

Anthropocene, Capitalocene and Liberal Cosmopolitan IR: A Response to Burke et al.'s Planet Politics

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Abstract

This article is a collective response to Anthony Burke *et al*'s 'Planet Politics', published in this journal in 2016, and billed as a 'Manifesto from the end of IR'. We dispute this claim on the basis that rather than breaking from the discipline, the Manifesto provides a problematic global governance agenda which is dangerously authoritarian and deeply depoliticising. We substantiate this analysis in the claim that Burke *et al* reproduce an already failed and discredited liberal cosmopolitan framework through the advocacy of managerialism rather than transformation; the top-down coercive approach of international law; and use of abstract modernist political categories. In the closing sections of the article, we discuss the possibility of different approaches, which, taking the Anthropocene as both an epistemological and ontological break with modernist assumptions, could take us beyond IR's disciplinary confines.

Keywords: Anthropocene, Capitalocene, global governance, cosmopolitanism, discipline of IR

Introduction

Writing in the *Prison Notebooks* Gramsci described the moment as an 'interregnum' where many 'morbid symptoms' were evident. Whether we are now in an interregnum or not could be a point for debate, but we appear to be surrounded by

many 'morbid symptoms'.¹ Within the human sphere, these are taking the form of political violence and an increased rhetorical violence amongst those who represent us. Looking out into the rest of nature there is the day-by-day drip-feed of news reporting on the devastation of our fellow species and landscapes, much linked to the issue of climate chaos.

It is to these latter manifestations that Anthony Burke, Stefanie Fishel, Audra Mitchell, Simon Dalby, and Daniel Levine (hereafter Burke *et al*) in particular draw our attention in their call for a 'Planet Politics', which they consider to be a 'manifesto from the end of IR'.² Their Manifesto comprises three main elements: a detailed re-statement of the ecological crisis that we confront, very closely linked to the notion of the Anthropocene; a critique of the discipline of International Relations; and finally, some, more or less, practical suggestions. That there is an ecological crisis, with possible civilisation threatening potential, and that the discipline of International Relations finds itself ill-equipped to engage with the issue are points on which we can find ourselves in agreement.

Where we find ourselves in disagreement is with much of the analysis, logic, and proposals and, as a result, we feel compelled to write this article by way of a response. As Gramsci highlighted, it is not easy to break from traditional frameworks of thinking, despite there being a barrier to critical engagement in the present. The authors of the Manifesto themselves state that, 'Trying to write from within IR, we find ourselves prisoners in our own vocation', noting that they leave for others the task of future research to 'set out the ontological or programmatic weaknesses of the field of International Relations in the face of the Anthropocene'.³ Here, we

¹ Antonio Gramsci, *Selections from the Prison Notebooks* (London, Lawrence & Wishart, 1978), 275-276.

²Anthony Burke *et al*, 'Planet Politics: A Manifesto from the End of IR', *Millennium: Journal of International Studies* 44, no. 3 (2016): 499-523.

³ Burke *et al*, 'Planet Politics', 502; 522.

suggest that the claim that Burke *et al* speak 'from the end of IR' serves to obscure exactly what might be at stake in engaging seriously with the Anthropocene.

It is perhaps ironic that, while rhetorically appealing to a range of critical perspectives and empirical concerns, the methodological framing and programmatic statements of the Manifesto slip easily into the traditional concerns and perspectives of the discipline, especially those rehearsed in the 1990s by the liberal internationalist theorists of cosmopolitan democracy.⁴ In the introduction, the authors lay out their understanding of the problematic posed sharply by the Anthropocene:

We contend that International Relations has failed because the planet does not match and cannot be clearly seen by its institutional and disciplinary frameworks. Institutionally and legally, it is organised around a managed anarchy of nation-states, not the collective human interaction with the biosphere. Intellectually, the IR discipline is organised sociologically around established paradigms and research programmes likewise focused on states and the forms of international organisation they will tolerate; it is not organised to value or create the conceptual and analytical changes that are needed.⁵

It is clear that their concerns lie with the nation-state based framing of Realism, the traditional Cold War paradigm of IR, rather than with liberal internationalist attempts to constitute new forms of global governance; exchanging the word 'global' for the word 'planetary' is not enough in itself to constitute a conceptual difference between the two approaches. There is little that is new or 'beyond IR'

⁴ See, for example, David Held, *Democracy and the Global Order: From the Modern State to Cosmopolitan Governance* (Cambridge: Polity, 1995); Daniele Archibugi, *Debating Cosmopolitics* (London: Verso, 2003); Mary Kaldor, *New and Old Wars: Organized Violence in a Global Era* (Cambridge: Polity, 1999).

⁵ Burke et al, 'Planet Politics', 501.

here, anymore than can be found in the critique of ‘methodological nationalism’ (mounted by Anthony Giddens, Herminio Martins, Anthony D Smith and others), which first arose in the 1970s⁶ and was popularised by Ulrich Beck, at the end of the 1990s, with his similarly doom-laden thesis of the ‘world risk society’.⁷ In their Manifesto, Burke *et al* highlight the danger that critical theorists can very easily appear locked in a prison, one of their own making. In this collective response, we wish to raise three aspects, which are particularly worrying; putting this danger in sharp relief, despite the authors’ conscious intention of making a radical statement going beyond IR’s confines.

It is our argument that Burke *et al* are strongly wedded to a liberal cosmopolitan perspective in International Relations. We substantiate this analysis in the following three sections, which claim that they reproduce an already failed and discredited liberal internationalist framework through: first, seeking amelioration rather than transformation; second, advocating top-down coercive approaches of international law as an effective mechanism; and third, resorting to abstract, high-flown and idealist notions, such as ‘global ethics’. In the closing two sections of the article, we discuss the possibility of different approaches which, taking the Anthropocene as both an epistemological and ontological break with modernist assumptions, can enable scholarship and policy engagements which we see as less likely to reproduce the disciplinary constraints of International Relations, as it has been historically constituted.

A ‘Manifesto’ without Politics

For a self-proclaimed ‘Manifesto’, there is strangely little in the way of politics. One of the most surprising phrases in the text is the view that ‘we need not focus on who

⁶ See, for an overview, Daniel Chernilo, ‘Social theory’s methodological nationalism: Myth and reality’, *European Journal of Social Theory* 9, no. 1 (2006): 5-22.

