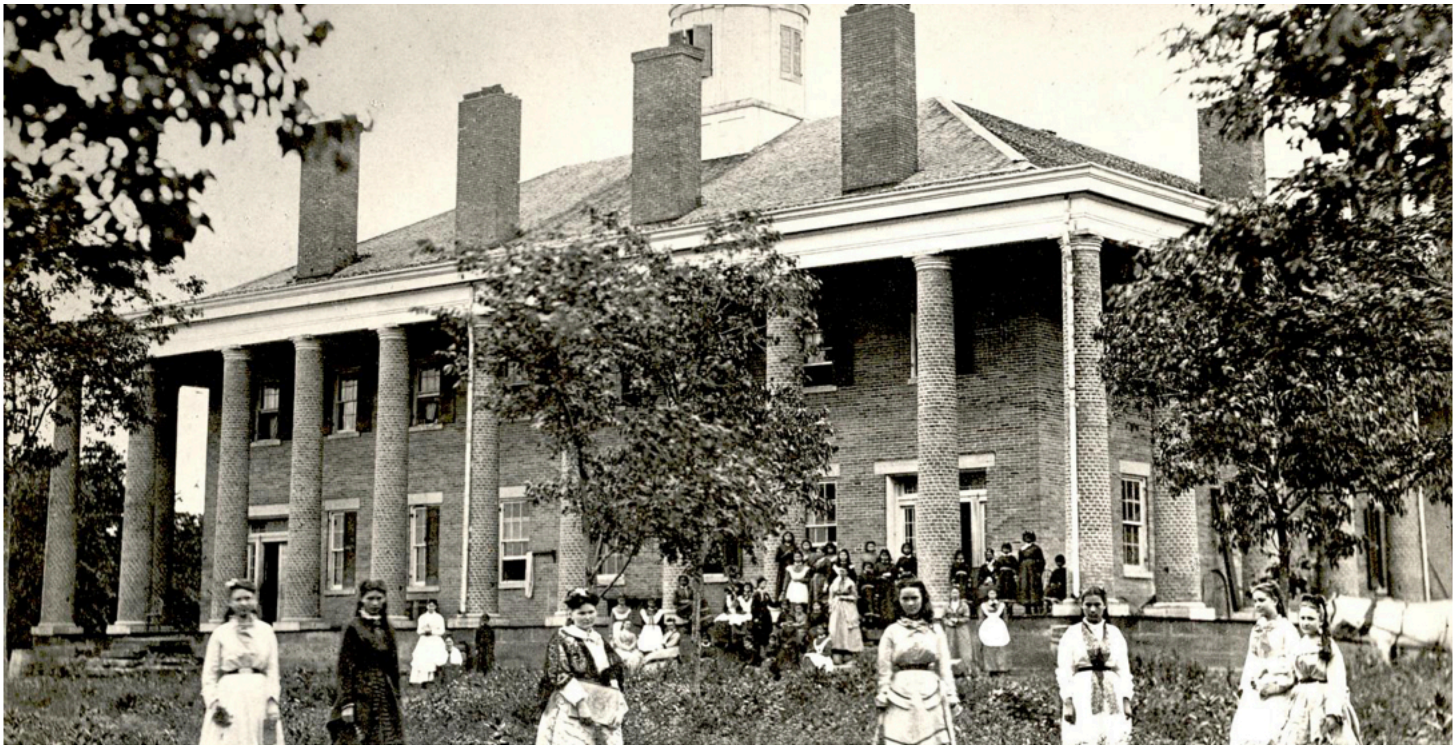
What is Regional about Critical Regionalism? Questions of National-Statism, Indigenous Politics, and Global Capital

AUTHOR
Ginger Nolan



Example of the Cherokee Doric.
L.C. Handy Studio, "Female seminary - Graduating class at Park Hill, Cherokee Nation," February 17, 1905, Oklahoma Historical Society.

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Two Models of Regionality

The concept of *region* has long lent itself to diverse adaptations, being suggestive not so much of bounded purviews and defined scalar categories, but of connective tissues related to geopolitics, climate, resource zones, ethnicity, and material cultures, or—in some other cases—allied forms of political resistance. This variability mirrors the diverse ways scholars have invoked the concept of critical regionalism in different disciplines during the last forty years. The term critical regionalism first appeared in architectural texts written by Alexander Tzonis and Liane Lefaivre and, shortly after, by Kenneth Frampton in the early 1980s.[1] A decade later, the concept was taken up in the fields of English and Comparative Literature. By the first decade of the twenty-first century, scholars were employing critical regionalism in ways that often bore little resemblance to how an earlier generation of architects glossed the term. Since "region" generally denotes a form of relationality between places (rather than a particularly-scaled circumscription of territory), the question is: what kinds of relationships between what types of places and connected through what systems of power or, conversely, united against what systems of power?

Today, amid enthusiasm for theoretical terms and models that suggest ways of mediating relationships between places —e.g., pluriverses, "glocality," regionalisms, and the paradigm of translation—it is worth returning to architects' formulation of critical regionalism to ask what model of regionality they promulgated, through what rhetorical sleights of hand, and to what effect. I argue that a certain model of regionality—one I call *nested regionality*—was operative in Frampton's two influential essays on the topic. Nested regionality implies a harmonious subsumption of differently scaled polities and systems of power within one another (like nesting Russian dolls), beginning with the scale of the building site and moving outward to the province, the nation-state, and global capital. Difference is managed through the subsumption of variation within larger systems like imperialism and global capitalism. I then contrast nested regionality to what I call *disjunctive regionality*. The latter describes a splintered concatenation between differently-scaled and differently-empowered political bodies and systems such that these systems are drawn into relationship with each other—supportive or conflictual—while the fundamental tensions between them (the unassimilable remainders) coexist in tension with each other, rather than being subsumed.[2]

To illustrate nested regionality, I focus on Frampton's two main essays on critical regionalism. First, because his essay

Recent notions of critical regionalism advanced by scholars in the humanities contrast with Kenneth Frampton's theory of critical regionalism and its "nested" model of regionality. Architectural strategies of nation-building employed by the Cherokee, Chickasaw, Choctaw, Muscogee, and Seminole Nations in the late nineteenth century demonstrate what an anticolonial version of critical regionalism might look like—one that departs from Frampton's prescriptions.

PROJECT

The Region: Architectural Histories of a Naturalized Concept

“Towards a Critical Regionalism: Six Points for an Architecture of Resistance” remains the most influential articulation of critical regionalism within the field of architecture and served as a source for Frederic Jameson, who brought critical regionalism to the attention of literary scholars; second, because Frampton’s texts raise some important political problematics, even while eschewing a clear or trenchant political position.[3] As an example of disjunctive regionality, I then analyze the politics undergirding the nineteenth-century civic architecture of the Five Tribes (comprised of the Cherokee Nation, the Chickasaw Nation, the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma, the Muscogee [Creek] Nation, and the Seminole Nation of Oklahoma). These civic buildings attest to disjunctive relationships between overlapping spheres of political and economic sovereignty, as they supported Native efforts to resist subsumption within the US government while likewise resisting the conversion of land into capitalist rubrics of extraction and exchange, even while—to some extent—these nations were embedded within the US political-economic system.[4] The political project in which these buildings partook anticipated contemporary challenges posed by Indigenous scholars and activists to the “ideal” post-Westphalian model of the national state: a state representing a single ethnonational people and occupying a contiguous and unpunctuated territory.

Some scholars outside of architecture, such as Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, have more recently used the term “critical regionalism” to describe political formations that reject ethnonational politics while also challenging the dominance of economic and geopolitical superpowers.[5] Per this usage, regionality is quite clearly counterposed to the nation-form of the state and to the power of global capital. As distinct from Spivak’s elaborations of critical regionalism (which don’t cite Frampton or, for that matter, any bibliographic sources), another set of literary and cultural theorists including Frederic Jameson and Alberto Moreiras have alluded to the political and conceptual inadequacies of Frampton’s theories.[6] Moreiras points out that earlier and contemporary evocations of critical regionalism neglect how regionalist expressions of difference function within a global system of capitalist exchange (rather than being always-already agents of anti-capitalist resistance). Yet Moreiras’ and Jameson’s interest in Frampton’s work derives from what they see as the fundamental relevance of one of Frampton’s basic concerns. They adapt Frampton’s line of inquiry in order to ask how to resist capitalist hegemony and globalization without turning a blind eye to the ways farflung places and peoples have already been brought into relationship with each other and been transformed by global commerce, colonial and imperial conquests, new technologies and relations of production, the globalization of popular culture, and the administrative programs advanced by national states and global bureaucracies.[7] Jameson paraphrases Frampton's basic inquiry, asking "how to fashion a progressive strategy out of what are necessarily the materials of tradition and nostalgia" and "how to use the attempt to *conserve* in an actively liberatory and *transformational* way."[8]

Jameson's first question betrays his skepticism of Frampton's project (which indeed is shot-through with nostalgia, his protestations notwithstanding).[9] But Jameson's second question hints at the relevance of the larger issue Frampton raises, which, were it conceptualized in more cogent political terms, might constitute a strategy for resisting forces of capitalist change. In Frampton's work, however, the negotiation between transformation and conservation stays mostly within the aesthetic realm, simply adding another piece to a centuries-old polemic concerning artistic innovation versus tradition. Still, the question of "how to conserve in an actively liberatory and transformational way" (and conversely, we might add, how to transform in an actively liberatory and conservational way) is important given the transformative effects of global capital and the ways various societies have negotiated these transformations. As Mark Rifkin has pointed out in his book *Beyond Settler Time,* currents of transformation have always run both with and against currents of conservation, recurrence, and renewal. In considering these temporal vectors, Rifkin has called for Indigenous forms of "temporal sovereignty" to resist the binary of tradition-modernity imposed by settler epistemologies.[10] Although Frampton's call for synthesis between what he terms (traditional) "culture" and (modern) "civilization" might appear to reject this binary, in fact his entire theory of critical regionalism rests on—and reinforces—the colonialist partition between "culture" and "civilization."[11]

Nested Regionalism: From Place to Province to Nation to Global Capital

For many contemporary scholars, regionalism describes alliances that undercut the ethnonationalist character of the state while also opposing the geopolitical power of imperial hegemons and the economic power of global capital.

