chapter also described the numerous links between migrant experiences of belonging and their ideas about fortune.

Anthropologists studying the United States had very clear ideas about the consequences of immigrant presence during a pivotal sixty-year period. When I examined their work it was evident that different communities of scholars possessed very different naturalist repertoires. Far from there being universal acceptance amongst anthropologists of the proposition that there was one nature and innumerable cultures there was considerable conflict over this point. Moreover, even when there was basic agreement over the existence of a single nature and multiple cultures as there was between Boas and Powell there were disagreements over what exactly constituted culture, and the implications of cultural change. However, what seemed most clear about this period is that all of these debates over being were marked by fears about loss and disruption that stemmed from the co-presence of humans deemed distinct from one another by dint of their culture, biology, or both. For anthropologists both immigrants and natives were becoming American merely by being present in a settler colonial society. This change by immigrants and natives into Americans was inescapable, and in both cases those becomings threatened the continuation of peoples' cultures.

These fears also marked and marred the lives of the Mongolian population in Los Angeles. They were subject to a curse that they could not control and had to live with uncertainty

and to hope against hope that their government would find away to resolve things. In the meantime they relied upon practices such as informal value transfer to preserve their Mongolian-ness. Informal value transfer allowed them to enact relationships, with those who remained in Mongolia. Of pivotal significance here was how money was sent. By sending money in a Mongolian fashion they were not only saving money but further demonstrating their continued Mongolian-ness.

While I do not deny that Mongolians in Los Angeles remain concerned about the effects of being in the United States on their identity as Mongolians, they are equally relieved at the ability of the US borders assemblage and inspection network to make otherwise problematic Chinese goods into acceptable commodities. The necessity for American contagious border magic reveals a greater truth shared by both the community and Mongolian buyers in Mongolia. This is a concern about the efficaciousness of their own borders. Mongolia's standards are either not efficacious or Mongolia's borders are too porous to prevent unwanted Chinese presence. The second sentiment was shared with me by one middle-aged interlocutor who had lived in the United States for more than a decade and feared the global reach of China. Her fear extended to a belief that the Chinese were erasing Mongolia from world history entirely. In her view Mongolia was teetering on the brink of extinction, as extractive projects and Chinese conspiracies destroyed the purity of its nature and its people. "Do not go to Mongolia" she repeatedly warned me. "It is not safe" is how she would often follow this statement up.

Contemporary Mongolian views on the disruptive presence of the other within their borders may seem similar to those fears voiced by the current US administration. However, I believe that Mongolian concerns are undergirded by a very different set of ontological

suppositions, and by their history as a Chinese colony. Mongolians are deeply concerned about their own personal susceptibility to transformation and change. This concern also focused on the ease with which one can lose one's Mongolian identity and the awareness that you and you alone are responsible for maintaining it. This responsibility was made doubly difficult because many people had come to the United States to study and effect becomings. However, in opening themselves up to one sort of becoming they risked another unwanted kind of becoming.

Chapter 2: Automobility and Morality

I had spent the better part of a day helping Carl, a gangly Mongolian-American university student studying physics, and Ganzorig, his computer programmer father, transport their furniture from Koreatown to their new Long Beach apartment. Now we were satisfying our hunger at an In-n-Out Burger joint. Carl asked me about my research and I explained that I had just returned from traveling with a *joloch* (trucker). As I recounted the details of a *joloch's* life he became increasingly interested. At one point I described the physical hardships associated with the job and explained that "People gain weight". "People gain weight?", he repeated my statement but framed it as an incredulous question. He seemed truly surprised by this. “Sure”, I said “the truckers do.” “It's true,” Ganzorig interjected. To illustrate how normal it was for Mongolian *joloch* to gain weight and how hard it was to avoid he described an exceptional *joloch* who had religiously exercised after driving more than ten hours per day. “He ran on the spot”, he stated. Ganzorig stamped on the floor miming the action of the *joloch* exercising, to illustrate his point. Ganzorig concluded by observing that “now he's retired from trucking and living in Chicago.”

Our extended conversation about *jolochs* had obviously inspired Carl, because he exclaimed that “The truckers are really important”. It was interesting, he continued, that Mongolian *jolochs'* labour—transporting containers of goods around the nation—made them central in my Mongolian interlocutors' eyes to the United States' reproduction as a place. When I

later re-examined my notes on this discussion I concluded that Ganzorig had been trying to use his story of the *joloch* exercising to make a point about ethics and that Carl was right about the *jolochs*. This chapter examines how their points about automobility and morality are entangled. Specifically, it is my position that Mongolian *jolochs*, while striving toward their ethical goals are helping to sustain what Clarsen and Veracini have labelled a settler colonial automobility system and are also constructing a post-socialist one.

John Urry's definition of automobility is perhaps the mostly widely cited. He described it as "a self-organizing autopoietic, non-linear system that spreads worldwide, and includes cars, car-drivers, roads, petroleum supplies and many novel objects, technologies and signs" (Urry 2004, 27). This system has been implicated in a host of developments, including redefining the very notion of an urban environment, shaping global geopolitics through the search for oil, and aiding in the development of urban sprawl (Bottles 1987; Norton 2011; Lutz 2014). However, a single-system model inadequately addresses how people specifically incorporate automobiles into their lives, automobilities relationship to forms of governmentality, and the assemblages that compose an automobility system (Böhm et al. 2006; Siegelbaum 2011; Hodder 2012). This is particularly true in post-socialist nations where "Access to a car, use of urban space, the symbolic meanings of mobility, remain inflected by socialist-era forms of modernity" (Morris 2017).

Emerging roughly contemporaneously with interest in automobility has been an attentiveness to settler-colonialism as a distinct form of governance (Ellinghaus 2009; Morgensen 2011; Simpson 2014). As a political formulation settler colonialism is marked by two intertwined features: permanent and possessive occupation of the landscape and the indigenous

population's elimination (Wolfe 2006; Veracini 2010). This permanent occupation is contingent upon technologies like surveying, ploughing, and fencing that enabled settlers to legally justify appropriating land (Veracini 2010, 66). Elimination, meanwhile, does not necessarily involve genocide, but potentially assimilation, biological absorption, and other means for erasing indigenous presence (Wolfe 2006). Settler colonial automobility works to "appropriate the physical environment . . . foster distinct subjectivities . . . enable particular forms of suburbanisation . . . efface indigenous peoples . . . elevate . . . settlers—into legitimate owners; and . . . deny class divisions" (Clarsen and Veracini 2012, 896). My principal goals are to explore the morality associated with the instantiation and maintenance of settler colonial automobility in Los Angeles, and the ethical implications for Mongolians of moving from a post-socialist automobility system to a settler colonial one.

There are a variety of approaches to studying morality in contemporary anthropology, and mine is largely Foucauldian (Faubion 2001; Laidlaw 2002; Cook, 2007). Foucault's understanding of morality was built upon an examination of both Aristotelian and early Christian virtue ethics (Foucault 2000, 225-226). He came to define morality as consisting of three elements: morals, the concrete acts of of moral agents, and ethics (Foucault 1984). Morals were "a set of values and rules of action that are recommended to individuals through the intermediary of various prescriptive agencies", which could include the family, the church and state institutions (Foucault 1985, 25). The concrete acts of moral agents referred to how historically individuals reacted to these prescriptive moral codes. Finally, ethics refers to how we choose to interpret and then apply these moral codes to ourselves. Ethics consists of the ethical substance —the part of herself that the person works upon, the mode of subjection—the way the individual

relates this conduct to the rules; the ethical work—what one does to become an ethical person, and the telos—the overarching ethical goal of which individual actions form a part (Foucault 1985, 26-28). My rationale for adopting this Foucauldian lens stems from Caroline Humphrey's observation that for Mongolians "the more important arena of morality appears in the relation between persons and exemplars" and that in that regard, Mongolians' approach to morality is similar to the division Foucault makes between ethics and morals (Humphrey 1996, 25-26). To further explain, a Mongolian picking an exemplary person to imitate interprets their chosen exemplars actions and behavior stressing certain elements of it over others just as Foucault argued those undertaking ethical work would interpret the existing moral codes in order to do so.

The moral codes that Foucault referred to are implicitly present in the landscapes, infrastructures, and objects of both post-socialist automobility system of Ulaanbaatar that Mongolians have emigrated from and the settler colonial one of Los Angeles that they now find themselves in. Borrowing from Gibson's notion of an environmental affordance—that is how we perceive the environment informs our use of it—I would argue that the presence of moral codes in places create ethical affordances, the opportunity to engage in particular forms of ethical work based on one's evaluation of a place. Stephen Collier's work on heating infrastructure in post-socialist Siberia is a perfect example of moral codes powers of endurance. Despite socialism's death, heating infrastructure is still centralized in Russia and so everyone within a city receives the same amount of heat at the same price and at the same time of year. Thus Russia's heating infrastructure continues to embody a moral code that does not venerate the market above all, but instead socializes need (Collier 2004, 50-51). The system thus creates a system in which

Russians, should they so choose, undertake various kinds of ethical work that they would not be able to had this key infrastructure been configured differently.

My examination of this entwining of ethics and automobility in Los Angeles and among the city's Mongolians focuses on a number of elements. The first of these is the history of the automobility system in Ulaanbaatar and Los Angeles, and the moral codes and ethics associated with these systems. Then I consider the post-socialist ethical debates around consumer culture and the car as they emerge in both Mongolia and the United States, and Mongolian approaches to capitalist labor in the United States, as explored through an account of a Mongolian trucking trip. Finally, I scrutinize the role of individuals' morality in the automobility system's continuation in Los Angeles, as examined through debates at the Wilshire Center Koreatown Neighborhood Council's (WCKNC) Planning and Land-use Management (PLUM) Committee.

Morality and Automobility in Los Angeles and Ulaanbaatar

In order to understand morality's entanglement with both settler colonial and post-socialist automobility it is first necessary to outline Ulaanbaatar's and Los Angeles's histories. These are exceedingly different cities. Spanish settlers founded Los Angeles in the 18th century to provide supplies to Alta California's *presidios* (forts), while Buddhist monks established Ulaanbaatar in the 17th century as a movable monastery (Fogelson 1993; Campi 2006). Los Angeles is often characterized as unplanned, while between 1954 and 1985 the Soviet Union's Giprogor Institute strove to define Ulaanbaatar's shape through several twenty-year master plans (Wachs 2007; Byambadorj et al. 2011). Despite this, the two cities are united in their atypicality.

Los Angeles, unlike other major US cities, was never a walking city; the railways and land speculation initially created its radial form (Bottles 1987, 6). The automobile then "increased . . . accessibility of sections by-passed . . . served places . . . far from the stations, opened up foothills . . . encouraged developers to subdivide isolated . . . districts" (Fogelson 1993). This suburbanization was an attempt to escape what were regarded as morally problematic areas for spaces that would allow for ethical work—particularly the work of rearing families (Bottles 1987). As Clarsen and Veracini observe "settler colonial automobilities are dedicated to attempts to return to a dispersed familial and residential order that is perceived to be threatened by encroaching urbanization" (Clarsen and Veracini 2012, 895). Meanwhile Ulaanbaatar's defining feature has always been the mobile *ger* (a felt tent). Even the city's early permanent buildings "featured polygonal roofs with six or twelve angles that gave the appearance of a large yurt" (Diener and Hagen 2013, 626). Many of Ulaanbaatar's residents continue to reside in *gers,* but their interiors have altered reflecting changes in Mongolian morality, for example during the socialist era the strict divisions in seating arrangements were deemphasized (Humphrey 1974, 274).

Bradford Snell's 1974 claim that in the 1930s and 1940s GM had actively and immorally sought to dismantle Los Angeles's streetcar system is part of the city's folklore (Adler 1991, 54). In actuality the streetcar's demise was multi-causal (Bottles 1987; Fogelson 1993; Wachs 2007). One factor was the general public's anger at the streetcar companies, for their high fees, overcrowding, and anemic service (Bottles 1987). Progressives also believed that streetcar companies were immoral, as they financed the city's politicians. In a perspective inflected by settler colonialism the automobile was regarded as a" democratic piece of urban technology," a

morally pure means of liberating oneself from this corrupted, urbanized mess (Bottles 1987, 15). Unsurprisingly in the 1920s the public opposed funding railway infrastructure and supported automobility. The implementation of some of Olmsted, Bartholomew and Cheney's progressivist 1924 plan resulted in: widened streets, the introduction of a traffic control system, and limited parking (Wachs 2007, 307).

Meanwhile, Ulaanbaatar attracted the attention of numerous foreign concerns (Szalontai 2016). Owen Lattimore recalled that "American firms . . . led in the import into Mongolia of trucks and cars . . . the "old" Dodge was the standard in frontier China and Mongolia" (Lattimore 1962, 112). This openness ceased in the 1930s. Mongolia underwent a profound moral shift— all of its several hundred monasteries were destroyed and thousands of Buddhist monks were tried and executed (Kaplonski 2014). The second world war then slowed development and it was only in the 1950s that construction really began. Portions of Ulaanbaatar's *ger* districts were destroyed and the city was redesigned to embody the socialist morality of high modernity (Byambadorj et al. 2011; Bawden 2013; Diener and Hagen 2013; Szalontai 2016). By the 1970s this embodiment had resulted in the construction of the modernist *ugsarmal bair* (apartment districts with central heating and sanitation) that were designed on the basis that the orderly concentration of people was moral (Graham 2016, 114). In accordance with Soviet ideology the capital's reconstruction had resulted in "two poles of stillness and movement" (Pedersen 2016, 7). The centre was monumental in nature, patterned after Red Square—there time slowed to a crawl. Beyond this still centre were wide ring roads teeming with traffic and activity. Finally, beyond the second ring road was the frenetic activity of the unapproved *ger* districts that were regarded as representing the past. As there were only a few

thousand automobiles—largely Soviet—in the whole country during the Socialist period traffic on Ulaanbaatar's ring roads was largely buses and lorries (Sanders 1968; Pedersen 2016). This only began to change in 1987 with the construction of a trolley-bus system (Nordby 1987, 125).

While the Giprogor Institute planned Ulaanbaatar's transportation system, Los Angeles's planners struggled to solve the congestion problems that stemmed from a booming population's use of the automobile as their principal means of transport (Roth 2007; Wachs 2007). The planners' solution was the resumption of freeway construction, and they adapted the Automobile Club of California's proposed pre-war solution to do so. Over two decades freeways would be constructed creating what some regarded as "one of the greater works of Man" (Banham 2009, 71). The freeways allowed many Angelenos to pursue their ethical work through the automobile, but the same infrastructural innovation has also been regarded by some as deeply immoral (Estrada 2005; Avila 2014). The charge of immorality stems from Chicano property owners being forced from their homes through eminent domain, and the disproportionate effect of the creation of the freeway system unincorporated, largely Latino East Los Angeles (Estrada 2005). There houses and in one instance a church—symbol of a moral order—was destroyed (Estrada 2005). What had once been the country's biggest barrio was cut to pieces by the freeway system (Estrada 2005; Avila 2014).

Mongolians, like people from other socialist nations, had envisaged socialism's demise as resulting in the freedom to pursue non-socialist ethical work, whilst maintaining the nurturing state of the socialist period (Bulag 1998; Zigon 2009). This was not the case and instead many found themselves in debt and uncertain of their future. Throughout Mongolia state-owned assets like cars and apartments were given away, which began the process of creating economic

inequality. The USSR's demise also brought to the end COMECON (the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance founded to organize economic relations between socialist nations), of which Mongolia had been a significant beneficiary. COMECON's dissolution resulted in a shortage of petrol between 1991 and 1992 (Sanders 1996, 173). However, by the beginning of the new millennium the number of privately owned automobiles in the country had increased from 6,600, when Communism ended, to 50,810 (Bardach et al. 2015). Most of these privately owned automobiles were old and second-hand. Mainly present in Ulaanbaatar, they contributed significantly to the city's congestion and declining air quality (Dienar and Hagan 2013; Bardach et al. 2015). The introduction of *zah zeeliin üye* (the age of the market) did not just result in an increasing number of automobiles it also heralded an entirely different morality, which had particular implications for private vehicles. Specifically, *zah zeeliin üye* resulted in a decline in trust (Humphrey 2002; Sneath 2006). During the socialist period stealing from the state was common, and was regarded as acceptable. Under *zah zeeliin üye* this was now theft from private owners, and was rendered acceptable because this new morality was taught as being every person for themselves (Humphrey 2002). The automobile is particularly prone to theft in such circumstances because it is highly desirable as an emblem of social status. As a result, Caroline Humphrey observed, "Cars come to people by other routes" (Humphrey 2002, 161).

The morality surrounding vehicles also changed in Los Angeles. Since the 1990s both Angelenos and the LACC's (LA City Council) attitudes towards automobiles have become more mixed. While this has been evident in a variety of areas I will touch on just three of them: the bus, the subway, and the bike. By the 1990s Los Angeles had the largest bus fleet in the nation (Wachs 2007). However, the city government has always harbored dreams of reinstalling

railways, and did so when they laid ground for a railway line from downtown Los Angeles to Long Beach. These rail projects were linked to other developments designed to increase Los Angeles's density and reintroduce middle-class capital to the city center, while reducing congestion and smog (Davis 2006). However, during construction the Labor Community Strategy Center (LCSC) discovered that these developments were disproportionately funded by impoverished minority bus-users while benefitting mainly middle-class suburbanites (Lipsitz 2004). They feared the development would create an immoral two-tier transport system that further discriminated against impoverished minorities. The LCSC then formed the Bus Riders Union (BRU) in 1998 and its 1,500 members managed to get a consent decree from the city (Grengs 2002). Contemporaneously bicycling, through events like Critical Mass, was beginning to re-emerge as a visible feature of the Los Angeles's transportation landscape (Lugo 2013). As Adonia Lugo's work on the city's bicycle movements has so clearly demonstrated in contemporary Los Angeles there is a strong argument for the bicycle (Lugo 2011; Lugo 2013). They connect riders allowing for forms of sociality that automobiles do not, are capable of integrating with other modes of transportation, and do not reproduce the inequality associated with automobility (Lugo and Matheis 2017; Lutz 2014b). Furthermore, many users regard the bicycle as essential tool for fulfilling a variety of telos, from reducing their carbon footprint to improving their physical fitness (Lugo and Matheis 2017). However, the bicycle is also regarded by some as inherently immoral, because it is often linked to gentrification. Lugo and Matheis detail how in working class neighborhoods like Boyle Heights the bicycle because of its association with gentrifiers has come to be regarded as a symbol of neo-colonization (Lugo and Matheis 2017).

Immoral Automobilities

Keeping this dual history in mind, I now turn to the contemporary. Anthropological accounts of post-socialism have long documented the socio-economic consequences of socialism's demise. These included: new patterns of consumption (Patico 2005; Marsh 2010); extreme economic inequality (Rossabi 2005; Rakowski 2008); and, the emergence of new, and the revival of old, ethical and religious practices (Zigon 2009; Abrahms-Kavunenko 2015). Post-socialist automobility systems demonstrate some of these features, such as new patterns of consumption and an inequality of access to vehicles (Clarsen and Veracini 2012). However, in Mongolia—previously distinguished from much of the socialist world by automobility's general absence—the automobility system is just beginning to emerge. This is evident not just from the increasing number of cars, but also from the slowly increasing presence of paved roads in a nation that previously lacked them (Diener 2011). Here I explore how some Mongolian-Angelenos regard the morality of both this emergent system of automobility and the more longstanding settler colonial automobility system in Los Angeles.

"I'm not happy with my Mongolian community . . . people are immature and need to grow up," said Gantulga—a man in his early 50s who played an active role in the community. It was early in the afternoon on a hot Sunday in late December. I had been hurrying across the busy intersection between 6th and Catalina—an area of fashionable eateries, coffee shops, and Korean barbecue joints that was swiftly coming to be regarded as the new heart of Koreatown. I was intent on arriving on time, or more accurately in advance of time, so that I could watch a

children's Christmas event that had been organized by a Mongolian Buddhist group. However, then Gantulga honked the horn of his Ford and attracted my attention. His Ford was a classic, heavy and with a large turning circle. The car bespoke a bygone era—before containerization and just-in-time production. This was a period in the nation's history before the Midwest had become the rust belt, and when Detroit still shaped America's mobility. When I walked over, Gantulga was still waiting for the light to change. He asked "Are you going to the children's event?" "Yes," I responded, somewhat taken aback by the serendipitous encounter. He motioned for me to get in and sit in the front passenger seat.