⁷ Beck, *What is Globalization?* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2000); ‘The cosmopolitan society and its enemies’, *Theory, Culture & Society* 19, no. 1-2 (2002): 17-44.

is responsible, but we do need to learn to adapt to the world we have created'.⁸ To adapt to the world that we have created implies that we are leaving the causes of our current problems in place. However, it was difficult to understand how we can work towards resolving some of our current challenges (even if that is at the level of adaptation) if we lack an analysis of what is the cause of those problems. It's the equivalent of collecting the water that is pouring through the roof rather than trying to fix the hole. As many writers have pointed out, we did not stumble into this current predicament, and there are a number of starting points for developing an analysis of the ecological impacts of the forms that human development have taken, including Simon Dalby's own work.⁹ Relatedly, a major issue that is not considered by Burke *et al* in the Manifesto is the question of global inequality. This is a significant oversight, highlighting the depoliticizing at stake. A priority here might be to explore the possibilities for de-development and economic democracy.¹⁰

In the short term, we are all having to adapt to the new circumstances that we find ourselves in, whether that is strengthening flood defences in Britain, or fleeing drought affected areas in other parts of the world. However, given that 'we must face the true terror of this moment'¹¹ there will be limits to which such adaptation,

⁸ Burke *et al*, 'Planet Politics', 500.

⁹ Examples would include: John Bellamy Foster, Brett Clark and Richard York, *The Ecological rift: Capitalism's War on the Earth* (New York: Monthly review Press, 2010); Andreas Malm, *Fossil Capital: The Rise of Steam Power and the Roots of Global Warming* (London: Verso, 2016); Jason Moore, *Capitalism in the Web of Life: Ecology and the Accumulation of Capital* (London: Verso, 2015); Simon Dalby, *Security and Environmental Change* (Oxford: Polity, 2009); Christophe Bonneuil and Jean-Baptiste Fressoz, *The Shock of the Anthropocene* (London: Verso, 2016).

¹⁰ There is an emerging literature including: Wolfgang Sachs, *Planet Dialectics: Explorations in Environment and Development* (London: Zed, 1999); Frances Hutchinson, Mary Mellor and Wendy Olsen, *The Politics of Money: Towards Sustainability and Economic Democracy* (London: Pluto Press, 2002).

¹¹ Burke *et al*, 'Planet Politics', 500.

in the face of rapacious capitalism, will be possible. In short, how exactly are we supposed to restore social justice, save oceans and prevent climate chaos unless we face the complex systemic causes of our current malaise? The suggestion that we should take on board the top-down global governance perspective of the planetary boundaries framework¹² and that it was ‘rightly advanced’ as ‘a new paradigm that integrates the continued development of human societies and the maintenance of the Earth system in a resilient and accommodating state’ is highly problematic.¹³ Work on becoming more resilient and accommodating, reflects a depoliticising neoliberal perspective¹⁴ that overlooks historical patterns, causes and structures, and fails to consider contemporary patterns of resource extraction and offshoring.¹⁵

Liberal Cosmopolitanism *Redux*

Just when it seemed that global cosmopolitanism could find no way back after the discrediting of David Held and Tony Blair, the death of the Third Way and Cool Britannia not to mention the Iraq war, the disasters of intervention in Libya and Afghanistan and the long-awaited Chilcot Inquiry, here we are with a new global liberal mission. While Burke *et al* are concerned about being trapped in the prison of International Relations thought, and its ‘state-centric’¹⁶ image, they are not averse to totalizing global claims of governance and intervention, including those of the

¹² Will Steffen et al., ‘Planetary Boundaries: Guiding Human Development on a Changing Planet’, *Science* 347, no. 6223 (2015).

¹³ Burke et al, ‘Planet Politics’, 506.

¹⁴ See further, Jonathan Joseph, ‘Resilience as embedded neoliberalism: a governmentality approach’, *Resilience: International Policies, Practices and Discourses* 1, no. 1, 2013: 38-52; Brad Evans and Julian Reid, *Resilient Life: The Art of Living Dangerously* (Cambridge: Polity, 2014); David Chandler, *Resilience: The Governance of Complexity* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2014).

¹⁵ John Urry, *Offshoring* (Cambridge: Polity, 2014).

¹⁶ Burke et al, ‘Planet Politics’, 504.

‘planetary boundaries’ and ‘safe operating spaces’ of Earth system science.¹⁷ Under the securitizing claims of ‘global ecological collapse’¹⁸ the authors feel entitled to dismiss even the formal niceties of international law and diplomacy on the basis that: ‘The biosphere cannot be traded, divided or bargained away. It is not a product, nor a monetary or diplomatic artefact, amenable to state compromises and quantification.’¹⁹ In moralising tones, no different from those of liberal internationalist cheerleaders in favour of ‘humanitarian’ bombing campaigns and new Western protectorates for ‘global justice’, Burke *et al* spend no time considering what new violences are afforded and enabled in their call for new global governance bodies to ‘enforce and penalise violence – slow and fast – against nonhuman communities and ecologies’ as they seek to legislate for securing the planet against errant humanity:

It is time to imagine a category that includes ‘crimes against biodiversity’: to expand international human rights law to take in precious species and ecosystems, and criminalise avoidable activities that do them grave harm... something akin to genocide or a crime against humanity... [For example,] we must consider how pods or communities of dolphins can be seen as analogous to a nation or ethnic group in international law.²⁰

In looking to the power of global institutions Burke *et al* continue a long line of liberal interventions on environmental issues,²¹ and we are by no means the first to raise the dangers of ecopolitical interventions institutionalising new legal and

¹⁷ Ibid, 504-6.

¹⁸ Ibid, 500.

¹⁹ Ibid., 510.

²⁰ Ibid., 516.

