Theory of the Anti-Globalization Movement

Review of *Naming the Enemy: Anti-Corporate Movements Confront Globalization* by Amory Starr and *Globalization from Below: The Power of Solidarity* by Jeremy Brecher, Tim Costello, and Brendan Smith

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Part I

Finally, after years of disintegration and defeat on the Left, a new movement has erupted upon the political landscape. It is not organized around a single issue, identity based, or somehow "implicitly" radical. On the contrary, this movement directly attacks global capital's economic and political infrastructure with a radically democratic politics and a strategy of confrontation. It is bold, anti-authoritarian, and truly global.

And also quite effective. This movement has already introduced a radical critique into the debate on the global economy and demonstrated the capacity to physically shut down meetings of trade ministers. It seems possible that this movement will continue to grow, deepen its radicalism, and revolutionize the world according to the radically democratic principles it embraces.

The emergence of the anti-globalization movement has produced a feeling of near euphoria among anarchists. Not only are our commitments to direct action and decentralization shared broadly in the movement as a whole, but we are also enjoying a political legitimacy that has eluded us for decades. We can now articulate our anti-statist, utopian message to activists around the world and we are no longer dismissed as terrorists or cranks. In many respects it seems like we should just mobilize, mobilize, and mobilize.

Unfortunately this would be a grave mistake. The movement's anti-authoritarian, revolutionary character is currently under attack by a informal network of reformists, who want nothing more than to see this movement accommodate itself to the basic structures of the present world. They are not waging a direct assault upon revolutionaries in the movement: they recognize that this would alienate them from the movement's base. Instead, they are fighting us indirectly, in the realm of ideas. In particular, they hope to define the movement in a way that renders its most expansive, utopian potentials literally unthinkable.

As important as it is to mobilize, anarchists will have to respond to this challenge on the theoretical terrain: we cannot afford to lose the battle of ideas. Above all, we must link the anti-globalization movement to a broader revolutionary project in a way that is coherent, concrete, and irrefutable. However, as a defensive measure, we should expose the reformist's attempt to sever this link and reveal their designs to the movement as a whole. The reformers will respond by declaring their good faith or complaining about our divisiveness, but we should not be swayed by such pre-political subterfuge: on the contrary, we should be merciless with those who would hinder the realization of the anti-globalization movement's most radical possibilities. Popular revolutionary movements have been betrayed countless times before: we should not let this happen again.

Naming the Enemy and *Globalization from Below* are exemplary documents of the reformist wing of the anti-globalization movement. They are more reflective and sophisticated than the majority of books on the movement and focus on the deeper questions upon which its identity hangs. These two works celebrate the movement's radicalism emphatically, but in terms that make the revolutionary transformation of the social order inconceivable.

In *Globalization from Below*, Jeremy Brecher, Tim Costello, and Brendan Smith (BCS) argue that the economic, political, and cultural interconnectedness signified by globalization is irreversible and possibly a good thing: this interconnection, they assert, could potentially serve the interests of people and the earth, not just the elites. Although the rich and powerful have shaped globalization in their interest thus far (BCS call this "globalization from above"), there is a counter-movement that seeks to reshape our interconnected world in the interests of people

and the planet (which BCS call "globalization from below"). They believe that the movement for "globalization from below" is disparate but growing, and their book is meant to provide a framework for uniting it into a common, grassroots struggle. They want to build a world structured by "human values other than greed and domination," one "less dominated by the culture and values of global capital, even if it is still constrained by them," and believe their book provides a realistic strategy for doing so.[1] They believe that the movement for "globalization from below" can transform the world by leading people to withdraw their consent from dominant social relationships, which will prevent the reproduction of the social order, and thus create a situation in which the movement can impose different, more just norms upon society as a whole. BCS try to concretize these norms with a detailed program for reducing poverty, limiting environmental destruction, and enhancing democratic control over the economy. They believe their program embodies values "already shared by many in this movement and that [it] is implicit in much of what the movement actually does."[2] Their attractive and short book (122 pages) is clearly conceived, written without jargon, and can be read for its programmatic suggestions as well as deeper speculations into the nature of social movements.