As Gantulga drove, he talked to me about what was on his mind. He'd been in Los Angeles since the 1990s, and was one of the first Mongolians to own a business. He had also been tangentially involved with Mongolian community groups since the early 2000s when he provided LAMA's board with an automobile that allowed them to engage in community business. Now, he was concerned about the community's direction. He felt it was mired in confusion and infighting. Moreover, when I asked him if he could explain what he felt was the cause of this discord, he said that he felt that too many people were overly selfish and too concerned with the unnecessary. When pressed further as to what was unnecessary, he discussed the luxury automobile. "People are not smart. They are buying cars that they don't need. It's crazy," he said. I hid my surprise and made a joke about his own automobile, but realized, as I did so, that while the exterior was impressive, the car's interior showed its age.

Gantulga was far from the only Mongolian to tell me about what they regarded as problematic consumption patterns amongst their co-ethnics. During my fieldwork, people also discussed this in relation to phones, clothes, and even fast food. One father proudly told me his

son was not like other young Mongolians living in Los Angeles. “He chooses not to have a smartphone” he said. Despite all criticism, Gantulga’s statement had still caught me completely off-guard due to his focus on luxury automobiles as materialized examples of problematic changes that he thought Mongolians were undergoing. I was surprised because, over the course of my fieldwork, the automobile had appeared, to me, as a necessary tool in the fight to preserve Mongolian culture. Among the biggest, most visible Mongolian companies in Los Angeles were the shipping companies, and a significant amount of their revenue appeared to being generated through exporting American luxury automobiles to Mongolia.

These shipping companies were major donors to all of the community events held in Los Angeles. Indeed, just before I had arrived LAMA’s board had succeeded in regularizing community events, with the sponsorship of the shipping companies. They were either significant donors or sponsors of the *Naadam* (the annual summer festival of the three manly games), the volleyball tournament, the basketball tournament, and the chess tournament. In fact, the one year that I attended the community poker tournament it was held in a shipping company's offices!

Despite all of these connections, Gantulga regarded the preference in the Mongolian community for up-market automobiles as an imprudent luxury. He felt that such vehicles only led to envy. Money became more important than community relations when automobiles were introduced to the equation, according to him. He was echoing a well-observed feature of the settler colonial automobility system, which critics have noted ,has tended to result in anomie. Encapsulated in their cars people feel increasingly removed from one another. I had hoped to convince Gantulga to say more about his perspective on this subject, but our conversation ended rather abruptly

when we arrived at our destination—a large church hall on the border between Westlake and Koreatown.

Gantulga was not alone in his feelings; a few months later, in late February, I was at The Grove—a fashionable mall on Los Angeles's Westside—with Bolormaa, an older interlocutor. We were wandering around taking photos of this Disney-esque space, with its tramline, and posting them to Facebook. Then, quite by chance, we came across a classic luxury automobile in the foyer of the mall's parking lot. We stared for some time in admiration at its sleek, black form. Bolormaa then began to tell me about how the role of automobiles had shifted in post-socialist Mongolia. In the past there had been an earnest admiration for government officials who owned luxury automobiles. There was a sense that the automobile signified that things were getting better; that they were improving after both communism and the economic "growing pains" that marked the first years of capitalism. Now, she said, there was a backlash as ownership of such luxury automobiles was seen as a marker of corruption. The prevailing thought was "how could someone on a government salary afford such an item?" Ownership of luxury automobiles was now an indicator of immorality. Bolormaa was not alone in thinking about this problem; beginning in the 1990s several Mongolian governmental officials were swept up in claims of corruption related in part to their ownership of luxury vehicles (Rossabi 2005, 84). Furthermore, Rebecca Empson has observed that one position on the *hurgan bayan* (newly rich) in their luxury 4x4s is "Somebody somewhere, it is often claimed, must have been seriously cheated in order to secure these possessions" (Empson 2012, 117).

Later in the evening, as we drove back from the mall in Bolormaa's car, our conversation turned once again to Mongolia's obsession with consumables. Now though we were

discussing this obsession in a broader sense, as more akin to a fatal disease that people were suffering from. For Bolormaa, Mongolians' current obsession with consumables was a byproduct of capitalism. She suggested, with what I interpreted as sadness, that before capitalism, it hadn't been like this. This statement was true to an extent as under socialism theft had largely been about sustaining social relations, while under capitalism theft was being conceived of as largely benefiting the individual. Moreover, in Mongolia and other post-socialist nations there is an ongoing moral discourse that has sought to distinguish between the practice of favors, obligations, and *avilgal* (corruption) (Sneath 2006; Pedersen 2007; Humphrey 2012).

The stories that I have offered here are indicative of a Mongolian attitude about automobiles as being potentially problematic consumables that mark a newly emergent morality amongst the Mongolian population. This attitude they held was a by-product of the post-socialist period, and not a necessarily a by-product of residing in Los Angeles, although, for some, time in Los Angeles was seen as exacerbating consumerism. This was undoubtedly because of the individualistic nature of settler colonial society, where money is sought at the expense of all else. At its core this negative commentary focused on a very public shift in the value of goods from the supposedly, strictly utilitarian to consumables with their concerns with style and their built-in obsolescence. Ironically, as I have identified, the fight to preserve Mongolian culture in Los Angeles, in the face of this onslaught, was being sustained by those allegedly lacking in morals. Luxury car buyers in Mongolia were helping to preserve Mongolian culture in the United States. In the process, though, Mongolian-Angelenos were helping to create a problematic, post-socialist automobility system in Mongolia.

Mongolian Jolochs' Ethics

If some Mongolian-Angelenos were uncomfortable with the morality they associated with the post-socialist and settler colonial automobility systems what about those whose labor helps to reproduce these systems? I argue that the way in which Mongolian *jolochs* drive can be regarded as small acts of resistance that subvert the moral codes associated with automobility. This is particularly true of how *jolochs* defy capitalist moral codes through manipulating time and avoiding surveillance. In doing so, I suggest, they are able to undertake their own ethical work and on occasion achieve telos, such as becoming a better citizen through learning English.

Trying to understand Mongolian trucking led to me standing one early autumn morning in the parking lot of a Los Angeles strip mall. From there Mönkhbat—an experienced *joloch*—and I drove an hour east to Fontana, a city whose entire landscape seemed shaped by trucking. After we picked up a load of wood, we then drove more than 1,500 miles to an industrial park in Missouri. There we dropped our load, located another, picked it up, and then returned to California. In what follows I will discuss how the capitalist temporalities specifically associated with trucking allowed Mönkhbat and others to pursue their own telos.

E.P. Thompson once suggested that it was a mistake to conceive of the relationship between capitalist time and work-discipline as purely concerned with the factory (Thompson 1967). Moralists long wished to make time-thrift a part of mundane existence. However, the home, as a private place, needed to be penetrated indirectly. Indeed, there is a debate as to whether these industrial attitudes toward time ever fully penetrated the home. Thompson argued that "the rhythms of women's work in the home are not wholly attuned to the measurement of the clock" (Thompson 1967, 79). In contrast, Emily Martin has suggested that over time there

developed a "sense of how desirable it is to be "efficient" and "productive" at home, much as it is in the workplace" (Martin 2001, 123).

Mongolian *jolochs* are not homemakers and their labor is valued, with some earning several thousand dollars a month. However, I would argue that the cabins of their trucks may also be sites of resistance to capitalism's dictates. This is possible because the truck just like the automobile can be "a platform for multitasking" (Featherstone 2004, 8). Mobility scholars, like Mike Featherstone and Eric Laurier, have argued that the possibility of multi-tasking is a by-product of the minimal levels of effort required to drive a vehicle. This allows one to complete office work while driving. I find it useful to think about Mongolian *jolochs* multi-tasking, but I am concerned about assumptions of time-thrift and homogenous space that underlie this suggestion. Instead, I suggest that Mongolians use multi-tasking to resist time-thrift, and to create opportunities to perform work on the self, such as learning English.

When Mönkhbat and I boarded his truck, and set off for the Midwest, he immediately donned a blue-tooth headset, plugged his phone into the dashboard charger, and called his wife. This assemblage of man and machine blurred the lines between such divergent roles as efficient worker, doting father, loving husband, and community activist through connections to the global telecommunication network. The constant possibility of communication with his family meant that Mönkhbat was able to perform a vital role despite his absence, such as when he successfully counseled his older daughter through her uncertainties about her career choices.

The assemblage allowed for the continual performance of what, following Malinowski, I would call phatic communion—that is "a type of speech in which ties of union are created by a mere exchange of words" (Malinowski 1946, 315). The potential of the phone in this regard has

been well documented by various scholars (Bell 2001; Vertovec 2004; Madianou and Miller 2012). Vikki Bell, for example, has argued that for absentee, divorcee fathers in 1990s Britain, the phone was part of "a network as an extended hybrid", which potentially aided in the creation and preservation of kinship relations (Bell, 2001). Mönkhbat's usage of the phone to achieve phatic communion, while driving, was evidenced in his regular calls to his wife, which appeared to benefit both Monkhbat and his wife as it established a reassuring sense of connection, however limited, even in absence.

However, for Mönkhbat, the phone's role extended beyond the maintenance of kinship relations; it created the possibility of performing community work while driving. I had first witnessed this practice, or rather heard it, several months into my fieldwork when I was attending a LAMA planning meeting for the *Naadam*. Mönkhbat was driving somewhere in Arizona, but via speakerphone he proceeded to organize and assign tasks to everyone in the room. This thoroughness was very impressive, and as I was later to learn, it was a by-product of the lists he had composed while driving—for driving also gave him time to reflect on community matters. It is ironic, that the phone and Mönkhbat's ability to make his own hours allowed him to participate in certain aspects of his community, like meetings, more fully than if he had actually been in Los Angeles. This is not mere speculation, on my part, not only were association members often delayed due to their work, but many Mongolians felt unable to participate due the lack of time. Of course when it came to matters that required a physical presence Mönkhbat was not advantaged over his fellows. His ability to participate in activities like meeting local politicians was limited, and his influence curtailed in this respect.

Mönkhbat used the freedom provided by trucking to participate, to the extent possible, in family and community life from afar. Other Mongolian *jolochs* used the time differently to pursue their own ethical work: to learn English, to revise for their citizenship test, or to improve some other skill. Many, including Mönkhbat, also used it to discuss both Mongolian and Mongolian diaspora politics. "No one knows more about politics than the *jolochs*", one boasted to me. This political knowledge has had tangible consequences in Los Angeles where the *jolochs* were able to have a marked impact on LAMA because they operated as a political bloc.

However, on the road the *jolochs* also had to contend with the moral code of the capitalist automobility system. As Aihwa Ong discussed, it is not just the emergence of clock time that is important to capitalism, but the regimes of discipline and surveillance associated with it (Ong 2010). Jacques Le Goff drew attention to Christianity's early support for these regimes, which including authorizing the creation of *Werkglocken* (work bells) to better regulate workers' behavior (Le Goff 1980, 45). These then proliferated in the late fourteenth century. The contemporaneous emergence of the notion that time wasting was "a serious sin, a spiritual scandal" increased the sense of regulation and surveillance (Le Goff 1980, 50). According to the Dominican Domenico Calva of Pisa wasting time marked one out as an amoral animal rather than immoral human. This view was alien to many of my Mongolian interlocutors.

Mongolian *jolochs* were aware of the presence of the clock while driving, but their profession's nature meant they were rarely subjected to direct visual surveillance. Instead oversight was provided by a diverse array of technological assemblages that hinted at the complex set of authorities involved in trucking. They included checking stations at state borders with their boom barriers, weighing stations and human authorities, GPS applications used by

their bosses and dispatchers to monitor the truck's progress, the *joloch's* log-book, speed cameras, and highway police with speed-guns. Together these systems were meant to ensure that *jolochs* did not exceed the hours of work mandated by Federal law, that they delivered their goods on time, and that they did not tamper with the items in the truck.

For Mongolian *jolochs* border-checks were the most worrying of the systems explicitly concerned with time, because they had the greatest potential to significantly slow progress, which could in turn lead to missed deadlines. Not only could they lead to one's truck being pulled over and inspected at length they also could potentially lead to problems with the law, as not all of the *jolochs* were possessed of the appropriate documentation. It was here their habit of sharing of information became valuable. During my trip with Mönkhbat we were only stopped twice despite crossing several state and innumerable county borders. We largely avoided the border checks by opting for a series of back-roads. These routes and technique had been developed by Mongolian *jolochs* over the years.

By comparison with the state's spotty oversight that of the boss was seemingly absolute. Once a trucking boss showed me a mobile phone application that allowed him to track his fleet's progress. The app provided detailed information about his *jolochs'* driving, but it did not make the boss a presence in the cabin. Unless told, the boss was unaware that *jolochs* would on occasion take their families with them on their jobs, thus further blurring the line between work and the home when they did so. Moreover, the app did not tell him what they were talking about over their own phones, or about the communal lunches that *jolochs* often shared as they drove together. It did record speed and distance but it also revealed the truth about trucking

labour as task-like. That is it was concerned only that an item be delivered within a certain time frame, and not about the circumstances in which the delivery was made.

WCKNC's PLUM Committee and its Competing Moral Visions

The focus of this chapter thus far has been on the role of vehicles within the automobility system as a means to engage in diverse work on oneself. However, there is considerably more to automobility than the automobile. Indeed, some have argued that it "is one of the principal socio-technical institutions through which modernity is organized" (Bohm et al. 2006, 3). The system played a consequential role in the development of Los Angeles's form. Automobility allowed communities to be independent of the streetcar companies and gave rise to the region's sprawling, polycentric core (Bottles 1987). By the mid-2010s some of the city's politicians and a growing crop of activists were energetically attempting to alter the settler colonial automobility system—a system that Mongolians living in Los Angeles were having to adapt to. With this in mind I consider urban planning, as a means to understand these contemporary attempts to disentangle the city's infrastructure from automobility and establish alternative ways of living.

My specific foci are two meetings of the Wilshire Centre Koreatown Neighborhood Council's (WCKNC) Planning and Land-use Management (PLUM) Committee. The PLUM committee was a five-person committee consisting of WCKNC board members, largely possessed of technocratic expertise, who would make recommendations to the broader council on planning projects. In the meetings, I examine, they discussed proposed housing developments.

I argue that the various ways in which developers, committee members, and stakeholders made moral claims supporting and opposing high-density housing developments revealed the means by which the automobility system continues to endure in Los Angeles despite increasing opposition.

The Wilshire Galleria is a several-stories-tall Art Deco building, with a marble facade. It dates to the late 1930s, long before Koreatown was Koreatown. That evening I was on the fifth-floor of the building in a windowless conference center observing a WKNC PLUM committee meeting. Despite there being only three items on the agenda the small room was packed. Around the table sat four members of the committee and the representatives of the three projects, and in the corner were several members of the general public. One of these was an elderly woman who later introduced herself as Lois. She was a member of the neighboring Rampant Village Neighborhood Council's planning committee. While largely silent through the first two items she became increasingly interested during the third item—a proposal to build a one-hundred-unit building on a former Hyundai dealership, which lay on the border between Koreatown and Rampant Village. When the question of parking was raised, she supported the planners' explanation that there would be minimal car parking and that instead more space would be devoted to bicycle parking. Indeed, she went further and suggested that given the proximity to two supermarkets, multiple bus lanes, and the metro railway, that there was no need to build any parking at all. "It is not necessary" she enthusiastically insisted. Moreover, she argued that building apartments without parking was necessary if Los Angeles was serious about weaning itself off of the automobile. Her suggestion was by no means accepted by everyone, but later in the evening one board member said she admired the bravery of this proposal. Irrespective of her contributions, the committee approved the project as it was.

Loren E. Lomasky, a libertarian philosopher, once argued that "People who drive automobiles upset the patterns spun from the policy intellectual's brain . . . precise urban design . . . loses out to suburban sprawl" (Lomasky 1997, 26). Lomasky strongly believed in the automobile as a philosophical good that allowed Americans everywhere to enjoy their freedom. The debate I described reveals that some community organizers are of a very different opinion. Not only do they regard the automobile as morally problematic, they also feel that the automobility system's dominance is encouraged by a distinct lack of transportation options. In contemporary Los Angeles there is a strong emphasis on multimodal transport; compliant developers are now rewarded with density bonuses. They allow property developers to apply for exceptions to increase the number of units beyond what the area was zoned for in return for providing social goods, like bicycle parking, that encourage the usage of other forms of transport.

While Lois celebrated the possibility of a development with minimal space for private transportation, a lack of parking was already playing havoc elsewhere in the neighborhood. On my own street, residents had taken to parking on the sidewalk. This practice had in turn sparked complaints from other residents who argued that it diminished the neighborhood and lowered property values. The area's councilperson failed to address this most egregious offense and some residents responded by installing anti-parking technology—steel poles sunk into the ground—and others planted street trees. However, there were those resisted this and continued to search out parts of the sidewalk not covered in this technology to park on.

While the previous committee meeting had served as example of a successful attempt to encourage the creation of housing that challenged the automobility system's dominance, not

all meetings were successful in that regard. It was an early Wednesday evening in the spring of 2015 and I was once again on the fifth floor of the Wilshire Galleria attending a meeting of WCKNC's PLUM committee. Three of the committee's five members were present, as were two project representatives. The meeting started late, as one of the committee members had been delayed. The board began to discuss the agenda's last item— a proposal to build a four-unit small lot division in the district's extreme North—because only that project's representatives were present. In 2005 the city had legalized the fee simple small lot—the standard housing lot in Los Angeles has traditionally been 5,000 square feet and small lots allow for that lot to be broken up into smaller units —in the hopes of encouraging developers to increase the city's population density through making use of "underutilized" commercial and residential land. Further, some of Koreatown's community activists saw the small lot as a means to retain younger families who they felt would otherwise migrate to suburbia. Thus, unsurprisingly, two committee members seemed eager to approve. However, the third was not. She turned the developer's proposal's pages and began to ask a series of detailed questions about the apartment block he was proposing to build. Her questions included: how much setback from the street, how many bedrooms, and the proposed color of the rendering. At one point she described development as a harbinger that would eventually result in the transformation of the area into a "Hollywood colony". The representative responded well initially, but increasingly his tone seemed to indicate his distaste for her line of questioning. During a discussion of whether the height of buildings would invade the privacy of their neighbors, he had promised to mask views with shrubbery. Seeing that this had not satisfied his questioner, he resorted to stating, in a rather frustrated fashion, that his project was not asking for any discretionary entitlements—things that deviated from the city

planner's master plan for the area. He then went on to discuss neighborhoods and their character, arguing that this neighborhood did not have an architectural character. "I appreciate", he said, "that you have a Craftsman house, but there is already considerable diversity in the neighborhood". The item was approved, but not without further argument and another board member unfavorably compared the dissenter to the celebrated Dutch architect Rem Koolhaas.

At the center of this dispute were two competing notions of the house and morality of house ownership. For the board member, much of her misgivings stemmed from a distinct feeling of unfairness. As much as she might try to preserve her house, she wanted a neighborhood that cohered with it. In other areas of the city, historical preservation overlay zones ensured that that occurred. In her neighborhood that was not the case. Reflecting on attitudes of this sort toward houses in Southern California Denise Lawrence-Zúñiga has observed that "Preservationists' narratives attribute higher value to reuse than the planned obsolescence they see dominating modern industrialized mass-production . . . " (Lawrence-Zúñiga 2010, 230). For the developer the morality of his project rested on its ability to revive overlooked land and to provide homes in a fashion that met with the priorities of the city. Thus unlike the previous debate, neither party was directly concerned with the automobile. However, this discussion nonetheless revealed that while the automobility system was not quite self-replicating, in the fashion that Urry characterized it as in my introduction, it was quite difficult to dislodge. The sorts of low density Craftsmen bungalows that the board member favored were historically tied to the development of the settler colonial automobility system in Southern California. Their low-density design renders public transportation impractical from the city's perspective. Historians and cultural studies scholars have often condemned Los Angeles for being far too willing to

consign its architectural history to, well, history (Klein 1997; Davis 2006). However, in this case there was an undercurrent of immorality to neighborhood preservation. Not only did preservation serve only to benefit certain neighborhoods, it also acted as a deterrent to the development of a Los Angeles transportation that was not so dependent on automobility.

Conclusion

I have argued that the settler colonial automobility system associated with Los Angeles possesses particular ethical opportunities. Transitioning to this system from Ulaanbaatar raises some concerns for some Mongolian-Angelenos. These concerns are specifically related to luxury automobiles and the consequences of owning them. However, these concerns are not just expressed about the purchase of automobiles in Los Angeles. Many of the same people are also concerned about the ethical and moral transformations wrought by the distribution of these vehicles in Mongolia. Worries about the automobility system index larger concerns about changes in patterns of consumption that have affected Mongolians both in Los Angeles and Mongolia. Ironically, the preservation of what some of these people would regard as authentic Mongolian culture is contingent, in part, upon the exporting of luxury vehicles to Mongolia. These vehicles further transform the emergent automobility of Mongolia into a post-socialist system of considerable inequality.

