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Reviews editor: Dawn M. Paley

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Rebecca Rose, 2019, *Before the Parade: A History of Halifax's Gay, Lesbian and Bisexual Communities*. Canada: Nimbus Publishing. 184 pp., paperback, $19.95.

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Review Author: Dawn Marie Paley

Book Review: Horie Takashi, Tanaka Hikaru, Tanno Kiyoto eds. *Amorphous Dissent*

Review Author: Kei Takata

Takashi Horie, Hikaru Tanaka and Kiyoto Tanno eds, 2020, *Amorphous Dissent: Post-Fukushima Social Movements in Japan*. Tokyo: Transpacific Press, US$41.95, 230 pp., paperback.

In March 2011, an earthquake-triggered tsunami hit the northeastern part of Japan, followed by nuclear plant explosions at Fukushima. This triple disaster became a catalyst to transform Japanese civil society, igniting large-scale social movements after more than 40 years of stagnation.

Naturally, the series of movements after the Fukushima incident began with protests against nuclear energy. Activists appealed to the government to abolish all 54 of Japan's nuclear power reactors. However, the movements soon evolved and began to contest other issues. In the summer of 2015, more than 100,000 people showed up in front of the National Diet building in Tokyo to protest against the National Security Legislation. They opposed the new law, which amends the pacifist spirit of the Japanese Constitution and the undemocratic and authoritarian procedure to pass the bill used by Shinzo Abe's administration.

On the other end of the spectrum, Japan experienced the rise of a new kind of right-wing movement, whose members have been expressing racist and discriminatory sentiments against Korea and Korean residents since the 2000s. Starting around 2013, activists began to form groups to confront the far right and diminish hate speech in public.

One could consider the rise of these new and large-scale movements after the Fukushima disaster a new cycle of protest. But despite its significant impact on Japanese society, English scholarship that examines post-Fukushima movements in a comprehensive manner remains limited. *Amorphous Dissent: Post Fukushima Movements in Japan*, explicitly written for the international audience, is a perfect book for readers interested in what actually happened in Japanese civil society after 2011.

Amorphous Dissent is divided into seven chapters. Editors Takashi Horie, Hikaru Tanaka, and Kiyoto Tanno, begin with a general overview of post-Fukushima activism and the development of Japanese social movements following the Second World War, explaining how significant the post-Fukushima movements were for Japanese civil society by overcoming the trauma from the radical and often violent movements of the late sixties.

The editors go on to explain their overarching concept of "amorphous dissent." "Amorphous," originally a scientific term, can be understood as 'shapeless,'

'unclassifiable,' 'lacking organization or unity' (p. 37). An opposing concept would be "crystalline" where elements are more structured and organized.

Throughout the book, different authors apply these contrasting images to social movement organizations. A typical example of crystalline movements would be labor unions, where the organizational structure is static and the memberships are relatively homogeneous, being composed of people with similar attributes.

The editors claim that people participating in amorphous movements are more diverse, and their organizational structure is generally more fluid, with a dynamic membership of people constantly joining and leaving. They argue that even though the overall volume of the crystalline type of movements remains large, amorphous movements are becoming more prevalent and playing a crucial role in Japanese civil society today.

In the text, the authors demonstrate the strength of amorphous movements. They claim amorphous movements have a greater capacity to incorporate minorities, especially as compared to crystalline movements. At the same time, their flexibility enables them to become brokers and bridge crystalline movements with different backgrounds and standpoints. To be sure, people's ties in the amorphous movements are often weak, and the sustainability of these movements can be low. Nevertheless, *Amorphous Dissent* argues that these weaknesses can also be a strength in the contemporary social movements arena (pp. 52-8).

The authors consider the fact that Japanese society itself has been moving towards an amorphous condition –a more fluid and liquid society– and following such social change, social movements with an amorphous nature are prevailing (pp.27-36).

The main section of *Amorphous Dissent* is divided among five authors, who explore various amorphous movements that emerged after the Fukushima incidents. Chigaya Kinoshita's examines how the "crisis" of the 3.11 disaster, as the nuclear plant explosions are known, became an opportunity for the movements with new amorphous characteristics to emerge. Kinoshita demonstrates in detail how post 3.11 social movements became amorphous along with the change of Japanese society.

Takashi Horie looks at social movements' influence on institutional politics in Japan during the Anti-National Security Law movements of 2015. Horie specifically discusses how the amorphous nature of the youth movements SEALDs (Students Emergency Action for Liberal Democracy) contributed to uniting opposition parties that have long been separate in Japan.

Hikaru Tanaka goes on to explore the case of the Japanese sub-cultural anarchist group Amateur Revolt, who played a crucial role in the post-Fukushima anti-nuclear movements. Amateur Revolt is taken as a representative case for understanding the strength of the amorphous social movement.

Atsushi Toriyama focuses on movements in Okinawa, an island in southern Japan where roughly 70 percent of the U.S. military bases in Japan are concentrated. Toriyama traces the historical development of fissures and contentions between the amorphous movements and local and national governments since 1995, when the extensive anti-U.S. military base movement erupted.

The final chapter, by Kiyoto Tanno, examines Japan's attempts to control hate speech. By exploring amorphous movements to ban the hate speech demonstration in Kawasaki-city, Tanno explores why and how the Kawasaki court ruling upheld foreign residents' "personal rights," despite the fact that the hate speech was aimed at ethnic groups and not individuals.