Amory Starr's *Naming the Enemy* is a comparative analysis of the ways activists in the anti-globalization movement criticize global capital and the types of alternatives they envision. She offers a panoramic view of the movement structured around three responses to global capital: restraining it, democratizing it, or building local alternatives to it. In her first category, which she calls "contestation and reform," she examines movements that want to restrain global capital through state regulation. Here she treats movements against structural adjustment, peace and human rights groups, movements for land reform, the explicitly anti-corporate movement, and cyber-punk. Her second category is "globalization from below," or movements that want to democratize globalization by making governments and corporations accountable to people instead of elites. Here she looks at the environmental and labor movements, socialist movements, anti-free trade movements, and the Zapatistas. Her final category is "delinking," in which she treats movements that want to separate from global capital and build locally based alternatives to it, such as the anarchist movement, movements for sustainable development, the small businesses movement, sovereignty movements, and religious nationalist movements. *Naming the Enemy* is international in scope, although based on English language sources exclusively, and tries to engage an academic and activist audience. While the book is sometimes suffocated by absurdly academic jargon,[3] she provides a sweeping, ground-level view of the movement through studies of manifestos, campaigns, and virtually any resource in which anti-globalization activists articulate how they "understand their enemy and envision rebuilding the world."[4]

Both BCS and Starr embrace the anti-globalization movement and clearly hope their books will contribute to its growth and self-understanding. BCS advance a program and framework for uniting the movement into a broad struggle against "globalization from above" whereas Starr offers a comprehensive analysis of the goals (and opponents) identified by movement activists.

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[1] Brecher, Costello, and Smith, *Globalization from Below*, p. 122

[2] Ibid., p. xi.

[3] The level of jargon is suffocating and sometimes nonsensical. For example, she mentions "potentially agentic forms of subjectivity" (p. 32). The invention of the word agentic is strange enough, but the phrase is also redundant: anything that possesses agency—the capacity to act— possesses subjectivity.

[4] Starr, *Naming the Enemy*, p. x.

It is tempting to regard these works as statements from sympathetic participants in a diverse, growing movement, and I suspect that Starr and BCS hope we will.

Revolution

But those of us who believe that "another world is possible" need to approach these books with very specific concerns. We should ask: do they link the anti-globalization movement to a broader revolutionary project or do they at least provide insights that could help us establish such a link?

Naturally the answer to this question depends on the meaning of the word "revolution," which has been subject to considerable and ongoing debate. The Left has normally used the term to designate not only a sweeping change in political, economic, and cultural relationships, but also the moment when one historical epoch gives birth to a totally new landscape of historical experience through a process of contradiction, collapse, and renewal. It is in this sense that the Left has always had a utopian dimension.

The idea of revolution is barely a concern for Starr or BCS and, to the extent that it is, they seem to restrict it to the transformation of political institutions (instead of society as a whole). BCS mention the idea of revolution in passing and, even then, only to state that it depends on "solving problems by means of state power."[5] Starr does not discuss the idea at all, although she suggests a theory of revolution in a treatment of reformist movements. For her, reform means "mobilizing existing formal democratic channels of protest, seeking national legislation, mounting judicial challenges, mobilizing international agencies, boycotting and protesting."[6] Thus, presumably, revolutionary movements are not oriented toward the existing political structures but rather fight for new ones. This suggests that Starr, like BCS, thinks of revolution only in terms of the transformation of political institutions (and her distinction between movements that engage existing political institutions and those that fight for new ones is not substantive: movements are not revolutionary merely because they fight for something new).

But do they provide insights that could help us link the anti-globalization movement to a larger revolutionary project?

Many anarcho-syndicalists and communists link the anti-globalization movement to revolution by affirming the analysis of capitalism advanced by late 19th and early 20th century socialists. According to this view, capitalism's central and fatal contradiction is the class conflict between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. Specifically, capitalism creates an industrial proletariat that must, in turn, fight for its interests as a class. Ultimately the proletariat becomes so numerous and impoverished that it will not only fight for immediate benefits but also against the social order that has produced it as a class: the class struggle then unfolds into revolution and capitalism as a whole is destroyed. Although communists and anarcho-syndicalists recognize that the anti-globalization movement is not a revolutionary working class movement, they believe it will become one when the movement grasps the real nature of economic inequality: in this sense the movement is a first, but partial step toward a broader revolutionary struggle. Ultimately groups that explicitly embraced a revolutionary socialist perspective, such as the Russian Bolsheviks or the Spanish anarchists, will have to provide the model for the movement as a whole. (This is why communists and anarcho-syndicalists are so focused on political lessons derived from pre-WWII events such as the Russian Revolution and Spanish Civil War.)