While some are condemning these developments, Mongolian long-distance *jolochs* are playing a key role in the reproduction of settler colonial automobilities in Los Angeles and the broader United States. This role is a by-product of their attempts to seek out jobs that allow them

to live ethically. While trying to live ethically through transporting goods, *jolochs* resist attempts at capitalist discipline that they encounter. In doing so they demonstrate that the freedom they seek is attained not merely by driving, but in driving in a particular fashion, a fashion that involves engaging with family members on the jobs, undertaking tasks unrelated to work such as educating themselves on the road, and stopping for communal dining at their convenience.

Lest anyone think that these concerns about the ethical status of consumption and trucking are unrelated to one another let me offer a story that illustrates the entangled nature of the automobility system. Towards the end of my time in the field I was sitting in a Mongolian restaurant observing the comings and goings of its customers. Suddenly I was hailed by a Mongolian acquaintance. I hadn't seen him in months. In fact there were rumors that he had moved to Chicago to chase better job opportunities. This was not the case, he said. He joined me and we ended up discussing his cousin, a *joloch*. A note of envy entered his voice, as he talked about the fantastic sums of money that his family member was earning. He was one of the few who was able to go to both Mongolian New Year's parties, he said. *Jolochs* are earning so much money that they can do what the rest of us cannot. The two New Year's parties had been a big problem as LAMA's board relied upon the New Year's party to bankroll their events. The other party had creamed off some of the guests. Community members made hard decisions about where to spend their money. In my friend's account it was the *joloch* who, through his truck and the freedom it offered, was corrupting the community. Only the *jolochs* could afford overwhelming expenses. Everyone else was having to make a choice. The choices *jolochs* make, with their wealth, are thus part of the problematic ethical politics associated with the

automobility system. A system which as my interlocutor Gantulga had lamented placed money above community.

While the current automobility system was regarded by some Mongolian-Angelenos as a danger, others in Koreatown and the wider Los Angeles area were seeking to change it through venues like the WCKNC PLUM committee. The extent to which any transformation was possible was unclear though. Even without reference to the car, moral values, such as the ownership of low density family home, which are associated with settler colonial automobility acted to render the city's goals for increased density a problem.

This account of ethical possibilities, or affordances associated with automobility systems, underscores the importance of objects (specifically, cars and consumer goods) to ethical work. It further reveals that ethics and moral codes become a reality under certain conditions and that their sustained existence is contingent on the places where they are enacted as much as anything else. As people's automobility systems change either through migration, as with the move to Los Angeles, or because of political change, as happened in Mongolia, there comes to be a concern about which morals are appropriate to the circumstance. In conclusion, the morality of automobility is as much a product of where one is and the objects that surround one and empower one as anything else.

CHAPTER 3: FLEETING RECOGNITION

The previous two chapters, while touching upon Mongolian attempts at self-preservation in Los Angeles, largely examined what Mongolians felt they lost in the process and discussed how that loss was connected to both settler colonialism and *zah zeeliin üye* (the age of the market). This chapter is not concerned with loss but one particular attempt at self-preservation—the effort to attain a Mongolian toponym—and what that reveals about settler colonialism's perpetuation. My specific argument in this chapter is that immigrants' construction of recognizable urban landscapes in California is a profoundly visual experience; one deeply informed by settler colonialism's values. I contend that these values led to the development of a political vision that equates visible physical presence with recognizable political presence.

In the mid-1990s, many key political philosophers explored the relationship between human rights, collective rights, and recognition in liberal, multicultural nations (Appiah 1994; Honneth 1995). The Canadians amongst them—perhaps reflecting an awareness of their nation's history—considered how settler colonial nations could balance their concern with protecting individual rights with the need to protect historically disadvantaged populations' collective rights (Taylor 1994; Kymlicka 2003). Concurrently some anthropologists discussed recognition's limitations within liberal, multicultural nations (Descola 2005; Strathern 2005; Sutton 2009). Povinelli, for example, argued that as a settler colonial nation, Australia's celebration of multiculturalism relied upon its indigenous population continuing "to identify with an impossible form of being" (Povinelli 1998, 27).

Both sets of scholars profitably explored recognition within the nation state. However, recent socio-legal studies suggest that there is also value in considering recognition within cities, because, practically, municipal governments play a crucial role in immigrants' and other residents' experiences, and municipal authority is not necessarily exceeded by (or equivalent to) that of the nation state (Valverde 2009; Blomley 2013). This is particularly evident in the United States, where municipalities have adopted immigration policies that differ from the Federal government's (Provine and Varsanyi 2012). Socio-legal scholars (Valverde 2011) have also made another important observation about North American municipalities: these tend to govern by regulating land use rather than civil rights (Valverde 2001). Thus political recognition is linked to the ability to identify presence in a landscape which takes the form not of an abstract national sovereign territory, but specific and concrete infrastructure. Those, like the homeless, whose land usage does not mark them as a presence, are not politically recognized, and their rights are abrogated (Beckett and Herbert 2010). To explore these emerging relationships between the built environment, urban landscapes, and new forms of immigrant selfhood and community, I focus on understanding the history of recognition in Los Angeles's landscapes. Specifically, I seek an understanding of how recognition functions, and how and why the Mongolian community has come to be entangled with this municipal mania for recognition through land use.

My exploration of the history of recognition in Los Angeles and its implications for Los Angeles's Mongolians is built upon three concepts: the landscape, the taskscape, and entanglement. In English, landscape's conceptual origins are obscured (Vergunst et al. 2012). Some scholars trace them through the Dutch *landschap* to a Latin tradition of merging the real and the fantastical in pictorial representations of nature (Cosgrove 1993; Hirsch 1995). Others

explore this concept via the Dutch to the Germanic tradition of *landschaft* thereby associating landscapes with a polity and with concerns about "the progressive habitability of the earth" (Olwig 2002; Descola 2016). Still others focus on the Frisian making of land through reclamation from the sea (Stilgoe 2015). My usage focuses on the interplay between "what is" (what Mongolians create through dwelling) and "what might be" (a municipally recognized Mongolian presence in LA), and the messiness of various populations all enacting this process of landscape creation contemporaneously (Rodman 1992; Bender 2002; Wiley 2016). Examining these messy landscapes, I will address human vision's role in the immigrant experience. Specifically, I will suggest that immigrants' landscapes transcend Cartesian coordinates and bounded ethnic enclaves. These landscapes take on intensely sensorial forms that link the immediacy of individual experience with broader discourses of ethnicity and belonging.

The process of continual reconfiguration makes landscapes into messy defiers of Cartesian fixity (Hirsch 1995; Bender 2002; Massey 2006). Tim Ingold has used the term taskscape to describe "the entire ensemble of tasks" involved in landscapes continual reconfiguration. Ingold defines task as being "any practical operation, carried out by a skilled agent in an environment, as part of his or her normal business of life" (Ingold 1993, 158). Christopher Tilley offers two richly described examples: a hunting taskscape, which ranges over a broad landscape and is characterized by uncertain routes, and an agricultural taskscape, typified by circulation and repetition over a smaller, predictable landscape (Tilley 2012, 22-25). Working in an urban context, Ulrika Trollva has advanced the concept even further. She argues "Just as every new footstep holds the potential to form the world to come, so does every blocked footstep" (Trollva 2015, 302). It is only by learning to engaging one's senses that one can know

these landscapes' histories (Tilley 2016); otherwise they are "invisible to the unaccustomed eye" (Teppo 2015, 287).

Urban landscapes' complex temporalities and intense impacts on human vision are not just products of anthropos' activities though; they result from muddled mutualisms with, amongst others, companion species (Plumwood 2006; Haraway 2008; Tsing 2012). The *sakura* (cherry tree) blossoming in Huntington Beach's Central Park, for example, helps remake the park as a Japanese landscape for a weekend, whilst also gesturing to its sororal relationship with the city of Anjo (Kandil 2016). Ian Hodder (2012, 164) defines these messy mutualisms as entanglement that is "the interlacing of materials with the whole suite of ways in which humans and things depend on each other" (Hodder 2012, 164). His approach is part of a broader turn in archaeology stressing that "things, materials, and landscapes possess real qualities affecting and shaping both our perception of them and our cohabitation with them" (Olsen 2010, 4). James Clifford's account of the Mashpee natives' court appeal for Federal legal recognition in the 1970s, so that they might control their landscape, provides a vivid example of the entanglement of people and legal recognition with things and landscapes. A judge questioned a Mashpee youth about why he wore a headband and if it was "an Indian headband" (Clifford 1988, 349). He answered that he wore it because his hair was long and that he bought it in a store. The judge concluded it was "ordinary" (Clifford 1988, 349). He could not see otherwise. Moreover, the judge was disappointed that it did not originate in an exotic landscape that accorded with his own sense of nativeness.

To understand the specific entangling of political recognition with visual recognition in Los Angeles's landscapes, I begin by examining the city's settler colonial history, tracing out the

vital role that recognition played in determining access to resources from 1781—the city's foundation. Keeping that in mind, I consider the role of trees in creating landscapes like Koreatown and their relationship to settler colonialism. Relatedly I explain LAMA's (LA Mongolian Association) campaign to have an area of Koreatown renamed, as part of their attempts to gain recognition for their community. Finally I discuss how, despite LAMA's board's best efforts, Mongolians continue to be fleetingly recognized as they become Mongolian-Angelenos.

The overarching purpose of this chapter is to establish the consequences of settler colonialism for the recognition of migrant populations like the Mongolians. My argument is that in Los Angeles the link between contemporary political recognition and landscape derives from the region's settler colonial history. Moreover, I suggest that this focus upon Mongolian acquisition of recognition through toponym, which in turn derives from the perceived usage of the landscape and looks like a normal practice, merely obscures the eliminatory practices at play. In essence my argument is that settler colonialism, as a structure, seeks to convert migrants like the Mongolians into settlers, by encouraging their adoption of settler colonial practices

Mongolians in Settler-Colonial Los Angeles

By October 2013 my visits to the Los Angeles City Archives to examine their collection of early city charters were so frequent that the visits felt routine. Then, while transcribing a charter, I unexpectedly encountered municipal by-laws forbidding "Indians" from nightly meetings and playing *peon*—just as in Trollva's discussion of the Nigerian city of Jos, Los

Angeles's landscapes were thus being defined as much through absence as presence. This helped me realize, belatedly, that any account of the development of recognition in Los Angeles had to begin with settler colonialism, as it shapes "all logics of inclusion and exclusion in settler law and . . . its universalisation as Western law" (Morgensen 2011, 73). These logics of exclusion rely on elimination; colonizers legitimate their claims to territory by disposing of the natives through practices like: assimilation, toponym (place names), and genocide (Wolfe 2006). While I have mentioned humans, elimination is best understood as multi-species endeavor (Anderson 2004; Mastnak, Elyachar, and Boellstorff 2014). Here, I focus on practices of elimination in Los Angeles so as to understand how juro-political recognition is entangled with landscape creation in the city, and what that has meant for the Mongolian community. My contention is, following Morgensen's position on settler colonial law, that settler colonial ideas structure immigrants' lives just as much as those of natives. I pay particular attention to the creation of toponyms and the changing taskscape. I chart toponyms' development and implications for both the Tongva—Los Angeles's natives—and immigrant populations.

El Pueblo de Nuestra Señora la Reina de los Ángeles del Río de Porciúncula was founded on the 4th of September 1781 in the Los Angeles plain—"a prairie ecosystem" that"once carpeted . . . vast flatlands" (Schiffman 2005).The Franciscan missionaries were responsible for the toponym, as they were for many others. They journeyed to California in 1769 with the Portolá expedition; to convert natives and solidify Spanish territorial claims (Lightfoot 2005). In the Los Angeles area, this conversion and solidification involved founding Mission San Gabriel Arcángel, ministering to the Tongva, and baptizing "willing" converts. Conversion was "a major cultural transformation" and a major change in the way the person was seen and known; Tongva

adopted “Spanish culture” and became *gente de razón* (people of reason) through using material goods (Hackel 2013). The conversion to *gente de razón* also meant internalizing “the need to manage . . . instinct for the good of the social organization” (Monroy 1990). The creation of a Spanish landscape through Mediterranean influenced agricultural taskscape was regarded a method for the Tongva to gain *razón,* and so they tended orchards of trees, like oranges, citrons, and limes (Wickson 1909). While missionaries regarded property rights as stemming from *razón*, the Tongva believed they had specific obligations to their land. For many California natives, “the Creator made the land . . . for the People” and “the Creator made a People . . . for that land” (Baurer 2016). Thus, some Tongva continued to try to shape the landscape through tasks, like hunting antelope, gathering herbs, and controlled burning. Of these tasks controlled burning was the most significant, as it exerted “control over the vertical structure of the region's vegetation” (Schiffman 2005).

Eventually the secular authorities came to regard both Missions and natives as a hinderance to the region’s development. The state responded by creating *pueblos* (towns), like Los Angeles. It was intended to attract settlers, offset Mission San Gabriel Arcángel’s power, and supply the *presidios* (garrisons) (Estrada 2007). Then, in 1784, retired soldiers living in Southern California petitioned and were granted large *ranchos* (ranches) from lands not occupied by the Mission, Tongva *rancherias* (villages)*,* or Los Angeles’s common land (Patterson 2016). Both the settlers and soldiers land grants were contingent on them altering the landscape through large-scale agriculture; *ranchos* were required to “maintain at least 2,000 heads of cattle” (Monroy 1990). Surrounding Tongvan *rancherias*, like Yangna, were instrumental to Los Angeles’s development as they supplied the labour (Phillips 2010; Pubols and Hise 2010). The

Franciscans criticized them; condemning the settlers' behavior as unchristian, because their laziness hindered native conversion.

Mexico achieved independence in 1821, but the new state worried about Franciscan loyalty and secularized the missions. The Franciscans responded by leaving Alta California and many natives migrated to Los Angeles. Mission lands—to be returned upon natives' successful conversion— largely went to a few settlers. These new *Californios* relied on abundant native labour to build wealth, by raising huge herds and participating in a maritime trade in hide and tallow. Los Angeles's taskscape gradually transformed into an export-led economy, with Anglophone artisans and traders. The US's conquest of California in the 1840s led to further structural changes as land was now taxable and most *ranchos* were now only marginally profitable. Consequently, numerous *Californios* were bankrupted and their *ranchos* sold to American consortiums that began the practice of land speculation. Meanwhile, the American senate declared native land *terra nullius* (Miller 2006). The American conquest saw a shift in concern with natives' reason to races' intellectual capability (Monroy 1990). California natives "seemed to many . . . like animals" and Mexicans were regarded as "a mixed, incapable race" (Horsman 1975, 165; Banner 2013). Neither population were regarded as making productive use of the land. This was an unsurprising attitude given that the American settlement of California occurred during scientific racism's rise. Scientific racism adhered to what Tobin Siebers called the ideology of ability; the Western world's enduring preference for "able-bodiedness", which "at its most radical…defines the baseline by which humanness is determined" (Siebers 2011, 8).

By the late 19th century Angelenos believed the Tongva had been eliminated. The only remnants of their presence were toponyms like Malibu, Topanga, and Pacoima. However, LA had a shadow geography— a landscape composed of native places and rites whose existence was largely unrecognized (Nabokov 2007). Many Tongva encouraged this, as they did not want to be seen and recognized (Bean 1996; Singleton 2004). They intermarried, passed as Mexicans, and "submerged themselves with . . . other disenfranchised" in the city's downtown (Nabokov 2007). Anglophone Angelenos regarded these populations as a problem and restricted the populations' movements, as they had done with natives. In the Spanish colonial period, cartography had been used to eliminate natives and create newly-named territories, but in the late 19th and early 20th centuries municipal authorities also employed biopower—the sciences of social work and public health—to eliminate these disenfranchised immigrant neighborhoods (Molina 2006; Quintana 2015).

La Fiesta de Los Angeles is perhaps the best example of how Anglophone settler colonialism linked elimination to recognition (Torres-Rouff 2013). This fiesta was first held in 1894 to fire public imagination during economic downturn. It was a mammoth seven-day parade with a series of floats. Amongst the floats were those representing Los Angeles's diversity: "Fiesta planners…boasting that 'not many cities could produce representative of four out of the five human races—Caucasians, Mongolians . . . red men from the residents of its immediate locality" (Deverell 2004, 57). These representatives were not Tongva but Quechuan—imported from a reservation (Deverell 2004, 56). These races were recognized only insofar as they glorified Los Angeles as an emergent cosmopolitan metropolis. The Tongva and *Californios* were relegated to "a Spanish Fantasy" and the complex ways they shape(d) the landscape

unacknowledged. The display did not acknowledge the city's diverse immigrant populations' role in creating landscapes either. The Chinese development of orange groves, which helped refashion the Los Angeles's landscape into the boosters' eden, went unrecognized (McWilliams 1973). La Fiesta ended in the 1920s, but it made an important contribution to linking the recognition of otherness within the city to festive events. It decontextualized participants reconstituting them in service of bullish boosterism.

Further evidence exists in the faux neighborhoods rooted in fantasy created to replace the early ethnic enclaves of Chinatown and Sonoratown which had been destroyed by development. For example, booster Christine Sterling successfully advocated for the creation of Olvera Street in the 1920s. Olvera Street celebrated a version of the city's Mexican past that was inspired as much by the Mexican muralism of the 1920s as by the history of Latinos in downtown Los Angeles (Estrada 1999). Similarly in the late 1930s the orientalist China City employed film sets rather than Chinatown's original Mexican buildings (López 2012). These developments thus continued the practices of ethnic commodification that were evident in La Fiesta (Kim 1999; Lin 2013).

Los Angeles's Koreatown is superficially similar to these early immigrant neighborhoods, because as a diverse neighborhood—peopled by Central Americans, Mongolians and Bangladeshis—its toponym is misleading. Just as these neighborhoods were regarded as "corrupting" white male workers with a mixture of prostitution, alcohol, and drugs, so to are contemporary Koreatown's abundant bars with their b-girls—commissioned to encourage customers to drink—are "corrupting" (Light 1974). One crucial difference was that Koreatown's name was not imposed. The Korean-American business community had campaigned for the

toponym and finally received it in 1980. This history and the 1992 civil disturbance, which saw Koreans arm themselves to defend the neighborhood, give this toponym particular significance (Koh 2007).

Mongolians began migrating to Koreatown in the mid-1990s. By the early 2000s, chain migration had substantially increased the population to a few thousand, and the Los Angeles Mongolian Association (LAMA) was founded to serve the needs of the city's many Mongolians students. By 2010 LAMA—still based in Koreatown and led by an ambitious President—was the city's sole Mongolian community-wide organization. Its expanded remit included cultural preservation and LAMA had become involved with the Wilshire Center Koreatown Neighborhood Council (WCKNC). These shifts correlated with a change in the community; a substantial minority were no longer in Los Angeles temporarily pursuing educational goals, instead they had become Mongolian-Americans. Following the Korean path, they sought a toponym.

Politicizing Trees

I have described how the history of recognition in Los Angeles is entwined with ideas about an appropriate taskscape. Furthermore, I have emphasized that a multi-species settler colonial taskscape produces Los Angeles's landscape. Acknowledging this encourages us to be attentive to how contemporary recognition is entangled in this history. Moreover, recognizing this context, the planting of street trees in Los Angeles's Koreatown cannot be regarded as entirely innocuous. Especially when one party sought to create a landscape which signaled

Korean ownership, such practices conveyed strong messages to LAMA. Both about how one should live in Los Angeles and about how one's presence could be erased.

I first heard about the municipality's tree planting program in February 2014, while attending a WCKNC meeting. Two representatives from MTLA (Million Trees Los Angeles)—a program founded in 2006 by the then mayor, Antonio Villaraigosa, in response to the discovery that Los Angeles lagged behind other major cities in tree coverage—explained that "It was a good time to plant street trees". A municipal initiative meant that trees could be bought for a couple of hundred dollars each, and a Board of Sanitation (BOS) initiative meant free concrete cuts. WCKNC's board were excited; at $300 a cut, cutting was the most expensive part of the process. They set up a working group— consisting of a board member, myself, and two UCLA undergraduates—to handle the application. We arranged a meeting with KYCC's (Koreatown Youth and Community Center) Environmental Services manager. WCKNC would be paying KYCC—initially founded in 1976 to help economically disadvantaged youth, but expanded now to the point where it was an approved city contractor for environmental services like landscaping and graffiti removal in Koreatown— to plant and maintain the trees, but first we needed to agree on the species, their numbers, and the location. WCKNC's board needed these details so they could vote on the funding.