Amorphous Dissent is a well-balanced book covering many of the major protests that emerged in Japan after 2011. It will be beneficial for a wide range of social movement scholars because it successfully incorporates insider perspectives into social scientific analysis and then translates them into a text for global readers. Each chapter is informative, and includes numerous facts, figures, and narratives about Japanese social movements.

The Fukushima disasters and their aftermath had a significant impact on the Japanese public sphere, and though many books and articles on post-3.11 activisms were published in Japanese, those discourses rarely reached international audiences. It can be challenging to translate local knowledge and experience to a global audience, especially if you know too much about the cases in question. Yet, the social scientific analysis on the part of the contributors and editors allows for a clear description of each movement's characteristics.

Bringing in the scientific term "amorphous" is unique and provocative. Indeed, compared with the past large-scale movements in Japan, one of the meanings of the movements after the triple disaster in 2011 was that amorphous movements without solid institutional bases and a fluid, network-based style of activism, took the initiative. *Amorphous Dissent* ably captures the significant roles played by various amorphous movements on different political issues. While the concept of an amorphous movement remains a bit broad, by linking it to existing social theory such as publics and networks, there is a potential for it to be an analytically valuable concept to capture the characteristics of contemporary social movements beyond Japan.

There are several points that were not fully elaborated upon in *Amorphous Dissent*, but could lead to future discussion in this field of research.

First of all, the "newness" of the post-3.11 movements compared to past movements could have been discussed further. Environmental issues, peace movements, and protests against racism, which are the topics of post-3.11 movements, can all be characterized as "New Social Movements" that emerged out of the movements of the long sixties. While it is significant that amorphous type movements stood in the forefront of Japanese civil society after the 3.11

disaster, similar network-based movements have existed in Japan in the past, such as Beheiren movements of the 1960s and the 70s.

This begs the question: to what extent are the post-3.11 movements "new"? On the one hand, one could reckon that post-3.11 was a time when the seeds of the "New Social Movements" of the sixties flourished. In other words, while the "newness" that emerged from the sixties movement remained modest between the 1970s and the aughts, such "newness" thrived after 40 years in the post-3.11 movements.

On the other hand, one can also call the post-3.11 movements "*New* New Social Movements," indicating significant "newness" that differed from the movements that emerged post 1960s. This question remains unresolved in *Amorphous Dissent*, and would be worth examining in future research.

There is also the issue of situating Japanese movements within a global context. Japanese post-3.11 movements emerged simultaneously with large-scale movements across the globe. There were contemporaneous movements against global capitalism and neoliberalism, such as the U.S. Occupy protests and anti-austerity movements in Western Europe as well as remarkable democratization movements in East and Southeast Asia and the Middle East.

How do the Japanese post-3.11 movements fit into these global movements? Again, these points are not a limitation of the book but rather point to the possibility of future research in this field. I am sure that *Amorphous Dissent* will serve as a valuable and essential ground to discuss the Japanese post-3.11 movements while also examining post-2011 protests from a global and comparative perspective.

About the review author

Kei Takata is an Assistant Professor at Hosei University, Research Center for International Japanese Studies in Tokyo. He received a Ph.D. from the New School for Social Research, Department of Sociology and was a *Wissenschaftlicher Mitarbeiter* at the University of Duisburg-Essen, Institute of East Asian Studies/Institute of Sociology prior to his current position. Overall, his research explores the intersection of politics, culture and social change with a specific focus on post-war Japanese civil society from a comparative and transnational approach. In particular, he has been working on a project to examine Japanese sixties movements from a cosmopolitan perspective. His work has appeared in *Moving the Social: Journal of Social History and the History of Social Movements*, *The Sixties: A Journal of History, Politics and Culture*, among others.

Book review: Nandita Sharma, *Home Rule*

Review Author: Elise Hjalmarson

Nandita Sharma, 2020, *Home Rule: National Sovereignty and the Separation of Natives and Migrants*. Durham & London: Duke University Press. 384pp., paperback, $29.95.

For those of us concerned with the violence of borders, it is difficult to imagine a bleaker moment. Worldwide, government efforts to stay the spread of COVID-19 have resulted in stringent im/migration controls, sweeping border closures, and travel bans. While arguably few lives continue undisrupted, some of the most acutely affected by pandemic restrictions are those whose mobility such regimes were designed to curtail—Migrants or 'people out of place.'

Nandita Sharma's *Home Rule: National Sovereignty and the Separation of Natives and Migrants* ambitiously interweaves immigration controls, liberation movements, national sovereignty, and capitalism, demonstrating their historical interdependence and racist *raisons d'être*. A vigorously researched rejoinder to nationalism, the book challenges taken-for-granted hierarchies and the partitioning of peoples based on national criteria of belonging. In doing so, it underscores the significance of biopolitical categorization to imperial modes of governance, migration management, and many contemporary struggles. A pertinent read for both scholars and activists, the book ultimately contests the conflation of migration with colonization and the villainization of Migrants as settler/colonizers within some decolonization movements.

Readers familiar with Sharma's work will recognize her same voice and careful discursive reflexivity from previous writings. *Home Rule* begins with a rearticulation of 'postcolonialism' as a remaking of the old imperial order and the naturalization of a racist order of sovereign nation states. Sharma calls this the 'Postcolonial New World Order'—a form of governmentality which exalts the nation-state and, with it, the 'true' Natives of its territory over and above Migrants.