However, in architects' original formulations of critical regionalism, questions of the region's relationship to the national state, imperialism, and global capital are never succinctly posed, much less answered. The absence of these questions leads us to ask: is *region* something above, below, within, or fundamentally at odds with the national-state? And what is *region's* relation to global capital? Despite remaining unnamed, nationalism and the national state lurk beneath the surface of Frampton's text; first, through a political geography that is focused predominantly on provincial confederations aggregated into national states (rather than a geography that cuts across multiple states). Additionally, Frampton's texts use terms and aesthetics that evoke nationalistic discourses, including architectural examples that blur the distinction between locality and nationality. Finally, these texts enact a symbolic displacement according to which architecture is asked to mediate between local material affordances and global capital, thus occupying a role analogous to that performed by national states' economic programs and policies.[12]

Although Frampton never explicitly discusses the national state, he draws from texts that do so. "Towards a Critical Regionalism" opens with—and quotes at length from—Paul Ricoeur's 1955 essay "Universal Civilization and National Cultures" (*Civilisation universelle et cultures nationales*), while also alluding (somewhat vaguely) to Hannah Arendt's political theories of confederation and local political community.[13] Whereas Arendt famously critiqued the ethnonational character of the state, Ricoeur posits the nation-form of the state as integral to his Hegelian vision of world progress. His central concern is how new national states–as presumed units of cultural cohesion–can negotiate between their cultural heritage and a (purportedly Western) inheritance of "rational" political administration. Frampton, however, juxtaposes Ricoeur's "universal civilization" not to nationality, but to a dense thicket of terms suggesting different scalar categories: *culture*, *local culture*, *autochthonous culture*, *regional culture*, *city-states*, *the historical city*, *regional center*, *traditional cities*, *the enclave*, *the local*, *local context*, *local materials*, *place*, *specificity of place*, *site*, and—most enigmatically—*world culture*.[14]

The fundamental discord between Arendt's and Ricoeur's political theories poses no apparent obstacle for Frampton, as he ignores Arendt's critique of the nation-state form.[15] Rather than delving into the political implications of Arendt's and Ricoeur's texts, Frampton refracts their political concerns through the prism of architectural phenomenology, a movement focused on the aesthetics of place.[16] Frampton translates Arendt's interest in confederation and local political community, first, into a heuristic geographic constellation of small cities, provinces, and nations that, he believes, nurture local cultural distinctiveness; and second, into a discussion of the aesthetic sensorium of a building site. At the same time, he borrows Ricoeur's binary of "national culture" and "universal civilization" (akin to *Gemeinschaft* and *Gesellschaft*) and translates it into an architectural binary between local material cultures and "rational" globalized construction techniques.[17] Despite Frampton's skewed readings of Arendt and Ricoeur, the authors' apparent significance to his thinking offers a clue as to what Frampton might mean by regionalism and its relationship to the national state.

With the term "universal civilization," Ricoeur invokes a Hegelian conception of the national state as a set of rational political administrative structures that are then suffused with a unique spirit called "the national culture," explaining that one of the primary functions of these administrative apparatuses is to facilitate economic accumulation.[18] Assigning a European provenance to "universal civilization," Ricoeur notes that in recently formed (implicitly postcolonial) national states, universal civilization arrives as a double-edged sword, instigating, on the one hand, a positive "phenomenon of accumulation and a phenomenon of improvement," but, on the other hand, an "attrition… of the cultural resources which have made the great civilizations of the past."[19] This leads Ricoeur to the postulation Frampton cites at length concerning the "paradox" of the postcolonial national state:

> on the one hand, [the newly formed nation state] has to root itself in the soil of its past, forge a national spirit and unfurl this spiritual and cultural revendication before the colonialist's personality. But in order to take part in modern civilization, it is necessary at the same time to take part in scientific, technical, and political rationality, something which very often requires the pure and simple abandon of a whole cultural past.[20]

There is certainly much in this statement to be critiqued, but I will focus on the fact that, for many Indigenous and postcolonial societies, the dilemma between accepting and refusing the nation-state form (and, along with it, capitalist means of accumulation) appears not as a paradox so much as a double bind arising from circumstances of coercion: how can Indigenous and postcolonial societies resist colonial forces of transformation when effective methods of resistance often entail adopting some of the very practices being resisted? This was the case for the Five Tribes in the late eighteenth through mid-nineteenth century when pressures to assert their sovereignty and protect their lands led them to incrementally adopt European political institutions and territorial conceptions.

Prior to the mid-eighteenth century, the political structure of these nations had been almost entirely town-based, with most political decisions debated and determined within town councils, and with the town serving as a primary locus of social affiliation. For the Cherokee, Muscogee, and Seminole, the town was, arguably, *the* primary affiliation.[21] Only in matters of international diplomacy and war would appointed leaders from different towns convene to determine national policy.[22] There was also considerable fluidity in the boundaries demarcating these nations. On the one hand, several of these nations were not fully distinct from each other, as all spoken languages derived from Muscogee, and the territorial borders between them were often a subject of dispute. The Muscogee and Seminole often functioned as a single nation, and the Choctaw and Chickasaw are believed to have splintered into two nations only in the very early period of European colonization.[23] On the other hand, within all these nations, there existed strong—though dynamic and shifting—regional subdivisions consisting of town groupings, with clusters of towns sharing a single “center town” or “mother town” where people gathered for events like the yearly Green Corn Ceremony and where town representatives met to discuss matters like war and diplomacy.[24]

However, beginning in the eighteenth century, colonial pressures led to the increasing articulation of these nations as centralized states with clearly defined territorial purviews. For example, the Cherokee, though initially resistant to Europeans’ post-Westphalian conceptions of territorial sovereignty, began to adopt this geopolitical epistemology as a defense against ever-expanding settler appropriations.[25] Simultaneously, the Cherokee adopted forms of political centralization, appointing a national leader in 1794 and, in 1827, making the short-lived capital New Echota the site of a tripartite federal government with a written constitution, even while local political affairs were still debated inside the wattle-and-daub townhouses at the center of each Cherokee town.[26] When the Indian Removal Act of 1830 began displacing the Five Tribes from their ancestral lands to an area roughly coterminous with present-day Oklahoma, each nation eventually formed a centralized republic with judiciary, legislative, and executive branches of government, even though many citizens still treated the town as the primary realm of political action.[27] Centralization was largely intended to protect self-sovereignty by presenting a political form that the United States recognized as legitimate.

Ironically then, political centralization was one strategy for protecting town-based political structures, even though centralization also posed an obvious challenge to towns' political autonomy. This double bind—whereby Euro-American practices were selectively adopted in order to fend off even greater assimilation to Euro-American practices—had to be carefully negotiated through political deliberations. However, for Ricoeur and Frampton, such "paradoxes" could be magically resolved through a specious distinction between "culture" and "civilization." What that division enables is the apparent dissolution of any relationship between, on the one hand, economic and political processes and, on the other hand, culture, which Frampton defines as a realm concerned with "the specifics of *expression*…[and] the realization of…[a] collective psycho-social reality."[28] With this division in place, global capitalism and related forms of political and geopolitical power are free to go about their business, while something called culture—divorced from economic and political processes—offers a sense of continuity with the past and an aesthetic refuge from capitalism's tawdry tendencies. This is one of the rhetorical moves through which critical regionalism "synthesizes" past and present, local and global: essentially by nesting different scalar categories within each other - in this case, nesting local expressions of culture within a system of global capital and nation-states.

This depoliticization of place is complicated, however, by the influence of Arendt on Frampton's thinking. While on the one hand, Frampton posits place as a sacred preserve of culture (transcending the realm of politics), his conception of locality also draws from Arendt's interest in the forms of direct political participation afforded by local townhalls, an institution she saw as a force of resistance against tyranny.[29] Frampton reorients Arendt's interest in townhall politics toward a partiality for *towns,* the latter being then contrasted to the alienating effects of the modern metropolis.[30] Similarly, he refracts his predilection for certain Swiss buildings through Arendt's notion of the "federal principle"—essentially, a loose aggregation of political bodies, as exemplified (for Frampton) by the Swiss cantonal system. For Arendt, confederation offered an alternative to national-statism and tyranny, as it afforded small-scale forms of political participation and autonomy while compacts—rather than ethnicity—constituted the binding agent through which smaller political bodies formed alliances.[31] Arendt pointed to historic examples like the Roman empire to show that diverse ethnonational political bodies could easily exist within the purview of a single state.[32]

Arendt's argument was not a wholly novel one. Roughly two centuries earlier, British settlers had likened the Haudenosaunee confederation to the Roman empire: a democratic alliance of small republics.[33] A century later (almost eighty years before Arendt critiqued the model of national-statism), delegates for the Cherokee Nation had protested to the US Congress that:

> As a mere historical fact, there is nothing either novel or incongruous in one government within another. We find nations with such relations in all history, ancient and modern.… The Roman Empire was made up in that way. So with nearly all great governments…[34]

Just as the Cherokee nation questioned these geopolitical epistemologies, so recent scholars have pointed to internationalism, confederation, and perforated forms of territoriality to describe how Indigenous nations have organized (and continue to organize) in opposition to the Euro-American model of the national state.[35]

The real status of the national state in Frampton's work is occluded through a very selective geography that, on the one hand, stresses provincial over national identities but, on the other hand, edits out most parts of the world strongly marked by struggles against majoritarian ethnic domination. He points to architectures from what he calls "city-states" (Zurich and Udine) and then to buildings in various European provinces (naming the provinces, not the nations) adding Osaka as the sole, non-European exemplar of provincial distinctiveness.[36] At times, however, the nation-state becomes synonymous with the region, cast as a harmonious mosaic of distinct provincial identities:

> Switzerland, with its intricate linguistic and cultural boundaries and its tradition of cosmopolitanism, has always displayed strong regionalistic tendencies… [W]hile the cantonal system serves to sustain local culture, the Helvetic Federation facilitates the penetration and assimilation of foreign ideas.[37]

Yet the coexistence of distinct provincial identities does not preclude forms of ethnonationalist majoritarianism that cut across provincial-cantonal identities. For example, the language-based identities distinguishing Switzerland's French-, German-, and Italian-speaking cantons still fall within the scope of white Christendom, a fact hinted at by the preponderance of white, Christian architectures—both secular and sacred—in Frampton's texts and in those of his phenomenological forebears.[38] These examples remind us that race and religion—not linguistic identity—is often what underwrites white European notions of ethnic solidarity.