[5] Brecher, Costello, and Smith, *Globalization from Below*, p. 24.

[6] Starr, *Naming the Enemy*, p. 45.

We will not find support for this idea in *Naming the Enemy* or *Globalization from Below*. Neither believe that capitalism is subject to fatal contradictions (class, or otherwise) nor that it should be transcended as a social form. In fact, BCS seek not only to retain but also to improve the capitalist mode of production: for example, they argue that their economic program will "expand employment and markets and generate a virtuous cycle of economic growth."[7] Starr eliminates the question altogether by defining the anti-globalization movement as anti-corporate instead of anti-capitalist.[8] Accordingly, the category of class is not important for BCS or Starr's analysis of the anti-globalization movement and neither attempt to relate the interests of the working class to the fate of the movement as a whole (Starr explicitly argues that labor struggles based on class interest do not challenge the corporate form[9]). For them, anarcho-syndicalists and communists are mistaken to draw a link between the anti-globalization movement and the older revolutionary socialist movements.

But clearly there are other ways to conceive of revolution than as a consequence of class contradictions: for example, it is possible to imagine revolution in a democratic populist sense, in which people draw upon shared values (as opposed to class interests) to overthrow elites. This vision of revolution is not premised upon the exacerbation of class conflict, but rather the emergence of a democratic sentiment that rejects exclusive, non-participatory social institutions. BCS and Starr offer some support for understanding the anti-globalization movement in these terms. BCS explicitly define the movement as a people's movement designed to "restrain global capital"[10] and Starr implies the same thing by focusing on the ideals, not class positions, of activists within the movement. However, Starr and BCS fail to articulate this democratic perspective in a way that could make a revolutionary transformation of the social order comprehensible. BCS want to place global capitalism under the control of democratic political institutions at the local, national, and international levels (they call this a "multi-level alternative"). However, their program for democratizing the economy is not complemented by a program for democratizing political power (in fact, campaign finance reform is the only explicitly political demand they advance). This is because they do not advocate (or even mention) direct democracy: on the contrary, they believe in representative democracy and are thus largely content with the political structures it presupposes. For example, they are oblivious to the inherently anti-democratic nature of the nation-state and institutions based upon it (such as the UN), not to mention the political apparatuses they imply, such as politicians, political parties, and advocacy groups. So, despite their democratic rhetoric and enthusiasm for extra-parliamentary social movements, their vision preserves the political structure of the world as it presently exists.

BCS's theoretical premises also make it impossible to conceive of a significant historical leap. For BCS, the social order is shaped by a balance between the powerful and the powerless (not necessarily classes). They write that the power of any society "is based on the active cooperation of some people and the consent and/or acquiescence of others. It is the activity of people—going to work, paying taxes, buying products, obeying government officials, staying off private property—that continually re-creates the power of the powerful."[11] This is why social movements

[7] Brecher, Costello, and Smith, *Globalization from Below*, p. 69.

[8] This is quite weak: for Starr "corporate" refers not to a legally constituted corporation but something that functions according to "corporate principles." Starr, *Naming the Enemy*, p xiv.

[9] Ibid., p. 93.

[10] Brecher, Costello, and Smith, *Globalization from Below*, p. 17.

[11] Brecher, Costello, and Smith, *Globalization from Below*, p. 21.

can transform these social relationships when they lead people to withdraw their consent from the dominant arrangements: people stop acquiescing and thus prevent the reproduction of the social order, enabling the movement to impose its own norms on society as a whole (for example, think of the civil rights movement). This vision of social change seems laudable, given its emphasis on the power of the oppressed in the reproduction and transformation of societies, but it has two fundamental problems. First, BCS do not explain why a people may develop norms that contradict the status quo, and thus cannot explain why they would want to withdraw their consent from the prevailing social relationships in the first place. Second, their assertion that society is always defined by a truce between the powerful and the powerless could characterize any social formation, from the birth of society to the end of history, and thus lacks any historical content. However, if we wish to retain this trans-historical principle, then we must conclude that social movements can only strike a new balance of disempowerment at the very best. There is no transcendence, no realm of freedom, in this vision.