In prioritizing the national sovereignty of National-Natives (autochthons) over and against Migrants (allochthons), Sharma suggests that postcolonialism "substitutes demands for decolonization with demands for national sovereignty" (15). Sharma traces the division of peoples and dovetailing of movements to imperial divide and conquer tactics which sought to thwart unification, seed animosity, and promote violence among colonized peoples. In white settler societies, also imagined as 'homelands', whiteness was exalted to depict white European migrants as 'original immigrants', setting them apart from racialized immigrants portrayed as not belonging.

Home Rule goes on to examine the genesis of immigration controls and the

creation of a new category: the Migrant-Native. Beginning with the Mauritius Ordinances in 1835, Sharma considers the shift from exit to entrance controls specifically targeting racialized coolie laborers as opposed to British—and, generally speaking, European—citizens. Sharma contends that Migrants are a racialized, colonial category from the start, constituting "people whose mobility was controlled by the state" (75). In the years that followed, newly independent states implemented similar immigration controls designed to regulate the movement of Migrants and prohibit the entrance of 'undesirables'.

Sharma then chronicles the collapse of empires and emergence of national liberation movements between the World Wars. She shows how once exceptional war-time mobility constraints were not abandoned with the declaration of peace, but rather intensified with the creation of passports, visas, and additional controls to block the entrance of displaced peoples deemed undesirable. It is here that we see the advent of new categories essential to contemporary migration management, including Minorities, Refugees, and the Stateless. Taken together, they constitute negatively racialized people out of place—those who do not belong in the racialized nation and have no right to membership in its community.

The book then goes on to look at the reduction of decolonization to nationalism and the emergence of 'development' as essential to self-government. The end of empires and birth of new nation-states ushered in an era of so-called 'decolonization'; in contrast to liberation or justice, however, it brought intensified, global economic exploitation. Sharma shows that, in spite of ideals of the contrary, postcolonialism did not challenge capitalist social relations. Rather, it entrenched them further. Likewise, while development was widely accepted as a way of countering—even reversing—colonialism, coordinated efforts by the so-called superpowers ensured the continuation of European dominance across the globe. It is here that we see the bifurcation of struggles, as the fight for independence and home rule, couched in the rhetoric of 'decolonization', becomes separated from broader movements to end exploitation and subjugation.

From this reflection, Sharma returns to the historical evolution of immigration controls and categories in a context of deepening global capitalism. She shows that as capital moves more and more freely, people's movement is increasingly restricted. Racist notions about Migrants, including that they "despoil national culture" (171) burgeon. For former colonized nations and imperial powers alike, the transition to nation-state is marked by the introduction of highly racialized immigration controls and a new emphasis on autochthony. A case in point, both Britain and France mount immigration controls against former colonial subjects just as they lift barriers preventing the entrance of non-nationals from the European Economic Community.

The thickest of the book's chapters explores the contentious relationship between anti-immigrant politics and struggles for decolonization in national liberation states across Europe and in the former White Settler colonies. In the

liberated former colonies, Sharma shows how nationalism subsumed anti-colonial resistance efforts, constructing Migrants as 'colonizing' and a threat to sovereignty. Meanwhile, in Europe, a discursive shift in the far right flipped the imperial narrative formerly dividing Europeans from Natives as European nation-states sought to protect 'European Natives' against invading Migrants. Finally, in Canada and the United States, Sharma argues that identifying as autochthonous "became a refuge as well as a rampart" (242) against Migrants as immigration became associated with conquest. Her differentiation between the three geographies is nuanced and thorough, underscoring the painstaking research that made this book possible.

In *Home Rule's* final chapter, Sharma brings her argument to a head with calls for a "politics of postseparation—the refusal to confuse categories of rulers with the people placed within them" (269). So long as we restrict our definition of colonialism to foreign rule, she contends, decolonization will continue to be defined by home rule. This, she insists, is the ultimate deception, for "'national self-determination' is a farce" (274). She closes by once again calling for the dismantling of borders as an essential step toward the eradication of racism. Her final pages are devoted to dreams of what could be achieved were the project of decolonization divorced from those of national liberation and home rule.

At once stirring and provocative, *Home Rule: National Sovereignty and the Separation of Natives and Migrants* consolidates Sharma's position as a scholar of global history from below. It is difficult to overstate the importance of this book's contribution to the ways those of us active in social movements *think* about decolonization, migrant justice, anti-racism, and inequality, as well as to *how we work* at the intersection of these too often separate(d) movements. By rendering so transparent the historical production of immigration categories—particularly those of Native and Migrant—Sharma's work challenges the nationalisms, hierarchies, and categorizations which permeate our movements. Like false walls, they crumble with a well-placed push, as do any barriers preventing collaboration across diverse movements and geographies in the struggle for decolonization, dignity, and places to dwell.