²¹ See, for example, Lorraine Elliott, *The Global Politics of the Environment* (Basingstoke, Palgrave, 2004); John Vogler, *Climate Change in World Politics* ((Basingstoke, Palgrave, 2016); Oran Young, *On Environmental Governance: Sustainability, Efficiency and Equity* (London, Routledge, 2016)

political inequalities.²² It is the fact that the potentially problematic nature of these proposals is not reflected upon that is most shocking about this Manifesto and its claims to be dealing with the 'planetary real'.²³

Having their cake and wishing to eat it too, Burke *et al* seamlessly vacillate between calling for the reform of existing institutions to make them 'fit for purpose' and declaring goals so vital that they are beyond political negotiation and legal constraints. However, for their prime practical proposal, that coal should be a controlled substance they return to a staple of Liberal International Relations: the efficacy of international law to control the actions of states. 'The 2015 Paris Agreement gave us hope', the authors say, despite an admission that it contained 'no firm and enforceable plans'.²⁴ While Liberals will hold to the line that 'most states obey most law most of the time', both those at the Realist side of the spectrum and the Marxist wing of International Relations are sceptical about the efficacy of international law. This is especially the case when the interests of the most powerful states are involved, which they are when it comes to the production of energy.²⁵ In fact, rather than these new treaties being ignored or weakly implemented (a risk which the authors recognise)²⁶ there is an obvious danger that

²² Robyn Eckersley, 'Ecological Intervention: Prospects and Limits', *Ethics & International Affairs* 21, no. 3, (2007): 293–316; Rosaleen Duffy, 'Waging a war to save biodiversity: the rise of militarized conservation', *International Affairs* 90, no.4, (2014): 819–834; Paul Robbins and Sarah A Moore, 'Ecological anxiety disorder: diagnosing the politics of the Anthropocene', *Cultural Geographies* 20, no.1, (2013): 3-19.

²³ Burke et al, 'Planet Politics', 501; 502; 512; 520; 521.

²⁴ Burke *et al*, 'Planet Politics', 503.

²⁵ Hans J. Morgenthau, 'Positivism, Functionalism, and International Law' *The American Journal of International Law* 34, no. 2 (1940): 260-84; China Miéville, *Between Equal Rights: A Marxist Theory of International Law* (London, Pluto Press, 2006).

²⁶ Burke *et al*, 'Planet Politics', 515.

new cosmopolitan international law will further reinforce international inequalities between the haves and have-nots.²⁷ The fact that the Manifesto authors fail to reflect on the built-in inequalities reproduced through such legislation is reflected in the fact that they use the analogy with the controversial Chemical and Biological Weapons Conventions ('the poor man's choice of WMD')²⁸ as an argument in support of their advocacy for a Coal Convention 'on the basis that coal is a profound and ongoing threat to global health and security'.²⁹

We would certainly agree that the burning of coal is deeply damaging to the environment. This was a point that James Hansen made several years ago.³⁰ Our argument is that attempting to control this through International Law is unlikely to be effective or to ameliorate planetary inequalities. It could be pointed out, for example, that certain drugs are controlled substances, but the trade in illegal drugs is one of the largest global markets. A related point is why stop with coal? Why not oil?³¹ There are many other practices that are also damaging to the environment and produce large amounts of greenhouse gases, with industrialised agriculture being a significant contributor – particularly in relation to meat and dairy production, but also linked to production of fertilisers, and to the transport of produce across the globe.

²⁷ Already indicated in the Manifesto's sceptical view of developing and postcolonial state claims for 'equitable carbon space to achieve sustainable development', Burke *et al*, 'Planet Politics', 509-10.

²⁸ See, for example, Tughral Yamin, 'Chemical & Biological Weapons: Positions, Prospects and Trends', *Policy Perspectives* 10, no. 1 (2013): 147-159

²⁹ Burke *et al*, 'Planet Politics', 515.

³⁰ James Hansen, 'Coal-fired power stations are death factories. Close them' *The Guardian*, 15 February 2009, available at <http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2009/feb/15/james-hansen-power-plants-coal>.

³¹ See Urry, *Societies Beyond Oil: Oil Dregs and Social Futures* (London: Routledge, 2013).

Likewise, Burke *et al* see legal process as the way to address ecological damage and ecocide.³² Yet how much evidence is there to support the view that legal instruments provide anything to halt large-scale ecological issues – particularly when there are financial interests at stake? While decrying the capacities of the ‘diplomacy’ of the UN, instead:

We suggest the creation of an ‘Earth System Council’ with the task of action and warning – much like the current UN Security Council – that would operate on the basis of majority voting with representation of Earth systems scientists, major ecosystems, species groups, and states.³³

Suggesting that an ‘Earth System Council’ might be effective in decreasing environmental insecurity, given that it is cast as a parallel to the UN Security Council, is an odd suggestion, to say the least, particularly for authors who claim to be against the elitist and top-down model of governance. The implicit assumption that technocrats and advocacy groups can mobilise with only the need for a minority of states’ support appears to provide a new legitimacy to global liberal ‘coalitions of the willing’ (it is obviously unlikely that coercive action could be taken against more powerful states). This move is even more worrying in connection with the securitizing claim that ‘diplomacy as an institution, is failing’,³⁴ carrying potent reminders of the Blair years and the claims that international law needs to bow to cosmopolitan justice.³⁵ Instituting global governance in ‘firm and enforceable’ ways, as if there were universal solutions that could be imposed from above, is a recipe for authoritarianism and new hierarchies and exclusions. As Walter Mignolo and others have noted, ‘all existing cosmopolitan projects rest on the hubris of the zero point’

³² Burke *et al*, ‘Planet Politics’, 515

³³ *Ibid*, 516.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 509.

³⁵ See Chandler, ‘New Rights for Old? Cosmopolitan Citizenship and the Critique of State Sovereignty’, *Political Studies* 51, no. 2 (2003): 339-356.

with the elitist assumption that the authors have some objective or scientific position outside a particular time and space, and thereby operating 'without questioning the very imperial epistemic foundations of cosmopolitan claims'.³⁶

Agency and Abstraction

Burke *et al* argue for a 'global ethics', which 'must respond to mass extinction',³⁷ though what this might comprise and how it would develop are not addressed here. What is the basis of their new ethics? Which established political or philosophical traditions might we draw on that 'embrace worldness'? The use of these terms including 'planet politics' is all so grand. While it may sound critical to desire a 'global ethics' that confronts the issue of mass extinction and ecological damage, this will only emerge from action in the plural political contexts of the real world and cannot be wished into existence in the abstract. There are no 'planet politics', and the use of such terms reflects a top down, universalist or 'God's eye' perspective associated with International Relations thinking in general and liberal, hierarchical, forms of global governance in particular. We are by no means the first to argue that global or planetary rhetoric is more likely to reinforce international hierarchies of power than to challenge them.³⁸

Planetary politics without any understanding of agency can only be a call for elite

³⁶ Walter D. Mignolo, *The Darker Side of Western Modernity: Global Futures, Decolonial Options* (London: Duke University Press, 2011), 262

³⁷ Burke *et al*, 'Planet Politics', 516.