While Starr does not advance a democratic revolutionary perspective, her work is more amenable to such a stance than BCS's. She treats movements that explicitly assert a democratic vision against the existing power structure and suggests that this orientation is both coherent and legitimate (she tries to defend anarchist as well as other decentralist tendencies against their academic and social democratic critics).[12] Also, the fact that she studies how actors in the anti-globalization movement conceive of their opponents and want to rebuild the world suggests that Starr regards our ideals and commitments as the most important factors in political action, not the "objective development of class contradictions." This value-based approach is a precept of any revolutionary democratic politics.

Although she tries to support anti-statist movements that are fighting global capital, her efforts are theoretically and empirically unsound. Instead of treating these movements as instances of a democratic, anti-statist tradition she defines them merely as localist movements that want to "delink" (or separate) from the global economy. This makes little sense: there are virtually no localists in the anti-globalization movement, but rather decentralist movements that regard the community (not the state) as the locus of political life and want to reconstruct the world around a new relationship between communities.[13] These movements are not localist—they do not simply want to retreat into their own enclaves—but rather communitarian movements fighting for the decentralization of political power. But also, on a theoretical level, her definition severs these movements from a broader democratic legacy, and thus obscures a tradition that connects (for example) Zapatista municipal radicalism to Proudhon's federalism. She even mentions the Proudhonian federalist tradition, but fails to theorize its presence in these decentralist movements. Thus, her defense of the most radical wing in the anti-globalization movement presupposes a sharp misreading of its politics. Even worse, her conception of localism-as-radicalism leads her to defend religious nationalists and their efforts to impose parochial, blood-based restraints on the world economy: for example, she mentions radical Islamic nationalists and the U.S.'s racist Christian Patriot movement. While these groups may share an emphasis on the locality with decentralist tendencies in the anti-globalization movement, religious nationalists

[12] For example, she states that anarchism is "the oldest and richest Western tradition" of local radicalism. Starr, *Naming the Enemy*, p. 226.

[13] One can find a few localists, such as flippant academics like Jerry Mander, but they are the exception rather than the rule.

are regressive to the extreme, whereas decentralists are confederal and cosmopolitan in the best sense of the terms. Starr's effort to soften this divide is less than compelling.

But even if Starr related her analysis to a democratic tradition, there is a problem in the very constitution of *Naming the Enemy*. She does not study movements on the basis of their "size, scope, practices or chances for success,"[14] but only on the basis of their ideals. This tends to broaden her picture of the anti-globalization movement, given that the most exciting developments in the movement are not always the largest, most influential, or most likely to succeed. However, some criteria must be applied to determine whose intentions are relevant: after all, countless groups declare their opposition to the consequences of global capitalism, from the Cuban Communist Party to the Catholic Church. But of course one cannot study a movement solely on the basis of its declarations any more than one can study a person on the basis of his or her self-description. Starr knows this, but refuses to spell out the criteria she uses to select movements for consideration. It is clear that she embraces some form of left-wing, democratic populism (á la *Z Magazine*) but theorizing these commitments would put her in opposition to the radical skepticism and liberal resignation prevailing in academia at the moment.

Conclusion

That Starr and BCS welcome the emergence of a democratic, direct action-based movement against global capital is an indication of the success of the anti-authoritarian tradition. Years ago they might have called for a small "c" communism or some form of Green Party-like electoralism but, instead, they praise this anti-authoritarian movement for its democratic sentiments, commitment to protest, and oppositional stance. They want to speak the language of the growing movement against global capitalism.

Yet they would lure us into a trap: they are not revolutionaries, their books do not provide terms through which we can link this movement to a broader revolutionary project, and their basic theoretical commitments are fundamentally antagonist to the goal of revolutionary transformation. BCS's *Globalization from Below* is comprehensible because it affirms the basic structure of the present world—that is, capitalism and the nation-state—and is thus written with the clarity and repose of those who have already won. They descend into platitudes when they try to relate their ideas to a project of radical social transformation precisely because they do not want such a transformation. Starr becomes incomprehensible, dipping into jargon and an absurd defense of religious nationalism, because she wants to reject the present but is unwilling to embrace the terms that would make such a refusal coherent.

Neither BCS nor Starr should be regarded as deceitful or malicious and, besides, their motives are of little significance. What must be recognized is that they are on different sides of the debate over the anti-globalization movement than those of us who genuinely believe that a new world is possible. They celebrate the movement, but the terms of their analyses are hostile to its best, most visionary dimensions.