Frampton supplements the confederate model with architectural examples drawn from several national states with small populations—Portugal, Denmark, and Finland—where a near identity is implied between national and local (*cum* regional) culture. (Jameson, in paraphrasing Frampton's arguments, hyphenates "regional-national," reflecting how Frampton often renders these two categories indistinguishable.)[39] One of Frampton's most cited examples of critical regionalism, Säynätsalo Town Hall, designed by Alvar Aalto, implicitly links local political community to the Finnish national state in which it is nested through the building's role in small-town municipal governance. Finland's inclusion in Frampton's geographic imaginary appears to derive from a notion that these small European states each exist as a perfect container for a distinctive and homogeneously singular culture. This assumption of homogeneity belies the history of the Sámi people who found their non-sedentary and place-based practices eroded by the nation-state-boundaries drawn through their ancestral lands.[40] In short, by suggesting a harmonious conservation of difference (i.e., of culturally distinct provinces or nationalities), Frampton evades the more difficult politics of difference: for example, the question of how the nationalist character of the state works to both suppress and exploit difference and what this means in contexts of, say, ethno-majoritarian violence and oppression, colonial conquest, forced assimilation, the appropriation of Indigenous resources, or a racial division of labor. He never turns this emphasis on place or province into a rebuttal of the ethnonational character of the state. Indeed, Frampton's fondness for small European states and provinces totters uncomfortably close to the twentieth-century nationalist ideologies that Arendt critiqued. For example, he cites Martin Heidegger's *Building, Dwelling, Thinking,* an essay beloved among architectural phenomenologists that was redolent of fascist *Heimatkultur*.[41] Yearning for the architectures of a "rooted culture," Frampton, like

Heidegger, suggests an autochthonous metaphysical bond between people, land, and landscape.[42]

Frampton's aesthetic formulation of *place* is to be contrasted with Indigenous philosophies that emphasize place-based relationalities which are material, semantic, and affective.[43] Such relationalities are foreclosed in critical regionalism by the cordon Frampton draws between "culture" and "civilization" as he asserts that culture is concerned with forms of expression, whereas political and economic processes fall within the ambit of "universal civilization."[44] It is not simply that Frampton maintains a colonial epistemic order that positions "civilization" above "culture" (as he eloquently demonstrates by describing Le Corbusier's colonial plans for Algiers as critical-regionalist).[45] The division between the realm of expression (culture) and that of economics and politics (civilization) furthermore denies the imbrication of affective and the material processes that bind humans and non-humans in a web of relations. This partition between the expressive qualities of places and the world of economic and political activity mirrors the false partition—arising with the birth of the nation-form—that enables the national state to appear as an organic outgrowth of folkish culture, distinct from the workings of capital. As such, the nationalist state hovers in the background of Frampton's texts by way of analogy, as he assigns architects a role similar to that played by the national state in mediating between global capital and local forms of labor and material resources.

Frampton imagines the architect as a canny de- and re-coder of the world's material practices, drawing selectively from local materials and techniques in order to translate them into allusive architectural details. Transformed into subtle signifiers of place, these features are then synthesized with the contemporary architectural methods of construction that Frampton refers to as "rational" techniques of "optimization," which serve as markers of "universal civilization." Architecture symbolically mediates between the local—with its particular affordances of material techniques and resources—and global capital, effacing any conflict between them through the cunning double-gesture of what Frampton calls deconstruction and synthesis. So long as a building is nestled harmoniously within the terrain, questions of who controls that terrain, according to what legal and economic systems, and at the expense of what former social and economic practices become irrelevant. Place is little more than topography brushed by sun and shadow.

Region, in this formulation rests on synecdochal reasoning: differently-scaled, differently oriented, and differently empowered territorial domains are presented as harmoniously co-existing ("synthesized") through a chain of signification in which smaller things refer to larger things and vice-versa. This chain of signification finds its epitome in the tectonic detail. The detail—essentially, a vanguardist, cosmopolitan translation of local features—draws together (magically) the diverse scales of place, province, nation, and globe. Or rather, to use Frampton's Hegelian terminology, the tectonic detail synthesizes the contradictions between the local and global. In alluding to local material practices, the tectonic detail stands in for those practices even while it displaces them. Expressions of the local obfuscate the radical transformations occurring as regimes of industrial and consumer capitalism expand. A synecdochal formulation of regionalism erases not only the conflicts between different elements within the chain of signification (neglecting their different orientations and effectivities); it also obfuscates the fact that differently empowered and differently oriented elements cannot be synthesized without destroying something in the process.

Frampton's wishful proposal for a harmonious synthesis between an aesthetics of place-making and global-capitalist techniques fails to account for the fact that many place-based practices are wholly incompatible with global capitalism, while others are easily subsumable within its rubrics and thus present no real contradiction to begin with.[46] Indeed, difference can become a precious source of cultural capital, thereby—as Bourdieu argues—becoming essentially fungible with economic capital.[47] Capitalism is only perceived by Frampton through its most flagrant aesthetic symptoms (of dreary homogenization or gaudy commercialization). Hence, the heterogeneity of places—antithetical to the allegedly homogenizing operations of capital—allows *place* to appear in a different ontological stratum from that in which global capital does its work. In actual fact, place is precisely the substrate *and* object of capitalist transformation. The heterogeneous affordances of different places—their distinctive natural resources, human resources, urban forms, and other aesthetic qualities—not only constitute objects of capitalist conquest; these differences form the whole premise of a global system of exchange.[48]

As distinct from Frampton's suggestion that place-specificity offers an intrinsic (and, implicitly, aesthetic) nugget of resistance to global homogenization, a *critical* critical-regionalist analysis would need to consider how place-based differences form the necessary ground for capitalist expansion. Proceeding from there, a *critical* critical-regionalist architecture would be calibrated toward fending off the interpolation of land, labor, and resources into expropriative programs. One important caveat is that this type of resistance might not be especially legible on the aesthetic plane. It might not *express* place-based heterogeneity but—for the very reason of its contestatory function—might look rather ordinary; it might even assume the outward form of the architectures spread through colonial expansion or globalization, even while it seeks to stymie those advances.

Rather than seeking to conserve architectural difference for the sake of difference, a *critical* critical-regionalist architecture might seek to conserve fundamental place-based relationships. Indigenous scholars have argued that place is a ground-zero for Indigenous cultural and economic practices.[49] Spiritual, material, and affective relationships bind people to places without precluding the forms of travel, influence, exchange, and political alliance that bring places into new sets of relationships and thereby transform them (to say nothing of the more violent ways places are transformed). Places—a fundamental source and substrate for social practices—are subject to change, so the question is always *which* place-based practices and relationships are to be conserved amid currents of transformation? In the case of the Five Tribes, non-privatized models of land tenure, along with non-export-oriented agriculture and town-centered political practices, constituted fundamental practices that national leaders sought to conserve against the pressures of settler colonial expansion.

Similar to place, *region* might be regarded not as a container of cultural distinctiveness but rather as a dynamic set of social and political relationships that can be leveraged against hegemonic forces in order to conserve forms of relationality.[50] Neither “region” nor “place” are to be treated then as magical antidotes to the effects of global modernity. (Certainly, as other contributors to this anthology demonstrate, regionality often serves precisely as a tool of colonial conquest and globalization.) Nonetheless, regional alliances can be used to bolster resistance to national and global programs of domination and exploitation. As a counterfactual to Frampton’s model of regionality—which involves nested scales of cultural, political, and economic activity and expression—I will consider strategic alliances that the Five Tribes used to resist the conversion of land into a private resource for wealth extraction.

The Cherokee Doric

An undated photograph, circa 1870, shows one of two identical secondary schools (respectively, a female and male seminary) constructed in 1851. Based on the seminaries' architectural style and form alone, it would be quite impossible to guess the region where they were built. Drawing on the classical Doric order, the buildings iterated an architectural type that had been disseminated across much of the world over the course of centuries. The Ancient Greek derivation of the buildings' style could be adduced as evidence of the extensive reach of imperial power, in this case emanating from Europe to a geographic area that had been occupied variously by the Quapaw, Comanche, and Wichita before being allocated in 1839 to the Cherokee Nation. Yet, despite such justifications for interpreting the buildings' style solely as a symptom of colonial expansion and displacement, the seminary buildings—commissioned by the Cherokee Nation—also represent a delicate (and compromised) strategy of resisting absorption and annihilation by the settler state.

The Cherokee male and female seminaries were followed in the 1860s through 1890s by other civic institutional buildings in the vicinity of the Cherokee Nation's new capital, Tahlequah, and in the capitals of the other nearby nations of the Five Tribes. These civic architectures, far from being designed according to these nations' extant building traditions, were commissioned with an eye toward adopting the basic governmental and architectural forms of Euro-American statism.

By the mid-eighteenth century, wars and diplomatic means of resisting colonial incursions had already led several of these nations to take steps toward centralizing power.[51] However, the nations of the Five Tribes all refused a key mechanism of statist centralization: that of levying head-taxes on citizens. Taxation would have impelled citizens away from subsistence-oriented forms of economic production in favor of a cash-based economy involving wage labor, cash-crop production, and land exploitation.[52] The Five Tribes also rejected a settler model of land privatization, preferring—for the most part—conventional usufruct forms of land tenure, with land distribution often managed at the local level, and with some towns still maintaining communal plots for cultivation.[53] With all lands belonging to the nation as a whole, plots could not be sold off to settlers by rogue agents. Thus, amid many new and significant developments—e.g., public school systems, tripartite governments, a robust print-culture, and (for some elite households) settler-colonial forms of chattel slavery—many essential place-based relationships were conserved, including the practice of subsistence-oriented forms of agriculture for a majority of households.[54]

This is not to suggest that what ensued was a harmonious synthesis between "traditions" and "modernity," as described by Frampton's theory of critical regionalism. On the contrary, the Five Tribes' strategies were adopted under extreme duress following more than a century of violence and upheaval, and these strategies were the subject of fierce contention among citizens, who were divided between what is referred to as "conservative" and "progressive" factions. The former chose to uphold town-based political systems and subsistence-oriented economic practices against the agenda of a small but relatively powerful elite (mostly of mixed Native American and European ancestry) that had, to various degrees, adopted settler practices of cash-crop production, chattel slavery, and conspicuous consumption.[55] Even apart from the political divisions between conservative and progressive factions, the double bind in which the Five Tribes had been ensnared meant that state-building was vexed by internal contradictions.

Throughout global history, statist structures have typically been funded through practices of accumulation and taxation, whereas the Five Tribes had adopted statist institutions largely as a way to defend *against* practices of accumulation and taxation (and the radical transformations these would entail). I therefore read the civic architectures of the Five Tribes as negotiations of this double bind: that is, of adopting a centralized state in order to protect against, on the one hand, even greater intensification of Native and colonial statist power (through practices like taxation) and, on the other hand, the conversion of land into a privatized capitalist resource, whether by settlers or by the nations' own citizens.[56] These architectural histories throw into relief (against Frampton's idealized model of "synthesis") the fact that strategies of resistance tend to be always-already compromised by power imbalances.

For example, funds for the Five Tribes' civic architectures came primarily from payments the United States owed the nations in exchange for their ancestral lands. Because this enormous debt was discharged in yearly pittances—and sometimes withheld as political ransom—the Five Tribes lacked money to fund a robust program of state-building. But instead of leasing out land to settlers or levying head-taxes to supplement their meager coffers, the Five Tribe legislatures avoided any policies that would have inveigled them more deeply in a cash economy or resulted in the incremental alienation of Native lands. The Five Tribes' efforts to confine government expenses to the United States' yearly debt repayments clearly affected how the civic buildings were constructed.