One early evening in mid-March the working group met at Caffé Bene—a fashionable Korean chain making inroads into Koreatown. The open-plan industrial layout with its exposed concrete walls, glass doors, and wooden bookshelves resounded with the mingled sounds of Kpop and human activity. The cafe was heaving with people: adolescents studying, a conversational Japanese group, and *ahjumma* (Korean term translating literally as marriage-aged

women) socializing. I sat waiting. Five minutes later the others arrived. The initial conversation lasted forty-five minutes. Varied topics—WCKNC's history, renters' rights, and planning practices—were discussed. Swiftly, a location along Vermont between 7th and Olympic was decided upon and a number of trees, thirty-three, was agreed upon.

An energetic, initially technical, discussion about tree species began. The board member felt the most important criterion was not height or drought resistance, but Korean-ness. He mentioned a Koreatown focus group for a different project involving trees had preferred "Asianish" trees. He then described a scene in which one would be driving up main thoroughfare and identify Koreatown by its street trees. He drew the Korean members of the working group into this discussion by reminiscing about trees in South Korea. In addition to the Koreanness of the trees he stressed the importance of seasonal foliage. Then the KYCC manager offhandedly mentioned the possibility of native trees. The board member dismissed the idea out of hand. Despite his Southern Californian drawl there was a fervor to his argument that such trees would do nothing for the region's indigenous people. He sadly stated that it was too late for them. His tone conveyed a rebuke of the settler colonial practices that had produced this state of affairs, but it also made clear that it was native Koreanness, not native Americanness, that was important now.

The board member's proposed Korean trees were to act both as signifiers of Korean identity and representatives of a Koreatown to which board members aspired. The trees were a manifestation of the board's concerns about Korean-ness' visibility in Koreatown. In recent years, the Koreatown landscape was undergoing a variety of changes, such as gentrification and the outmigration of young Korean families to elsewhere in Los Angeles county. The board had

sought to address this through a variety of projects that highlighted the Korean-ness of the neighborhood's landscape, including: naming several public buildings after significant Korean-Angeleno historical figures and proposing the construction of an elaborate archway on Koreatown's main thoroughfare. Korean trees would thus be part of broader effort to identify the landscape. However, planting Korean street trees was not just about preserving the current Korean landscape through visibility it was also about betokening a desired future landscape. The Korean trees the board member desired were also aimed at creating a landscape that visually evoked the orderliness and prosperity they wanted the neighborhood to attain.

The views about trees that I have discussed thus far demonstrate that it was not merely enough to have trees that were native to Korea, in addition, they had to behave in certain suitable ways. Concerns about suitability clearly resonate with the city's settler colonial history and the ideology of ability that is at its core. They signal that ideas about normalcy are consequential both for Koreatown's landscape and contemporary ideas about recognition. Informing these ideas was a particular understanding of the species concept. One's species was understood to be predictive of an organism's future behavior. Thus the Environmental Service Manager's suggestion of native trees stemmed largely from the belief that as natives they exhibited the behavior most suitable for the environment. When the concept of species is employed in this way trees are not treated as beings leading complex lives. Instead, in a situation that parallels the historical treatment of indigenous populations, they are reduced to a series of tropisms. This is the converse of Tim Ingold's observation, that "the form of the tree is no more given, as an immutable fact of nature, than is the form of the house an imposition of the human mind" (Ingold 2000, 187).

These notions of suitability were particularly evident when we discussed roots and height. This was because street trees have a very particular history in Los Angeles, and do not necessarily have either the municipality's or the public's good will. One of the "troublesome" breeds the Environmental Services manager specifically mentioned was the towering *Washingtonia robusta* (Mexican Fan Palm). The tree's presence dates to the 19th century, but the many thousands on Los Angeles's streets are largely a product of works programs in the early 1930s (Masters 2011). The trees are "troublesome" because their height and fronds create a problematic entanglement and have to be actively managed. Otherwise their height blocks hoardings and their spiked fronds can be dangerous. Recently, both foresters and the city council attacked the palm's presence in Los Angeles. The foresters represented it as a weed that potentially threatened native flora and fauna. Meanwhile, the council argued for a ban because "Palms. . .are . . .a type of grass and. . . provide almost none of the benefits of trees"(Hahn 2006).

Other trees are also regarded as creating problematic entanglements. As the Environmental Services Manager informed us, when Los Angeles's government officials, developers, and foresters think of trees and react negatively they often mention *Ficus macrophylla* (the Moreton Bay fig). This Australian native was also introduced to the area in the late 19th century, but was "Widely planted as a shady street tree in the 1950s and 1960s" (Pool 2006). However, unlike the palm whose "troublesome" nature is seen as stemming in part from reproduction, the ficus does not reproduce. Its reproduction is contingent on mutualism with a fig wasp— a species that has not made the journey across the Pacific. Despite relatively small numbers the ficus is regarded as a particular nuisance, because its branching roots can cause severe structural damage to the pavement, rendering it uneven, and creating significant problems

for pedestrians. Thus, the Environmental Services Manager explained to us, when discussing suitable trees the ficus was at the bottom of the list.

Several months later the BOS had begun to make concrete cuts. Then they encountered a Korean-American landowner who objected. He went so far as to refill the concrete cut in front of his lot. BOS responded by not planting the tree, as the California Streets and Highways Code made the landowner responsible for the sidewalk in front of their lot. In this instance responsibility allowed for the assertion a right to shape the landscape. Merely by gazing at the hole, the landowner had recognized and foreseen the impositions stemming from the tree's assertions of its right to also shape the landscape. Thus he rejected it; irrespective of what role it might play in shoring up the Korean-ness of Koreatown and ushering in the desired tidy future.

Recognizing Names

Just after 10 on a Friday morning in October a delegation assembled in a Los Angeles City councilperson's offices. It included several members of LAMA, Mongolia's boyish consul and his deputies, and myself. The room was full of photos of family, staff, electorate, other politicians, and the city. The occupant's life was woven from all these strands. We didn't wait long for the councilperson. They arrived swiftly. Greetings and introductions were made. Hands were enthusiastically and forcefully shaken. Everyone was acknowledged. With abrupt forthrightness, the councilperson immediately enquired about the creation of Little Mongolia—the LAMA's president's attempt to rename an area of Koreatown. The president responded that it did not exist, yet. "It needs to", the councilperson stressed. The Consul agreed. He declared it

“my number one priority”. A brief discussion of a potential site followed then the topic changed. The councilperson wanted Los Angeles to replace Denver as Ulaanbaatar's sister city. The consul prevaricated and changed the topic. Things drew to a close. The councilperson called for a photograph. They roped the Mongolians and I into a pose that looked like a sports team’s huddle.

Next the councilperson led us to the main council chambers—the John Ferraro room. Its marble columns, high ceiling, and flags (including that of the Viceroyalty of Nueva España) spoke of a history woven from civic ambition and settler colonialism. The councilperson stood at the lectern and their voice boomed as they formally introduced the consul to their fellow council people sitting at their horseshoe-shaped desk. Meanwhile the public sat in the pews looking on and the press surrounded them to film it. The councilperson's introduction made good use of the limited Mongolian phrases learnt thirty second earlier. They then presented the Consul with a certificate signed by the councilperson, the Council President, and the Mayor. Afterwards the Council President jocularly declared that every time the councilperson introduces a cultural group they appeared to learn a new language. After some good-natured laughter, the delegation left the room.

The city council’s formal recognition of an ethnic communities’ representatives at one of their thrice weekly meetings was not unusual. On particularly significant occasions there would be cultural performances during a council meeting, for example in 2014 members of the Chinese community performed a lion dance in the council chamber to celebrate Lunar New Year. However, recognition was usually tied to groups’ histories in the city’s landscape. By this measure the Mongolian presence in the meeting might have seemed abnormal. Mongolians had only been present in the city since the mid-1990s and community organizations like LAMA

really only began to appear in the 2000s. However, it was the Mongolian consul who was being formally recognized, not LAMA. Indeed, this was the only occasion during my fieldwork that a Mongolian group was invited to attend a city council meeting.

Despite the councilperson's eagerness, gaining support for a "Little Mongolia" in Koreatown could be difficult. Several years earlier, Bangladeshi community organizers had submitted an application to rename a sizable portion of Koreatown as Little Bangladesh, without notifying any of the other Koreatown communities. In doing so they were symbolically claiming the area as their own and giving their people a place in the Los Angeles landscape. The explanation they gave in their application was simple enough "We have a lot of people of our Bangladesh community living within that boundary". The mainly Korean WCKNC responded in the language of economics; Koreatown was no longer just where people lived it was a potential site for foreign investment. Renaming a portion of the area would damage its economic viability, "It is our belief that designating the Area as "Little Bangladesh" will have a negative effect on commercial growth" (Wilshire Centre Koreatown Neighborhood Council 2009). Even outside of Koreatown there had been criticism of the Bangladeshis. One councilperson had weighed in claiming the Bangladeshis had not invested enough in the neighborhood. Investment in the sense he was using the term alluded to a landscape which bore witness to their enduring presence. Finally, Steve Lopez—an influential Los Angeles Times columnist—had dismissed the Bangladeshi claim. He argued that all such exercises in renaming were cynical attempts to make money, and, even if they were not, the area being claimed contained more evidence of a Central American presence in the form of storefronts than a Bangladeshi one.

This argument over Little Bangladesh was entangled with a number of strands of settler colonial thought. WCKNC's and the councilperson's responses are in part indicative of the valorization that I mentioned earlier (Dávila 2001; Lin 2013). This prioritizing of economics as justification for recognizing claims to territory is a descendent of arguments, like *terra nullius*, that had justified native dispossession (Miller 2006). One of Lopez's arguments, that perhaps the area should be named after the Central Americans because of the number of Central American stores in the area also relied on this logic of visible improvement. His other derived from a belief that neoliberalism had so tainted ethnic ownership that any attempt at renaming was about money. This second line of thinking has often been used to critique Native American attempts at preserving their culture through monetizing it (Comaroff and Comaroff 2009). Finally, the Bangladeshi organizers' argument was also contingent on presence; an argument that the English had used when contesting Spanish colonial claims (Seed 1995). Fueled by these opposing ideas, the dispute rumbled on for several years before being acrimoniously resolved. A Little Bangladesh was created but it was considerably smaller than that which had been applied for.

LAMA's President was both aware of this acrimony and it implications for the technical process that the organization would have to undertake to gain a "Little Mongolia". She knew five hundred residents' signatures were required to submit an application to rename an area and that the Mongolian presence in Koreatown was dispersed. LAMA's board would need allies from the neighborhood's other communities. She also knew the city council had to approve the process and that the community's chances improved if their existence was mentioned in documents the Los Angeles City Archive and Records Centre held. Hence LAMA's board's strategy for gaining support for their bid for formal recognition of a toponym relied upon making the Mongolian

presence less fleeting and more visible in Koreatown's political taskscape. They attempted to accomplish this through joining the WCKNC and participating in their events. However, as not even all of the WCKNC board members were aware of this goal, their success was limited at best. Some Mongolian community organizers dismissed the project as a pipe dream, while others complained that LAMA's board should instead spend their energy and resources addressing the community's needs.

Despite this Little Mongolia remained an important goal for some. For a few such a development would remind future generations of Los Angeles's Mongolian population of the sacrifices their forebears had made; while for others its commercial potential would create jobs. These aims were thus similar to those of the Bangladeshis. The councilperson's argument was partially about trade. Attracting foreign investment to Los Angeles through named areas had become part of the municipality's economic strategy. Additionally, I suspect, they were enchanted by Mongolian culture. As Comaroff and Comaroff have observed, the value of culture to capitalism rests on uniqueness, and the fear of taint derives from the concern that the latter degrades the former's special quality (Comaroff and Comaroff 2009). However, not all cultures are equally rare, Los Angeles would be one of the few cities in the world to have a Mongolian neighborhood. It fitted well with the councilperson's boosterish vision of the city as globally significant. For the consul too such a development was largely about economics. That very evening LAMA's President hosted a reception for the consul. The consul's speech stressed the role Mongolian-Angelenos were to play in attracting American investors to Mongolia. A "Little Mongolia" would serve as a location to redirect American investment towards Mongolia.

Sighting Mongolian Landscapes

The history of Los Angeles's trees and toponyms is linked to the recognition of rights. If one keeps that in mind, then the goal of Korean trees shaping the Koreatown landscape and producing a lasting visibility through presence seems sensible. However, the ongoing debate as to whether the California natives manipulated their landscape through controlled burning—an argument dating to the Spanish—underscores recognition's dependence on learning (Lightfoot 2005; Minnich 2008). Learning to see how tasks have changed the landscape, that is. Learning was difficult to achieve in Koreatown as its densely populated landscape heaved with activity. Wandering the neighborhood, one might encounter workers removing evidence of ongoing tagging battles, sausages frying in a vendor's tray, b-girls walking the short distance from their transport to one of an innumerable number of karaoke bars, and pavement disturbed by a ficus. Turning from this ocean to the tiny ripple of Mongolian activity I will examine the difficulties encountered when trying to recognize Los Angeles's Mongolian landscape.

A hot summer day. Danzin and I had walked more than a mile in the noonday sun searching for a restaurant. A newcomer; he was homesick. He wanted Chinese food, the sort of Chinese food found in Mongolia. We failed to find any. Eventually our hunger triumphed and we decided on the closest Korean restaurant. Inside, a middle-aged women brought us menus. Then she attempted to address Danzin in Korean. He swiftly corrected her.

Danzin' experience was not unusual. Mongolians were routinely mis-recognized by Koreantown's Korean-Americans as co-ethnics. In Danzin's case the woman could be forgiven because his personal style was very influenced by *hallyu* (literally the Korean wave or Korean popular cultural trends). Earlier I had watched as he carefully gelled his hair into a side-swept

fringe modeled on a Kpop-star's. A tracksuit clothing his willowy form, aviators and a Von Dutch cap further lent itself to this interpretation. Danzin's ensemble reflected, Korean pop culture's globalization and post-socialist Mongolia's changing consumption patterns. The Korean-American woman was likely unaware of the latter. To her, Danzin was not a Mongolian imitating Korean style, but a Korean-American. Her reasoning was further legitimated by Koreatown's seemingly Korean-American landscape. Mongolians formed such a small proportion of Koreatown's population that unless one learned through prior encounter or conversation to be attentive to their presence in the landscape one would not know that they were there. Danzin was thus the right body in the right clothes in the right place to be hailed in Korean.

Charles Taylor has described how in liberal societies mis-recognition has come to be regarded as harmful (Taylor 1994). My Mongolian interlocutors would probably agree as they typically did not enjoy being mis-recognized. On several occasions I was provided with accounts of how someone had listed a seemingly endless number of Asian identities only to be informed the person was Mongolian. This was frequently compounded by the suggestion Mongolia was in China. One interlocutor suggested Mongolia's experience would have been better apprehended by Americans if Mongolians had "looked" Central Asian. Midway through my fieldwork, I naively enquired about how one could tell if a person was Mongolian and was told that it was largely about mannerisms. Mongolians, I was informed, walked in a fashion that conveyed their confidence. This was an interesting response; anthropologists have rarely considered walking as constitutive of being, but when they have they have generally regarded it as a learned activity (Mauss 1973; Ingold and Vergunst 2008). When I asked one of my Mongolian interlocutors how

confident she was in her ability to identify this Mongolian quality she responded that she was very confident. It was for her learned, the product of a lifetime of being around other Mongolians. Without experience Mongolians were just as likely to misidentify each other as *gadad* (foreigners) were.

My interlocutors' assertions of their ability to identify Mongolianess did not always accord with my observations. In summer 2014 I went to a park to watch a Mongolian volleyball tournament. The several scratch teams were a mixture of ages and talents. Some players had attained the rank of master during the Soviet era, others learned volleyball at US high schools, and still others had minimal experience. One of the players was a bare-foot, tall, well-muscled man in his twenties, who strode purposefully around the court. After the event, my friend Naran, who had played on his team, revealed he had initially surprised her. "I did not realise he was Mongolian when I first saw him", she said. "His features were so broad . . . I assumed he was Middle Eastern," she clarified.

Naran rationalized the man's facial features as the cause of her failure, failing to mention his confident stride. However, several years ago she had moved to suburbia. This was one of the few Mongolian events she attended that year. "I've left the community" she routinely told me, and thus she was not likely to recognize newcomers. The man she mis-recognized was a newcomer—a temporary language student. He had only been in Los Angeles a few months. Newcomers were a recurrent feature of Mongolian-Angeleno life. The community's dispersed nature meant even community events regular attendees frequently encounter Mongolians they had never met. Furthermore, the community was super-diverse, a whole host of structural factors meant its diversity transcended ethnicity. Specifically, many Mongolians frequently migrate

between US cities. During fieldwork I encountered Mongolians who lived in places ranging from, large Southern cities to tiny Midwestern university towns. Frequently Mongolians living elsewhere and studying as students would come and live with their kin over the summer. Once ensconced in the city, and with minimal expenses, they would spend the summer earning money before returning to school.

For both Mongolians and non-Mongolians the difficulty of recognizing a Mongolian presence in the landscape was exacerbated by their economic activities. Koreatown had Korean, Bangladeshi, and Central American businesses but almost no Mongolian presence. Instead, most of the Mongolians I met were employed in: valet parking, construction, food services, furniture removal, cosmetology, or trucking. The landscape they created could not be easily identified as Mongolian. Trucking is a good example, recently, growing numbers of men had become long-distance truckers. Frequently away from Los Angeles they lacked time to participate in community life. In Koreatown, one might occasionally see a truck parking for the night, but unless one knew their company's name and something of the Mongolian language one would not identify them as Mongolian. Furthermore, their labour's only recognizable contributions to Koreatown's landscape were in the form of their trucks' smog and noise. Neither of which were readily identifiable as Mongolian.

Thus far I have accounted for a failure to recognize Mongolians' presence in the landscape by emphasizing the tasks they were performing. Furthermore, I have argued that the ability to see tasks is learned, and that an awareness of only certain types of tasks has a long history dating back to settler colonialism's beginnings in the area. These observations are entwined with the final element that I address, elimination. The end of the volleyball tournament

exemplifies this well. As night fell on Los Angeles, the Mongolians and I packed up. We removed all traces of their presence. Gone were the volleyball nets, the announcer's table and audio equipment, and the flags. When we finished all that would seemingly remain were bent blades of grass, which would be erased by other people undertaking other tasks.

Elimination was not just a feature of Mongolian events, it was common to many cultural events in Los Angeles. Generally elimination resulted from public spaces' multiple roles. This was a particular issue in Los Angeles because by contrast with Mongolia—long defined in the Western imagination as a land without fences—its' landscape is famously restricted. As Nathalie Boucher correctly observes "Los Angeles has never made a priority of spaces where real flesh and blood contacts happen" (Boucher 2012, 45). Spaces that appear public are often quasi-public —giving the appearance of being open, but only open to those meeting certain criteria (Peterson 2006). Even truly public spaces, such as parks, are the product of a series of conventions governing who can perform what tasks within a particular landscape. For other groups with more of a presence in the landscape—in the form of named neighborhoods, restaurants, memorials, businesses, or simply numerous bodies—recognition is not solely dependent on publicly held events. For Mongolians this sort of elimination makes an important contribution to the invisibility of their presence in the landscape, and by extension the failure of their co-ethnics and co-residents to recognize their existence in more than a fleeting fashion.

Conclusion

Within Los Angeles a particular practice of recognition exists that forces communities to "invest" in the creation of specific landscapes, if they are desirous of being seen. For those unable to create landscapes that accord with these ideals, recognition is fleeting. Indeed, as these landscapes lack in Cartesian fixity many parties are unable to see one another and uncertain of the details of each other's existences. For the communities of non-Anglophone Angelenos who have long occupied the city, this ignorance has often made them the target of investigation by both policymakers and academics seeking to solve, what they regard as, their "problematic" ways of life (Hise 2007; Quintana 2015). One might argue, as Ronald Frankenberg once did, that the city's size is a significant cause of this lack of recognition as "urbanized societies have an associative nature" and "There is often comparative infrequency of interaction" (Frankenberg 1965, 286). However, I contend that in the case of Los Angeles its problematic settler colonial heritage plays an important role in defining the terms under which recognition is possible, both for older ethnic communities and newer ones, like the Mongolians.