Our capacity to push the anti-globalization movement from opposition to revolution will be destroyed if we accept the premises of their books, either passively or otherwise. Even if demonstrations and militant conflicts with the police were to continue, we cannot fight for a revolution that we cannot conceive.

[14] Ibid., p. xi.

I think anarchists have been correct to greet the anti-globalization movement with enthusiasm: I believe that extraordinary potentials are at hand. However, to realize these potentials, we must confront those who would erase them from the historical agenda. This will allow us to preserve the idea that new, emancipated landscapes of historical experience are available to us and to set about creating them.

Part II

What was remarkable about the movement that erupted in Seattle 1999 was not so much that previously adversarial sides of the progressive opposition—the "teamsters and turtles"—had started working together or that old revolutionary flags were flying once again. These things had happened at various times in recent history to no great effect. What was extraordinary was the dialogue that emerged between members of the revolutionary, ideological Left (anarchists and communists) and activists whose primary interest lay in pragmatic, bread-and-butter reforms. These two tendencies have long been divided and often regarded one another suspiciously, but somehow the anti-globalization movement created a political space in which they could come together and jointly imagine a movement that is utopian and yet faithful to the demands of day-to-day activism.

The challenge was to figure out how to hold these dimensions together in one more or less unified movement—how to be realistic and demand the impossible—and activists across the world confronted this challenge with a vigorous campaign of education from below. They held teach-ins, Internet discussions, and sponsored countless other activities designed to flesh out the contours of this compelling new movement. Although their work helped raise the level of discourse among activists immeasurably, the movement's common principles remained embodied in a sensibility and shared activist experience rather than in clear political statements.

Thus the significance of *On Fire: The Battle of Genoa and the Anti-capitalist Movement* and *The Battle of Seattle: The New Challenge to Capitalist Globalization.* These anthologies attempt to constitute the anti-globalization movement as a coherent project. They draw upon its history and culture to elaborate its internal cohesiveness, identify its continuities and discontinuities with other political tendencies, and clarify its problems. They reveal a movement that is exciting and dynamic but also struggling with difficult theoretical and political questions. In fact, the future of the anti-globalization movement will be determined to a great extent by our response to many of the issues raised by these books.

On Fire is a short (141 pages) collection of sixteen accounts and analyses of the July 2001 demonstrations against the G8 in Genoa, Italy. The essays were written by members of the most militant, confrontational wing of the protest, and the book's purpose is "to encourage debate about theory and tactics so as to empower us to take on those who currently are ruling this world."[15] Although the anthology has no "About the Authors" section (and many essays are signed with only first names), political references in the articles indicate that most of the writers are European (particularly British).

The Battle of Seattle presents a sweeping account of the anti-globalization movement as a whole. The anthology is divided into five parts: the first provides historical and political background on

[15] Introduction to *On Fire: The Battle of Genoa and the Anti-capitalist Movement*, ed. various authors (Edinburgh: One-Off Press, 2001), 5.

the movement that leapt to world attention in Seattle 1999; the second explores debates that unfolded during and after the Seattle protests (especially over tactics and organization); the third considers the relationship between the protest movement, left-wing advocacy groups, and right-wing anti-globalization tendencies as well as examines the question of racial diversity within the movement (which is also treated in articles throughout the book); part four contains accounts of post-Seattle actions (in Washington, D.C., Philadelphia, Prague, Genoa, among other places); and part five examines the convergence of diverse theoretical and political tendencies within the movement. *The Battle of Seattle* shares a distinctly militant orientation with *On Fire*, yet unlike *On Fire*, it has deeper roots in the movement's direct action faction than its explicitly anarchist wing. The majority of the authors in this book are from the United States and some are well-known (such as Noam Chomsky and Naomi Klein), although most have little reputation outside activist circles. Surprisingly, there is little repetition or academic jargon in either *On Fire* or *The Battle of Seattle*, and almost every contribution offers something unique. These books are also well edited and attractively designed, containing ample photographs and illustrations (and not the same ones that have been floating around the Internet for years).

On Fire

While the stated aim of *On Fire* is to promote discussion about the tactics and ideas of the anti-globalization movement's most militant sector, the book could more aptly be described as a defense of this camp rather than an attempt to initiate analysis per se. Of course, the selection of the Genoa protest as a platform upon which to make this defense is not accidental: the demonstration devolved into terrifying, chaotic riots during which the police assassinated one protester, and injured and arrested countless others. Some argued that these events proved the futility of militant protest actions, whereas the contributors to *On Fire* want to show that they are not futile but, in fact, sustainable and desirable.