The archival records pertaining to these architectures are very sparse, with most documents having been drafted retrospectively, often a half-century after the buildings were completed, as part of nations' efforts to recuperate and restore the buildings. These documents consist mostly of brief, straightforward descriptions of the buildings, offering little evidence of national leaders' intentions or debates.[57] To contend with a dearth of documentary evidence, a dearth of contemporary Native interpretations, and my own subject-position as a non-Native scholar, I turn to political histories (many written by members of the Five Tribes) and to theoretical frameworks developed in the field of Indigenous studies to supplement existing archives.

A substantial body of published scholarship and archival records attest to four dominant political themes in this period of the Five Tribes' history: a desperate commitment to protect lands against settler incursions, constrained fiscal budgets, political strife between conservative and progressive factions, and struggles to demonstrate national sovereignty to US agents.[58] Focusing here mainly on three architectural examples—the Cherokee seminaries, the Muscogee capitol, and the Chickasaw capitol, I show how architecture played a role in strategies that—though deeply transformative—were intended to conserve fundamental social practices against the pressures exerted by colonial and capitalist conquests of land-based resources. In this sense, the buildings constituted elements within a politics of refusal: calibrated against the incursions of settlers and against certain functions of the administrative state—like taxation—that could easily usher in capitalist forms of exchange and production. Yet even while these buildings partook in strategies to conserve essential land-based relationships, they also partook in transformative processes developed in response to colonization and resettlement.[59]

I begin with the Cherokee seminaries because of the role that formal education plays in maintaining extant social structures while also introducing new social programs and norms. Scholars disagree about whether the seminaries were primarily hegemonic institutions supporting the power of the Cherokee elite.[60] However, historians broadly concur that the nineteenth-century Cherokee school system (and the Choctaw system that developed around the same time) certainly offered preferable alternatives to either the Christian missionary schools run by settlers or the United States' infamous Native American boarding schools. Choctaw scholar Devon A. Mihesuah has proposed that liberal arts education, though elitist, at least helped provide a "talented tenth" with the skills of diplomacy and fiscal management needed to maintain and assert national sovereignty vis-à-vis the United States.[61] Moreover, the equal inclusion of women within liberal arts programs has been understood as one element of the Five Nations' long struggles against Euro-American patriarchal norms. Still, bearing in mind Mihesuah's critique, the adoption of this institution of class-differentiation exemplifies the kinds of compromised reforms enacted by Native Americans to support self-sovereignty and thereby protect land from privatization and alienation.

When drafting early nineteenth-century treaties with the US, the Choctaw and Cherokee had stipulated that the revenues from certain ceded lands be used to fund national school systems.[62] As these nations made no such provision for funding government salaries or for building other civic architectures or major infrastructures, the very existence of the schools, when read against the absence of costly legislative assembly buildings, speaks to a sense of futurity: a determination to conserve the possibility of national self-determination for generations to come, rather than inveigling those generations in debt for the sake of their forebears' present status and comfort.[63] This is distinct from the transformative logics of capitalism—exemplified by processes of ecological destruction and many debt-funded forms of development—that often sacrifice future generations to the wants and whims of the living. The endowment of the future—the refusal to sacrifice it to the present—is a theme found in other practices of the Five Tribes, especially those related to land use.[64] In this way, the prioritization of certain building programs over others speaks to the negotiation of the politics of transformation and conservation.

Inspired by Mount Holyoke College, the Cherokee nation hired a Boston-based architectural office to design the seminaries.[65] The architect's elevation drawings show a conventional use of the Doric order, with exterior colonnades consisting of smooth plastered columns topped by banded capitals and an entablature with Doric triglyphs and decorative metotopes. The final buildings, however, boasted no such ornamental features: the columns were unplastered and unpainted, exposing rough brick masonry, and the columns' capitals lacked most of the ornamental bands shown in the architectural drawings, while the triglyphs and metotopes specified by the architect were absent. The roughness of the brick took on an almost ornamental quality in and of itself, constituting the most distinctive characteristic of a style that preservationists would eventually refer to as the "Cherokee Doric"[66] (**fig. 1**).

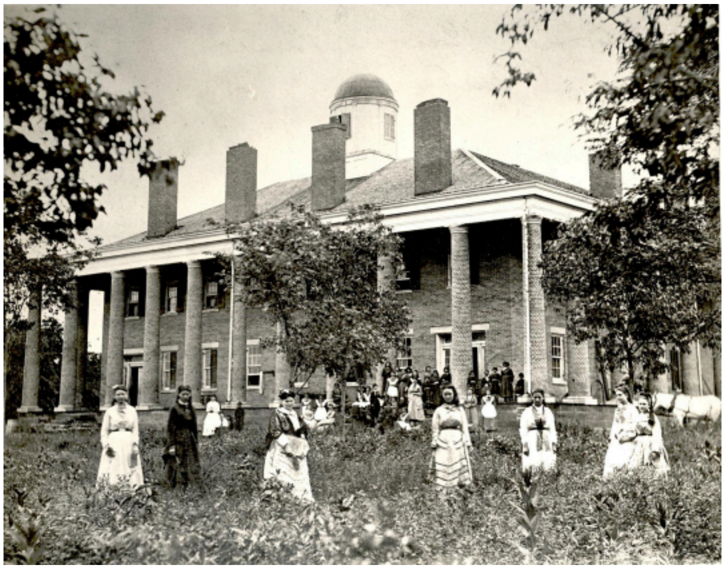

Fig. 1. Example of the Cherokee Doric.
L.C. Handy Studio, "Female seminary - Graduating class at Park Hill, Cherokee Nation," February 17, 1905, Oklahoma Historical Society.

The textured brickwork of the seminaries could be compared to that of Aalto's design for Säynätsalo Town Hall, praised by Frampton for its tactile qualities. Frampton and other phenomenologists regarded tactility—which they conflated with rough, variegated surfaces—as a more authentic form of sensory perception than the visuality that was typically emphasized in modernist design. Frampton especially took issue with the eye-catching consumer-capitalist aesthetics embraced by postmodernist architects.[67] As distinct from the architectural-phenomenological strategy of counteracting the *aesthetics* of capitalism, the rough brick surfaces of the Cherokee seminaries likely resulted from prioritizing economic and political self-sovereignty, thus avoiding dependence on settler products and labor. Given the general lack of skilled carpenters, stone quarries, masons, plasterers, or plaster itself within the Cherokee nation in the 1840s, the completed building had clearly been modified to better accommodate local material constraints and thus avoid expenditures that would have compelled the nation to lease out land to settlers or to levy taxes.[68] Apart from these broad concerns around expenditure, there was also the fact that the settler contractors originally hired for the commissions were found to be surreptitiously engaging in religious proselytization, leading to the termination of their contract and subsequent construction delays.[69] This historic detail attests to the importance the Cherokees placed on maintaining sovereignty against settler influences, even amid the use of settler labor and the adoption (in many respects) of Euro-American educational institutions and architectural forms.

The resulting bluntness with which different materials and structural elements—like columns and entablatures—butt up against each other inverts the logic of Frampton's tectonic detail. "Tectonics" refers to the art or craft of building and occupies a hallowed status in Frampton's oeuvre, effecting a magical synthesis between the local and global. [70] As distinct from Frampton's ideal of elegantly legible tectonic expression, in the Cherokee seminaries and the Muscogee capitol (addressed below), there is no expressive emphasis given to where and how the column is joined to the entablature or to the column base below. It is precisely this absence of tectonic expression that attests to a politics of refusal, a form of economic conservation intended to protect the nation from the kinds of social and economic transformations that would have been necessary to fund a more lavish—and tectonically elegant—program of architectural construction. In almost every civic building constructed by the Five Tribes during the mid- through late-nineteenth century, there are similar alterations to European classical styles that clearly reduced dependency on imported labor and materials, eschewing expenses that would have pushed the nations toward capitalist systems of accumulation and land privatization.

Confederation

For roughly three decades following Removal, the Five Tribes' respective national legislatures and judiciaries convened in a range of building types, including hewn-log structures and open-air pavilions, with the Choctaw shifting their capital several times over the years.[71] The 1860s then brought the US Civil War to the Five Tribes' territories, sharply dividing political factions within the Cherokee and Muscogee nations, leading to internecine violence while also wreaking destruction throughout the area. With the advent of Reconstruction, the United States began developing infrastructures of resource extraction and governmentality throughout the Five Tribes' lands, while also forcibly resettling many other Native nations and tribes to those lands. Against these increasing threats to national sovereignty, the Cherokee, Chickasaw, Choctaw, and Muscogee nations directed considerable resources toward their nation-building architectural programs, as evidenced by the capitols commissioned in the 1860s through 1880s.

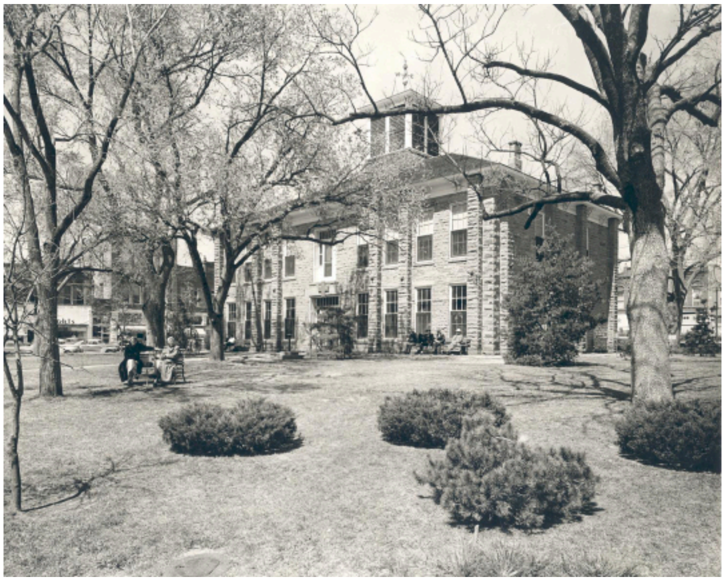

Fig. 2. The Muscogee capitol.
Kent Spring Studio, "Creek Council House," 1965, Oklahoma Historical Society.

In 1859, the Muscogee nation began organizing an international confederation, summoning a council of Native nations to draft a constitution.[72] To host assemblies of international delegates, the Muscogee offered the use of their new capitol building—a large hewn-timber structure—in Okmulgee.[73] Between 1870 and 1878, representatives from thirty-eight nations and tribes convened to draft and ratify a constitution intended to grant individual tribes and nations political autonomy while still providing a unified front against colonialism.[74] This confederation—the Intertribal Indian Confederation (IIC)—anticipated the politics of resistance that Spivak would later describe as critical regionalist, insofar as it was formed to counteract the power of an imperialist hegemon.[75] This political project, along with Muscogee efforts to impress upon US agents its own sovereign status, led the nation to commission a new national capitol in the late 1870s that would also serve as a seat of the IIC (although, in fact, the IIC would be dissolved by the time the new capitol was finished).