³⁸ In fact, the birth of the discipline of IR is often seen to lie with EH Carr's scathing critique of global ethics, see his recently reissued *The Twenty Years' Crisis: 1919-1939* (London: Palgrave-Macmillan, 2016); see also, Craig Calhoun, 'The Class Consciousness of Frequent Travelers: Toward a Critique of Actually Existing Cosmopolitanism', *South Atlantic Quarterly* 101, no. 4 (2002): 869-897; Anthony Pagden, 'Stoicism, Cosmopolitanism, and the Legacy of European Imperialism', *Constellations* 7, no. 1 (2000): 3-22.

governance. Nothing sums this up better than Burke *et al*'s reactionary view that human interests must be subordinated to ecology, as if we could literally govern against and without democratic reasoning and debate. Apparently, the Anthropocene:

...issues a profound challenge to politics: no longer is it legitimate to understand politics as the perennial clash between human preferences and interests, or indeed a bargaining of human interests against those of ecology. The planet is telling us that there are limits to human freedom; there are freedoms and political choices we can no longer have.³⁹

The desire to jump straight into the 'limits to human freedom' on the basis that this is what 'the planet' is 'telling us' would be comical if it were not articulated as a serious suggestion by well published and internationally respected critical theorists. The 'manifesto' is full of such elitist imperatives, facilitated by the uncritical abstraction of the human, whose political interests are seen as problematic and whose 'freedoms and choices' are to be limited. There is an uncritical endorsement of our contemporary condition in terms of the 'Anthropocene' wherein 'humanity' is constituted as problematic *per se*.⁴⁰ Burke *et al* tell us that 'transformations are afoot that are of humanity's own making'.⁴¹ Yet this notion remains contested within geology rather than a self-evident truth.⁴² There are very significant oversights and risks in deploying a conflated conception of 'humanity'⁴³ and, of course, Burke *et al* are not the first commentators to problematically attempt to use the concept of the

³⁹ Ibid., 507.

⁴⁰ Paul Crutzen and Eugene Stoermer, 'The Anthropocene', *IGBT Newsletter* 41 (2000): 17-18.

⁴¹ Burke *et al*, 'Planet Politics', 512.

⁴² For example, Whitney J. Autin, and John M. Holbrook. 'Is the Anthropocene an issue of stratigraphy or pop culture?' *Groundwork: The Geological Society of America* 22, no. 7 (2012): 60-61.

⁴³ Erika Cudworth and Stephen Hobden, *Posthuman International Relations: Complexity, Ecologism and Global Politics* (London: Zed Books, 2011).

Anthropocene to engage in such conceptual conflation, suggesting that 'humanity' is a force of nature that is singular.⁴⁴

Some reflection at least might have been offered on the conceptual paradox of the Anthropocene which both emphasises the unprecedented entanglement of human activity on the planet with its species, eco-systems and landscapes while remaining wedded to a position of human universalism and exceptionalism.⁴⁵ The question of what constitutes intervention and agency in the Anthropocene as posed and presented in the 'Manifesto' is human-centred and self-referential, appearing more like a last gasp attempt at reasserting a liberal anthropocentrism rather than a political or epistemological challenge to the disciplinary limits of IR. As Adrian Franklin argues, our histories of co-evolution raise serious questions for the 'entire conceptual edifice of Liberal rationalism with its supremacist view of human agency against a largely passive and frail nature'.⁴⁶

What drove 'us' - the collective human - to be so destructive and dangerous a species? As many have pointed out, we might characterise our current condition as one produced by the lifeways of a distinct social and geographically defined group; a subset of humanity. Thus terms such as the Capitalocene, the Anthrobscene, the Plantationocene⁴⁷ have been used to make clear 'who' and what practices are

⁴⁴ See Dipesh Chakrabarty, 'The Climate of History: Four Theses', *Critical Inquiry* 35 (2009): 197-222.

⁴⁵ Florence Chiew, (2015) 'The paradox of self-reference: sociological reflections in agency and intervention in the Anthropocene' in Human Animal Research Network Editorial Collective (eds.) *Animals in the Anthropocene: critical perspectives on non-human futures*. (Sydney: Sydney University Press, 2015), 1-18.

⁴⁶ Adrian Franklin. 'Ecosystem and Landscape: Strategies for the Anthropocene', in Human Animal Research Network Editorial Collective (eds.) *Animals in the Anthropocene*, 63-88.

⁴⁷ Jason W. Moore. *Capitalism in the Web of Life*. (London: Verso, 2015); Jussi Parikka, *The Anthrobscene* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2015).

responsible; while the difference filled Chthulucene understands us as enmeshed through tentacular practices and entreats us to 'make kin' as the mechanism for delivering multi-species eco-justice.⁴⁸ Singular humanity is a dangerous trope when there is the aspiration for a political project that 'will necessarily involve agonism and conflict' and 'new forms of cooperation and ongoing contestation'.⁴⁹

But perhaps even more problematic than the erasure of socio-political distinctions in the liberal trope of the 'human' is the almost celebratory way the Burke *et al* seek to dethrone the human through constituting the 'planet', the planet's 'politics' and what the planet is 'telling us' in its place. As Claire Colebrook has argued this type of liberal 'posthumanism' is actually 'ultrahumanism': 'Humanism posits an elevated or exceptional "man" to grant sense to experience, then when "man" is negated or removed what is left is the human all too human tendency to see the world as one giant anthropomorphic self-organizing body.'⁵⁰ The planet and what it is 'telling us' sounds very much like the ideal embodiment of liberal universalist ethics which the cosmopolitan theorists were touting in the 1990s on the back of liberal interventionist human universalism.

A further element in this reinforcement of human exceptionalism is the rather odd notion that 'the planet' might have anything to 'say' to the collective homogenised human. What earth system science has emphasised from the 1970s is that the complex assemblage of multiple complex systems that make up 'the planet', does not 'tell us' anything or 'ask' anything from 'us'. The planet is indifferent 'to our reasons and our projects'.⁵¹ Invoking Rosa Luxemburg (1916), Isabelle Stengers

⁴⁸ Donna Haraway, 'Anthropocene, Capitalocene, Plantationocene, Chthulucene: Making Kin.' *Environmental Humanities* 6. (2015): 159-165.

⁴⁹ Burke *et al*, 'Planet Politics', 507.

⁵⁰ Claire Colebrook, *Death of the Posthuman: Essays on Extinction, Volume 1* (London: Open Humanities Press, 2014), 164.