About the review author

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Book reviews editor's note, July 7, 2021: A draft version of this review was initially published in Interface *13.1. I offer my sincerest apologies to the reviewer and to readers for this oversight. The version above is the final version.*

Book review: Rebecca Rose, *Before the Parade*

Review author: Lorax B. Horne

Rebecca Rose, 2019, *Before the Parade: A History of Halifax's Gay, Lesbian and Bisexual Communities*. Canada: Nimbus Publishing (184 pp., paperback, $19.95)

With a tight focus on the period of 1972 to 1984, Rebecca Rose's new book *Before the Parade* focusses on a foundational period for the queer community in the principal city in Atlantic Canada. Rose herself was a founding member of the Halifax Dyke and Trans march which emerged as a counterpoint to corporate Pride in recent years. As a millennial member of the rainbow community, she surveys the earlier generations of lesbian, gay and bisexual people who organized structures of permanence, like housing co-operatives and commercial public spaces. *Before the Parade* asks: how did human rights for queer folk become in the space of a couple of decades a mainstream concern, while resisted by all institutions, a state broadcaster, and the military industrial complex that is also the province's largest employer?

Drawing on her background as a journalist, Rose investigates the social networks of LGB elders and recovers oral histories in a region that is often excluded from tomes claiming to be national in scope. To guide this recovery effort, *Before the Parade* opens with biographical sketches of 33 people who become central to the narrative core of the book. Rose combines interviews with access to the personal archives of key organisers, as well as familiarity with long-time publisher Daniel McKay's Halifax Rainbow online encyclopaedia, the Canadian Museum for Human Rights, and Dalhousie University's growing collection of elder's records. The seemingly arbitrary choice of a concluding date of 1984 is, in fact, a personal one: the historical survey ends on the year of the author's birth.

Rose's research focuses on the Gay and Lesbian Association of Nova Scotia and its predecessor, GAE. These community-based advocacy organisations gave birth to structures like a volunteer-staffed telephone hotline and a mixed gender dance hall and events space called The Turret. People who passed through the formal organizations and the social scenes fought the battles for space in the culture that came as a result, and spoke to the author about the difficulties of establishing a radical political presence in a conservative province.

Rose traces telephone and mail surveillance of activists back to the nearby military base (p.166) and the military intelligence unit (p.14). Activists faced censorship when trying to purchase ad space for the telephone helpline. When organizing a boycott of the state broadcaster, solidarity from student media became critical to the movement (p.57). Long before any other denominations opened their doors to us, the faith-based community of Unitarian Universalists

was hosting and connecting gay, lesbian and bisexual community members (p.49). Similar to how activists today hat-tip the invisible agents surveilling our social media, in 1978 they composed Christmas carols to sing to the obvious intelligence officers photographing them outside their gathering places (p.147).

As can be expected from any dissident community faced with incoming violence from multiple fronts, the history of bisexual, gay and lesbian Halifax is fractious. LGB people that exited the movement in Halifax continued into women's movements, anti-war, and struggles for racial justice, narratives which one is left to imagine as they are not included in this history.

Before the Parade leaves open questions for future investigators to undertake in order to further understand the experience of queer people in the Maritimes. One anticipates a possible start from some of the missing letters in the fuller acronym: 2STQIA+. The Dalhousie University archive in particular is a newer resource for this work, recently founding an LGBT-dedicated archive with a two year grant from the province of Nova Scotia.

Rose's research perhaps was overly dependent on oral interviews and the private collections of individuals, and too thin on topics of racism and white supremacy on which the community today desperately needs historical perspective. While an academic effort might have more systematically excavated the archival sources, and used oral history to supplement that research, this account revolves around telling the stories that often can't be confirmed or interrogated.

By 2019, the military, the media outlets and other employers and churches that created the conditions necessitating an activist underground in the first place, sent floats to rainbow-wash their brands at Pride parades, sponsoring the commercial event's glossy programme. In 2020, the last queer bar in Halifax closed at the start of the global pandemic, and community members are still organizing to reopen a joint arts and performance space at the site of the original Turret bar. *Before the Parade* is in conversation with this ongoing struggle of queer people to find and keep, records of ourselves as protagonists of history.

About the review author

Lorax B. Horne is a journalist and a member of Distributed Denial of Secrets, publishing data in the public interest.

Book review: Giorgos Kallis, Susan Paulson, Giacomo D'Alisa & Federico Demaria, *The Case for Degrowth*

Review author: Alexander Dunlap

***The Case for Degrowth* by Giorgos Kallis, Susan Paulson, Giacomo D'Alisa & Federico Demaria, Cambridge, Polity Press, 2020, 129 pp., plus endnotes and index. US$12.95 (Paperback), ISBN 978-1-5095-3563-7**

Degrowth is the antidote to capitalist relationships, profiteering and expansion. It challenges the pervasive "more:" annual profits, energy use, consumerism and, overall, the focus on increasing the Gross Domestic Product (GDP).

Getting to the core of the climate crisis, degrowth advocates for the planned transition to reducing material and energy throughput. Not to be confused with recessions or pandemics, degrowth organizes transition away from crises and, instead, is akin to an overdue corrective to military planner and development theorist Walt Rostow's *Stages of Growth*, that conceptualized development as the "age of mass consumption" (1960).

The Case for Degrowth is a short, accessible—even friendly—exhibition of degrowth history, ideas and proposals. Despite concerns discussed below, the book is another valuable contribution collectively authored by four leading degrowth scholars. Teaching in Barcelona, the US and Portugal, Giorgos Kallis, Suasan Paulson, Giacomo D'Alisa and Federico Demaria have an extensive catalogue of previously authored books spanning the disciplines of ecological economics, anthropology and political ecology.