In addition to chambers for a bicameral legislature and a courtroom, the new capitol included a Room for Committee on Foreign Relations to accommodate negotiations with US delegates, so the building had to communicate Native nations' sovereign status, a status that, according to Euro-American rhetoric, rested on the existence of certain civic institutions (like a parliamentary government) and on the material architectures related to those institutions. The resulting building was designed in the federalist style that had been popular for US civic architectures in the decades surrounding the formation of the US government (**fig. 2**). But the Muscogee's aesthetic agenda surely responded to more complex factors than US power alone. During this period, the nation was riven by intense strife between the "conservative" faction of the Muscogee nation (those maintaining town-based political structures and subsistence-oriented economies) and the "progressive" elite that practiced cash-crop agriculture and Christianity and tended to favor strong national centralization.[76] An overly lavish capitol would have stoked further animosity among the conservative contingent. The resulting building therefore struck a middle course between the vexed imperatives to justify the legitimacy of the IIC's national governments to US agents without further stoking tensions among the Muscogee. While the federal style answered to the former criterion, the unusual use of rough ashlar stone on a federal-style building and the lack of ornamentation attested to policies of fiscal restraint demanded by conservative citizens. The deep conflicts among the Muscogee demonstrate how the politics of transformation-amid-conservation are often highly fraught, not to be glibly resolved through methods of aesthetic synthesis.

The IIC could be understood as regionalist, but not in a way that posited ethnic attributes, territorial contiguity, or even geographic proximity as the primary basis of affiliation, given that the participating tribes and nations were united by their common struggles against US domination. This is to be distinguished from the many examples described in this anthology in which regionality serves the interests of military, economic, or governmental conquest. In these cases, cultural, political, and environmental differences are typically elided in order to render various political entities and their lands into a single, comprehensible entity, subject to a single strategic program of capture. Against such erasures of difference, many proponents of critical regionalism have emphasized the architectural (or literary) expression of cultural and environmental heterogeneity, often going to the other extreme—i.e., neglecting how these differences are, by virtue of their singularity, enfolded within global systems of capital. By casting aesthetic variation and local particularity as the real victims of capital (rather than, say, the humans and non-humans disenfranchised and exploited by it), critical regionalists conjure a ruse of resistance through aesthetic means.

Conclusion: Local Materials and the Question of Ornament

This distinction—between an aesthetic ruse of resistance and the incidental aesthetic effects of resistance—can be seen in the way building materials have been treated, respectively, by advocates of critical regionalism and the Five Tribes in their civic commissions. Whereas the former have focused on the use of local materials as an expression of place-based heterogeneity, for the Five Tribes' national legislatures, the question of building materials was politically crucial, determining the extent to which an architectural commission would entangle the nation within the settler economy. Euro-American-styled civic architectures required hiring settlers for design and construction work, but construction materials could, for the most part, be sourced from within the nations, albeit sometimes involving new methods of production and extraction.

For example, in the 1840s, the Cherokee built a brick kiln factory to avoid importing bricks from US border towns for their seminary buildings. The Choctaw followed suit several decades later to provide bricks to build their new capitol. The other three nations used local stone and timber when building new capitols in the 1870s through 90s.[77] For the last Chickasaw capitol—built in the late 1890s to replace a brick building that had burnt down—the national legislature approved the use of pink granite quarried from the lands of the former chief executive, Governor R.M. Harris, who chaired the building committee.[78] The choice to use local granite was made before the nation chose which architectural office to hire. As such, the Richardsonian Romanesque style of the capitol seems to have perhaps derived from the choice to use Harris' supply of granite rather than vice versa.

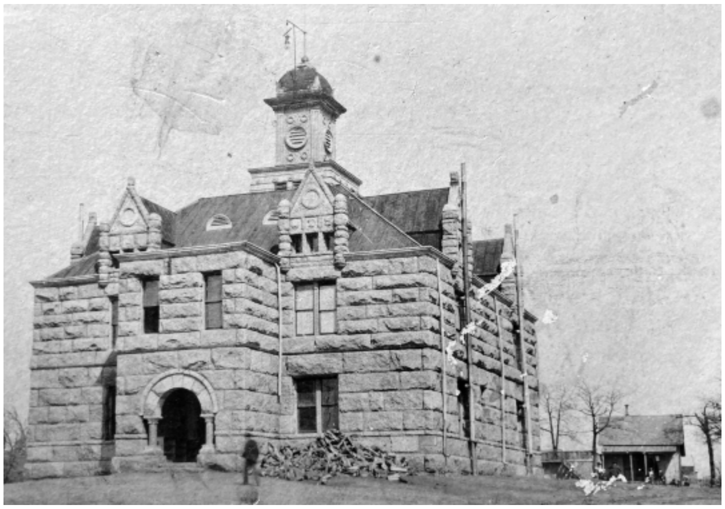

Fig. 3. The Chickasaw capitol.
“Chickasaw Capital Building at Tishomingo, Chickasaw Nation,” photograph, ca. 1896. WHC-P-1960, Box: Photo L-19, Item 4, Gaston Litton Photograph Collection, Western History Collections, Oklahoma University Libraries, Norman, OK.

The Chickasaw capitol was designed through a back-and-forth process between the Building Committee—whose members drew a schematic plan—and the settler architect hired for the commission. This committee was likely involved in the ensuing modifications to the ornamental motifs typically found in Richardsonian Romanesque buildings, such as the elaborate carvings adorning lintels, quoins and entablatures. On the Chickasaw capitol, a single pared-down ornament—a ring-shape—is repeated four times on each dormer window and four times on each side of the building’s cupola (**fig. 3**). While sun circles and wind spirals—both circular designs— occupy a central place within Chickasaw decorative and cosmographic vocabularies, the rings on the Chickasaw capitol lack the characteristic radiating spikes (to signify the sun) or the characteristic spirals (to signify the wind). Another Chickasaw decorative motif was a concentric ring shape that symbolized the political equality of all people (likely derived from the circular form of a council meeting, with the small center circle probably symbolizing the ceremonial fire). Certainly, this symbol would make sense as an ornament on the nation’s capitol, except that here it takes the form of a single ring. In any case, this empty ring—like any cipher—begs speculative interpretation, since no historic documents or recent analyses offer any evidence of what it purported.[79]

The simplest explanation for this apparent alteration to traditional Chickasaw motifs is an economic one—that the nation was avoiding the high costs of ornate carvings, a job for which settlers were typically hired. If so, this strategy of ornamental adaptation discredits European modernist theories that denied conscious agency and intentionality in non-European aesthetic practices.[80] Modernist exhortations concerning material and technical probity often entailed reducing ornament to a simplified, rarefied form, thereby distinguishing the European architect from his subaltern counterparts.[81] The modified Chickasaw ornament speaks back to this colonialist division of aesthetic labor: the imaginary division of labor that accords to Euro-American designers the unique privilege of consciously adapting the ornaments "unconsciously" furnished by so-called "primitive" people.

Frampton rehearses that colonialist logic when he declares that the architect must "'deconstruct' the overall spectrum of world culture which "he *inevitably inherits*" in order to effect "a *self-conscious* synthesis between universal civilization and world culture".[82] Apparently, in digesting the whole spectrum of world culture, the tectonic totem absorbs (in cannibalistic fashion) the pre-colonial authenticity of ornaments produced under non-capitalist regimes of production. By absorbing that nugget of non-capitalist authenticity, the tectonic detail arrogates the supernatural ability to counteract the vulgar cultural effects of capitalist production. That is, Frampton claims for the tectonic totem the (cannibalistic) power to critically resist capitalist alienation through the charismatic force of primitive authenticity drawn from the artefacts it has digested. Yet, it is only thanks to capitalism–and its colonial legacies–that the architect could possibly feel emboldened to make such a fantastic claim: that "he" can deconstruct and sublate the entirety of world culture and, from this alchemy, produce a magically-charged tectonic detail.

By presuming that the architect's "inevitable inheritance" comprehends the whole breadth of world culture, Frampton: first, forecloses the possibility of historical contingency (e.g., of alternatives to "inevitable" colonial-capitalist teleologies); second, erases forms of subaltern agency that have pursued alternative trajectories; and third, transposes into an "inheritance" (and thereby renders lawful and legitimate) the violent expropriations through which European actors collected, parsed, and repurposed the arts and architectures of the world.[83] Against Frampton's theory of the synthetic tectonic detail, the ornamentation of the Chickasaw capitol serves as a kind of prolepsis: ornament is, to borrow Frampton's terminology, "self-consciously" modified and simplified; but the modification does not serve to perform a magical act of synthesis. Instead, the displacement of Euro-American ornamental motifs by (what appears to be) a modified version of a Chickasaw motif speaks to a broader strategy of refusal to accept either the inevitability of capitalist advance or the annihilation of meaningful cultural practices through globalizing influences. Clearly, tradition works in tandem with transformation (transformations most obviously materialized through the very existence of the capitol). But, amid such transformations, something else is conserved, namely the nation's general commitment to communal forms of land tenure and the myriad relationships supported by this treatment of the land.

The simple ring ornament on the Chickasaw capitol—presumably a result of the need to reduce ornamental expenditures—must be read through histories of how the United States used trade to produce Native American debt. These debts were intended to compel nations to sell off land, a process that, it was hoped, would drive Native Americans toward petty cash-crop agriculture, land privatization, and the incremental abdication of ancestral hunting grounds.[84] When we bear in mind, then, how debt was used to instigate a whole process of land alienation, unsettlement, and political disenfranchisement, this relatively minor alteration of architectural ornament can be read as an act of deeper political significance.

As distinct from Frampton's culture-civilization binary that situates *place* in a rarefied sphere, place could be conceived as a site where economic, spiritual, and political ways of life become imbricated, as described in Indigenous theories of relationality.[85] The peculiarity of architectural critical regionalism is that its very raison-d'être consists in a never fully articulated (and never sufficiently Marxian) nostalgia for erstwhile place-based relations, relations that have been destroyed (implicitly) through the conversion of land and labor into capital; yet it is precisely this destruction of place-based relations that enables Frampton to imagine a clear-cut division between so-called civilization (essentially, the economic and political forces of capitalist transformation) and culture (which exists as a static stratum unaffected by the upheavals wrought by civilization). Simply put, the alienation that critical regionalists lament—arising from the transformations of cultural traditions—is the same alienation that allows critical regionalism to split the economic-political from the cultural and thereby propose the simultaneity of resistance (through allusions to local cultural traditions) and complicity (with globalizing capitalist systems of production). The division between culture and economics must remain firmly in place in order for critical regionalism to make any sense, even though the alienation between the two is precisely what engenders the melancholic impulse that is the very basis of critical regionalism.