⁵¹ Isabelle Stengers, *In Catastrophic Times: Resisting the Coming Barbarism* (London: Open Humanities Press, 2015), 47.

argues that our challenge once again is to face ‘the coming barbarism’ in the face of ‘the intrusion of Gaia’. Luxembour’s powerful invective against imperialist warfare saw humanity at a crossroads of resistance. The cause, capitalism, is ‘dishonoured, wading in blood and dripping with filth... Not as we usually see it, playing the roles of peace and righteousness, of order, of philosophy, of ethics - but as a roaring beast...’.⁵² Like Luxembour, Stengers argues that we are not facing an oncoming crisis but operating within one. In 2016 as in 1916, the machine of capitalism continues to be radically irresponsible and our political guardians tinker very lightly with its imperatives. It is as indifferent to the vulnerability of the living as ‘the planet’ is indifferent to the homogenised human.

Alternatives

Let us be clear, Burke *et al* are not establishing the ‘End of IR’, or anything remotely like it, on the basis of the challenges of the Anthropocene. Quite the opposite, they have great confidence in international political guardianship. Their ‘Planetary Manifesto’ seeks to give IR a new framework of meaning through the call to collective action given by the overwhelming threat of the Anthropocene, read as planetary extinction. As we have stated above, this desire to overcome the national and to reconstitute the ‘planetary’ is little more than a revival of liberal global cosmopolitanism of the 1990’s except now the problem to be dealt with is environmental abuses and planetary crimes rather than human rights abuses and war crimes.

In a follow-up piece to the Manifesto, Burke and Fishel spell out their concerns more clearly: ‘We believe new international institutions and laws are needed, with one fundamental purpose: to give a voice to ecosystems and non-human forms of life.’⁵³

⁵² Rosa Luxembour, *The Junius Pamphlet* (1916), Available at <https://www.marxists.org/archive/luxemburg/1915/junius/>

⁵³ Burke and Fishel, ‘Politics for the planet: why nature and wildlife need their own seats at the UN’, *The Conversation*, 30 June 2016. Available at:

They describe the Manifesto as a challenge to the existing international mechanisms 'too focused on interstate bargaining and human interests' and focus on three key international reforms: a coal convention, an Earth system council, and a new category of "crimes against biodiversity".

They propose a system of top-down global regulation that would make the global cosmopolitan ideologues of the 1990s envious. At the top of the tree, the Earth system council would function much like the UN Security Council. It would, in effect, be an 'ecological security council' involving representation from permanent member states and representatives of new 'eco-regions' which 'would be represented by a democratic assembly and have a constitution focused solely on the preservation and repair of its ecology'. 'Crimes against Biodiversity' would be tougher than current 'international laws that punish genocide, our suggested law would not require proof of intent to commit the crime, but merely a strong link between the activity and the destruction of biodiversity or industrial and systemic harm to animals'.

While the Manifesto authors claim that they seek to fire a new 'political imagination' and to bring a 'new urgency' that is beyond 'politics as usual',⁵⁴ the problem is less that the claims are utopian than that they are a recipe for reinforcing the disciplinary hierarchies just when they appear to be eroding. The 'Manifesto' faces exactly the same problems as those already rehearsed in the critiques levelled against the global cosmopolitan theorists: as long as we live under capitalism the measures argued for would never succeed or, if they did, they would only be used selectively to reinforce dominant power relations. As Drucilla Cornell and Stephen Seely have noted recently, we need to be extending human freedoms rather than seeking to bureaucratically and hierarchically to limit them. The threats of global extinction and global warming should not be used to pose a 'forced choice' of 'the planet' or

<https://theconversation.com/politics-for-the-planet-why-nature-and-wildlife-need-their-own-seats-at-the-un-59892>.

⁵⁴ Burke *et al*, 'Planet Politics', 500.

'politics'.⁵⁵ Giving up on the human (of liberal modernity) does not necessarily imply that we give up on humanist aspirations for radical change and revolutionary possibilities and install global courts and legislators to act as enlightened overlords, squashing debate and democracy on the basis that they can hear 'what the planet is telling us' to do.

Thus, the greater concern for us, of course, is the real impact of such a Manifesto: an elitist and managerialist assault on the political imagination, which has little to do with academic discussion and debate about whether and how to go 'beyond IR' or beyond modernist constructions of the human subject. This is why, when you scratch the surface, what is revealed is actually an anti-political manifesto: a call for the abolition of politics. In their demand for urgent action on universal moral grounds any attempt to discuss the stakes involved are sidelined rather than encouraged. Therefore, it is little surprise that, in their recent piece, Burke and Fishel blithely conclude: 'We are aware that these are radical ideas that raise significant political and legal complexities.... Planet Earth needs unprecedented politics for these unprecedented times.' Against this position, we would suggest a 'Non-Manifesto for the Capitalocene', one that encourages debate rather than closing down discussion with calls for focusing on establishing new legal and institutional frameworks of global security governance.

While the term 'Anthropocene' has entered common usage, we are concerned that its use can confuse the issues rather than illuminate them.⁵⁶ The term once again puts an emphasis on the 'anthropo', the human. And while Crutzen and Stoermer justifiably sought to draw attention to the human impact on the planet, there is a

⁵⁵ Drucilla Cornell and Stephen Seely, *The Spirit of Revolution: Beyond the Dead Ends of Man* (Cambridge: Polity, 2016), 6.

⁵⁶ We would concur with Donna Haraway that more than one name is needed to describe the current era. See Donna Haraway, 'Anthropocene, Capitalocene, Plantationocene, Chtulucene: Making Kin', *Environmental Politics* 6, no. 6 (2015): 160.

danger that this reinforces the view of the human as all-powerful and separate from the rest of nature. Furthermore, it is not the 'human', that is the cause of the impacts on the rest of nature, but a specific subset of the human, living within a particular form of social organisation. Yet, as Stengers reminds us, the planet does not discriminate. The specific subset of the human and their ways of life will not be somehow targeted by planetary feedback loops. Rather, it is the most vulnerable humans and other animals who will be and are already bearing the first effects of the intrusion of Gaia. As Roy Scranton puts it 'We're fucked. The only questions are how soon and how badly'.⁵⁷

In emphasising a 'Non-Manifesto for the Capitalocene', we would, first, refuse to rush to support global securitising measures of any sort, any more than we would support state declarations of 'states of emergency' or 'emergency powers'. Second, we think that politics cannot and should not be reduced to 'the preservation and repair of ecological systems'. It is a shame that the 'Planetary Manifesto' forces debate on to the technical terms of what steps should or could be taken by global (planetary) governance bodies and how feasible any such establishment of these bodies might be and their political consequences. Intellectually this discussion is no less problematic than debating earlier ideas for world government or global governance in the past and we are not the first authors to highlight its 'deeply authoritarian and de-politicising tendencies'.⁵⁸

The Capitalocene and the End of IR

The proposal of a 'Non-Manifesto' is purely a heuristic device to make clear that we definitely do not want to engage in the debate on the policy-making terms set by

⁵⁷ Roy Scranton, *Learning to Die in the Anthropocene* (San Francisco, City Light Books, 2015), 16.

