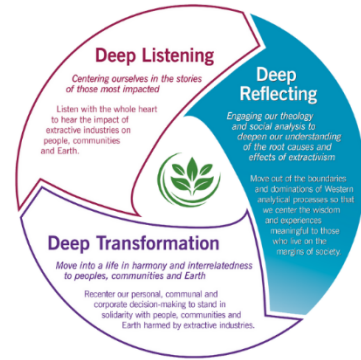


Awakening to a New Consciousness

*Listening to the Cry of Earth
and the Cry of the Poor*

Mercy's Theological Reflection Process



Glossary

Neo-Colonialism

Colonialism refers to the violent political and economic domination of much of the world by European countries for 500 years, beginning in the 15th century. While most of the Global South had achieved independence from outside direct rule by the mid-1900s, these new countries often were left with [ingrained patterns of exploitation by and trade with](#) former colonial powers and the mindsets underpinning them. Now, transnational corporations and Chinese companies are increasingly replicating some of this colonial dynamic in their search for natural resources.

Capitalism

The extraction of natural resources can't be separated from the economic model this process upholds. Excavating minerals, drilling for oil and gas, damming water to produce electricity, and cutting down forests for large agricultural plantations are all part of the churn for profits and continual economic growth. These raw materials and the products made from them aren't usually for nearby communities but for export and trading in an international marketplace.

Racism

Much of the justification for exploiting communities for natural resources is rooted in the Doctrine of Discovery, a series of papal bulls issued in the late 1500s that encouraged the seizure of land from non-Christians. Europeans relied on this toxic blend of Christian superiority and domination to dispossess the original inhabitants of Africa, the Americas, Asia and Oceania, who were usually of darker skin color. That continues today as [racial minorities and Indigenous peoples disproportionately experience harm](#) from the extractivist economy.

Misogyny

Ingrained prejudice and violence against women have accompanied the arrival of extractive industries for centuries, going back at least to when early European conquerors pillaged the lands of the Americas while also raping native women. Today, the mindset of male privilege and entitlement is seen in [increased sexual violence near “man camps”](#) at mining, oil and gas sites. Reports of human-rights abuses also include women promised mining jobs but instead finding themselves trafficked for sex and, in some communities, increases in domestic violence as traditional sharing of household roles gives way to growing power for male workers as they begin earning wages.

Corruption

The “resource curse” is a phrase often used for communities rich in oil, gas, minerals and metals but that benefit very little from their extraction. Corruption—from corporate payments to secure the right to extract resources through governments’ use of the revenues generated— often contributes to that gap. Advocates worldwide have been calling for [“publish what you pay” policies](#) that require extractive industries to disclose payments to governments for the rights to explore, develop and extract resources. Such transparency holds governments accountable for their use of funds and equips local communities to better advocate for services they could be receiving from payments and revenues.

Campesino

“Campesino” is an encompassing term, including small- and medium-size farmers, landless people, women farmers, indigenous people, migrants and agricultural workers from around the world. More specifically, campesinos are rural producers who work small plots, with the family constituting most or all of the labor, and often do not own land. The food they harvest is traditionally for their own consumption and sale to the market, with both activities maintaining the life of the family as opposed to accumulating capital. **[1]**

[1] <https://www.heifer.org/blog/a-word-about-the-word-campesino.html>