They do this in two ways. First, virtually all the accounts of the protest insist that the tremendous state violence unleashed on activists undermined neither their humanity nor their indignation against the G8. Indeed, many passages read like therapeutic writing exercises designed to encourage recovery from a terrible trauma:

> I stopped in the crowds to see what was going on, but everyone was running past me, knocking into me, away from the police—I suddenly saw what looked like something out of star wars, a huge grey tank thing, driving straight at the crowds, and right behind this huge thing were cops in armored vehicles. I started running.[16]
>
> After a period of being gassed, you became immune. The panic dropped. The eight-inch-long canisters were pumped through the air with such regularity that you could watch them coming and run accordingly.[17]

Entries such as these, which explore the fear and confusion experienced by thousands, reveal that it is possible to persevere amid the savage cruelty that the system imposes on those who

[16] Diego Jones, "Shooting Blanks," in *On Fire: The Battle of Genoa and the Anti-capitalist Movement*, ed. various authors (London: One-Off Press, 2001), 14.

[17] Adam Porter, "It Was Like This Before," in *On Fire: The Battle of Genoa and the Anti- capitalist Movement*, ed. various authors (London: One-Off Press, 2001), 76.

resist. Activists show that they were not conquered simply by writing about these traumatic experiences and linking them to larger patterns of social conflict.

The second major point of *On Fire* is to justify the black bloc's aggressive tactics, which were often blamed as the source of the police terror. On a practical level, multiple authors give examples of vicious police assaults on nonviolent, unarmed, and sometimes sleeping protesters, thus refuting the claim that the black bloc provoked the police's sadistic frenzy. They underscore the obvious point that the police initiate violence against those who threaten the powerful, not those who break the law.

Furthermore, in broader terms, numerous contributors contend that the profound existential rage at the system expressed by the black bloc is a constructive, eminently creative part of the movement. As one writer explains, protester violence "illustrates the depth of our discontent, it demonstrates the fact that we reject the state's ideological policing of our political activity, it indicates that we recognize the fact that unfortunately some level of violent confrontation will have to be had with the wealthy elite if we are going to achieve our goals of a different world to the one they currently control."[18] In other words, the urge to destroy is also a creative urge.

On Fire demonstrates that activists will not recoil when faced with state terror and that militant rage is a positive contribution to the movement against global capital. They refute those who indict the Black Bloc and redeem its antagonism toward the system as such. They show that despite all the chaos, the Battle of Genoa was a positive moment in the broader project of shaping "a protest movement into a social movement into world revolution for global human community."[19]

The Battle of Seattle

The Battle of Seattle is a more ambitious attempt to constitute the anti-globalization movement as a political project. It does this principally by analyzing the movement's history, its internal identity (including debates and differences with other political tendencies), and its possible future challenges. The historical essays seek to show that the 1999 explosion in Seattle was not a freak, isolated event but rather something with roots in much more universal social processes. For example, George Katsiaficas places the anti-globalization movement in the context of Third World rebellions against structural adjustment programs, such as the 1989 uprising in Venezuela against IMF-imposed austerity measures, during which the state killed more than three hundred and arrested more than two thousand. Jaggi Singh explores anti-globalization protests in India and Manuel Callahan shows how the Zapatistas helped set the preconditions for the Seattle protests through the movement they launched in 1994. These essays are complemented by detailed chronologies of anti-globalization protests—such as Andrea del Moral's "Direct Action Convergences 2000," which describes twenty-nine demonstrations from New Zealand to Canada in the year 2000 alone—and there is even a map drawn by James Davis and Paul Rowley that depicts "demonstrations, riots and events that are specific responses either to SAPs [structural

[18] Jazz, "The Tracks of Our Tears," in *On Fire: The Battle of Genoa and the Anti-capitalist Movement*, ed. various authors (London: One-Off Press, 2001), 88.

[19] Ibid., 99.

adjustment programs] or summits/fulcrums of capitalist globalization."[20] This book illustrates that the novel political phenomenon that is the anti-globalization movement extends through time and space as well as across diverse cultural divides.