The Case for Degrowth offers context, outlining key concerns and proposals. "The case for degrowth is a case for stopping the pursuit of growth and for reorienting lives and societies toward wellbeing" (1). Referencing Thunberg's 2019 UN Climate Action Summit statement, "fairy tales of eternal economic growth," *The Case for Degrowth* begins with a clear outline of its purpose, the problems and harms of growing economies and the importance of commoning.

The Case for Degrowth goes on to examine the costs of a capitalist economy breaking down the problem of GDP as an economic indicator, debt and financial crisis as key historical events. Continuing to explore the economic, ecological, and psychosocial harms of growth, *The Case for Degrowth* shifts into discussing existing degrowth practices, projects and survival strategies already in action. The Green New Deal; bike paths and collective housing; local food, electricity and artisanal production; yoga, the tiny house movement and, interestingly, "womanhood" since it embodies "modesty and abnegation of personal ambition in favor of commitment to family and community," are all given as examples of these practices (47).

The Case for Degrowth then turns to examining what the authors call "path-breaking reforms." This includes "universal incomes and services; policies to reclaim the commons; reductions of working hours; and public finance to support the first four" (65).

The authors celebrate the Green New Deal (GND) as an important opportunity, even though they recognize degrowth is at odds with the "green growth and prosperity" agenda (67). They argue for a universal basic income, reducing work hours, and reclaiming the commons from profit driven organizations through municipalities and cooperatives. In addition, there is a discussion of the necessity of redirecting public finance away from socio-ecologically destructive projects organized around profit instead of wellbeing.

In the chapter on strategy the authors take a Zapatista inspired approach, encouraging "the Global Tapestry of Alternatives to support conditions in which a plurality of pathways can thrive in mutual respect" (104). They distinguish between three transformational strategies: "interstitial (building alternatives in the cracks of the current system), symbiotic (working within systems for reforms), and ruptural (disruption or revolting against dominant systems)" (87). All and all, the degrowth movement is not "purist" and encourages a wide spectrum of political action, from voting to direct action(s).

The Case for Degrowth concludes with an accessible FAQ section, which discusses degrowth positions on green growth, poverty, inequality and ways to start organizing. It is short, concise and designed for a popular audience. Moreover, it does well in weaving together historical events, theory and commonalities of various political positions under the banner of degrowth. I would highly recommend this volume to anyone unfamiliar and curious about degrowth.

On the other hand, I would not recommend *The Case for Degrowth* to people with long-term engagement in political struggle, societies-in-movement and those disinterested in academic-policy debates. Aside from various one-liners like "McDonald's serve Beyond Meat Burgers" as a positive development (91), I have serious concerns with how the book engages the Green New Deal, approaches and omits local resistance struggles.

The Case for Degrowth ignores the reality of the Green New Deal. It is viewed as an opportunity to impress a degrowth agenda. This approach radically underestimates the green growth agenda already underway within the European Green Deal (EGD). The EGD is already perfecting the neoliberalization of the European energy sector, spreading infrastructural development and digitalization, which—despite acknowledging the extractive costs (5, 113, 118)—demands a much deeper critical reflection in the book.

The relatively uncritical deployment of a "fossil fuel" versus "renewable energy" dichotomy in *The Case for Degrowth* obstructs a political assessment of the Green New Deal, neglecting how everything operates on hydrocarbons. The EGD Directive, or corresponding legislation, is ignored in *The Case for*

Degrowth, instead the authors rely on reports that speak of a "Green New Deal for Europe" (Ch. 4, endnote 2). NGO proposals are presented as government directives.

Speaking in general terms about the Green New Deal avoids the uncomfortable reality of the neoliberalization schemes it "rolls out" in practice. The book's advocacy for Green New Deal policies stands in stark contradiction to its rightful criticisms of green growth.

In addition, *The Case for Degrowth* falls short in matters of social change. The political omissions in this book almost entirely betrays the approach of advocating a "plurality of pathways that can thrive in mutual respect" that the authors claim to take. While drawing extensively on anarchist (or Indigenous) inspired ideas of "mutual aid," horizontal organizing (cooperatives, etc.) and direct action, there is no mention or reference to the Indigenous or anarchist combatants or scholars.

Erasing anarchist praxis from the book, especially since two authors live in Barcelona, raises eyebrows (and in my case, provokes a frown). Is the book mining, watering down and repackaging anarchist ideas or do the authors fear alienating new readers with the "anarchist" label associated with property destruction and sabotage? It is anyone's guess, but there seems to be a quantitative concern for readership and marketability over quality of political discussion.

More glaring omissions emerge in the discussion of "common modes of production" and housing. "Worldwide, hundreds of eco-communes, transition towns, co-living and co-cohousing communities are learning together and gaining strength," the book states (57). Why is *squatting* missing here? Arguably, squatting is the preeminent commoning project, seizing private property to create common housing and anti-capitalist spaces. Squatting as a global political movement in every city—with a particularly strong history in Barcelona—or as informal settlements and *favelas* organizing political education and resistance. Squatting offers important common survival and resistance strategies.

Couched in the language of degrowth, Claudio Cattaneo (2013: 139) reminds us that the "autonomous squatting movement" has "practical effects" in "terms of reduced material and energy consumption." The link between degrowth and squatting is already established, yet the book is silent on this connection.

