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Kowalewski, J. (Ed). (2023). **The Environmental Apocalypse: Interdisciplinary Reflections on the Climate Crisis**. Routledge.

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I will not lie: reading this anthology was difficult. A part of that difficulty was due to the fact that reading about the concepts of ecological apocalypse after the summer of 2023 struck very close to home, as smoke from the wildfires across so-called Canada (Alook et. al., 2023, 2) choked the air even in southern Ontario, where the fires were not an immediate threat. That was (and still remains) a solastalgic experience. The term ‘solastalgia’ was coined by philosopher Glenn Albrecht in 2005 and it describes the lived experiences of environmental change that is negative, or, as he puts it in his article, a “form of homesickness one gets when one is still at ‘home’” (Albrecht, 2005, 48). This collection brought that aspect to the forefront. However, a challenge with reading this book was that this collection is intentionally interdisciplinary, drawing from fields such as psychoanalysis and philosophy. As a result, the jargon in some essays is unfamiliar and I struggled at times. Despite the combination of these factors weighing heavily on me, the premise of the volume is compelling enough to take me through to the end.

The thesis of the collection is that framing the climate crisis as an apocalypse can trap us within two unsatisfactory approaches: the conservative impulse to preserve the status quo responsible for the crisis and the uncritical acceptance of climate change’s deleterious effects. The book is thus split into four parts: part one deals with conceptualizing environmental apocalypse, part two is concerned with its representation, part three with its ethics, and part four strives to think beyond the environmental apocalypse as a framework. Each section contains three to four chapters, each authored by a scholar from different fields of expertise. The disciplinary diversity of the authors allows the collection to address the idea of eco-apocalypse and its representation through different angles.

However, I wish that the contributors had corresponded with the editor to outline a few basic definitions in the introductory segment of the book, in order to avoid unnecessary repetitions throughout the essay. The etymology of apocalypse as revelation (as translated from the Biblical Greek) is stated and repeated quite a bit: this is effective, as the reiteration of the climate crisis as revelatory in the context of particular chapters is an integral part of each author’s argument. However, taken together in an edited collection, the repetition is slightly tiresome.

Though the book makes consistent efforts to escape the framework of apocalypse in its arguments, it fails to do so. This may be due to the title of the entire collection, which reasserts the apocalyptic as the argumentative framework of the book. The introductory chapter in Part

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1, by Omar Rafael Regaledo Fernandez, sets the tone for the whole volume: it is a reflection and summation of the ways in which the apocalyptic theme appears in modern scientific discourses. The scientific history discussed is mostly American (with some European content), but includes some consideration of scientific approaches from the Global South, operating as a microcosmic reflection of the book itself. A majority of the historical and contemporary permutations of the concept of apocalypse are presented from de-facto Western, Global North, cismale perspective, but there is an essay at the very end that deals with the concrete effects of how colonial, imperialist Western powers enforced their values in accordance with their apocalyptic ideologies on colonized people (in this case, communities in the Indian subcontinent).

There are many provocations and interesting reflections on the concept of apocalypse within many different disciplines, but to me, the only essays coming close to thinking beyond the Euro-Western, Judaeo-Christian concept of apocalypse are Jakub Kowalewski's chapter "The Shapes of Apocalyptic Time," "Queer Ecologies and Apocalyptic Thinking" by Elizabeth Pyne, "Wiping Away the Tears of Esau" by Agata Bielik-Robson, and Vinita Damodaran's "Looking Beyond Apocalypse." Marita Furehaug deserves a special mention because her essay on apocalypticism in Islamic environmental thought appears to be a meditation on a truly different worldview. However, the essay is an exploration of the valences of Islamic thought and philosophy specifically regarding environment and eschatology in the context of the past, in order to reconceptualize the Anthropocene as a theological concept.

It seemed to me that the philosophy underpinning each chapter is the historical ecofeminist observation that the consequences of the European "Enlightenment" were to demystify and desacralize the natural world. Bound up intimately in this process was the exploitation and subjugation of the not-human, the non-white, the non-male person who, because of their non-conformity to the standard of the male colonizer, were seen as "less than" (Merchant, 1980A). However, the only explicit reference to the inarguably foundational work of Carolyn Merchant in this arena of ecofeminist philosophy comes in Damodaran's chapter, which is the very last. There are no entries in the index for "feminist," "ecofeminist" or "intersectionality," and this volume's arguments are tellingly bereft of those theoretical lenses, which beggars the impact of the analyses herein. While Western capitalism and imperialism are often invoked in essays as the present and past drivers of resource exploitation and environmental destruction, the patriarchal underpinnings of such scenarios remain unacknowledged. The way patriarchy historically influenced and warped the worldview of so-called Enlightenment thinkers to instrumentalize the Other—in this case, the non-human world—and continues to influence our thinking even today (Merchant, 1980B; Merchant, 2001) is not adequately addressed. Even in the chapters which deal explicitly with this separation in philosophy between "nature" and "civilization" do not refer to its roots in patriarchal reasoning, which is not only disappointing, but a strange case of ignorance in what seems to me otherwise thorough intellectual work.

I would mention this book as a resource to those scholars who are interested in learning more (or teaching) about how some aspects of the concept of apocalypse affect present-day (mostly Western) institutions and fields of study; how they have historically infiltrated its very modes of thought (Plumwood, 2002), and how that history is present in our contemporary struggles with climate catastrophe. An important caveat to this endorsement is that I would recommend that these essays be accompanied by or put into conversation with articles in intersectional

theory and ecofeminist philosophy by scholars such as Val Plumwood, Rosi Braidotti, Stacey Alaimo, and Donna Haraway, in order to nuance and contextualize some of this anthology's works and consequent observations. I am pleased by the depth and thoroughness with which some of the chapters explore the valences of apocalyptic thought and its relation to notions of environmental stewardship. The edited volume also explores the meaning of human life and actions in a time of apocalypse, the different ideas of apocalyptic time, how the ideas affect human experience, and the ways in which "apocalypse" can be seen to have already occurred multiple times over the course of history (Tallbear, 2020) to disparate groups across the globe within the confines of their disciplinary lenses.

While many of the authors do emphasize subjective experiences of apocalyptic events (especially in Part 2, as well as Pyne, Bielik-Robson, and Damodaran), I found the volume overall did not give concrete examples of ways of life outside of the concept of apocalypse. Each chapter ends with the perspective that it is necessary to break free from the framework of apocalypse (or to re-shape it in some other fashion) in order for humanity to truly combat or adapt to the reality of the climate crisis. If, following the authors' conclusions, the climate crisis is revealing to us truths about human existence and our interactions with humans and the non-human world, then what should we do with that knowledge? The volume makes this call to action but does not suggest actionable responses for the reader, saying what they should do in this case. Perhaps this is because the answer will be different for every reader depending on their location on the planet and the myriad sociopolitical and environmental forces affecting their own *Umwelt* on a daily basis. However, it is very like the author has placed a set of tools in front of the reader, who is facing a wall, and then walked away without a word.

Readers who are looking for an answer to the question of what to do about the climate crisis will be disappointed. However, readers who are in search of a set of thoughtful discourses about the nuances of the wicked problem of framing ecological catastrophe as apocalypse and several of the ways in which it affects particular scholarly disciplines, will come away much more satisfied. The essays are about our present ways of thinking and representing the environment, how that has been shaped by the past, and the possible ways of living that can take the insights offered into consideration as important factors driving future action to avoid similar mistakes.

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