Treatments of the movement's internal norms and debates attempt to clarify some of the driving issues within the movement, whereas those exploring its external alliances try to sketch out its differences with the official progressive opposition and parallel movements on the Right. Expressions of the movement's internal identity can be found in essays throughout the book, although the articulation of this theme tends to be more diffuse than others (which makes sense, given that the collection's purpose is to constitute the movement). Nonetheless, one of the best takes on this question can be found in Eddie Yuen's introduction. He emphasizes the movement's commitment to direct democracy and practice of militant direct action, and points out that the movement draws (demographically and culturally) from an overwhelmingly white activist milieu. Efforts to make distinctions between the anti-globalization movement and parallel groups on the Left-liberal spectrum are weaker, although Jim Davis's essay, "This is What Bureaucracy Looks Like: NGOs and Anti-Capitalism," is notable for its sharp exploration of the conflict between NGO reformism and the aims of the movement's more radical wing. Regrettably, there is no critique of the Democratic Party, destructive communist sects like the International Socialist Organization, or academia (*On Fire,* on the other hand, contains a valuable essay titled "Trots and Liberals," which focuses on the United Kingdom's largest authoritarian socialist group, the Socialist Worker's Party). The treatment of the uncanny parallel between some right-wing groups and the anti-globalization movement is developed most fully in James O'Connor's essay, "On Populism and the Antiglobalization Movement," which elaborates the differences between left- and right-wing populism.

Summaries of the movement's development thus far and attempts to identify its future challenges revolve around a number of related issues. There is a consensus that the movement needs to diversify its membership (particularly in ethnic, but also economic terms) and develop a positive relationship with communities of color that are facing and fighting the weight of the "New World Order." The anthology not only does a good job of stressing the need for such transformation but also scrutinizes many of the concerns that have emerged during attempts to accomplish it. For instance, Andrew Hsiao discusses efforts made by the Mobilization for Global Justice to reach out to communities of color before the April 2000 protests against the World Bank and IMF in Washington, D.C. (their only paid staff person was directed toward this work), but he also underscores the inadequacy of "outreach"—as opposed to active solidarity—especially considering the striking resurgence of activism among young people of color in recent years around issues such as police brutality, juvenile justice, and the death penalty. Colin Rajah looks at the conflicted relationship between communities of color and the anti-globalization movement, emphasizing paternalistic and "in-group" behavior among white activists, yet frames the discussion in terms of the challenges faced by activists of color. Pol Potlash offers a harrowing account of the unique brutality visited on activists of color by police and fascists alike in his excellent "Infernal Pain in Prague."

[20] James Davis and Paul Rowley, "Internationalism against Globalization: A Map of Resistance," in *The Battle of Seattle: The New Challenge to Capitalist Globalization*, ed. Eddie Yuen, George Katsiaficas, and Daniel Burton Rose (New York: Soft Skull Press, 2002), 25.

There is also widespread agreement that the movement needs to grow beyond its focus on large, international protests and engage in sustained, transformative community work. The general divide between these two types of organizing is expressed in Juan Gonzalez's "From Seattle to South Central: What the Movement Needs to do Next," which highlights the broad disconnect between the anti-globalization movement and the struggles of poor communities in places such as the South Central neighborhood of Los Angeles. Several essays mention the student anti-sweatshop movement as a positive example of long-term, non-protest-oriented activism, including Naomi Klein's "The Vision Thing" and Lisa Featherstone's "The New Student Movement." These articles, however, were less than satisfying: the anti-sweatshop movement wants to reduce, but not abolish capitalist exploitation, and hence expresses presuppositions shared by only one part of the anti-globalization movement. Besides, even a decent paying job at the Gap or Nike would be an exercise in alienation: no one should ever have to spend their days making sneakers or T-shirts for rich First Worlders.

Finally, there is a consensus that the movement needs to clarify its relation to politics and the social and political alternatives it advances. Some argue that this clarification should take the form of an avoidance of the big questions; Klein, for one, suggests that the movement's "true challenge is not finding a vision but rather resisting the urge to settle on one too quickly."[21] Yuen cautiously disagrees in his post–September 11th prologue to the book: "The prioritizing of tactics over politics must, it seems to me, be reversed at least for the time being."[22] But others are not hesitant at all; for example, Barbara Epstein points out that the "question of what demands the movement should make … has important consequences."[23] And Stanley Aronowitz states that "while I would not want to see the incipient alliance adopt a sterile ideological framework… I would want to see a vigorous debate over ideas. If anti-capitalism is the leading edge, what are the alternatives?"[24] These articles underscore the importance of the political questions for the movement; unfortunately, they are only touched on rather than thoroughly examined.