Furthermore, and especially given the emphasis on localizing, the spectacular and relatively recent *Can Vies* squat resistance is another missed opportunity. In May 2014 the city of Barcelona tried to evict the squatted social center, spawning weeks of rioting and protests that spread to Girona, Madrid and Valencia. People formed a human chain just under a mile long to pass rubble from the demolished part of the squat to the doorstep of the district hall (see Scorsby, 2017). Ignoring *Can Vives*, and squatting in general, is an unacceptable omission that implicitly promotes the sanitizing of commoning struggles.

While anarchism, squatting, permaculture and edible cities were ignored, the "occupy" and "plaza occupation" movement was mentioned positively (92, 107) without discussing the reality of (movement-led) political recuperation and institutionalization of the movement (e.g. SYRIZA; Podemos).

The Case for Degrowth also ignores important analysis of these movements from within these struggles (see: Crimethinc, 2011; Gelderloos, 2013; TIC, 2015). While degrowth as a political strategy remains open and plural—which is a great strength—*The Case for Degrowth* simultaneously treads lightly on political analysis, the influence of the non-profit industrial complex (100), and differentially parades struggles in the so-called global "North" and "South."

Degrowth scholars are exceptional at demonstrating the global relevance of degrowth, but combative political tactics are implicitly limited to the Zaptatistas and "Indigenous communities" fighting against extractive projects (101), while civil disobedience and "the exercise of massive non-violent protest to contest those who use violence to maintain undemocratic and untenable orders" is reserved for Europe (97).

As I have expressed elsewhere (Dunlap, 2020), the same critiques of degrowth from Latin America—"reflecting the values of a particular social group" that is "insufficiently sensitive to their realities and unable to capture the essence of the visions articulated by those who oppose extrativist projects" (Demaria et al., 2019: 439) – also resonate in committed and combative struggles in Europe, from squatting to land defense. In these passages, and especially when lacking citations—the text feels careless, rushed and contradictory.

The Case for Degrowth makes a fundamentally important case, especially in advocating a plurality of struggles. The substance of this position, however, is diminished by the authors' treatment of the GND, political ideas and struggles. I would still recommend *The Case for Degrowth,* but with the caveat of its silence regarding anarchism and squatting, the possibilities of edible cities, and pathways offered by militant struggle inside Europe.

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Book review: Andreas Malm, *How to Blow Up a Pipeline*

Review author: Sakshi

Andreas Malm, 2021, *How to Blow Up a Pipeline: Learning to Fight in a World on Fire*. London & Brooklyn, NY: Verso. 200 pp., paperback, £10.99.

In the co-authored introduction to *Another Knowledge is Possible: Beyond Northern Epistemologies*, Boaventura de Sousa Santos and others warn against 'colonial epistemic monoculture' that continues even after the end of political colonialism (Santos et al 2008, xxxiii). The authors argue that the coloniality of knowledge and power tend to reproduce Eurocentric concepts and concerns even within emancipatory discourses.

While these ideas were articulated in the context of knowledge and the postcolonial, the frameworks are highly relevant for how contemporary environmental politics and climate movements take shape. These critiques of the nature of knowledge, social emancipation, and revolutionary approaches spring back to mind upon reading Andreas Malm's *How to Blow Up a Pipeline*. We cannot know how ambitious the author was when the book was conceived and written. However, the pre-publication publicity and the post-publication euphoria suggest that the book/manifesto was pitched as an essential work calling for escalating tactics in climate activism.

How To Blow Up a Pipeline asks some important, but not necessarily original, questions about the path ahead for climate activism. Malm is troubled by the apparent strategic pacifism that dominates the field. In a passionate opening salvo, he asks:

> At what point do we escalate? When do we conclude that the time has come to also try something different? When do we start physically attacking the things that consume our planet and destroy them with our own hands? Is there a good reason we have waited this long? (Malm 2021, pp. 8-9)

The book's arguments, which are surprisingly few and thin given the gravity of the topic, can be very briefly summed up. *How To Blow Up a Pipeline* is a manifesto that draws on scattered evidence from political movements and revolutions in Egypt, Iran, Libya, South Africa, Algeria, amongst others, to ask why climate movements have not yet trodden a similar path. Malm resents pacifism while grudgingly acknowledging its advantages, arguing that it is no longer possible to talk to the ruling classes about the impending crisis.

The nature of the catastrophe that awaits humanity demands an escalated strategy, such as inflicting property damage, something harsh but not violent against individuals' lives. While there are some critiques of the blind spots in *How To Blow Up a Pipeline*, they received less attention than the celebratory reviews that appeared on the mainstream platforms (See: Kuhn 2021, Molyneux 2021, Wilt 2021).

There is an apparent danger in spending time on an unapologetically Eurocentric text, which is blind to innumerable past and contemporary Black and Indigenous struggles against environmental racism and settler colonialism. In this review, I will focus on critiquing what the book embodies – the chilling whiteness that thrives on what Potawatomi scholar and activist Kyle Whyte calls 'epistemologies of crisis' (Whyte 2020).

In a recent essay, Whyte defines epistemologies of crisis as imagining the world and a certain present as something new (Whyte 2020, 53). In the context of climate change, this 'knowing' manifests itself in the ongoing conversations around 'urgency' and 'unprecedentedness' of climate catastrophe – running themes of *How to Blow Up a Pipeline*.

Nevertheless, talking about climate catastrophe as something imminent reaches out only to a limited but privileged constituency of people. Indigenous people have been subjected to a catastrophic shift in social and environmental conditions since the ongoing process of dispossession from their land by settlers began in the 15th Century. As seventeen-year-old Naelyn Pike, a Chiricahua Apache activist fighting against Resolution Copper Mine in the Oak Flats says, Indigenous people are born fighting.

