

# Soil, Seeds, and Sacrifice: Agricultural Imperialism and US Literature

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Thomas Jefferson's garden at Monticello – from *A Rich Spot of Earth* (2012) by Peter J. Hatch.

The intricacies of “settling” the land – mixing the soil with the labor of people’s hands (according to John Locke) – has received relatively little attention in settler colonial studies. This talk reflects on the history of American agricultural colonialism and its literary representation, on the micropolitics of “taking” and changing the land, of saving soils and seeds from the grip of “national sacrifice.” Examples will be taken from diverse writers such as James Fenimore Cooper, Leslie Marmon Silko, Linda Hogan, Diane Wilson, and Ruth Ozeki.

Tuesday,  
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6:15 – 7:45 pm  
(CET)

Rabinstr. 8, SR 6

Gesa Mackenthun is professor of American Studies at Rostock University. Her most recent books are *Embattled Excavations: Colonial and Transcultural Constructions of the American Deep Past* (2021) and *Decolonizing ‘Prehistory’: Deep Time and Indigenous Knowledges in North America* (with Christen Mucher, 2021). Her current research deals with representations of the transatlantic history of enclosures, evictions, and ecocide.