Conclusion

These two collections reveal a movement that has erupted against global capital in a profoundly democratic, confrontational way. This movement has not only radicalized public discourse about the global economy but has also given untold numbers a feeling of a shared oppositional project and a sense of hope in revolutionary transformation. There really is a movement.

But these books also reveal that the movement is unified primarily around a tactical commitment to big protests against organizations such as the World Bank and the use of participatory activist structures. Clearly, this movement does not possess sharply defined political principles, and many of its participants hold deeply contradictory views about how the world should work (from Green Party social democrats, to Marxist-Leninists, to anarchists, to whomever).

Regrettably, these books do little to flesh out political differences in the movement, and in fact, seem designed to cultivate a sense of a common project despite the differences. Both share

[21] Naomi Klein, "The Vision Thing," in *The Battle of Seattle: The New Challenge to Capitalist Globalization*, ed. Eddie Yuen, George Katsiaficas, and Daniel Burton Rose (New York: Soft Skull Press, 2002), 317.

[22] Yuen, introduction, 4.

[23] Barbara Epstein, "Not Your Parents' Protest," in *The Battle of Seattle: The New Challenge to Capitalist Globalization*, ed. Eddie Yuen, George Katsiaficas, and Daniel Burton Rose (New York: Soft Skull Press, 2002), 54.

[24] Stanley Aronowitz, "Seeds of a Movement," in *The Battle of Seattle: The New Challenge to Capitalist Globalization*, ed. Eddie Yuen, George Katsiaficas, and Daniel Burton Rose (New York: Soft Skull Press, 2002), 200.

a focus on demonstrations and this necessarily orients the discussion toward tactical instead of political differences (that is, methods instead of principles). For example, *On Fire* contains an ample defense of the black bloc, yet virtually no analysis of the anarchist movement's substantive goals. *The Battle of Seattle*, which provides a much more sweeping picture of the movement, only touches on the big issues. Indeed, neither anthology contains a serious discussion of the most compelling divide: the division between those who want to democratize global capital and those who want to abolish capitalism as such.

This movement has grown so quickly and become so popular partly because it has embraced a political style that facilitates the evasion of tough political questions. After all, social democrats, anarchists, communists, and various others all agree on the need to build a popular protest movement against global capital. For some, these protests prefigure a larger revolutionary movement; for others, they are merely a form of lobbying. Yet everyone agrees that the protests are a good thing.

Doubtlessly, the anti-globalization movement's capacity to hold together contradictory political tendencies in a shared project has produced a fruitful discussion among members of the Left that have communicated too infrequently in the past. The dialogue between practical reformers and utopian revolutionaries has been especially productive: the revolutionaries have learned to be more concrete and the reformers have learned to be more far-reaching, and as a result, everyone has developed a richer sense of the possibilities.

Nevertheless, this movement cannot grow unless it confronts the big questions about the social order. For instance, contributors to The Battle of Seattle assert that the movement must diversify its composition, engage in community organizing, and clarify its demands. This is all true, but how should the movement diversify? What type of community organizing should it initiate? What convictions will frame its demands? These questions cannot be answered in a vacuum; they require clear commitments and political principles.

This suggests that the movement is in a contradictory position in which the source of its popularity prevents it from growing and therefore realizing the potentials that made it so popular to begin with. In fact, I think the movement is destined to shrink, and the pertinent question is not whether it will shrink, but how? It can avoid the big political quandaries and degenerate into a marginal and bourgeois clique (perhaps like the Greens). Or it can clarify its political vision and transform its constituency. Should this happen, the revolutionaries will leave if it becomes explicitly social democratic and the social democrats will depart if it becomes explicitly revolutionary. Either way, it will become a smaller though more focused movement.

There is no doubt that the movement has already expanded political discourse and introduced millions to a deep sense of revolutionary possibility. This is a tremendous achievement. However, it is also clear that the movement must confront many difficult questions to sustain and build upon its accomplishments. In many respects the hard work has only just begun.

Chuck Morse
Theory of the Anti-Globalization Movement
Review of *Naming the Enemy: Anti-Corporate Movements Confront Globalization* by Amory Starr and *Globalization from Below: The Power of Solidarity* by Jeremy Brecher, Tim Costello, and Brendan Smith
June 2002

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