A thorough reading of *How To Blow Up a Pipeline* leaves one wondering: where does Indigenous struggle fit in the white, Eurocentric narrative of climate activism? Malm's ruminations about violence and non-violence in political struggles ignores the realities of Indigenous environmental and political struggle for sovereignty.

To ask, as Malm does, why climate movements have abstained from escalating tactics is to wilfully remain ignorant of the fact that Indigenous environmental struggles have already been at the forefront of political struggle, adopting a range of strategies from setting up blockades to challenging extractive industries in courts. Further, a lack of clear understanding about what constitutes climate activism, its complex relationship with extractivism, and where it leaves the ongoing fight for environmental justice is confounding.

What is a climate movement if it fails to demonstrate its ability to understand the violent roots of planetary collapse in colonialism, settler colonialism, and imperialism? Settler colonialism is built on stolen land, and so the question is, how does one physically destroy that? Climate injustice is environmental injustice, and both arise from the roots of economic, social, health, and educational inequalities that disproportionately impact Black and Indigenous

people. However, *How To Blow Up a Pipeline* does not once mention the words "settler colonialism."

Through a perfunctory examination of revolutionary violence, *How to Blow Up a Pipeline* appears like a trendy call to arms after waking up from a long slumber of indifference. This shows a brutal obliviousness to pre-existing Indigenous struggles for land back, environmental justice, and self-determination. The word "pipeline" in the title seems to be more of a marketing strategy than a measured engagement with Indigenous-led struggles against entrenched power forms within settler capitalism.

Of the two mentions that Indigenous people receive in How to Blow Up a Pipeline, one –which mentions Ecuadorian authorities shutting down a pipeline after Indigenous protesters 'disrupted' it (*sic*)– is not cited (p. 113). Pipelines in Ecuador are shut down for various reasons; from protests over fuel price hikes, to the removal of subsidies, to landslides and pipelines bursting. Nonetheless, Indigenous communities bear the brunt of oil spills and remain without reparations or remedies (Cabrera 2018). These communities fight for justice in courts because in these cases, blowing up pipelines is redundant. Similarly, the cherry-picked instances of political violence from the Global South mentioned by Malm, such as Naxals in India (p. 88), who have complex relationships with the idea of extractivism, Adivasis, and the state itself, appear out of place in a self-aggrandising narrative of white climate movements in the Global North.

How To Blow Up a Pipeline mentions the militarised state power that will be unleashed at the first sign of violence (p.112). However, Malm does not meaningfully engage with how the full force of state is designed to suppress and erase the plurality of voices resisting its prowess.

Since *How To Blow Up a Pipeline* was published, more Indigenous land defenders and other environmental activists have been murdered, including in Honduras (Juan Carlos Cerros Escalante), South Africa (Fikile Ntshangase), and Colombia (Gonzalo Cardona Molina), to name a few. In 2019, Global Witness reported that 212 land and environmental defenders were killed for standing up for their rights peacefully (2020). Even then, they mostly remain as aggregate numbers which appear to fan the West's anguish over the declining state of human rights in the Global South.

There is also calculated obliviousness to the role of law and courts in *How to Blow Up a Pipeline*. Malm's argument for 'trying something different' in the environmental movement ignores how Indigenous communities have long diversified their tactics and engaged with the same settler state they have been resisting. The judicial politics of Indigenous environmental justice movements play on the internal contradictions of the state (as Santos et. al. term it) and emerges from a strategy that does not equate law, justice, and the state at all times.

Environmental and climate movements should aim for lasting changes that dislodge the entrenched colonial and imperial powers, not actions that

consolidate them. Hence, calling for different strategies as if they were a tasting platter and calling for breaking completely replaceable objects while failing utterly to study or understand the long-standing tradition of Black and Indigenous activism demonstrates the incompleteness of Malm's proposal.

Fossil economies do not exist in a vacuum, and extraction is not a singular, original event. It is founded on past and ongoing violence against Black and Indigenous peoples. The state would do everything to preserve the logic of settler colonialism and capitalism. An antidote to such logic would be the memory of Standing Rock water protectors building their encampment along the proposed pipeline, facing the pepper spray of the police while standing in the river, carrying their bitten and bloodied bodies to the protest sites over and again. It demands forming kinships and re-educating the individual and collective of the many worlds we inhabit. It demands the return of Indigenous sovereignty over the land.

Environmental and climate movements ought to be defined in terms of rights, constructive recognition, and justice, not entitlement or substitution of reified power structures. In writing about them, one is obliged to consider and rethink one's epistemic and racial privileges in knowledge production. As Santos and others observe, "reinvention of social emancipation is premised upon replacing the "monoculture of scientific knowledge" by an "ecology of knowledges" (Santos et al. 2008: xx).

The injustices of erasure in *How to Blow up a Pipeline* are stark and far too many to ignore. The nature of extractive and state-led violence is always mutant. Settler capitalism actively responds to all forms of resistance, and Indigenous people have fought back against and witnessed its full force over centuries, since the beginning of their dispossession and erasure. Those who write about environmental and climate movements have an obligation to know and understand these struggles, lest the work should become another conduit for epistemic erasures.