⁵⁸ Jeremy Baskin, 'The Ideology of the Anthropocene', *Melbourne Sustainable Society Institute (MSSI) Research Paper*, 3, (University of Melbourne: MSSI, 2014), 15; see also Bonneuil and Fressoz, *The Shock of the Anthropocene*.

Burke *et al.* It is not a call for inaction. However, the idea of the 'Non-Manifesto' flags up the demand that we make a refusal: a refusal to fall back into reinforcing the international arena as the source of politics and policy-making. The Capitalocene actually makes a major challenge to IR, one that is not taken at all seriously by Burke *et al.*: it challenges the possibility of governing from the top-down through questioning the modernist understanding of the world. For all their talk of the 'complex enmeshment of human and non-human life in the planetary biosphere', Burke *et al.* demonstrate little awareness of the consequences of this embeddedness for the policy-making they suggest or what is at stake for the discipline of IR itself.

IR is a discipline concerned with policy-making - the policy-making of the inter-state sphere and the projection of policy intentions in the international arena. Until the 1990s, this was a fairly minor academic concern and domestic politics and the discipline of political theory were seen as much more important. IR as a discipline boomed in the 1990s as the barriers between the domestic and the international appeared to be blurring (this is what led some academics to think that the days of the national state were over and the future was that of global governance). However, the fantasy of reproducing the state at the global level failed and what we witnessed was not the homogenising of the liberal order globally but rather the implosion of this order.

In short, the discussion of 'globalisation' in IR in the 1990s was seen to be merely about the nature of the state, its borders and capacities, rather than liberal modernist frameworks *per se*. Today it is clear that the Capitalocene is globalisation 'with bells on', that is, the Capitalocene raises the prospect of the end of all the liberal binaries, particularly that between culture and nature. It is in many ways ironic that Burke *et al.* treat the Anthropocene as if it is merely a rerun of globalisation (given the urgency of global warming and species extinction) rather than understanding that the impact of the Anthropocene/Capitalocene is actually much more radical.

The radicalism of the Capitalocene could be described in terms of the difference between the ontic and the ontological in Heidegger. The ontic level concerns the types of objects which make up, in this case, the subjects of International Relations, individuals, states, NGOs, TNCs, etc; under globalisation there was a shift at this level, states seemed less important, NGOs and other non-state actors seemed more important, but nothing was drastically at stake in the discipline, even if some people chose to call IR 'global studies' the subject matter and the theories were essentially the same. The Capitalocene heralds a change at the ontological level, at the level of how we understand what constitutes the subject matter itself.

If the Capitalocene promises the end of the culture/nature divide, policy-making and policy institutions can no longer work in their traditional liberal modernist ways. Essentially we no longer understand nature to be separate, outside, external to us, somehow bound by fixed laws of repetition and strict linear causality. In which case, we no longer understand humans as separate and above nature, able to govern, control and direct it. Making policies in the Capitalocene then would make Burke *et al's* recipes for global governance especially ridiculous or counterproductive: the Anthropocene is all about flux, multiplicities, feedback loops and interactions. It is about the limits of modern science and top-down governance and fantasies of control. This is precisely why the Capitalocene spells the end of IR while Burke *et al's* 'Planetary Manifesto' can only appear as a last gasp attempt to save IR.

The need for a change in our ways of thinking about the world has been signalled by a range of thinkers both within and outside of IR. Drawing upon these ideas might provide ways of conceptualising 'the end of IR'. Bruno Latour has been at the forefront of thinking about relations between the human and non-human, and of ways of incorporating the non-human into political processes.⁵⁹ In his keynote address, given at the same conference that Burke *et al* first presented their manifesto, Latour argued against the very notion of sovereignty and geopolitics that

⁵⁹ See, in particular, Bruno Latour, *We Have Never Been Modern* (Hemel Hempstead: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1993); *Politics of Nature: How to Bring the Sciences into Democracy* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2004).

underpins liberal cosmopolitan responses to the current ecological crisis. He notes that 'the return of natural entities such as CO2 into politics thus offers an excellent occasion to purge the notion of sovereignty of the odd physics that had been inserted into it in earlier days'.⁶⁰ In other words, there is a need for a complete re-think of how we understand sovereignty, with implications for how to confront the environmental crisis.

Drawing on Latour's work, Anna Agathangelou also highlights IR's 'failure and denial of environmental questions or political ecology'.⁶¹ The discipline of IR she argues limits our capacity to consider ourselves as agents of change. Despite her sympathetic reading of Burke et al, we would argue that their proposals reproduce exactly the same feeling of incapacity.⁶² In responding to this failure and denial, she points to the possibilities for re-thinking agency to avoid such an incapacity in particular drawing on alternate cosmologies and postcolonialism.⁶³

As an alternative to the top-down approach signalled by 'Planet Politics', we would like to suggest a bottom-up process which seeks to challenge the fundamentals of the contemporary situation. Our use of the term Capitalocene signals our view of a link between capitalism as a form of social organisation and the ecological, political and economic crises that we currently confront. We foresee no end to these crises within capitalism. This is why we question the policies suggested by Burke *et al* which not only fail to engage with the underlying issues but can only act as a

⁶⁰ Bruno Latour, 'Onus Orbis Terrarum: About a Possible Shift in the Definition of Sovereignty', *Millennium* 44, no. 3 (2016): 320. Note that this is a somewhat different presentation from his keynote at the conference.

⁶¹ Anna M. Agathangelou, 'Bruno Latour and Ecology Politics: Poetics of Failure and Denial in IR', *Millennium* 44, no. 3 (2016): 321-347.

⁶² Agathangelou, 'Bruno Latour', 343-4.

⁶³ Mark Jackson, 'Composing Postcolonial Geographies: Postconstructivism, Ecology and Overcoming Ontologies of Critique', *Singapore Journal of Tropical Geography* 35, no. 1 (2014): 72-87; Eduardo Viveiros de Castro, 'Exchanging Perspectives: The Transformation of Objects into Subjects in Amerindian Ontologies', *Common Knowledge* 10, no. 3 (2004): 463-484.

palliative, not a remedy. Unfortunately, as the social experiments in Communist Russia and China demonstrated, capitalism does not have a monopoly on either exploitation or environmental degradation. Assessments of alternative forms of social organisation are a necessary but not sufficient direction to explore.