One of these terms is concerned with the commodification of identity. In much of the literature the existence of ethnic identity as a commodity is regarded as a very recent development. A product of neoliberalism, we are told. However, such an account does not seem to fit in Los Angeles. Indeed the city's very history militates against treading such a well-worn analytical path. Long before academics even considered the possibility of neo-liberalism, ethno-racial distinctiveness was a visible commodity in Los Angeles's landscape. This commodity was sold and consumed at events like La Fiesta and in places like China City. The origins of this consumptive practice lie, I have suggested, in earlier colonial beliefs about the appropriate usage

of the land. Immigrant others are politically recognized only so long as they are capable of inhabiting the landscape in the correct manner. This involves undertaking tasks that signify that one is largely the same, yet slightly different from Anglophone settlers. Phrased differently one can do anything, just so long as that anything does not upset existing ideas about what one should do.

This position represents a challenge to the city's Mongolian population. Some of them would dearly like to be recognized, as it is a means of preserving their sense of collective identity. But much of what they are is not readily and easily commodifiable. The possibility of recognizing Mongolians' existence is further diminished by the forced erasure of Mongolian activity from the landscape. As their taskscape goes unrecognized Mongolians in Los Angeles might seem to have been eliminated. However, just as there is with the Tongva, there exists a shadow geography of which Mongolians are part. To those who cannot be present or see them the Mongolian presence is revealed through mundane, bureaucratic documents like, records of park rentals, City Council presentations, and long distance truck drivers' licenses. Seen through these documents an outsider, a non-participant-observer, can gain an awareness of the Mongolian presence in the city.

While for some Mongolians a toponym appears a desirable mechanism for securing recognition the recent challenges to Koreatown's status by the Bangladeshis application for a Little Bangladesh would suggest otherwise. In such circumstances it is unsurprising that members of the Korean-American community would seek to symbolically shore up Koreatown by planting Korean trees. Identity work is a multi-species endeavor that is contingent on the co-operation of a host of non-human beings to render one recognizable. However, as the history of

Los Angeles demonstrates, non-human beings are themselves not necessarily durable. One thinks of the numerous trees and plants eliminated by settlers who introduced non-native species to the Los Angeles Basin. As Paula Schiffman (2005) observes

> Early settlers were not naturalists. They viewed Los Angeles's valleys and plains as a resource to be exploited. . . . they failed to notice regional changes in vegetation and ecology. . . . early settlers exhibited a high degree of 'verbal (and visual) blindness.

Perhaps because of the scale of migration, the United States imagines itself as a nation of immigrants, rather than more accurately conceiving of itself as a nation of settler immigrants. However, being attentive to Los Angeles's landscape reveals that settler colonialism continues to structure the recognition of contemporary immigrants.

CHAPTER 4: UNSTABLE POLITICS

One Saturday in 2012, while at the Los Angeles Mongolian Association's (LAMA) office, I observed preparations for the Wilshire Center Koreatown Neighborhood Council's (WCKNC) biennial election. LAMA's then-president ran for a seat. Volunteers working in the office that Saturday provided community members with letters signed by the president affirming that the bearers were members. The election's poll workers then identified the bearers as community interest stakeholders, with the right to vote for WCKNC's several community interest seats.

WCKNC is one of Los Angeles's more than ninety Neighborhood Councils (NC). Ncs are part of a deliberative democratic system designed to ensure each neighborhood's stakeholders—those working, residing, or belonging to a community group based in a neighborhood—are able to communicate with municipal government. However, NCs' approaches to elections vary: some only require voter self-affirmation while others insist upon documentation. LAMA's mobilization to ensure its members' right to participate demonstrated an expertise in WCKNC's particular electoral by-laws; laws which confused even more established community groups. It underscored a point some of my Mongolian interlocutors routinely made—that in Los Angeles rights are rooted in expertise. I explore the implications of this connection between rights and expertise for Los Angeles's stakeholders in this chapter.

Urbanists' conversations about rights often reference Henri Lefebvre's right to the city (Simone 2006; Harvey 2008; Soja 2009). Lefebvre contended that capitalist domination of the production of space marginalized urban dwellers. His solution was a struggle to achieve active

participation in governmental oversight (Lefebvre 2000 [1968]; Dikeç 2001; Elden 2004). Lefebvre's idea transcended the academy influencing France's 1991 Urban Development Act and Brazil's 2001 City Statute (Sugranyes and Mathivet 2010). However, the idea did not address competing claims (Purcell 2002; Attoh 2011). My focus is on encounters between either people from different socio-legal systems or people with different understandings of their socio-legal traditions. I am interested the claims they make on the city, and the assemblages of rights reliant on expertise that they produce as justification. I particularly consider land rights because these constitute the principal mechanism through which North America's settler colonial municipalities govern (Valverde 2005; 2009; 2011).

My analysis makes use of three key, interrelated concepts: expertise, learning, and encounters. During the nineteenth century, expertise first began to be used as a noun to describe expert knowledge (Williams 1985; Carr 2010). For some—Marx, Durkheim, Foucault to name a few—this shift was regarded as leading to an increased division of labour and concomitant social problems (Boyer 2006). While there was a longstanding misconception in the western world that expertise was limited to certain civilized peoples, anthropological studies have established the universality of expertise (Radin 1927; Gladwin 1970; Lave 1977). However, only lately with Laura Nader's call for attention to elites, science studies' emergence, and a processual turn, has there been a renewed focus on western, non-indigenous experts and how they learn and perform their expertise (Nader 1972; Latour 1983; Gusterson 1997; Harvey and Knox 2015). I want to argue that an element of the claim to expertise is familiarity. It is familiarity that leads to actors being inextricably bound together as expert and subject/object of an expertise .

Familiarity with how "the city is lived, assembled, and contested" is acquired through learning (McFarlane 2011). Some of this accomplished through instruction via schooling or communities of practice—social formations that anthropologists have long studied (Lave 1977; Lave and Wenger 2008; Mertz 1998; Marchand 2010). With regard to community of practice, I will often reference Lave and Wenger's notion of legitimate, albeit peripheral, participation— the minor tasks one performs when becoming part of a community. Indeed, adapting a position some anthropologists have taken, I contend that one of the functions of a municipality's bureaucratic system is to force the weaker party to become a legitimate peripheral participant in order to communicate (Stern and Hall 2010; Plueckhahn 2017). Two important aspects of learning as part of either a school or a community of practice are some form of credentialing and the development of contributory expertise—that is enough expertise to be recognized as a specialist in a topic (Carr 2010; Collins et al. 2016). In this chapter I discuss one example—the neighborhood council system's accreditation process. Most learning is not conducted through instruction though but is a by-product of educating one's senses (Ingold, 2000; Marchand, 2010). The latter is essential for recent immigrants like Los Angeles's Mongolians; through living in Los Angeles, with its people, laws, language, infrastructure, and non-humans, they are entangled, and become familiar with the city in specific ways. Some of this is ubiquitous expertise: things like "speaking your native language . . . how close to other people one should come when passing them", knowledge which "Everyone acquires . . . as a result of growing up in a particular society" (Collins 2014, 53). However, following a system developed by Collins and Evans, I also refer to some of the expertise accumulated through living in Los Angeles as interactional

expertise—that is informally learned, but at the level where one can knowledgeably discuss the subject, with a practitioner (Collins and Evans 2015).

In addition to familiarity and credentialing, how one performs expertise during an encounter with others is of paramount importance (Goodwin 1994; Carr 2010; Morita et al. 2013; Kimura 2016). Ward Goodenough recognized the link between performance, credibility, and expertise when he argued that a test of an anthropologist's expertise was "the extent to which we ourselves are able to behave in ways which lead to the kind of responses from the community's members which our theory would lead us to expect" (Goodenough 1957, 168). As a number of linguistic anthropologists have detailed an important aspect of such enactment is understanding the language ideology associated with the encounter, and knowing the appropriate register to speak in. However, where I depart from Goodenough's formulation is the presumption that expertise predates performative encounters. Instead, my position, akin to Ingold's and Mitchell's, is that expertise does not pre-exist encounters but rather is continually created in them (Mitchell 2002; Ingold 2013).

My account begins by examining the historical relationships between expertise and rights in both Los Angeles and Ulaanbaatar. I begin by tracing the role of expertise in progressivism and socialism and conclude with the neighborhood council system's creation in 1999. Then through analysing LAMA's organization of a basketball tournament on public land I consider how such groups acquire this expertise to access rights and what understanding the bureaucracy they encounter imagines they possess. To further explore the question of this relationship I next turn to the WCKNC and consider the specific types of expertise its members are expected to perform to relay their neighborhood's opinions on the technical aspects and

political ramifications of spatial production. Finally, I discuss encounters between the public and the municipal government at the City Council and its Planning and Land-use Management (PLUM) Committee in order to explore in a more detailed fashion the role of language as a form of expertise in rights claims.

This chapter illustrates that in Los Angeles while the municipal government appears to offer city stakeholders rights to the city they are inaccessible unless one possesses certain forms of expertise. Recent attempts, like the NC system, might appear empowering but the expertise required to participate is entirely incommensurate with the power wielded. Furthermore, it is less than ideal for cosmopolitan, multilingual neighborhoods, where radically different histories of political engagement are the order of the day. Ultimately, I argue that the necessity of possessing expertise to access rights signifies the limitations of a framework derived from a liberal-democratic political tradition and like an iceberg's mass what lies hidden beneath the water, in this instance the history of settler colonialism, is of considerably grander proportions than what is visible.

A Brief History of Politics and Expertise in Los Angeles

LA's history of neighborhood empowerment initiatives began in 1894 when "a group of college women from Los Angeles Normal School" established "the College Settlement in old Sonora Town" (Pitt 2004, 67). There to assist in the creation of the city's first settlement house was Jane Addams. Addams had co-founded Hull House in Chicago's Near West side five years earlier, with the goal of addressing the immigrant neighborhood's "physical, economic and

spiritual needs" through social work (Pitt 2004, 67). Sonoratown was not looked upon favorably by the municipal government and its inhabitants were considered unassimilated and socially distant (Hise 2007). The interventions of social workers from settlement houses were thus welcomed. Unfortunately, the expertise they provided was not necessarily beneficial to those they sought to serve. As Stephanie Lewthwaite observed "Chinatown and Sonoratown were subjected" to their "racializing discourses . . . from the late 1890s" (Lewthwaite 2010, 46). Indeed, one early social workers characterized Sonoratown as radiating wretchedness (Lewthwaite 2010). The College Settlement was the first of the city's many settlement houses and an early example of its Progressive movement. Progressivism, an American municipal movement which would truly flower in the 1900s, sought to address the wasteful management of America's cities through implementing reforms to increase efficiency, and to break the stranglehold of machine politics at the ward level. Many progressives were members of the patrician class and in Los Angeles they regarded the ideal model for their newly enlarged municipal state as the corporation (Fogelson 1993). The expertise required, as they saw it, was administrative not legislative, because they regarded their proposed reforms as common sense.

Unsurprisingly, given this attitude to the corporation, when the social workers failed, progressive city officials proved more than willing to accept corporations' applications to locate factories in neighborhoods, like Sonoratown, "City officials and the press presented manufacturing as an improvement that would contribute to the public good" (Hise 2009, 483). Municipal records also suggest that such claims depended on the skill of these entrepreneurs to pitch their very specific visions. Even the letters of those residents who opposed such

developments reveal a considerable degree of rhetorical skill. For both groups it became clear that specific talents were needed to assert rights.

The overarching goal of the modernist expertise deployed by Los Angeles's public health officials, social workers, and other progressives was rationalization, be it biopolitical or administrative. The purpose of this rationalization, as James Scott has argued of modernist statecraft elsewhere in the world, was the creation of a legible, governable city (Scott 1998). Similar practices were employed in Mongolia when the socialists came to power in the mid-1920s and until their fall from power at the twentieth century's end (Sneath 2003; Myadar 2017). Amongst the suite of practices undertaken to make the nation legible there were the portrayal of high-ranking lamas as bourgeois enemies of the proletariat (Kaplonski 2012); the centralization of the Mongolian state (Myadar 2017); and, the solidification of Mongolian populations, like the Buryat, into ethnic groups (Bulag 1998; Sneath 2003). For this study, the most significant of these undertakings was the full-scale urbanization that Mongolia underwent. Ulaanbaatar, which under the Chinese had largely been populated by foreigners, mushroomed in size and was filled with "with monumental public buildings and concrete housing blocks" built largely by technicians and specialists from elsewhere in the second world (Myadar 2017, 21). The socialists had done away with the "barbaric primitivism" of mobile pastoralism and shamanism and replaced them with order and logic. Ulaanbaatar was the socialists crowning glory inhabited by the socialist "New Man—reformed, cultured, well-groomed and, more importantly, settled in administratively manageable space" (Myadar 2017, 11). The culture and expertise of the socialist new men and women was in many cases the byproduct of an education both in Russian and in Russia. Indeed, in a move that some have regarded as self-serving the

USSR positioned itself as the Mongolian state's older brother there to offer expertise and aid as the new nation evolved, while by-passing capitalism (Sneath 2003).

Over the course of the twentieth century Mongolia's socialist government, with the help of the USSR, steadily remade the Mongolian nation into a "spatial ordering" that "served to make society administratively legible by geographically rooting the population in a clearly defined space" (Myadar 2017, 19). Concurrently in the US as the twentieth century wore on various minorities sought to remake society and drew on the discourse of empowerment and rights to do so (Pulido 2006). The 1965 Hart-Cellar Act—which abolished the 1921 Emergency Quota Act's race-based immigration quotas—was particularly significant for Los Angeles's development. Amongst the 1965 act's most visible consequences was a significant increase in the Korean presence in the United States (Yu et al. 1982). After the 1965 Watts Rebellion—an African-Americans uprising in response to LAPD brutality—Koreans became a very visible presence on Olympic Boulevard, and the street "became the center of Korean commercial activity, eventually expanding its borders to the nearby 8th Street, Western Avenue, Vermont Avenue, and other major streets" (Park and Kim 2009, 129). Bonacich, Light, and Wong identified the Korean success as partially stemming from Koreans' organization (Bonacich et al. 1977, 57). The Korean Development Association was particularly important: "they [members of the KDA] bought up inexpensive real estate around the mid-Wilshire district and promoted Koreatown in Seoul" (Park and Kim 2009, 129). Despite this purchasing of real estate, some Korean scholars and academics argued that more savvy was necessary (Jo 1982). Yung-Hwan Jo strongly called for greater Korean-American self-organization and expressly linked this self-organization to land-use. He suggested that cross-community alliances were necessary to ensure

the Wilshire Development Plan continued to meet Koreans and Koreatown's needs. He also advocated that the community establish educational programs to ensure community members gained the requisite knowledge. Once this expertise was attained, he felt that Koreans would have effectively learnt "the skill and 'games' of American local politics"(Jo 1982, 215).

Expertise was certainly a requirement for political and quotidian life in Mongolia once post-socialism began. The country was heavily impacted by economic "shock" therapy—the end of state currency and price controls and the denationalization of key sectors of the economy—for much of the 1990s. In response Mongolians leaned heavily on their extended networks of kith and kin to provide services and provisions that had been previously supplied by their centralized state government (Sneath 1993). Mobilising these networks became increasingly difficult as the currency of choice moved from favors to money (Zimmermann 2012). Indeed, in Ulaanbaatar the response of some to these new regimes of debt were new forms of mobility. As Pedersen says of the city, "debt compels people to move around in the cityscape in particular ways, either because they are chasing after people who are in debt to them, because they are escaping from people to whom they are in debt themselves" (Pedersen 2016, 10). Mongolians of course did not just move around Ulaanbaatar, they also moved into it in vast numbers; its population was swelled by former pastoralists. The modernist logic which characterized socialist era Ulaanbaatar, with its clearly defined space, has been unable to keep pace. This inability to keep pace is especially true of the informal settlements of the peri-urban *ger* district that ring the city. Plueckhahn's recent account of the difficulties of land registration of land in this area revealed a city developing far faster than bureaucracy is able to map and comprehend. The requirement of making land-possession legible thus increasingly falls to private citizens who have to expertly

discern which private companies selling cadastral mapping services will be acceptable to the state (Plueckhahn 2017, 105). As others have noted of encounters with bureaucracy, the result is anxiety, in this case because “One does not know if the steps approved today will ensure that the land will still be theirs in the future” (Plueckhahn 2017, 92).

By the late 1990s, Los Angeles’s fifteen-member city council, who ran their districts as fiefdoms, had left the portion of city’s populace who were aware of their existence feeling not anxious but alienated (Pitt 2004, 65). The 2000 City Charter’s article nine, “To promote more citizen participation in government and make government more responsive to local needs, a citywide system of neighborhood councils, and a Department of Neighborhood Empowerment is created”, addressed this alienation (Charter 2015). The neighborhood council system originated with Jeffrey Berry’s and his colleagues’ work on neighborhood associations (Berry et al. 1993). Berry and colleagues had sought a deliberative democratic system to re-engage constituents in US towns and cities (Berry et. 1993; Cooper and Musso 1999). Their solution was rooted in the nation’s settler colonial history—the “New England town meeting” a “ place where the bond of community allows those with differing points of view to come together and solve the problems” (Berry et al. 1993, 9-10). Historically, such meetings were not egalitarian (Arensberg 1955; Ulrich 2010). They fixed “individuals within "little commonwealths” reinforced “gender ideals”, and ensured “religious obligations” fulfillment (O’Brien 1997). DONE attempted to achieve egalitarianism through prescribing conduct and requiring board members to have a range of attachments to neighborhoods (Musso 1999; Jun and Musso 2013; Musso et al. 2006). DONE did not entirely succeed. WCKNC’s board was largely Korean-American professionals—not

representative of the neighborhood's economic or ethnic realities, but reflective of those who had the power and interactional expertise to draw boundaries and who had the time to participate.

Producing Mongolian stakeholders in Los Angeles

The entangling of expertise and rights in contemporary Los Angeles is significant for populations like the Mongolians. I illustrate this with LAMA's application of the 2014 Annual Mongolian West Coast basketball tournament. Organizing a tournament in Koreatown demanded encountering, engaging, and satisfying various county and municipal agencies' street-level bureaucrats—public service workers who "interact with and have wide discretion over the dispensation of benefits and the allocation of public sanctions" (Lipsky 2010). Bureaucrats' requirements were of paramount significance because, as I argued in chapter three, public space was central to Mongolians' attempts at self-preservation. However, street-level bureaucrats managing public space demanded very culturally-specific expertise. This was evident from their assumptions about organizations' structure and function, understandings of risk and culpability, beliefs about people's ways of learning, and notions of time. These preconceptions likely resulted from a lack of time and resources to learn about the specificities of applicants situations, and as in other contexts these have resulted in street-level workers "developing routines of practice and psychologically simplifying their clientele and environment in ways that strongly influence the outcomes of their efforts" (Lipsky 2010). However, as I discussed earlier such practices are also a continuation of settler colonial attitudes that entangle rights, particularly land-use rights, with culturally valued forms of expertise.

Thirty to forty Mongolian men of varying ages scrimmaged two to three times a week for three to four hours on poorly lit outdoor courts, just north of Koreatown. This was, one interlocutor informed me, the largest regular gathering of Mongolians outside of a church. The games served as an opportunity for intergenerational homosocial bonding. Players would swap stories, tell jokes, and talk about recent movies. The basketball court was a site where, as one of my interlocutors put it, "Mongolians could be Mongolian". The camaraderie reached its zenith with the annual Mongolian West Coast Basketball tournament. Every November, teams would travel from places as far away as Salt Lake City and Seattle to play one another. Koreatown played host because its relatively larger Mongolian population enabled the provision of sufficient temporary lodgings. Its night-life also offered plentiful opportunities for post-tournament recreation. But, as a park poor area, Koreatown lacked public recreational facilities (Park and Kim 2009, 144). The local Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) had proposed buying land during the recession to rectify the problem (Vincent 2011; Kim 2016). However, in the early 2010s, California's 425 CRAs were disbanded. Koreatown's sole publicly accessible basketball courts remained oversubscribed; public school gymnasiums were the sole option.

The Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) was the county's second largest employer and all of Koreatown's public schools were in its jurisdiction. Fewer than two dozen of the LAUSD's staff were responsible for managing the bureaucracy of facilities rental for more than a thousand schools. It is my contention that amongst the qualities these street-level bureaucrats expected lessees to demonstrate was a reasonable degree of interactional expertise—the appropriate language necessary to discuss a topic (Collins and Evans 2016). In particular, they were expected to understand how LAUSD reckoned time. My position here is in keeping

with David Graeber's assertion that the when the public encounters a bureaucracy the former is always expected to engage in the imaginative labour of understanding the latter's position (Graeber 2012, 116). As far as the LAUSD were concerned, LAMA's board had comprehensively failed to demonstrate such expertise in the past. LAMA had organized a winter party for children at an LAUSD school's gymnasium in December 2013. The party had been successful, but: one organizer had damaged the gymnasium floor; attendees strayed into areas of the school not rented; LAMA's board significantly exceeded the time they had purchased; and, LAMA was accused of bribing the custodian. Furthermore, when LAUSD attempted to bill LAMA's board for both damages and the extra time, the board failed to respond for five months.