My analyses of the Five Tribes' civic architectures were intended as counterfactuals that show the possibility of conceptualizing critical regionalism differently. This rhetorical strategy is not to be confused with claiming either that these buildings *should* be interpreted retrospectively as critical-regionalist or that, in light of such historic examples, critical regionalism *should* be reinvigorated as a discursive category. Within the field of architecture, critical regionalism has operated at best as a description for buildings designed thoughtfully in respect to local site conditions and ecological concerns; and, at worst, to mask architecture's complicity with capital by sanctifying the integration of heterogeneous local affordances into a system of capitalist exchange. Instead of using the Five Nations' buildings as earnest examples of critical regionalism, I have proposed a thought experiment: what architectural critical regionalism might have been, had it not been hobbled by architects' resignation to—and pragmatic investment in—global economic forces whose advances were always posited as lying beyond architects' control, even while architects played crucial roles in expanding the ways that land and place figured within this world economic system. What if, instead of swaying between melancholic resignation to the forward march of global capital and puffed-up assertions of resistance to that same march, advocates of critical regionalism had set about examining, first, the ways architecture has helped expand the wealth and power of a rentier class and, second, some possible alternatives to the architectures of rentier power?

The long struggles of Native nations throw into sharp relief Frampton's failures to consider the real degree of violence that capitalism continues to wreak and his concomitant failure to consider existing strategies of resisting that violence, strategies that have sometimes involved tactical—albeit vexed—architectural adoptions and adaptations. Nonetheless, the fundamental issue that Frampton raises concerning the challenge of conservation-amid-transformation remains urgently relevant today, so long as we amend this query by asking: *what* is one trying to conserve? Is it merely an allusive semiosis of place or is it a set of structural relations among humans and non-humans that form alternative models to the capitalist nation-state form? In the case of the former, then regionalism becomes hard to distinguish from the nationalist, imperialist objectives promulgated by so many twentieth-century discourses. As for the latter, an actually *critical* critical-regionalist architecture—one directly opposed to colonialist capitalist exploitation—may look rather ordinary and thus remain unrecognizable within the aesthetic categories and predilections that have for so long structured the field of architectural criticism.

✓ Transparent peer-reviewed

Ginger Nolan, “What is Regional about Critical Regionalism? Questions of National-Statism, Indigenous Politics, and Global Capital,” *Aggregate* 14 (April 2026), https://doi.org/10.53965/PEXO2473.

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[1] Alexander Tzonis and Liane Lefaivre first broached the concept of architectural regionalism and modernism in Tzonis and Lefaivre, “Die Frage des Regionalismus,” in *Für eine andere Architektur*, ed. Michael Andritzky, Lucius Burckhardt, and Otto Hoffmann (Frankfurt: Fischer, 1981); and in Tzonis and Lefaivre, “The Grid and the Pathway” in *Architecture in Greece* 5 (1981). In 1983, Kenneth Frampton subsequently published two essays on the topic: Frampton, “Prospects for a Critical Regionalism,” *Perspecta 20* (January 1983): 147–162; and Frampton, “Towards a Critical Regionalism: Six Points for an Architecture of Resistance” in *The Anti-Aesthetic: Essays on Postmodern Culture,* ed. Hal Foster (Port Townsend, Washington: Bay Press, 1983), 16–30. Tzonis and Lefaivre continued to expand on the concept of critical regionalism, while Frampton worked some of its main tenets into his work on tectonics. See: Kenneth Frampton and John Cava, eds., *Studies in Tectonic Culture: The Poetics of Construction in Nineteenth and Twentieth Century Architecture* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1995). Carmen Popescu has traced a helpful genealogy of the development of critical regionalist discourse in architecture in Popescu, “Critical Regionalism: A Not So Critical Theory” in *The Figure of Knowledge: Conditioning Architectural Theory, 1960s - 1990s,* ed. Hilde Heynen et al. (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2020). Some recent reflections on critical regionalism can be found in “Critical Regionalism Revisited,” eds. Tom Avermaete, Véronique Patteeuw, Léa-Catherine Szacka and Hans Teerds, *OASE 103* (May 2019). ↑

[2] Manuel Shvartzberg Carrió has similarly contrasted the “smooth nesting” of scopes of territorial sovereignty to the political negotiation of disjunctions. See: Manuel Shvartzberg Carrió, “Towards an Architectural Theory of Jurisdictional Technics: Midcentury Modernism on Native American Land,” *Architectural Theory Review* 27, no. 3 (October 2023): 391–415. ↑

[3] Jorge Otero-Pailos has detailed Frampton’s political leanings and his interest in small-scale forms of political community. See: Jorge Otero-Pailos, “Surplus Experience: Kenneth Frampton and the Subterfuges of Bourgeois Taste,” in *Architecture’s Historical Turn: Phenomenology and the Rise of the Postmodern* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2010). ↑

[4] This might seem anachronistic. However, Frampton’s texts themselves open the possibility for projecting the theory onto even earlier architectural examples. See: Frampton, “Prospects for a Critical Regionalism,” 153, 156. ↑

[5] Judith Butler and Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, *Who Sings the Nation State?: Language, Politics, Belonging* (London: Seagull Books, 2007), 77–84. Spivak has also alluded to critical regionalism in Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, *Other Asias* (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishers, 2008 [2003]), 2, 126–27. ↑

[6] The term critical regionalism seems to have migrated from architecture to literary studies through Jameson’s *Seeds of Time*. Since then, the term has assumed two distinct trajectories: the first derived from Marxian (and, for Moreiras, anti-colonial) politics; the second, tending to posit regional cultural manifestations (like regional literary

tropes and styles) as evidence of resistance to global cultural homogeneity. See: Frederic Jameson, *The Seeds of Time* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994); Alberto Moreiras, “A Storm Blowing from Paradise: Negative Globality and Critical Regionalism” in *The Latin American Subaltern Studies Reader*, eds. Ileana Rodriguez, María Milagros López (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2001); Moreiras, *The Exhaustion of Difference: The Politics of Latin American Cultural Studies* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2001). ↑

7 Whereas Jameson pursues this question in reference solely to Euro-American cultural production (mostly European and US architecture), Moreiras is focused on the economic and political conditions of the global south, with a particular interest in Latin America. ↑

8 Jameson, *The Seeds of Time*, 202, emphasis added. ↑

9 Frampton’s theory of critical regionalism seems intent on eschewing the nostalgia that marks many works of architectural phenomenology, although Frampton too clearly pines for the presumed beauty and authenticity of the past. ↑

10 Mark Rifkin, *Beyond Settler Time: Temporal Sovereignty and Indigenous Self-Determination* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2017), 2. See also: Sara Ahmed, *Queer Phenomenology* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2006). ↑

11 Charles L. Davis II has critiqued Frampton’s use of the civilization-culture binary while pointing to how Frampton’s formulations of place fail to consider the contributions of diasporic peoples such as African American architects and builders. See: Charles L. Davis II, “Blackness in Practice: Toward an Architectural Phenomenology of Blackness,” *Log* 42 (Winter/Spring 2018): 43–54. ↑

12 In his discussion of regionalist architectural discourses related to Palm Springs (on the ancestral lands of Agua Caliente band of Cahuilla Indians), Shvartzberg Carrió similarly discusses the relationship between coloniality, the nation-state, and the metaphysics of regionality: “Depending on how the concept [of regionalism] is deployed, then, it can signify a return to nature and the irreducibly metaphysical qualities of specific places, or the objective particularities that make such places unique but also commensurable with other variables….” Manuel Shvartzberg Carrió, “Designing ‘Post-Industrial Society’: Settler Colonialism and Modern Architecture in Palm Springs, California, 1876–1977” (PhD Dissertation, Columbia University, 2019), 131–34. See also: Alan Colquhoun, “Critique of Regionalism” and “Concept of Regionalism,” in *Architectural Regionalism: Collected Writings on Place, Identity, Modernity and Tradition*, ed. Vincent B. Canizaro (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 2007), 140–155. ↑

13 Frampton, “Towards a Critical Regionalism,” 25. ↑

14 Frampton proposes that “world culture” might be combined with “universal civilization” to mitigate the latter’s rationalist, homogenizing effects. As an example of “world culture,” he points to the Asian pagoda roofs that inspired the undulating ceiling in Jørn Utzon’s design of the Bagsværd Church in Denmark. Frampton, “Towards a Critical Regionalism,” 22–23. ↑

15 Arendt describes in various works the role of nationality in justifying the intense expansion and centralization of the state in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. See: Hannah Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism* (Orlando: Harcourt, 1994 [1951]). I borrow the term “nation-form” from Étienne Balibar who uses it to stress the ethnonational form of the state. Balibar and Immanuel Wallerstein, *Race, Nation, Class: Ambiguous Identities* (London: Verso, 1991). ↑

16 See, for example: Christian Norberg-Schulz, *Genius Loci: Towards a Phenomenology of Architecture* (New York: Rizzoli, 1980). ↑

17 Ferdinand Tönnies, *Community and Civil Society,* trans. Margaret Hollis, ed. Jose Harris (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012). ↑

18 Paul Ricoeur, *History and Truth,* trans. Charles A. Kelbley (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1965 [1955]), 271–73. ↑

19 Ricoeur, *History and Truth,* 274. ↑

20 Ricoeur, *History and Truth,* 277. ↑

21 Ian Chambers, "The Movement of Great Tellico: The Role of Town and Clan in Cherokee Spatial Understanding," *Native South* 3, no. 1 (2010): 89–102. ↑

22 On the Five Tribes' pre-Removal town-based forms, see: Linda S. Cordell, "Mississippian sociopolitical systems" and other contributions in *Great Towns and Regional Polities: In the Prehistoric American Southwest and Southeast*, ed. J.E. Neitzel (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1999); Tyler Boulware, *Deconstructing the Cherokee Nation: Town, Region, and Nation among Eighteenth-century Cherokees* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2011); John R. Swanton, "Modern Square Grounds of the Creek Indians" in *Smithsonian Miscellaneous Collections* 85, no. 8 (1931); Wendy Cegielski and Brad R. Lieb, "Hina' Falaa, 'The Long Path': An Analysis of Chickasaw Settlement Using GIS in Northeast Mississippi, 1650–1840," *Native South* 4, no. 1 (2011): 24–54; and Angie Debo, *The Rise and Fall of the Choctaw Republic* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1934), 58–60. ↑