At a more fundamental level, there is a need for a change in human consciousness. Richard Falk has recently written about the need to develop a 'postmodern global imaginary', a view that takes 'much fuller account of the wellbeing of the *whole* (the world) as well as remaining attentive to the viewpoint of the *parts* (the states)'.⁶⁴ Theodor Adorno spoke in similar terms when in relation to the development of a 'self-conscious global subject'.⁶⁵ The point where we differ from the 'Planetary Manifesto' is in not refusing to put social change at the top of the agenda. The 'Manifesto' is a programme of global governance, one that accepts the appearances of the world and argues that we should obey what 'the planet' is 'telling us'. For us, this is archetypal liberal governance, where Burke *et al* seek to revive the discipline of IR on the basis of a conceptual framework that re-orientes thought and practice in response to the Anthropocene's destabilising effects.

For the authors of the 'Manifesto', we need to suborn the human to the planetary governance of elites in the name of the Anthropocene. We need to sacrifice democracy, debate and political struggle in order to prosper within a catastrophic horizon of planetary extinction. From this perspective, the relation between politics and the Anthropocene is a profoundly depoliticizing one. Politics is in fact reduced to responding to and managing what are understood to be the consequences of previous human actions. Governing never starts a process with goals or aims at transformation and instead is reactive and responsive rather than a matter of initiation, of beginnings, of creativity. While agential powers of creativity are projected to the world, the human is reduced to, at best, following the instructions

⁶⁴ Richard Falk, *Power Shift: On the New Global Order* (London, Zed, 2016), 134.

⁶⁵ Theodor Adorno, 'Progress', in *Critical Models: Interventions and Catchwords*, ed. Theodor Adorno (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005), 144.

given by the world. As Levi Bryant notes, this subordination to the whole would leave 'Gaia' as 'either a fascist or a totalitarian'.⁶⁶ This we suggest is precisely the problem of the Manifesto.

Rather than this approach, we consider that a manifesto for living in an age of catastrophe requires different responses. One necessary response is to acknowledge the tragedy of our times, to take on board that catastrophe is already here and that we live in times of extinction and crises that are and will be profoundly transformative.⁶⁷ Second, is to retain and extend our practices of critical analysis and politics where we need to continue to demonstrate the responsibility of particular forms of social organisation for our currently precarious condition. There are, in fact, many possibilities whereby a liberating and emancipatory perspective can be generated from the entanglements of the Anthropocene/Capitalocene, which, following some critical decolonial, feminist, queer and posthuman approaches, enables the dethronement of Enlightenment Man, without smuggling the 'God trick' back into a human-less world, where politics has to be subordinated to the planet. Third, we would rather seek inspiration in other ways of 'renaturalising' politics, ways which can be seen to offer creative possibilities and potentials. While we need to continue our critical analysis, political creativity has never been so urgent, and we need new research to unearth different ways of being in the world and to consider radical possibilities for different present and future life. What we need then, is to put research to work in, as the authors of the *Manifesto for Living in the Anthropocene* suggest – making 'a stand for life!'.⁶⁸ As Val Plumwood asserts, 'If our species does

⁶⁶ Levi Bryant, *The Democracy of Objects* (London: Open Humanities Press, 2011), 277.

⁶⁷ See, for example, Deborah Bird Rose and Thom van Dooren (eds), 'Unloved Others: Death of the Disregarded in the Time of Extinctions', special issue, *Australian Humanities Review*, 50 (2011).

⁶⁸ Katherine Gibson, Deborah Bird Rose and Ruth Fincher (eds) *Manifesto for Living in the Anthropocene* (Brooklyn, NY: Punctum Books), iii.

not survive the ecological crisis it will probably be due to our failure to imagine and work out new ways to live with the earth'.⁶⁹

This three-fold response echoes the recent exhortation from Simon Springer to 'Fuck Neoliberalism'. In unpacking what 'fucking up' means, Springer suggests it involves first, the expression of rage (through intellectual and practical political means such as critical research and protest); second, rejection (ignoring neoliberalism, or doing things differently) and third, 'prefigurative politics'. The latter is most important in our current epoch and involves developing means 'not to an end, but to future means'; it is an enactive politics in which we learn how to make new worlds in the shell of the old.⁷⁰

Unlike Burke *et al* we do not consider 'Man' and 'Nature' to be separable in a zero-sum relationship, we would reject and go beyond this modernist binary. Going beyond IR is possible and also necessary once we radically redefine human agency as part of nature itself. For example, Hasana Sharp, drawing on the politics of Spinoza and Deleuze, suggests that awareness of our embodied and embedded relationships within the world enables governance through the cultivation of practical wisdom, seeking out 'new sources of agency, connection, and energy' rather than focusing on a problematic politics of top-down law-making and bureaucratic regulation.⁷¹ A 'posthumanist politics of composition and synergy' would see the radical potential of appreciating contingency through an affective politics of enablement.⁷²

⁶⁹ Val Plumwood, review of Deborah Bird Rose's 'Reports from a Wild Country: Ethics for Decolonisation', *Australian Humanities Review*, 42 (2007): 1.

⁷⁰ Simon Springer, 'Fuck Neoliberalism', *ACME: An International Journal for Critical Geographies*, 2016, 15(2): 287-8.

⁷¹ Hasana Sharp, *Spinoza and the Politics of Renaturalization* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2011), 13.

⁷² *Ibid.*

Similarly, Elizabeth Grosz suggests that appreciating the power of emergence - as a vital force of Life itself - enables and facilitates new forms of social organisation which would challenge the constraints of global liberalism. The naturalising of politics is only oppressive if nature is seen as fixed and linear rather than as lively excess and creativity. In her reading of Darwin, Bergson and others, she suggests that governing for the Anthropocene is not necessarily a matter of 'a rational strategy for survival, not a form of adaptation, but the infinite elaboration of excess' and experimentation.⁷³

In a world of becoming, beyond the binaries of 'Man' and 'Nature', it is possible to develop creative and enabling perspectives of relational embeddedness that see the contingencies of the Anthropocene as an opportunity rather than as a call for yet more constraints upon human freedom. We would extend the notion of freedom and emancipation beyond the human, in fact, such a change in thinking is not only possible but also occurring. As Philippe Descola has argued, there are at least four ways in which humans have conceived their relations with nature.⁷⁴ We don't argue that any one of these is 'correct', but make the simple point that no one way of conceiving human relations with the rest of nature is 'natural', essential or inevitable. In other words, these perspectives are the product of circumstances rather than fixed and as a result are open to change.