When LAMA's board was confronted with these accusations, they insisted that its "young" community had learnt from this experience. Its leaders made this statement on a variety of other occasions, not all of which were a result of misunderstandings and misconceptions. For example, in December 2014, I attended a meeting between LAMA leaders and the Armenian-American owner of a banquet hall. The meeting lasted far longer than intended because LAMA's leaders attempted to negotiate for alterations to the menu and reductions in cost. After the negotiations, one of LAMA's leaders remarked to me that it had been an extremely beneficial meeting in which he had learned something of brokering a deal. On the basis of this and other instances I would say that LAMA's members regarded the necessary interactional expertise as being gained through legitimate peripheral participation—in the form of extended face-to-face interaction with street-level bureaucrats (Lave and Wenger 2008; Ribeiro and Lima 2016). This contrasted with LAUSD which seemed to regard interactional expertise as stemming merely from reading the relevant documents and learning the language through minimal engagement.

On reflection I think this difference arose because those in LAUSD often assumed that LAMA's representatives shared a context with them. However, most of Los Angeles's Mongolian population were not raised in Los Angeles and were in fact acclimating themselves.

LAMA's board did not just have to deal with LAUSD, it also required the school principal's approval and he was worried that the Mongolians would damage his school. Moreover, the school's head custodian fueled his fears. The custodian reported that after the 2013 tournament there was evidence of drinking and smoking—in the form of cigarette butts and beer cans. For the custodian and the principal this trash, the butts and cans, were as Mary Douglas once labelled dirt, "matter out of place" (Douglas 2003, 36). These were profane items indexing unacceptable behavior that challenged the categorical order of the school as a special place of learning. Thus for the principal, the expertise that LAMA's board needed to demonstrate was not interactional. He sought not a mastery of language and understanding, but a sign that LAMA could control the presence of these things and activities on the school grounds. Contractual stipulations were added to emphasize this issue of control: increased custodial hours, limited parking, and private security. LAMA was assessed a larger fee and a substantial deposit. Finally, there was an ultimatum: ensure good behavior or lose access to LAUSD facilities. LAMA's leaders emphasized to me that this was a difficult request to implement, because drinking is regarded as a Mongolian cultural activity, particularly for males. It is central to a variety of rites. All of the festivals I attended involved the consumption of vodka, with the expectation of intoxication. Complying would reduce the event's Mongolian-ness.

The final approval rested with LAUSD's risk management division. The division required volunteer marshals commensurate with attendee numbers. In essence, what was being

demanded of LAMA was an expertise in the management of Mongolians. However, LAMA's influence was limited. In a 1957 chapter, Decisions by Consensus in Councils and Committees, F.G. Bailey distinguished between two ideal types of political organizations, arena and elite (Bailey 1957, 10). An elite organization is dominated by one strata of society such that there is a horizontal cleavage between this strata and the rest of society—a council of chiefs, for example. An arena organization is composed of representatives from every section of society there exist vertical cleavages within this organization between the different parties. LAMA was hardly a stable organization and had swung between these two ideal types, but at the time of my fieldwork LAMA was largely an elite organization composed of older Mongolians; the President, a well-off man, had attained his position largely on the basis of promising to spend his own fortune. LAMA lacked the political authority to censure the behavior of its broader community or to compel community members to carry out activities. The idea that LAMA should somehow be able to provide volunteers in this manner was the cause of some concern to the LAUSD board. Eventually non-board members were recruited with the promise of financial remuneration. This episode underscored the extent to which street-level bureaucrats at LAUSD had failed to comprehend the difficulties their demands placed upon LAMA. This situation was far from unique to LAMA though, and I will now go on to consider how the relationship between expertise and rights was consequential for LAMA's neighbors in the WCKNC.

The Rights to the Neighborhood

Earlier, I discussed how LAMA's board's attempts to claim the right to use public spaces to preserve their Mongolian-ness relied on expertise and now I will consider the

implications of the relationship between expertise and rights in Los Angeles for the WCKNC. I argue that lived reality complicates the Los Angeles municipality's simplistic rhetoric of empowerment. Framing WCKNC's work in terms of expertise reveals that, irrespective of intention, the municipality has created a system that prioritized communicating in its own language. The burden of interpretative labour fell to the weaker party (Graeber 2012; Plueckhahn 2017). Furthermore, the municipality, by dint of how the work of interpretive labor was apportioned, had created an elitist WCKNC replicating the very problem the neighborhood council system was designed to solve—a very common result of bureaucratization that has occurred in places as varied as Canada and Tanzania (Green 2000; Stern and Hall 2010).

WCKNC's 2014 election was held at a local school. When I arrived, a candidate was handing out flyers. Perhaps his presence spurred poll workers into action, because one frantically chalked a campaign exclusion zone. When finished, this poll worker explained the exclusion zone's significance to the candidate. The polling coordinator saw me enter the polling station and proffered a voter registration form. "Are you a residential, business, or community stakeholder?", she enquired. This initial normalcy disappeared over the course of the election as I witnessed robed Buddhist monks relegated to provisional voting, traumatized migrants turned away, candidates translating for Korean stakeholders, and retirees bussed in. These events so upset six incumbent board members that they filed challenges alleging significant procedural irregularities. However, DONE dismissed their challenges resulting in a council dominated by Korean-American business interests.

The challengers' letters and DONE's responses offered contrasting accounts of the election. Inspired by Charles Goodwin's emphasis on the processual nature of legitimation and

his emphasis on "socially organized ways of. . . understanding events. . . answerable to . . .a particular social group" I have found it helpful to focus on what the challengers' arguments lacked (Goodwin 1994, 606), a focus which helps to clarify why challengers failed to convince DONE. Firstly, they failed to demonstrate the appropriate interactional expertise as their challenges revealed an unfamiliarity with by-laws that required voter identification. Their contributory expertise was also lacking as they were responsible for ensuring translators and poll workers were provided. They were expected to know their neighborhood's linguistic makeup and to gauge turnout. In sum while the challenges focused on what had happened, DONE focused on why these seeming irregularities had occurred and demonstrated to its own satisfaction that irregularities resulted from the challengers' lack of expertise and inability to see things through the prism of the by-laws. Unsurprisingly DONE upheld the election results.

The newly elected board were now legitimate peripheral participants and expected to begin acquiring expertise in governance immediately. Indeed, DONE emailed instructing the new board to complete training exercises in ethics and funding, which could either be completed online or in training sessions organized by the city. The former was universal, all municipal employees and representatives received ethics training, but the latter was specific to the NC system and a prerequisite for voting on budgetary items. Additionally, a ninety-minute training was also scheduled so that members could learn the NC system's purpose, the laws governing their work, and how to conduct successful meetings. Fittingly, the training was held in a tiny, private university's sole classroom. DONE's enthusiastic director of policy lectured, presented using a whiteboard, and engaged in call and response with new board members who sat at desks like students. He explained that the NC's purpose was to communicate stakeholder's desires to

the municipality and explain the municipality's decisions to stakeholders. He also stressed the need to value the opinions of the public and one's fellows and treat each other as you would wish to be treated. Finally, he explained the implications of conforming with California's sunshine laws—laws ensuring that public meeting would be held openly and could be scrutinized by the public. One of the implications was that the majority of the board could not meet to discuss matters outside of an officially noticed meeting. In theory this rule meant that, contrary to the behavior of elite organizations—where the group is composed of people from one strata of society—like those described by Bailey or English county councils as described by Spencer, official meetings could not be used to legitimate previously arrived at consensus (Bailey 1957; Spencer 1971). Over the course of the board's existence these initial trainings would be supplemented by others designed to help the board gain further expertise in the municipality's vision.

Achieving those goals required contributory, interactional, and referred expertise. Contributory expertise in the neighborhood derived from one's circumstances—as a residents, business owners, or community activists. It required being constantly attentive to your neighbors, your neighborhood, and the municipality and its agencies. Processing this information required creating a framework for knowing through the development of techniques of coding, annotating, and representation, so as to classify information (Goodwin 1994). In his work on state systems James Scott has described development of state knowledge making projects such as cadastral maps as one of simplification—the creation of a new reality in which all information deemed irrelevant was classified as extraneous (Scott 1998). One previous board member described just such a project to me. An urban planner by trade, and former member of the neighborhood's

PLUM committee, he set up an elaborate alert system which aggregated all of the neighborhood's land-use cases. It meant that he knew what was going on in the neighborhood before its physical manifestation. This was an unusual approach, but it illustrated that maintaining contributory expertise not only involved significant effort, but also the creation of state-like systems.

However, being aware of a project was not enough. Ensuring the board's concerns were heard required significant interactional expertise. Representatives attended a Zoning Authority hearing to communicate the board's opposition to a development. Ideally the board would have sent a letter—the form of communication DONE encouraged. However, the vote occurred the evening before the meeting. There was no time to expertly craft a letter in the appropriate register outlining the board's objections. When representatives entered the room, the zoning administrator asked for an explanation of their presence, and then informed them that appearance did not substitute for an official letter. She also enquired as to whether these opinions were the board's or the PLUM committee's—significant because only the former can make a recommendation. WCKNC's position was conveyed in a formulaic manner, using previously rehearsed phrases. It was then challenged by both the developer and by a council person's staffer. They claimed WCKNC supported the development. Confronted with this confusion, the administrator decided that written proof was vital, thus further underscoring interactional expertise's importance.

The board was also expected to possess referred expertise, the ability to draw on relevant life experiences in board meetings, as the following vignette from a July 2014 WCKNC board meeting demonstrates. It was half-past-seven, WCKNC's board and an audience of stakeholders,

city workers, and developers sat silently through the controversial presentation. They stared at architectural plans trying to imagine its impact. The board began debating. Mei, a young white-collar worker who had served two terms on the board, asserted that a lack of parking meant such a development could not be approved. Geof, new to the board but a veteran of municipal politics, replied that the development was in his sub-district, where parking was plentiful. "You don't live there," he argued. He maintained that while the development deviated from the master plan, it accorded with the city's current attitude towards transit oriented design. Cathy responded that the neighborhood should be offered contributions toward a park. Geof answered, "that's why Quimby fees exist." Cathy rubbished this arguing that Quimby fees—a reference to fees a developer is required to pay to the city for the development of new recreational facilities if they are building new houses or apartments. Next the public was heard. One person objected to the proposed development because of traffic. Another worried about dust and noise. The meeting had to end at 8pm. The council president called for a vote. Geof proposed a motion supporting the development's general concept, with conditions set by the city's planning department. A tied vote. Geof's motion was rejected. Cathy proposed a motion opposing the development. The president stifled a board member, "people who arrive late shouldn't expect to contribute." The result was eight ayes and four noes. The motion passed.

The president's silencing of another board member violated the meeting's rules. Meetings are governed by Robert's Rules of Order—a system devised in 1876 based on US congressional procedure and designed to ensure that everyone's opinion is heard in a meeting—a person cannot merely be silenced once they have the floor. However, I found, as others have

before me, that the rules were divisive because of the expertise required to employ them (Reed 1990).

When the meeting ended, I and a number of younger Korean-American attendees went to a restaurant. We discussed the President's leadership which they felt was in keeping with Korean ideas about seniority and status. They labelled his leadership 'old-school' and suggested he had not read the bylaws. He was regarded as inexpert despite his longstanding as a community leader. His time management alone prompted a mixture of embarrassment and amusement. "You cannot tell someone to explain a thing that complicated in two minutes or less", one argued. His behavior was not entirely abnormal—the previous board president, also Korean, had also behaved in an inappropriate manner—he had recurrently silenced a female board member. I was also told by DONE employees, that another Korean WCKNC President had run the council with an iron fist. My interlocutors associated this controlling, paternalistic behavior with older, male, Korean immigrants. However, the Board of Neighborhood Councils (BONC)—mayoral appointees overseeing DONE and the NCS—saw this as a system-wide problem. They were concerned that a lack of referred expertise prevented the exchange of diverse opinions and knowledge adequation. They introduced of a code of conduct, as a remedy. Members were required to read the code or watch a video on it. Failure would lead to removal from office.

The Right to Talk at City Hall

In my examination of the expertise required to make spatial claims in Los Angeles's neighborhoods, I have described both historical and contemporary encounters. I now want to consider the city council's meetings and scrutinize the interactional expertise required for communities like the city's Mongolians to participate in them. Since the Brown Act's passage in 1953 the California code has required all of the state's legislative bodies to "provide an opportunity for members of the public to directly address the legislative body on any item of interest to the public, before or during the legislative body's consideration of the item . . ." (California Code 2017). I will focus on the practice of addressing the Los Angeles City Council, specifically, the language ideologies that the various parties at city council meetings produce. By language ideologies I mean the valorization of particular ways of communicating—this is a byproduct of power-relations determined by material conditions (Irvine 1989; Woolard 1998). Anthropologists, linguists, and historians have devoted much effort to ascertaining language's role in government meetings (Reed 1990; Kamensky 1997; Hull, 2010).However, Evans' recent study of the London Olympic Bid Committee's dealings with allotment gardeners is one of a few accounts to explicitly consider the relationship between language and the sorts of spatial rights that my Mongolian interlocutors desired (Evans 2017). I build on contributions like hers by describing the linguistic register and the temporal nature of speech at such meetings.

The John Ferraro Council Chamber, with its marble columns, terra-cotta floors, and ornate ceiling painting, was a majestic room. This majesty combined with the wooden pews with their burgundy cushions where the public sat and the red rope dividers to create an air of quasi-religious solemnity. Thrice weekly the city council meetings' chaotic atmosphere upended this. A

council meeting might feature protests about housing, a mariachi band, or a lion dance, but most often it would attract several disputatious gadflies. The only entirely predictable aspects of a city council meeting were the presence of the gadflies and the inevitable discussion of liens and rent escrow. The first several items would always be concerned with hearing protests, appeals, and objections to fines the Department of Building and Safety (DBS) had assessed. When members of the public presented themselves to protest these liens they frequently cited a lack of warning or the fact that they had paid the assessed fees. The Council President would often consult with Charles, the DBS' deep-voiced representative, over the veracity of these claims. Generally, the President would then resolve the matter by either ordering them to consult with Charles or by rescheduling the meeting so as to give appellant time to organize their affairs. Occasionally appellants would wander around appearing bewildered before the start of the meeting. Frequently they would then be approached by Armando Herman, a gadfly who disrupted meetings with a mixture of dancing, singing his objections to the tune of various Disney classics, and performing as Batman. He would advise appellants to be contrite and ask the council for help, which he said would lead to their council member scheduling a meeting with them. Often, they took the proffered advice and the results were routinely as he predicted they would be.

Herman's assertion that there was an appropriate way to talk about liens stemmed in part from his belief that DBS officials were frequently in error because they were overly zealous in their practices. In identifying what he saw as the ideal response his advice was essentially to resolve the problem by speaking in a particular register. His approach was not that different from how anthropologists, variously labelled new ethnographers or ethnoscientists, thought about culture in the 1950s and 1960s (Goodenough 1957; Frake 1964; Sturtevant 1964). Ward

Goodenough, for example, argued that “A society's culture consists of whatever it is one has to know or believe in order to a manner acceptable to its members” (Goodenough 1957, 167), while Charles Frake suggested, following Dell Hymes, that what one needed to know in order to speak was “a specification of what kinds of things to say in what message forms to what kinds of people in what kinds of situations” (Frake 1964, 127). For Frake learning how to talk in this fashion demonstrated an expertise in this register. Such approaches were pervasive in American society in the 1990s when the learning of American Standard English was supposed to convey an appropriate mastery that helped ensure one’s social success (Silverstein 1996). However, as Riberio and Lima observe in their discussion of interactional expertise, the only way to know such things is through phenomenological experience (Riberio and Lima 2016). What Herman had suggested, acting contritely and asking for help, worked in this very restricted situation, but ironically it was not applicable in other situations where the speaker had considerably more agency. In such situations a host of other factors came into play, particularly temporality.

A mid-afternoon in mid-March, the three member City Council’s Planning and Land-use Management (PLUM) Committee are expeditiously conducting a meeting. Three minutes in, they reach the seventh item, a proposal to re-designate a portion of a street in Westlake—the neighborhood abutting Koreatown. The chair is about to approve on consent when he realizes that someone has lodged a speaker card. “Applicant representative, we are going to move this on consent. Do you still wish to speak?” enquires the chair. The representative answers “No, if you’re willing to approve on consent then I’m good with that”. The chair, heartened by this answer, approvingly responds “I always tell people stop you know you’re ahead, so . . ..” The council member’s statement is intentionally unfinished as he cannot stop people from speaking if

they lodge cards, but he implies that the resolution of the item is in part contingent on his mood and that his mood is influenced by perceived time loss. Time loss was an issue at all of the LACC's meetings. Attending Council meetings early in the morning I would frequently witness the Council President referring to those members of the council who arrived on time as his on-time crew, while sending officers to search council offices and remind other council people to attend. Then, while making comments on items, some of the more savvy members of the public would try to budget their time, so as to speak on several items. "Save my time" they would shout.

It is my contention that this sort of time management requires a particular expertise—speaking in a specific register--and that doing so was often challenging for members of the public. To further illustrate my point I will examine the PLUM committee's handling of a discussion at a meeting in March 2014. There were only ten items on the agenda that day, but two of them concerned the same subdivision in Venice Beach. It was a controversial enough development that the planning report, council person's statement, and public testimony lasted for more than half an hour. The meeting's chair that day began by asking the public to be "very exact" in their testimony, and a few minutes later he asked that the public be "as exact as you can be." In this instance exactness referred not to giving a detailed account but to speaking in such a way as to use as little time as possible. This was further underscored when the chair, in his role as chair, attempted to bargain with a member of the public to convince them to use less time, while she attempted to request more time on the basis that she was responsible for bringing the original objection. By the 40th minute of the meeting the board's patience was clearly waning and the chair made the following exasperated statement "Look we have got a very big list here.

Opposition is evident. You have to decide do you want to win this and go home with a victory or do you want to give a speech." Despite this admonition, testimony continued on for several more minutes. However, people did begin to be more thrifty in their use of time.

The sorts of people able to turn up to a PLUM Committee meeting would ordinarily be labelled nimbys—those possessed of what Mike Davis called "an untranscendable parochialism" (Davis 2006, 203). In Davis' analysis nimbys were a powerful political force in the Southlands fully capable of asserting and even overstepping their rights, but in this instance even they needed to gain the expertise in register necessary to make their points. And on several occasions they did not. One woman despite having opted to read her testimony was so overcome with nerves that she used an abundance of verbalized pauses and failed to finish making her point. Many, despite the councilman's request to use their time wisely and to not reiterate the same ideas, merely made the same point ad nauseum. Others not realizing the time constraints attempted to illustrate their concerns with photographs or posters before curtly being told to submit them. Thus even those perceived as possessing cultural and political capital along with the necessary expertise were fallible when faced with city meetings' very particular register, with its emphasis on time management. Furthermore, irrespective of their socio-economic standing no member of the public received more time than any other.

Conclusion

The overarching argument of this chapter has been that there exists an inextricable link between rights and expertise in municipalities, and that without some semblance of the latter it is impossible for urbanites to acquire rights to spatial production. I have explored this argument

through a series of encounters between LAMA, the LAUSD, Angelenos, and the city council. This necessity for interactional expertise runs contrary to the letter of the law governing the broader Californian political system of which the NC system and the City Council are part. Specifically, the sunshine laws passed in the 1950s and 1960s were designed to make such bodies' workings more transparent and accessible to members of the public. One was not supposed to require much expertise to understand them. However, my work reveals the functioning of such institutions to be distinctly different from that embodied in legislation. Instead, the reality of the process, I have suggested is that lying beneath the rhetoric of deliberative democracy and tolerance is in fact a tendency to place the burden of comprehension and communication on the weaker entity. This is by no means a new phenomenon, in fact from the history I have discussed it is clear that such practices were common from the moment of Los Angeles's foundation. Furthermore, such disempowerment will continue as long as advocates of deliberative democracy continue to be inspired by seventeenth century town-hall democracies which they treat in an idealist fashion rather than realistically. It is necessary to cease regarding the town hall meetings as if it was an ahistorical model free of bias rather than products of a paternalistic, class-based, settler colonial system. A system which privileges the few over the the many and does not effectively address the relationship between expertise and the rights to the city.