23 On the original divergence of the Chickasaw and Choctaw in the pre-colonial period, see: Patricia Galloway, *Choctaw Genesis, 1500–1700* (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 1995), 49–55. ↑

24 Boulware uses the term "beloved town" to describe these center towns. Boulware, *Deconstructing the Cherokee Nation,* 24–26. ↑

25 Tyler Boulware, "'It Seems Like Coming Into Our Houses': Challenges to Cherokee Hunting Grounds, 1750–1775," in *Before the Volunteer State: New Thoughts on Early Tennessee, 1540–1800*, ed. Kristofer Ray (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 2014). See also: Julie L. Reed, "Thinking Multidimensionally: Cherokee Boundaries Above, Below, and Beyond," *Transactions of the American Philosophical Society* 110, no. 4 (January 2021): 57–70. ↑

26 Christopher B. Rodning, "Mounds, Myths, and Cherokee Townhouses in Southwestern North Carolina," *American Antiquity* 74, no. 4 (October 2009): 627–663. ↑

27 Centralized consolidation occurred gradually and to different extents for the various nations. See: Duane Champagne, *Social Order and Political Change: Constitutional Governments among the Cherokee, the Choctaw, the Chickasaw, and the Creek* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1992) and Tim Alan Garrison, "Pan-nationalism as a Crisis Management Strategy: John Ross and the Tahlequah conference of 1843" in *Between Indigenous and Settler Governance*, eds. Lisa Ford and Tim Rowse (New York: Routledge, 2013), 48–58. ↑

28 Frampton, "Towards a Critical Regionalism," 17. ↑

29 Arendt refers frequently to the importance of town hall politics; see: Hannah Arendt, *On Revolution* (London: Penguin Books, 1990 [1963]). ↑

30 Frampton, "Prospects for a Critical Regionalism," 162 and Frampton, "Towards a Critical Regionalism," 25. ↑

31 This idea of confederation first appears in Arendt's discussion of the non-nationalist and confederate-minded character of Europe's anti-fascist Resistance movements in Hannah Arendt, "Approaches to the German Problem" [1944] in *Essays in Human Understanding, 1930–1954* (New York: Harcourt Brace, 1994), 113. The "federal principle" then forms a recurring theme of her examination of the US political system in *On Revolution.* ↑

32 Arendt's claim about ancient Rome is that, by emphasizing law (rather than ethnicity) as the basis for inclusion in the state, the empire granted a fair degree of political and cultural autonomy to conquered tribes and nations. Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism,* 125. See also:

Butler and Spivak, *Who Sings the Nation-State?,* 54–56, 71–72. ↑

33 Allan S. Mohl, “The Rise and Fall of the Iroquois Confederacy: Its Influence on Early American History,” *The Journal of Psychohistory* 34, no. 4 (Spring 2007): 352. The influence of the Haudenosaunee (Iroquois) confederation on US political structures has been the subject of scholarly debate. See, for example: Felix S. Cohen, “Americanizing the White Man,” *American Scholar* 21, no. 2 (1952): 177–91; Elisabeth Tooker, “The United States Constitution and the Iroquois League,” *Ethnohistory* 35, no. 4 (1988): 305–336; and Donald A. Grinde, “The Iroquois and the Development of American Government,” *Historical Reflections / Réflexions Historiques* 21, no. 2 (1995): 301–18. ↑

34 Cherokee Delegation to US Congress May 3, 1879. Ann Ross Piburn Collection, Western History Collections, University of Oklahoma Libraries, Norman, Oklahoma, Box P-19, Folder 14. See also: Tyler Boulware’s description of pre-Removal Cherokee political structures as regionalist due to a gradation of affiliations between differently-scaled body politics. Boulware, *Deconstructing the Cherokee Nation*. ↑

35 John Marshall’s decision in *Cherokee Nation v. Georgia* crucially defined the status of the Cherokee as a “domestic dependent nation” (rather than a fully sovereign foreign nation) because of the Cherokee’s geographical situation within territory claimed by the United States, setting a precedent for US policies regarding Native tribes and nations. On this case and on related US legal decisions, see: Jonas Bens, “When the Cherokee Became Indigenous: Cherokee Nation v. Georgia and its Paradoxical Legalities,” *Ethnohistory* 65, no. 2 (April 2018): 247–267; Jill Norgren, *The Cherokee Cases: Two Landmark Federal Decisions in the Fight for Sovereignty* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2004); and David E. Wilkins, *American Indian Sovereignty and the U. S. Supreme Court: The Masking of Justice* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1997). Many scholars have proposed Native alternatives to Euro-American models of national sovereignty. Audra Simpson calls for forms of “nested sovereignty” (not to be confused with what I’m calling “nested regionalism”); see: Audra Simpson, *Mohawk Interruptus: Political Life Across the Settler State* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2014), 11–12. Leanne Betasamosake Simpson has discussed forms of Indigenous internationalism based on grounded normativity and relationality; see: Leanne Betasamosake Simpson, *As We Have Always Done: Indigenous Freedom through Radical Resistance* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2017). Mark Rifkin has echoed this call for a politics based on relationality as a way to resist settler biopolitics; see: Rifkin, “Geo into Bio and Back Again, or Tracing the Politics of Place and Sovereignty,” *American Quarterly* 71, no. 3 (September 2019): 871–879. ↑

36 Frampton, “Prospects for a Critical Regionalism,” 149–50. ↑

37 Frampton, “Prospects for a Critical Regionalism,” 156. ↑

38 Frampton, “Prospects for a Critical Regionalism,” 157. Keith Eggener has noted how Frampton has exoticized the work of Luis Barragán while ignoring Barragán’s elitist affiliations. See: Eggener, “Placing Resistance: A Critique of Critical Regionalism,” *Journal of Architectural Education* 55, no. 4 (May 2002): 228–237. ↑

39 Jameson, *The Seeds of Time,* 203. ↑

40 In Frampton’s teaching lectures, he has spoken of the ways timber is used in Aalto’s Villa Mareia to evoke Finland’s forest landscape. Those forests have been the object of political battles between the Sámi and Finnish logging interests. Hans Petter Graver and Geir Ulfstein, “The Sami People’s Right to Land in Norway,” *International Journal on Minority and Group Rights* 11, no. 4 (2004): 337–377. Rebecca Lawrence and Kaisa Raitio, “Forestry Conflicts in Finnish Sapmi: Local, National And Global Links,” *Indigenous Affairs* 4, no. 4 (2006): 36–43. ↑

41 Jeff Malpas, “Assessing the Significance of Heidegger’s Black Notebooks,” *Geographica Helvetica* 73, no. 1 (March 2018): 109–114. The Black Forest nostalgia expressed throughout “Building, Dwelling, Thinking” is hard to

dissociate from the fascist and proto-fascist discourse of *Heimatkultur.* See also: Malpas, *In the Brightness of Place: Topological Thinking in and after Heidegger* (Albany: SUNY Press, 2022) and Popescu, “Critical Regionalism: A Not So Critical Theory,” 213. ↑

42 The terms “root,” “rooted” and “rootedness” appear fourteen times in Frampton’s two short essays on critical regionalism. On “rooted culture” specifically, see Frampton, “Towards a Critical Regionalism,” 27 and Frampton, “Prospects for a Critical Regionalism,” 148, 158. Bryan E. Norwood has examined the racial-nationalist biases of architectural phenomenology, contrasting architects’ notions of centeredness and rootedness to Edouard Glissant’s notion of créolité. See: Norwood, “Disorienting Phenomenology,” *Log* 42, (Winter/Spring 2018): 10–22. Nor is Frampton above trucking in antisemitic tropes concerning the presumed link between “rootlessness” and mercantile chicanery. To explain critical regionalism Frampton recounts a diatribe by Adolf Loos against the rootless urbanites who “have no culture.” Frampton then repeats a joke about a Jewish merchant who justifies selling rotten sardines by claiming that sardines aren’t meant to be eaten; they’re meant to be bought and sold. Frampton likens such mercantilism to the treatment of architecture as a commodity. Kenneth Frampton and Trevor Boddy, “Regionalism: A Discussion with Kenneth Frampton and Trevor Boddy,” *Fifth Column* 3, no. 3–4 (July 1983): 55, 57. ↑

43 The problem that Euro-American notions of ancestry pose to questions of tribal membership has been a key issue of theoretical (and practical) concern, especially with the rise of DNA testing. Mark Rifkin has provided an extensive framework for understanding the distinctions between Euro-American and Native American conceptions of kinship. See: Rifkin, *Politics of Kinship: Race, Family, Governance* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2024). Other scholars have also contrasted Euro-American ideas of ancestral inheritance to Indigenous modalities of incorporation and belonging. See, for example: Audra Simpson, *Mohawk Interruptus;* Donna Akers, *Living in the Land of Death: The Choctaw Nation, 1830–1860* (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 2004), 43–44*;* and Kim Tallbear, “Beyond the Life/Not-Life Binary: A Feminist-Indigenous Reading of Cryopreservation, Interspecies Thinking, and the New Materialisms” in *Cryopolitics: Frozen Life in a Melting World*, eds. Joanna Radin and Emma Kowal (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2017). ↑

44 Frampton, “Towards a Critical Regionalism,” 17. ↑

45 Le Corbusier’s plans involved selectively destroying and depopulating large portions of the kasbah to accommodate European spaces of consumption. Frampton and Boddy, “Regionalism: A Discussion,” 57–58. On Le Corbusier’s plans, see: Zeynep Çelik, “Le Corbusier, Orientalism, Colonialism,” *Assemblage* 17 (April 1992): 59–77. ↑

46 See: Moreiras, “A Storm Blowing from Paradise.” ↑

47 Pierre Bourdieu, “The Forms of Capital” in *Cultural Theory: An Anthology*, eds. Imre Szeman and Timothy Kaposy (Malden, MA: Wiley, 2011), 81–92. ↑

48 Neil Smith, *Uneven Development: Nature, Capital, and the Production of Space* (Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 2008 [1984]). ↑

49 See: Vine De Loria Jr., *God Is Red: A Native View of Religion* (Golden, CO: Fulcrum Publishing, 2003 [1973]). For literature specific to the Five Tribes’ conceptions of place, see: Dustin J. Mack, “The Chickasaws’ Place-World: The Mississippi River in Chickasaw History and Geography,” *Native South* 11, no. 1 (2018): 1–28; Akers, *Living in the Land of Death*; and Clint Caroll, *Roots of Our Renewal: Ethnobotany and Cherokee Environmental Governance* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2015). ↑

50 There is a large literature on the topic of relationality. Concerning histories of the Five Tribes, see: Akers, *Living in the Land of Death*; Zoe Todd, “An Indigenous Feminist’s Take On The Ontological Turn: ‘Ontology’ Is Just Another Word For Colonialism,” *Journal of Historical Sociology* 29, no. 1