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Book Review: William I. Robinson, *The Global Police State*

Review Author: Dawn Marie Paley

William I. Robinson (2020) *The Global Police State*. London: Pluto Press. 208 pp., £16.99.

William I. Robinson's new book *The Global Police State* is a crucial reflection on power, capitalism and war globally. At the same time, it provides readers with perspective on police power in the United States, particularly in the wake of last summer's protests and demonstrations for Black lives and against white supremacy and police violence in the US and beyond.

The uprising, which carried on for months in cities and towns across the US following the police killing of George Floyd in Minneapolis was the largest popular movement in the country's history.

Released in August of last year, as demonstrations entered their third month, The Global Police State provides an accessible and compact overview of repression and corporate expansion into policing and surveillance.

Far from offering reformist solutions to what the author describes as a "crisis of humanity," the book is effectively a treatise against capitalism and centralized power.

The concept of the global police state, according to Robinson, takes into account three aspects. First are the "omnipresent systems of mass social control, repression, and warfare promoted by ruling groups to contain the real and the potential rebellion of the global working class and surplus humanity."

Second is what Robinson calls "militarized accumulation or accumulation by repression," by which he is referring to capitalist gain to be made through participation in a "veritable global war economy." One of the strengths of the book is the author's ability to zoom in and out of unrest, police repression and militarization in different parts of the world.

Finally, there's "the increasing move towards political systems that can be characterized as 21st century fascism, or even in a broader sense, as totalitarian." Of which, of course, Trump and Brazil's Jair Bolsonaro are exemplary.

Robinson's writing is concise, his examples concrete and his theoretical advances build on years of his own research. Robinson, who was politicized alongside African freedom fighters in the period after independence struggles, is a veteran of critical globalization theory with a direct connection to social movements.

The author devoted much of the 1990s to advancing a structural critique of global capitalism, marking the differences in the shift from world capitalism,

which he argued went into decline in the 1970s. The rise of transnational corporations and global corporate conglomerates has defined this shift.

Robinson's own work in Latin America, particularly in Nicaragua, informs a powerful and sophisticated synthesis of the structural constraints facing leftist parties who have come to govern in the hemisphere.

While he writes that "these governments challenged and even reversed some of the most glaring components of the neo-liberal program… leftist rhetoric aside, the Pink Tide governments based their strategy on a vast expansion of raw material production in partnership with foreign and local contingents of the [Transnational Capitalist Class]."

These reflections are, in a sense, a clear call for nuanced understandings of left rule, in Latin America and beyond. "There emerged an evident disjuncture throughout Latin America — symptomatic of the worldwide phenomenon on the Left — between mass social movements that are at this time resurgent, and the institutional party Left that has lost the ability to mediate between the masses and the state with a viable project of its own," writes Robinson.

Overall, *The Global Police State* packs a truly dystopian punch. Robinson outlines his own theory of global capitalism and globalization and then delves into the key aspects of the current crisis of capital. This theoretical work is necessary, he argues, because the global police state has emerged largely in response to uprisings led by poor and working-class people around the world.

Robinson then develops on his notion of militarized accumulation, which "coercively open up opportunities for capital accumulation worldwide."

Finally, he outlines the ongoing "threat of twenty-first century fascism and the global reform project to save capitalism from itself." His refusal to participate in feel good liberalism is a refreshing departure from much US commentary on the Trump presidency.

Marxism plays a central role in his political analysis, and he explains the current relevance of Marx's theorization of capitalism in a manner that feels at once authoritative and accessible.

Throughout *The Global Police State*, Robinson leans on official reports and statistics, never removing his theoretical considerations from actually existing capitalism.

The section on digital surveillance and the tech industry's participation in "war on immigrants" is devastating. He describes how arms manufacturers, together with tech companies including Amazon, IBM and Zoom, collaborate with ICE and DHS, and have found ways to profit from state-sanctioned racism, violence, deportation and detentions of undocumented people.

As I read, I could not resist reaching out to Robinson to ask for an update, and about what he saw in the streets last summer. "I witnessed the brutal police violence and also palpably felt young people's yearning for radical change as

they risked life and limb in the streets," he wrote back. "The anti-racist insurrection in the wake of the police murder of George Floyd was the first full-scale uprising in the United States against the global police state."

In a recent interview on *Democracy Now!,* Ash-Lee Woodard Henderson, co-executive director of the Highlander Research and Education Center, told host Amy Goodman:

> "...We'll be fighting to make sure that when we talk about — when the Movement for Black Lives talks about defunding police, that we're talking about all police, including ICE and Customs and Border Patrol; when we talk about abolishing prisons, that we're talking about all of them, including detention centers; and when we're talking about Black Lives Matter, we're talking about all Black lives, including those of our people that are in this country without papers."

The connections and struggles Woodard Henderson names point to a future horizon in which broad and powerful movements again rise up, defunding the police, abolishing prisons and destroying white supremacy.

In this context, *The Global Police State* is a valuable resource for readers to become familiar with the theoretical architecture of repression and capitalism, and better navigate (and avoid) the murky waters of reformism and empty promises.

This review was previously published in ROAR Magazine.

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Dawn Marie Paley is a journalist and author of *Drug War Capitalism* (AK Press 2014) and *Guerra Neoliberal: Desaparición y búsqueda en el norte de México* (Libertad Bajo Palabra 2020). She is book reviews editor for *Interface* Journal.