It is also important to point to the existence of what Erika Cudworth has named 'posthuman communities'. Cudworth's research has focussed on dog walking communities in Britain, but there are numerous other examples where the character of human/non-human relations have shown characteristics of 'inclusivity, diversity,

⁷³ Elizabeth Grosz, *Becoming Undone: Darwinian Reflections on Life, Politics, and Art* (London: Duke University Press, 2011), 119.

⁷⁴ Philippe Descola, *Beyond Nature and Culture* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2013).

and reconstitution'.⁷⁵ There is a considerable overlap here with Donna Haraway's project of 'making kin' as a necessary response to 'mass death and extinction' and 'onrushing disasters'.⁷⁶ Examples would include human-nonhuman animal communities in times of conflict or fishing communities in Brazil that co-operate with dolphins and the honeyguide bird. We need different visions of what it means to be human and making our lives with multifarious other species. We need to re-enact the relationship between economy and ecology, through community economy for example.⁷⁷ We cite these examples to suggest that non-exploitative relations with other species are possible. Our research and our practice should be geared to exploring, encouraging, and developing these cases. This we believe opens the possibility for change at a much more fundamental level.

Conclusion

In sum, 'Planet Politics' makes for a confused read. There is a smattering of talk of social justice, yet 'humanity' is a homogenised entity. There is faith placed in international law and international organisations when there is also talk of weakness and of failure. States are depicted as arbitrary in the face of ecological collapse, yet the international system of states appears our only hope for a human future. There is mention of an 'entangled' existence, yet overwhelmingly this is a manifesto which understands 'humanity' (singular) as disembodied rather than co-constituted; and ultimately 'the human' is a sullyng force on 'the natural'. While we may well require an apocalyptic tone to provoke us out of slumber, there is a familiar tale

⁷⁵ Erika Cudworth, 'Posthuman Community in the Edgelands', *Society and Animals* (forthcoming).

⁷⁶ Haraway, 'Anthropocene', 161; and *Staying with the Trouble: Making Kin in the Chthulucene* (London: Duke University Press, 2016), 35.

⁷⁷ J.K. Gibson-Graham and Ethan Miller, 'Economy as Ecological Livelihood' in Gibson et al. eds., 7-16; also see J.K. Gibson-Graham, *The End of Capitalism (as We Knew It): A Feminist Critique of Political Economy* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1996).

underpinning talk of our past, present and future here. Man was created and he made the world in his own image. In the process he fell, and he sullied paradise. Can he save himself at the end of days by renouncing coal and through the redemptive power of international agreements?⁷⁸

On that note, however, we could do with a bit of panache and fervour and, goddammit, some humour. Burke *et al's* Manifesto is a rather limp call to arms. Where is the rhetorical flourishing of 'fixed, fast-frozen relations, with their train of ancient and venerable prejudices and opinions' being 'swept away', by the juggernaut of capital;⁷⁹ trampling the world, dripping blood? Where is the provocation of a 'dream not of a common language, but of a powerful infidel heteroglossia'⁸⁰ or the bravado of a story of multispecies co-evolution and future flourishing 'rooted in those canine bitches who got in the way of man making himself yet again in the Greatest Story Ever Told'?⁸¹ The violence of making live and letting die surely needs decrying with a bit more verve; and our possible future at the edge of extinction needs a bit more joy and celebration of the 'bling' of life?⁸² While also, of course, carefully avoiding the 'God trick'.

We can agree that International Relations is inherently the discipline that has the responsibility for considering global processes, and that this is a responsibility it has thus far failed to shoulder. Yet this 'Manifesto' seems underpinned by an expectation that International Relations while currently failing the planet, may be of

⁷⁸ Inspired by reading Jairus Grove 'Of an Apocalyptic Tone Recently Adopted in Everything: The Anthropocene or Peak Humanity', *Theory and Event* 18, 3 (2015).

⁷⁹ Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *The Communist Manifesto*, retrieved from <https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/download/pdf/Manifesto.pdf>: 16.

⁸⁰ Haraway 'The Cyborg Manifesto' in *Manifestly Haraway* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press), 67-68.

⁸¹ Haraway 'The Companion Species Manifesto' in *Manifestly Haraway*, 97.

⁸² Deborah Bird Rose, *Wild Dog Dreaming: Love and Extinction* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2011).

some use in 'saving' it. This is indeed dreaming. Whatever might be 'saved', the discipline of IR will have little if anything to do with it. The discipline's emergence as the handmaiden of political theory (with all the modernist binaries, including those of inside/outside, subject/object, cause and effect) makes IR particularly unsuited for dealing with the entanglements of the Anthropocene/Capitalocene. Where the globalisation of the 1990s undermined political theory's state-centredness, the Anthropocene/Capitalocene of the 2010s similarly rings the death-knell for Burke *et al*'s human-centred global liberalism.

What we don't need at the present time is a 'planet politics' based on diktat and wedded to a Liberal account of International Relations. Rather, we need a concerted assault on the systemic practices, institutions and imperatives of dominatory power which have contributed to a condition of crisis. What we also require is the exploration of ideas from outside the disciplinary prison. These may help us in the task of building networks of reciprocity across social, cultural and species distinctions – of kin-making, of making space for the possibility of life in capitalist ruins.⁸³ If we are prisoners, it is because we choose to be, and that appears to be the choice that Burke *et al* have made.

Thus we advocate a *Non-Manifesto for the Capitalocene*. Even a Non-Manifesto might make use of a rallying cry, and Springer's railing against Neoliberalism fits our purposes well. So, fuck the Capitalocene and

Fuck the hold it has on our political imaginations. Fuck the violence it engenders. Fuck the inequality it extols as a virtue. Fuck the way it has ravaged the environment. Fuck the endless cycle of accumulation and the cult of growth.⁸⁴

⁸³ Haraway, 'Anthropocene, Capitalocene, Plantationocene, Chthulucene'; Anna L. Tsing, *The Mushroom at the End of the World: On the Possibility of Life in Capitalist Ruins* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2015).

⁸⁴ Springer, 288.

Let us find new ways of making life with others in the oncoming ruins of the Capitalocene; of making flourishing life for myriad creatures including those wonderful primates called human. This, certainly, will be beyond International Relations (as We Knew It). Let's get out of jail.