(March 2016): 4–22; and Tallbear, “Beyond the Life/Not-Life Binary,” 179–202. ↑

51 Champagne, *Social Order and Change;* Boulware, *Deconstructing the Cherokee Nation.* ↑

52 A small elite, mostly consisting of households with mixed European and Native American ancestry, practiced cash-crop agriculture using the enslaved labor of African Americans. Nonetheless, there was overwhelming consensus against the privatization of land. On slavery, see: David A. Chang, *The Color of the Land: Race, Nation, and the Politics of Landownership in Oklahoma, 1832–1929* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2010); Barbara Krauthamer, *Black Slaves, Indian Masters: Slavery, Emancipation, and Citizenship in the Native American South* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2013); Theda Perdue, *Slavery and the Evolution of Cherokee Society, 1540–1866*, 1st ed. (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1979); and Andrew K. Frank, “Red, Black, and Seminole: Community Convergence on the Florida Borderlands, 1780–1840,” in *Borderland Narratives: Negotiation and Accommodation in North America’s Contested Spaces, 1500–1850*, eds. Andrew K. Frank and A. Glenn Crothers (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2017). ↑

53 Douglas A. Hurt, “The Shaping of a Creek (Muscogee) Homeland in Indian Territory, 1828–1907” (PhD Dissertation, University of Oklahoma, 2000), 87–96. ↑

54 On the Choctaw’s changing settlement patterns, see: Clara Sue Kidwell, *The Choctaw in Oklahoma: From Tribe to Nation, 1855–1970* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2007)*,* 5. On pre- and post-Removal settlement patterns of the Five Tribes, see: Angie Debo, *And Still the Waters Run: The Betrayal of the Five Civilized Tribes* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2020 [1936]), 14–17, and Debo, *The Rise and Fall of the Choctaw Republic*, 19–21. ↑

55 The terms “conservative” and “progressive” were used by US agents stationed among the Five Tribes in the nineteenth century and were subsequently adopted by the so-called progressive faction of the nations. In recent decades, the terms continue to be used by historians—Native and otherwise—to describe this basic division that characterized the politics of all the nations of the Five Tribes. ↑

56 Ginger Nolan, “The Cunning of Misrecognition: Indigenous Politics and the Five Tribes’ Capitols,” *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 84, no. 1 (March 2025): 64–83. ↑

57 Historical sources on the buildings are mostly confined to three types: legislative records, which describe only very basic decisions—budget allocations, the siting of buildings, and the hiring of architects or contractors; a few oral histories conducted under the New Deal writers’ program; and documents and photographs collected by the early-twentieth-century historian Muriel Wright (Choctaw Nation). Living citizens of the Five Tribes, such as curators of national museums, have derived much of their knowledge of the buildings from these archives. See: Muriel Wright Collection, Oklahoma Historical Society, Research Center, Box 22. ↑

58 These themes can be gleaned from reading nineteenth-century legislative records, which the Cherokee and Choctaw have published. For the other nations, records are kept on microfilm, including in the Oklahoma Historical Society’s American Indian Archives. There is a large literature on the political histories of the Five Tribes during the post-Removal period. See: Debo, *And Still the Waters Run.* ↑

59 On the co-creation of modernities through Native American and colonial exchanges, see: Philip Joseph Deloria, *Indians in Unexpected Places* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2004). ↑

60 Meredith McCoy and Matthew Villeneuve have claimed—though without adducing evidence—that the seminaries constituted a “creative repurposing of the technology of schooling.” See: McCoy and Villeneuve, “Reconceiving

Schooling: Centering Indigenous Experimentation in Indian Education History," *History of Education Quarterly* 60, no. 4 (November 2020): 489. Devon A. Mihesuah (Choctaw Nation) has studied how the seminaries primarily served the mixed-blood offspring of the planter-class and tended to deepen class divisions. See: Mihesuah, *Cultivating the Rosebuds: The Education of Women at Cherokee Female Seminary, 1851–1909* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1993). On the Cherokee and Choctaw seminaries, see also: Brad Agnew, "A Legacy of Education: The History of the Cherokee Seminaries," *Chronicles of Oklahoma* 63, no. 2 (1985): 128–147; Debo, *And Still the Waters Run,* 66–68; James D. Morrison, *Schools for the Choctaws* (Durant: Choctaw Bilingual Education Program, 1978), 1–14, 18–32, 160; Akers, *Living in the Land of Death*, 105–106, 109–111; and Dennis Miles, "'Educate or We Perish': The Armstrong Academy's History as Part of the Choctaw Educational System," *Chronicles of Oklahoma* 89, no. 3 (2011): 312–337. ↑

61 Mihesuah, *Cultivating the Rosebuds,* 39. ↑

62 On provisions in the Cherokee and Choctaw national constitutions for the funding of secondary schools, see: *The Constitution and Laws of the Cherokee Nation: Passed at Tahlequah, Cherokee Nation, 1839–51* (Tahlequah: Cherokee Nation, 1852), 15; Choctaw Nation, *The Constitution and Laws of the Choctaw Nation*, 56–57; "Treaty with the Choctaw, 1830 September 27, 1830" and "Proclamation, February 24, 1831," in *Indian Affairs: Laws and Treaties,* 2, ed. Charles Kappler (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1904), 311. ↑

63 Following Removal, the Choctaw (like many of the Five Tribes nations) used a succession of open-air pavilions and hewn-timber buildings that preceded the 1883 capitol building in Tuskahomma for political deliberations. Their seminary Armstrong Academy accommodated legislative assemblies for many years following the US Civil War. On the Choctaw council houses and the 1883 capitol, see: Muriel Wright Collection, Box 22, Folder 10 and Box 7, Folder 20. ↑

64 See, for example: Glen Sean Coulthard, *Red Skin, White Masks: Rejecting the Politics of Recognition* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2014), 63. ↑

65 See: Agnew, "A Legacy of Education," 130–31, 133; and Mihesuah, *Cultivating the Rosebuds*, 27. ↑

66 The National Park Service states that the style of the two original Cherokee seminaries was referred to as "Cherokee Doric." Historic American Building Survey, Building OK-No 23. See also: Jace Weaver, cited in Anon., "UGA team helps design exhibit on Cherokee Female Seminary," *Red Lake Nation News,* May 4, 2011, https://www.redlakenationnews.com/story/2011/05/04/features/uga-team-helps-design-exhibit-on-cherokee-female-seminary-set-to-open-in-may/050420111032488823617.html . ↑

67 See, for example: photographs in Norberg-Schulz, *Genius Loci*. ↑

68 An application to the United States' National Register of Historic Places describes how the construction of the Cherokee Female Seminary "was plagued by shortages of both building materials and skilled labor." Ruth Kent (on behalf of the Oklahoma Historical Society), Inventory nomination form 10-300 for the National Register of Historic Places, US National Park Service, 2. ↑

69 Kent, Inventory nomination form, 2. ↑

70 Frampton, *Studies in Tectonic Culture.* ↑

71 "Tuskahomma Council House to Be Preserved," Choctaw Council House Collection, Oklahoma Historical Society, 2011.304, Box 1, Folder 22. ↑

72 James L. Hill, "Muskogee Internationalism in an Age of Revolution, 1763–1818" (PhD Dissertation, College of William and Mary, 2016). See also: Hill, *Creek Internationalism in an Age of Revolution, 1763–1818* (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 2022) and Patricia Galloway, "'So Many Little Republics': British Negotiations

with the Choctaw Confederacy, 1765," *Ethnohistory* 41, no. 4 (October 1994): 513–537. ↑

73 Jefferson Berryhill, "The Creek Council House," 25 June 1937, Indian Pioneer Papers, University of Oklahoma Libraries; Andrew Denson, "Muskogee's Indian International Fairs: Tribal Autonomy and The Indian Image in the Late Nineteenth Century," *Western Historical Quarterly* 34, no. 3 (Autumn 2003): 325–345. ↑

74 Curtis L. Nolen, "The Okmulgee Constitution: A Step Towards Indian Self-Determination," *The Chronicles of Oklahoma History* 58, no. 3 (October 1980): 264–282. ↑

75 Spivak and Butler, *Who Sings the Nation State, 77–79.* ↑

76 See: Hurt, "The Shaping of a Creek (Muscogee) Homeland in Indian Territory, 1828–1907," 133–38. ↑

77 On the use of native stone in the Creek, Chickasaw, and Seminole capitols (respectively), see: Berryhill, "The Creek Council House" and "Capitols of the Five Civilized Tribes," *Tulsa Sunday World Magazine,* January 1953 in Grant Foreman Collection, Oklahoma Historical Society, Box 16, folder 1; and "Seminole Council House," C. Guy Cutlip Collection, Western History Collections, Oklahoma University Libraries Digital Collections, https://repository.ou.edu/islandora/object/oku%3Anamcutlip . ↑

78 "Capitols of the Five Civilized Tribes," Grant Foreman Collection. ↑

79 I have tried—without success—to reach the engineers who oversaw the recent restoration of the Chickasaw Cultural Center. They restored these ornaments very differently from how they appear in early twentieth-century photographs, and it is unclear whether they may have had access to architectural drawings or bibliographic sources describing a different design, or whether the new ornaments are innovations. ↑

80 Arindam Dutta, *The Bureaucracy of Beauty: The Work of Art in the Age of Its Global Reproducibility* (New York: Routledge, 2007) and Ginger Nolan, *Savage Mind to Savage Machine: Racial Science and Twentieth-Century Design* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2021). ↑

81 This attitude linking ornament to savagery and degeneracy is articulated most vividly by Adolf Loos; see: Loos, *Ornament and Crime: Selected Essays,* ed. Adolf Opel (Riverside, California: Ariadne Press, 1998). ↑

82 Frampton, "Towards a Critical Regionalism," 21–22, emphasis added. ↑

83 On the connections between colonial violence, colonial methods of expropriation, and colonial interest in the material products of the colonized, see, for example: Itohan Osayimwese, *Colonialism and Modern Architecture in Germany* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2017). ↑

84 Thomas Jefferson and Merrill D. Peterson, *Writings* (New York, N.Y: Literary Classics of the U.S, 1984). Jefferson to Brother Handsome Lake, November 3, 1802; Jefferson to the Brothers of the Choctaw Nation, December 17, 1803; To the Chiefs of the Cherokee Nation, January 10, 1806; *Second Inaugural Address,* March 4, 1805. ↑

85 Deloria, *God Is Red,* chap. 7; Coulthard and Simpson, "Grounded Normativity / Place-Based Solidarity," *American Quarterly* 68, no. 2 (June 2016): 249–255; and Tallbear, "Why Interspecies Thinking Needs Indigenous Standpoints," *Fieldsights* (November 2011). ↑