However, the need for expertise does not mean that there is no value to these encounters. Instead they stand revealed in this chapter as vital. It is in encounters with street-level bureaucrats through the organization of community events like the basketball tournament that Mongolians gain key insights into the various forms of expertise necessary to achieve their

goal of cultural preservation. Furthermore, forums like the WCKNC can potentially allow for the development of expertise in the forms of speaking and presentation required to assert rights of spatial production. What is also readily apparent from my account is that the NCs as forums have distinct limitations with regard to directly advocating for spatial rights. This is particularly true for low-income, multicultural neighborhoods where few people possess the necessary time to learn this expertise or where their own socio-legal traditions are so distant from it. A wide variety of socio-legal traditions also makes it difficult to coalesce around a single understanding of an NC's functioning.

In my discussion of encounters that reveal the relationship between rights and expertise I have tried to pay particular attention to both the history of Los Angeles generally and specifically as it relates to language ideologies and linguistic registers. This is an element that I feel might add considerably to contemporary engagement with Lefebvre's original theorizing of the right to the city. Lefebvre's work was produced in the context of examining a swiftly changing France where the nature of provincial cities was altering and governance was becoming increasingly technocratic. This second element is of obvious value for a study like mine but the first, provinciality, is considerably less portable. In thinking about rights to spatial production in a city like Los Angeles one cannot escape the question of language and its implications for a city where much of the population not only does not speak the language of government as its first language, but also frequently does not speak the language of its neighbors. By describing the history of Los Angeles, and the experiences of LAMA and the WCKNC in their encounters with municipal government I hope that I have provided some insight into the benefits of particularly

focusing on expertise and language for discussing contemporary rights of spatial production in cities like Los Angeles.

CONCLUSION

It was not yet noon on Saturday and Munkh-Erdene and I sat outside one of Koreatown's innumerable cafes drinking *boba* (a cold Taiwanese bubble tea containing balls of tapioca) and discussing his several years in Los Angeles. Earlier in his life, he had studied graphic design in Kuala Lumpur, then worked in advertising in Ulaanbaatar, before moving on to Los Angeles. He and his family had come to the city so his wife could study accountancy. Once her education was complete they had planned to return to Ulaanbaatar. He also studied, religious studies, but mainly he worked a series of low wage jobs. During his time in Los Angeles he had been a furniture mover, a valet parker, and a security guard. When not working he engaged in homosocial activities like playing basketball; he had been an accomplished amateur in Mongolia. He also helped his wife look after their pre-pubescent daughter, born unexpectedly while they were sojourning in Los Angeles. However, the opportunities available to him in Los Angeles were limited. No one would hire him as a graphic designer, because he lacked the correct documentation, and the jobs that he had held were killing him. His back was, he felt, already permanently damaged from lifting furniture several hours a day. "I don't want to be like those Mongolians who come over here and sacrifice themselves for their children. I want a life of my own!", he confided. He went on to describe those who sacrificed themselves for their children in this manner as already dead, for they had no future of their own. Munkh-Erdene said he would rather return to Ulaanbaatar than continue in such a manner. The feeling that death was what awaited him in Los Angeles eventually led to his decision to move his family to Denver in search of better fortune.

Munkh-Erdene equated his plight, as a low-wage worker doing cash-in-hand jobs in Los Angeles's shadow economy, with death. He felt that such work offered him no future of his own but at best created one for his child. The connections that he drew between death, capitalism, and degrading labour are part of the fabric that is the United States's ongoing history. One sees it in the stories of travelers and merchants who portrayed native lives on California missions in the late 18th century as desperate ones in desperate places devoted to producing goods for the fathers to sell (Sandos 2004; Lightfoot 2005). It was equally evident in the Southern medical doctor Samuel Cartwright's mid-19th century justification of slavery as a means to ward off drapetomania, which he claimed resulted from "negro liberty—the liberty to be idle, to wallow in filth, and to indulge in improper food and drinks" (Cartwright 1851, 707). One sees it again in the rise of early 20th century when the United States occupied Haiti and American travelers appropriated the notion of the zombie from Haitian folklore to describe laborers on the Haitian American Sugar Company plantations (Métraux 1959; Murphy 2011; Hoermann 2016). And it has occurred most recently in ethnographic accounts of Latino laborers in the United States existing as *homo sacer*—a permanently deportable labor force forced to toil away in penury (Chavez 1998; De Genova 2002; Holmes 2011).

Munkh-Erdene's account not only connected recurring themes about labor practices in the United States, but also contradicted a fairly common process of incorporation. That is the suggestion that by the sweat of their brow and the power of their sinews first generation, immigrants laboring in this manner made themselves and their descendants Americans (Chavez 1991; Fujikane 2008; Saranillio 2013). Indeed, such arguments have been specifically made of Koreatown. Bonacich, Light, and Cho in their account of the meteoric rise of Korean business in

Los Angeles argued that it was in part the product of what they label "Korean Thrift." This thrift meant that "not only . . . lack of spending, but . . . hard work . . .. The immigrants may work so hard that their health suffers" (Bonacich et al. 1977, 55). Of course many Mongolians living in Los Angeles did not share Munkh-Erdene's perspective on the matter. Some regarded such labor more positively, thinking that it would secure their children's' futures, and that doing so was a worthwhile endeavor. Batmonkh, a garage owner and mechanic in his late forties, who had lived in Los Angeles since the late 1990s was one. As we sat in his office one mid-April evening, talking about the community, he remarked that too many Mongolians underestimated the degree of work necessary to survive in Los Angeles. He felt he was lucky, because his work was his passion. But even so he worked so much that his neighbors—non-Mongolians—called him the "crazy" Asian. But he felt it was all for the good. His eldest, a son, had a good job and his daughter was performing well in school. They were both beneficiaries of the labor performed by him and his wife.

My dissertation is built on exploring stories of hardship, labor and consternation like those of Munkh-Erdene and Batmonkh. These are stories of the lives that post-socialist Mongolians have experienced in Los Angeles. They tell of what they hoped to become, what they have become, and what they fear becoming. As they make clear, becoming occurs not in a vacuum but in occupying spaces and constituting particular places. I have drawn chiefly on a mixture of ideas from phenomenologically informed social science and settler-colonial studies to examine and contextualize the experiences of Los Angeles's Mongolian population (Ingold 2000; Wolfe 2006; Veracini 2010). The latter field is an interdisciplinary one defined by its commitment to the perspective that settler colonialism was about sovereignty and the

dispossession of indigenous subjects, and it is deeply concerned with the consequences of erasure, becomings, recognition, and expertise. In this concluding chapter I do three things. First, I place my findings in dialogue with the broader field of the anthropology of Mongolia. Second, I argue for the relevance of a settler-colonial perspective for anthropologists studying Los Angeles. Finally, I examine what has become a controversial issue within settler-colonial studies, that is the extent to which there can be a distinction between settlers and immigrants. And in answering that question I argue that Mongolians can indeed be settlers in Los Angeles.

What Becomes of Mongolians?

"Now that I have my green card I am going to go to Mongolia this summer and bring my son and his family to live with me here" Naran, a middle-aged freelance nail technician, said this to me with an air of resolve in her voice as we unpacked her possessions. Naran had been living in the United States since the late 1990s. She had studied at a university in Utah, and then had migrated to Southern California. Meanwhile, her father, a widower, had remained in Darkhan—Mongolia's third largest city—and raised Bat, her son. Bat was now married, worked as a police officer, and had a daughter. Over the years Naran had regularly communicated with Bat and his family via video chat. Now she was imagining a life for them in the small apartment in the wealthy, white southern Orange County beach town to which she had just moved.

Naran's time in Southern California had involved working a variety of jobs and living in almost as many neighborhoods. In no particular order, she had been a realtor in the San Fernando Valley, a bank teller in Compton, and a waitress in Koreatown. The unifying theme of her varied

experiences was the continual attempt to improve her circumstances. She felt this was not attainable in Koreatown. Like some of my other female interlocutors, who had also left the Mongolian community in Koreatown for various suburbs, Naran saw this as a logical move. To Naran moving to the suburbs meant better schools for her grand-daughter, wealthier customers for her nail business, and better job opportunities for her son and his wife. It not so far away from the Southern California settler colonial dream that boosters and developers had sold for more than a century (Fogelson 1993; Davis 2006; Star 2007). In opting for this path Naran, and others like her, rejected Koreatown and its opportunities as they associated them with unwanted becomings. However, this desire for suburbanized living did not necessarily entail a rejection of Mongolian identity. Indeed, Naran had been quite involved with LAMA at various points in her life. What united Naran, and other Mongolian suburbanites, with Munkh-Erdene, and the temporary Mongolian migrants, that I have written about in this dissertation was their desire to maintain a specifically Mongolian identity while resisting certain unwanted becomings in Los Angeles. The form this resistance takes has been shaped by the political possibilities of Los Angeles, which are the continuing by-products of settler-colonial logic. It is my contention that understanding these concerns about unwanted becomings and the forms that resistance to them take greatly enriches the anthropological literature on Mongolia.

The relationship of Anglo-American anthropology's to the study of Mongolia is a long and complicated one. Pioneering work was carried out by R.R. Marett's student Maria Czaplicka in the 1910s as part of her study of aboriginal Siberia and by Ethel Lindgren as part of her research into the Evenki in the late 1920s and early 1930s (Czaplicka 1914; Lindgren 1935). From the 1940s until the late 1980s Mongolia was almost entirely inaccessible to Western

fieldworkers. Instead research during the 1950s and 1960s was conducted on Mongolian refugees who had largely migrated to the United States from the Russian state of Kalmykia (Aberle 1953; Adelman 1960; Rubel 1963). It was only in the 1990s that Anglo-American anthropology really gained a foothold in Mongolia again with a number of researchers conducting studies of topics as varied as mobile pastoralism and the post-socialist state's attempt to forge a national identity for itself, with the largely unified goal of documenting the consequences of post-socialism and the beginning of *zah zeeliin üye* for the nation and its people (Humphrey 1992; Sneath 1993; Kaplonski 1998; Bulag 1998). Much of the anthropological research in Mongolia has continued to focus on either the national scale or on rural areas and pastoral populations. But of late there has been a turn to the investigation of urban phenomena in Ulaanbaatar and other *aimag* (provincial) centers (Zimmerman 2012; Smith 2015; Plueckhhan 2017). Against this background of a changing field that continues to concern itself with the effects of the market and capitalism for Mongolia, I suggest that the anthropological study of Mongolian migrants, like Naran and Munkh-Erdene, with their specific concerns about becomings can make worthwhile contributions to the sub-field. Specifically, I propose that work on Mongolian emigration can enlarge and enrich the sub-field's established understandings of three spheres, mobility, morality, and consumption. These three spheres have been central to the emerging post-socialist nation's sense of national identity. After the Cold War ended Mongolia's politicians sought to create national identity that was grounded in mobility—specifically a representation of nomadic herding as the idea of the traditional way of life. It also emphasized a new morality based in capitalism, and allied with willingness to consume.

Contemporary anthropological work on Mongolian mobility has focused on two distinct questions, how are mobile pastoralists' movements understood by themselves and others, and what new forms of movement have emerged since the collapse of the socialist state. Scholars considering the first question have both drawn attention to the various emic understandings of movement that mobile pastoralists have developed that challenge various Western misconceptions about pastoral life (Humphrey 1995; Sneath 2007; Murphy 2014). Daniel Murphy, for example, has observed that for Mongolian pastoralists "landscape actively participates in the constitution of . . . territorialities rather than acting as an inert "arena" in which herders navigate "nature" like players on the stage" (Murphy 2014, 773). The consequence of such a landscape is a tendency to comprehend risk and fortune in very different ways from those who live in agricultural societies. For the latter "landscape is sedentary" it tends "to highlight spaces at the expense of places" and thus such people perceive "landscapes . . . as largely homogeneous" (Pedersen 2009, 135). This perception is not the product of any inherent cultural difference, but as anthropologists examining various populations have stressed it reflects the radically different taskscapes of these two groups (Ingold 2000; Hsatrup 2009; Tilley 2012; Trovalla 2015). Anthropological work on migratory taskscapes thus offers an opportunity to examine how even a largely urban Mongolian population, which Anne Fengers Benwell argues retains these sensibilities, deals with the forms of mobility it encounters in landscapes, like Los Angeles, shaped by those with agricultural sensibilities (Benwell 2013, 242). Specifically, it is possible to attend to how landscapes of seeming similitude formed through specific histories of movement associated with Hispanic and Anglophone settler-colonialism and offering particular forms of mobility affect Mongolian understandings of risk and opportunity. In my own research

new forms of mobility combines with a Mongolian willingness to take risks to actually produce a paradoxical result, Mongolian immobility. In this context what became particularly interesting was how my Mongolian interlocutors responded to immobility by seeking out opportunities, such as trucking or in Naran's case working as a freelance nail technician, that would even in the face of immobility offer them the possibility of uncertain and risky movement.

Research on new forms of movement in Mongolia has primarily consisted of examining the continual movement between the *khoodoo* (countryside) and the *khot* (city) in response to fluctuations in the both the nation's economy and environmental circumstances. Scholars like Ole Bruun have documented how in the early 2000s many herders were responding to winter *dzud* (literal translation—natural disaster) by selling their herds and moving to Ulaanbaatar and other *aimag* centers (Bruun 2006). Similarly, in response to financial hardship in Ulaanbaatar during the 1990s many Mongolians migrated to the *khoodoo* and began to herd animals (Benwell 2013). To a lesser extent scholars, like Pedersen and Højer have documented the forms of movement that urbanities have developed since *zah zeeliin üye* began (Pedersen and Højer 2008). For many the economy's collapse in the 1990s meant an endless number of creditors and ceaseless movement through the city to try and avoid paying for what one could not afford (Pedersen 2016). Much of this movement is contingent upon kinship networks and studying international migration provides an opportunity to examine what sorts of movement Mongolians make when their kinship networks are attenuated. In Los Angeles I found that there was a tendency for people to either accentuate other ties, or to strike out on their own entirely without reference to the community. Whilst I did not investigate how gender shaped Mongolian attitudes to movement, the latter practice of striking out on one's own more often seemed to be the case

amongst women, like Naran. In fact Naran even went so far as to suggest that for Mongolian men who arrived in Los Angeles as singletons there was a tendency to always be thinking about the return, whereas for single Mongolian women there was a far greater likelihood that they would remain. it seems likely Naran was suggesting was that the freedoms available to Mongolian women in Los Angeles were a far greater attraction. She regarded Mongolia as overwhelmingly and uncomfortably patriarchal.

Changes in movement are not the only thing that anthropologists have noted since *zah zeeliin üye* began. There has also been the emergence of a strongly condemnatory discourse on corruption and immorality that is reflected in the media, popular culture, and social media conversations. In part this is identifiable as part of a larger discourse that dates back to late socialism and encompasses varied socialist nations (Sampson 1987; Ledeneva 1998; Humphrey 2012). Since post-socialism began, discourse about corruption has only intensified. As one Eastern European anthropologist acutely observed, it was as if once the system was no longer to blame the international community began to blame the people for capitalism's failures in the former socialist world. Both Zimmermann and Sneath, who have studied this phenomenon extensively in rural Mongolia, argue that there is a tendency particularly amongst INGOs to fail to distinguish between bribery and obligatory relationships (Sneath 2002; 2006). Equally Zimmermann notes that in rural areas one is often torn between the mores associated with one's work and those of one's kinship network (Zimmermann 2012). The problem of distinguishing between corruption and obligation is intensified when one is dealing with migrants, as I have described with respect to LAMA's dealings with the LAUSD. When LAMA's President offered the custodian money after the end of their event both the custodian and LAUSD, to whom he

reported it, interpreted it as a bribe. However, from LAMA's perspective this is decidedly more complex, such a gesture could be read as a sign of respect for someone who had aided them in organizing their event. Studies of Mongolian migration thus create an opportunity to explore how such practices of obligation travel, are understood by people inhabiting the places to which Mongolians migrate, and the consequences of those incidents for Mongolian attitudes to such practices.

Closely aligned with Mongolian critiques of corruption are Mongolian critiques of capitalist activity more generally. A number of scholars have identified how for older Mongolians overly capitalist behavior is associated, with if not immorality then at least highly undesirable characteristics (Humphrey 1993; Pedersen 2008; Empson 2012). Particularly important work on this topic was Wheeler's investigation of the longue duree history of trading and markets in Mongolia and demonstrated that commercial activity has not always been the sole province of the Chinese in Mongolia (Wheeler 2004). Studies of Mongolian international migration can offer a considerable opportunity to understand the emerging form of Mongolia's post-socialist economy as many overseas Mongolians are specifically studying business, with the goal of returning to Mongolia (Benwell 2013). There is thus an opportunity to examine both what they are learning from whom and how they intend to apply it. In addition to this formal education many of these students work a series of low-wage jobs whilst studying, which provides them with an altogether different education in the workings of market capitalism. Furthermore, as many of these students are sons and daughters of the well-off, this also offers an opportunity to think about how they regard the relationship between labor and class position given the labor that they are obliged to undertake in cities like Los Angeles.

The emergence of new patterns of consumption has been a relatively under-examined topic within the anthropology of Mongolia until recently. Billé, for example has discussed how some Mongolians have responded extremely negatively to the increasing presence of Chinese and other foreign restaurants in Ulaanbaatar (Billé 2015). Meanwhile from a completely different perspective, Peter Marsh has described the rise of consumer culture within Mongolian Hip-Hop music, which he has characterized as a result of "an emerging middle class with cash to spend on goods, luxuries and entertainment" (Marsh 2010, 349). Equally though Marsh observes that the country is becoming increasingly deeply divided into a land of haves and have nots. While some have money to burn others do not. And as Rebecca Empson has suggested, this has reinforced rumors of wealth being acquired through illicit means (Empson 2012). The rise in new patterns of consumption has been consequential for the purchase of comestibles and consumables, but it has also led to a refashioning of Mongolian bodies as acknowledged objects of erotic desire. Such desires were officially frowned upon during the socialist period (Terbish 2013). One response to the new acceptance of desire has been a rise of plastic surgery amongst Mongolian women, for whom beauty is now regarded as being linked to *hishig* (Waters 2016). Migration research raises interesting questions with regards to these emergent patterns of consumption, as for many Mongolians overseas there is often an attempt to present oneself as rich through the effective management of social media profiles. However, just as in Mongolia this presentation of self does not necessarily tally with the quotidian labor that one engages in or the places in which one resides (Waters 2016). It is equally worth considering how changing patterns of consumption are shaping Mongolian attitudes to travel more broadly. While conducting my research I often observed Mongolians living in Los Angeles acting tour guides for

visiting Mongolians who wished not just to purchase consumer goods, but also to purchase experiences in the United States, like visiting the Grand Canyon or playing the slot machines in Las Vegas. Equally amongst my interlocutors the converse was also occurring. Some of those who were able to visit Mongolia had taken to touring the countryside on hunting trips and the like when they returned. For others visiting the *khoodoo* was a spiritual retreat to the "real" Mongolia that allowed for a reconfirmation of their origins.

We need to talk about settler colonialism, in Los Angeles?

"The cycle club might be a problem, they ride through the neighborhood regularly and claim to be stakeholders but I have checked and their club is located outside of the district", so said the youngish Department of Neighborhood Empowerment (DONE) staffer overseeing the election. It was early 2014 and I was observing the neighborhood council elections for the Boyle Heights Neighborhood Council. I had come from Koreatown, which was only 6 miles away on foot, but felt psycho-geographically far further away. Koreatown is to the west of the Los Angeles river while Boyle Heights is to the east, and as the historian Greg Hise once argued "a distinction between west side and east side" is "a foundational dichotomy for thinking about space in Los Angeles" (Hise 2007, 48). The enduring association of the neighborhoods east of the river is with labour, it has always been where the city's working class resided kept away from the monied westside through property prices, redlining, and other means.

Boyle Heights was a historic neighborhood that had once been home to a large multicultural community that included Jews and Latinos, but the construction of the freeway

system had helped end that and now it was almost entirely the latter. Throughout my fieldwork there was an ongoing concern amongst the neighborhood's residents that gentrification was coming to Boyle Heights. The bicycle was but one symbol of the advance of middle-class professionals whom the residents of Boyle Heights felt threatened to overrun the neighborhood and price them and their children out (Lugo and Mattheis 2017). Many of the neighborhood's inhabitants believed that themselves, their taskscape and their landscape would be replaced if they did not oppose gentrification. They had examples of this from was what had happened earlier in the twenty-first century in neighborhoods like Silver Lake, Eagle Rock, and Los Feliz. Gentrification was not the only term used to describe this phenomena though, on occasion some residents also used the term colonialism when talking about Boyle Height's future. Here I reflect on that usage and think about how this recent usage of the term might connect to the way that I have used colonialism in my dissertation, and its implications for the anthropology of Los Angeles.

Ostensibly this is a study of Mongolian international migration to Los Angeles. The study is a means of employing a new lens for the anthropology of Mongolia, one that allows it to extend its scope beyond national borders and the region of high Asia to trace how post-socialist Mongolians have fared when they encounter settler-colonialism in Los Angeles. However, it also asks the question, what might the study of settler colonialism offer those anthropologists interested in the study of Los Angeles? As demonstrated by my brief account of a neighborhood council election in Boyle Heights this is neither an abstract question nor an academic indulgence, it is instead one that is of practical consequence for the lives of Angelenos. The accounts of Munkh-Erdene's and Batmunkh's positions on laboring in Los Angeles that I discussed in the

introduction further bring to the fore this central concern of my dissertation—the various becomings that post-socialist Mongolians and their fellow Angelenos undergo by living in the city and what this reveals about the perpetuation of the city's settler-colonial system.

Scholars like Elizabeth Povinelli, Glenn Coulthard, and Kevin Bruyneel have previously made the connection between settler colonial liberalism and ideas about becoming (Povinelli 2002; Bruyneel 2007; Coulthard 2013). Bruyneel, for example, has argued "there is a disavowal . . . that the USA is a settler colonial state, as well . . . a liberal democratic one. These . . . forms are not contradictory, they are mutually constitutive" (Bruyneel 2013, 319). Thus from his perspective narratives of equality in the United States are built upon and sustained by settler-colonialism. Jessica Cattelino would seem to be of the same mind when, in her annual review, she argued quite convincingly that "inquiry into settler colonialism . . . has the potential to strengthen the anthropology of the United States by accounting for the ways that being a settler society structures all American lives" (Cattelino 2010, 282). In this section I begin by examining how it was that the anthropology of the United States and the anthropology of Native North America became strangers to one another, before going to demonstrate the truth of Cattelino's statement with regard to Los Angeles and its implications for contemporary Angelenos.

The rationale for such shifts in anthropology's scholarly focus away from Native North America is complex and not easily explained. Starn, for example, has characterized it as deriving from the rise of Red Power in the 1960s and an attempt by apologetic, anti-imperialist anthropologists to "distance themselves from the real and imagined crimes of their predecessors" (Starn 2011, 184). However, there are also the factors of the declining Boasian consensus after World War Two—by this I mean the emergence of anthropologists like Leslie White, William

Lloyd Warner, and Julian Steward with research programs that were not focused on the sorts of questions Boas posed; an increasing interest in government service—anthropologists increasingly sought to do applied research; and once the Cold War began funding from a variety of government sources that opened up greater opportunities for research in distant yet politically pivotal areas like South-East Asia and Micronesia (Price 2016). All these were elements which moved Indigenous North America from what had once been anthropology's centre to its periphery. In studies of the United States, this was replaced by an ever-increasing focus on perceived social problems and the fate of immigrant and ethnic communities (Schwartzman 1993; Baba 2009; Gilkeson 2010; Price 2016).

This marginalization of the study of Native Americans and American settler-colonialism in the practice of the anthropology of the United States lies in stark contrast to the anthropological traditions of settler-colonial states elsewhere in the Americas (Freyre 1986; Ortiz 1995; Gamio 2010). In nations like Brazil, Cuba, and Mexico "native" anthropologists built upon the concept of culture to create fields that sought to strengthen their nations as imagined communities (Benessaieh 2016). The scholars involved in such projects have long been attentive to claims that the settler-colonial experience "has conditioned not only Indigenous peoples and their lands and the settler societies that occupy them, but all political, economic and cultural processes that those societies touch" (Morgensen 2011, 53). The significance of this settler colonialism for settler nations has also been attended to by American anthropologists studying in these nations (Stephens 2002; Alonso 2008). In Canada, an Anglophone and Francophone settler colony, whose anthropological tradition has been influenced by that of the United States, the necessity of reflecting on both the settler-colonial past and present has long been evident (Brody

2002; Plaice 2006). While these foundational accounts largely focused on the nation state, my work is more in line with Alejandro Lugo's study of Ciudad Juarez. He observed of that city that "many of the sociocultural markers of empire . . . as well as the unequal social relations that produced these markers, have persisted, with minor alterations, for more than four hundred years" (Lugo 2008, 1-2). Similarly, I have argued in this dissertation that the Los Angeles that my interlocutors encounter is not just one upon which settler-colonialism has left a mark but one in which it continues to flourish to this very day informing a variety of quotidian activities and mundane interactions. This flourishing was evident in neighborhoods like Koreatown where the planting of trees was linked to a settler-colonial notion of recognition. It was present in places like Boyle Heights where the idea of wealth as worth was used as a justification for the removal of existing communities to replace them with culture creators and more expensive rental properties and restaurants. And it was present in the way in which the city marketed its various populations' cultures through naming those it deemed worthy.

In this dissertation I began with the understanding that cities are specific legal entities with a particular socio-spatial histories (Soja 1996; Blomley 2004; Valverde 2012). These histories are reflected in everything from the planting of trees to the enforcement of laws (Herbert 2005; Braverman 2008). However, it is arguably most evident in matters pertaining to immigration enforcement. As attitudes to immigrants noticeably hardened during the Obama presidency relations between the Federal government—notionally responsible for regulating foreign affairs—and various local governments have grown increasingly complex. Some municipal and county governments have been more than willing to co-operate with Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) while others, like Los Angeles that have come to regard

themselves as sanctuary cities, have not. The result of these distinctly different approaches has been the increasing evidence of the jurisdictionally complex relationship not just between the state and its municipalities, but between neighboring municipalities and between municipalities and their counties. To illustrate this in the most mundane terms consider the following example from Los Angeles—where during the Obama years the Los Angeles county sheriff's department cooperated with ICE, while the LAPD did not. In Los Angeles the bulk of public transportation within the municipality is provided by the county. The contract for enforcing law on the county transportation system was held by the sheriff's department. A county bus or train or train station was thus under the jurisdiction of the sheriff, even if it lay within the boundaries of the city of Los Angeles. Fare-dodging was exceedingly common and as a result the sheriff's department instigated random sweeps and checks. I had cause to think about this as I returned from observing the neighborhood council election in Boyle Heights. While waiting in the subway station for my train I was approached by a fellow passenger as we exchanged pleasantries he asked me if I had seen sheriffs in the station this afternoon. I replied that they had come and gone. He seemed relieved and admitted that he had not paid the fare. As I began the long train ride back to my apartment in Koreatown and reflected on that conversation I realized how exposed immigrant fare dodgers were. Their vulnerability derived from a state of affairs in which jurisdictions overlay one another in complex almost incomprehensible and unpredictable ways a state referred to by some socio-legal scholars as a multi-layered jurisdictional patchwork (Versanyi et al. 2012). Scrutinizing this through a settler colonial studies lens leads one to the question of how cities' specific settler-colonial histories have shaped developments around policing and attitudes to immigration. In the case of Los Angeles I have argued that settler

colonialism shaped the city's concern with recognition through occupation, such that populations like the Mongolians and the Koreans strove to preserve themselves through increasing their visibility. The other side of this concern with occupation was a concern with eliminating nonconforming others, especially native others. The historian Kelly Lytle Hernández has done the crucial work of linking Los Angeles's history of imprisoning black and brown bodies to its history of eliminating native ones (Hernández 2017). She argues that this is a specific and local history of elimination through imprisonment, which dates back the city's Mexican era when indigenous peoples were routinely imprisoned and then forced to labour on chain gangs.

Given both this history of settler-colonial elimination and its continued significance, the anthropological study of Los Angeles with its interdisciplinary heritage and attentiveness to power would seem an excellent candidate for a reconsideration of the consequences of settler colonialism. This is particularly true of those many anthropologists studying Los Angeles, who having been influenced in part by the work of the loose affiliation of influential planning scholars, historians, and geographers, known informally as the Los Angeles school, have already become adept at scrutinizing practices of spatialization in Los Angeles, particularly as they relate to issues of race, gender, and class (Hyde 2000; Peterson 2006; Lugo 2013). As these scholars have already called attention to the presence of neo-colonial practices as evidenced in the proposed development of places like Boyle Heights and Downtown Los Angeles they are already close to assessing the role of settler-colonialism in structuring Los Angeles's spaces. A recently edited volume by Melissa King and Jennifer Bahn on the anthropology of Los Angeles that aimed at offering "contemporary anthropological perspectives on LA itself" is a good example of the interdisciplinary thinking that makes the anthropology of Los Angeles an excellent field

for engagement with settler colonialism. Despite it being an anthropological text there were chapters by scholars from a number of fields, and the two contributing historians drew the necessary attention to the presence of Native Americans in the city (King and Bahn 2017). Following in Hernandez's footsteps I believe it is necessary for those focusing on what they label neo-colonial formulations, such as are found in the gentrification of Boyle Heights, to connect them with the city's settler-colonial history. It then becomes possible to argue that these are in fact not new instances of colonialism but instead the results of sustained continuation of settler-colonial logics.

While disciplines like history and archaeology have been live to the presence of Native Americans in Los Angeles the majority of the city's inhabitants have not been. There is a tendency for people to fail to acknowledge a Native presence in American cities, like Los Angeles, and it is routinely remarked upon by scholars studying both contemporary and historical Native populations (Lobo 2001; Fixico 2006; Rosenthal 2012). In the case of Los Angeles it is made all the more remarkable because of the size of the community and its antiquity. Not only were indigenous people from Baja California some of the original settlers in Los Angeles the local Tongva and other California Natives performed much of the labor in the city until the late 18th century (Lightfoot 2005; Hernandez 2017). Moreover, as anthropologists, like John Price, Shirley Fiske, and Joan Weibel-Orlando, working on the indigenous populations of Native North America have noted since at least the 1960s—when Federal programs began relocating Native Americans to urban areas—Los Angeles was one of the early centers of Pan-Indianism (Price 1968; Fiske 1977; Weibel-Orlando 1984).

The failure to acknowledge urban Native Americans' presence is itself the product of a broader tendency in settler-colonial ideologies which has long structured cities as emblematic of modernity and civilization while consigning "pure", primitive, indigenous peoples to uncultivated nature (Léclere 2017). Such practices are used to legitimate ongoing operations of colonization and dispossession. They justify a lack of engagement with indigenous people still present in the landscape, and as Puketapu-Dentice et al argue represent a failure to incorporate indigenous ideas and concepts into the urban landscape (Puketapu-Dentice, Connelly, and Thompson-Fawcett 2017). Moreover, without wishing to impute any particular value to urbanism, the enduring equation of Native Americans with the rural is incorrect, such a position obscures a lengthy history of urbanism in the Americas; a history that long predated any contact with Europeans (Forbes 1998; 2001). One is left to conclude that the equation of Native Americans with the rural is a symptom of what Grant Arndt has labelled settler agnosia (Arndt 2016). This is "pattern of perceptual and cognitive failures" that means one does not connect the specific presence, or in the case urban areas, perceived absence of indigenous people with a broader system of domination (Arndt 2016, 466). In the wake of this agnosia it has been left to historians and others to shape our understanding of these events. An anthropology of Los Angeles cognizant not just of this as history but as the structuring of the contemporary would be well placed to capture something essential about contemporary American existence.

Can Mongolians settle?

"When we first came to Los Angeles we were like Marco Polo. Everyday we made new discoveries and when we came home in the evening we would talk and tell each other about what

we had discovered". This was how Bayaarmaa, who had come to Los Angeles as a student in the late 1990s, described to me her first memories of life in Los Angeles's Koreatown to me. The tone of her voice conveyed a nostalgia for that period and the pleasure she had associated with these daily discoveries was obvious. Both Koreatown and Bayaarmaa had changed since then. Infrastructural damage caused during the 1992 Los Angeles uprising had largely been repaired and Koreatown was gentrifying, as was evident from the increasing presence of white professionals, new high-rise apartments, and by the increasing attention that Koreatown's night time economy was garnering from the LAPD. Bayaarmaa, for her part, had become a white-collar worker and had managed to buy a house in Los Angeles County where she now lived, with some of her family.

Historians consider Marco Polo, to whom Bayaarmaa compared herself and her Mongolian roommates, a problematic figure. Scholars argue over whether the medieval merchant, proto-anthropologist, and travel writer even existed, let alone journeyed to China (Wood, 1996; Jackson 1998; Wolfe 2014). What is agreed though is that elimination of the natives and occupation of their land were neither the goal nor the outcome of the trips that traders like Polo made along the silk roads. Polo's travelogue did however serve as an important source for Christopher Columbus—one of the Age of Discovery's principal figures (Wallis 1992,18). And it was Columbus and his fellow sailors and navigators who inextricably linked the act of discovering indigenous landscapes with occupation and elimination (Hixson 2013). Bearing in mind the compromised role of discovery in the history of North America, what then did it mean for Bayaarmaa and her friends to imagine their initial time in Los Angeles as one of discovery? My argument throughout this dissertation has been that in the settler colonial city of

Los Angeles this continual process of what Bayaarmaa has described as daily discoveries is in fact an incremental, cumulative process of settling, becoming, and creating settler landscapes in Los Angeles. Indeed, here I conclude by demonstrating one final time that there currently exists no other possibility for Mongolian migrants dwelling and becoming in Los Angeles beyond settling.

Earlier in this conclusion I argued that studying the lives of Mongolian immigrants in Los Angeles could enrich the anthropology of Mongolia's understandings of how Mongolian lives had transformed in response to *zah zeeliin üye*. This was particularly true with regard to understanding how Mongolian ideas about mobility, consumption, and morality have changed. However, my study of those Mongolians who dwell in Los Angeles, like Bayaarmaa, Naran, Munkh-Erdene and Batmunkh, and their relationships to settler colonial practice and logic also contributes to a series of ongoing debates within the interdisciplinary field of settler colonial studies over whether the immigrants to settler-colonies are themselves always settlers. I argue that because both their contemporary national identity and their representation within western orientalizing texts defines them as a people continually on the move and unwilling to settle, Mongolians who settle in Los Angeles make a particular contribution to such discussions by demonstrating the effects that settler-colonial logics of occupation may have on migrant mobility (Bulag 2002; Sneath 2007; Myadar 2011).

The question of whether migrants are necessarily settlers has proven to be an emotive and divisive topic not just for indigenous populations and minorities in settler-colonial states, but also for settler-colonial studies scholars who write on the question. Those calling for a distinction between settler and migrants have argued that indigeneity is itself a problematic modernist

framing that reflects naturalizing far right and anti-immigrant discourse and that, moreover, settlers and immigrants should be distinguished on the basis of whether they are establishing sovereignty and creating a polity or merely residing in one that already exists (Béteille 1998; Kuper 2003; Sharma and Wright 2008; Veracini 2013; 2016). On the other hand those who are opposed to distinguishing between the two categories contend that, settlement is defined by presence and the intention to stay, even subordinated and racialized migrants can adopt the eliminatory logics of settler colonialism, and that what defined settlement was an unwillingness on the part of migrants to fully accept the radical specificity of the connection that indigenous people had to their taskscapes (Lawrence and Dua 2005; Fujikane and Okamura 2008; Saranillo 2013; Wolfe 2013).

I have argued that Mongolians like Bayaarmaa, by dint of their very presence in Los Angeles, are settlers, and that the conversion of people who pride themselves on moving into settlers demonstrates the efficacy of the settler-colonial system. However, this should not be interpreted as justification for adopting the position that tout court all immigrants to Los Angeles are necessarily settlers. It is instead an argument that one's attitude to movement is not a ready shield against settler colonialism. The field of Chicano studies is a good location from which to understand the complexity of the question of whether immigrants are by dint of their presence in a colonized land settlers (Sanchez and Pita 2014; Alberto 2016; Pulido 2017). There exists an exceedingly complex relationship between Chicano's, a Mexican-American political identity that asserts descent from the Aztecs, and the concept of indigeneity. In particular, this is the case because of Aztlán—Mexican lands in the Southwestern United States relinquished with the signing of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo and regarded by Chicanos as the Aztecs ancestral

homeland (Vigil 2012). Those same lands are also the home of indigenous populations who regard the Chicano as being non-indigenous colonizers descended from the mixing of native Mexicans and Spanish colonists. Non-indigenous in that they do not have the same sort of cosmological relationship with the landscape that they create that those who are indigenous do. Such positioning does not deny the Chicanos a native identity, but instead denies the equation of one's ethno-racial background as a native with indigeneity, which in this particular discourse is premised upon practice and being part of a particular community.

In mentioning the case of the Chicanos I am not setting out to deconstruct or challenge their self-identification as native. Both the public's and the academy's responses to Allan Hanson's problematic discussion of the seeming fictiveness of certain aspects of Maori culture in a 1989 article demonstrate the danger for anthropologists in engaging in such practices (Hanson 1989; 1991). As scholars like Elizabeth Povinelli, Jean Jackson, and Jessica Cattelino have observed, to present indigenous people as political actors tends to frame their cultures as inauthentic. This is because the role assigned to the colonized is to represent the purity of the imagined, national past not the complexity of either the nation's actual history or its contemporary existence (Jackson 1989; Povinelli 2002; Cattelino 2010). It is for such reasons that Laura Pulido has cautioned that "I do not think white geographers should rush to study the dynamics I have outlined. White people studying conflict between racially subordinated groups is ethically and politically loaded" (Pulido 2017, 8). This is not my intent. In mentioning the conundrum that the Chicanos pose for scholars I am merely seeking to demonstrate the importance of context. What makes Chicanos important to those studying former Spanish

colonial spaces, like Los Angeles, is that they destabilize any neat attempt to equate being of native descent with indigeneity.

Keeping these complexities in mind, I now return to explaining my conclusion that Mongolians living in Los Angeles, in spite of a national identity tied to nomadism, can be considered settlers. I would suggest that those Mongolians who came intending to stay, who have in fact secured their place in Los Angeles, and/or those who own property are settler-colonizers. This would include people like Bayaarmaa. For them being in Los Angeles afforded opportunities that simply could not be matched by remaining in Mongolia. However, that leaves several other groups within in Los Angeles's Mongolian population: largest amongst these are those who are here for educational purposes; next are those like Munkh-Erdene, who I discussed at the beginning of the chapter, and who is unable to stay permanently as he lacks the legal status; finally there are those that do not own property, like Naran. The case of each of these groups is complicated. To begin with those sojourning, while they are temporary at best during their time in Los Angeles their presence is consequential for the landscape. They act to shape and change it in ways that do not necessarily accord with the ontologies of the city's native inhabitants. To consider how it is only necessary to state that even sojourners, provided they have an address in a neighborhood, can join the neighborhood council and impact planning policy. Indeed, during my time observing the WCKNC there were several members of the board who left to move either elsewhere in the United States or in the world. The sole requirement for being on the council was that one met the stakeholder criteria at the time of the election, and continued to meet them until one left the board. The council system, reflecting Los Angeles's history as a

sanctuary city also was entirely uninterested in one's immigration status. Recognizable presence not citizenship was the relevant criterion.

Moving on, those like Munkh-Erdene who are unable to stay, might seem to fall into a category of failed settler. In an article from the early 1990s Leo Chavez discussed the attempts of undocumented Latino migrants to settle in San Diego (Chavez 1991). Drawing on Arnold van Gennep's notion of a rite of passage Chavez argued that in coming to the United States, and eventually trying to settle, migrants underwent a territorial rite of passage. Successful settlement resulted in incorporation to the nation. However, even those who were not fully incorporated as settlers accumulated a series of socio-economic ties and links, As one of Chavez's interlocutors informed him "Anyone can buy a house . . . In Los Angeles I have cousins who are illegal, completely illegal like me. One of them . . . has bought two homes" (Chavez 1991, 267). Thus even those migrants existing in a liminal state are capable of possessing property and thus by extension of fulfilling the basic requirements to be a settler.

Finally, even those who do not formally own property, like Naran, may still involve themselves in Los Angeles's settler-colonial political system. Indeed, as we have seen the very attempt to persist in Los Angeles as a Mongolian while preserving something of oneself requires that one become a settler. Mine is not a condemnatory ethical argument in this regard it is merely a statement of fact. To persist in Los Angeles even for a relatively short space of time requires abasing oneself to the municipality's established settler-colonial logics. It cannot be helped. However, Mongolians should be aware of this conundrum given the post-socialist development of Mongolia as an ethnic indigenous nation designed to preserve them in the face of perceived assimilatory aggression, particularly from the Chinese. For these reasons property ownership for

foreigners is limited, foreign proselytizing is a crime, many people have opposed the presence of foreign mining consortiums, and foreign businesses and signs more generally. Mongolia is a realized indigenous state whose population are live to what they perceive as the dangers of potential settlement. It may therefore seem ironic that by moving to Los Angeles they participate in the perpetuation of a settler-colonial city.

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