

AMBIENTES

REVISTA DE GEOGRAFIA
E ECOLOGIA POLÍTICA

CALL FOR PAPERS:

Planetary Necropolitics: Ecological and Social Challenges and Conflicts Across the World

Editors:

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The above editors are seeking contributions to an special issue to be published in the Brazil-based journal ***AMBIENTES: Revista de Geografia e Ecologia Política***; the special issue is entitled ***Planetary Necropolitics: Ecological and Social Challenges and Conflicts Across the World***

Bios:

Marcelo Lopes de Souza is a professor at the Department of Geography of the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. He acted as an academic visitor or visiting professor at several universities in Europe (Germany, United Kingdom, and Spain) and Latin America (Mexico). He has published seventeen books (thirteen monographs and four edited volumes) and about one hundred and sixty papers and book chapters in several languages, covering subjects such as the spatial dimension of social movements and political ecology (focusing especially on environmental justice).

Rosie R. Meade is based in the School of Applied Social Studies, University College Cork, Ireland. Her praxis interests centre on various forms of community activism and community development, social movement studies, cultural democracy and participatory arts, emancipatory and left politics. With Órla O'Donovan, she was formerly co-editor of the *Community Development Journal*, and her work has been published in journals such as *Antipode*, *Critical Social Policy*, *Race and Class*, *Gender, Work and Organization*, among others. With Mae Shaw and Sarah Banks she is co-editor of the *Rethinking Community Development* book series at Policy Press and with Órla O'Donovan, Fiona Dukelow and Heather Laird, she is co-editor of the *Síreacht* book series at Cork University Press.

Description & Rationale:

“New ideas germinate everywhere, seeking to force their way into the light, to find an application in life; everywhere they are opposed by the inertia of those whose interest it is to maintain the old order; they suffocate in the stifling atmosphere of prejudice and traditions.”

Peter Kropotkin, *The Spirit of Revolt*

In an age that is desperately in need of critical new directions, especially in terms of overcoming *injustice* and giving hope to a humanity concerned with the *environmental basis of survival*, new theories and new strategies for change require a combination of social and ecological concerns and sensibilities. Unfortunately, these concerns and sensibilities still do not go together sufficiently; on the contrary, academic and activist bubbles have cultivated separations rather than integrations. All too often still, social justice, spatial justice, environmental justice and ecological justice are treated in isolation or poorly integrated with each other. This is exacerbated by the frequent neglect of the multiscale and socio-spatial diversity of the production of dimensions of injustice. This neglect means, among other things, that certain approaches pay little attention to problems such as the coloniality of knowledge and the need for autonomy to establish research agendas (which should be as much as possible inspired and nurtured by the local, regional, etc. specificities of social movements' emancipatory agendas).

In recent years, Achille Mbembe's updating of Michel Foucault's focus on 'biopolitics,' through the concept of 'necropolitics' has become widely known. Biopolitics represents the control of individuals, groups, and spaces by means of devices and strategies supposedly aimed at 'collective well-being' - everything from demographic censuses to epidemic prevention to 'social integration' and housing policies. Biopolitical interventions thus complement and (partially) overcome the technologies of power associated with 'sovereignty' and 'discipline'. 'Necropolitics,' however, corresponds to something much darker and more radical: the exercise of sovereignty guided by the choice of *who can live* and *who must die*, eventually creating spaces of brutal submission and gradual extermination of entire social groups. Mbembe's approach, no wonder, was proposed by an intellectual based in the Global South and 'inspired' by the paradigm of European colonisation and its dehumanisation of entire peoples.

Both from the viewpoint of geography and sociology, we argue that the concept of necropolitics can be used in systematic and specific ways to analyse the *concrete links between social groups and their environments, territories, and places*. This usage would strongly integrate the concept of 'necropolitics' with those of 'geopolitics' and 'ecopolitics', in order to draw attention to the suffering and death associated (at various scales, from local to global/planetary/hemispheric) with the constitution of 'sacrifice zones.' Here 'sacrifice zones' refers to the environments, territories, and places in which exploited, oppressed and racially/socially stigmatised classes and groups are disproportionately exposed to several types of risks, particularly those linked to pollution, disasters, violence and, eventually, the environmental effects of wars.

The purpose of the proposed special issue is to encourage debates around the concrete forms assumed by necropolitics in different areas around the world, considering the economic and power asymmetries that can be seen within places, regions, countries and, ultimately, the capitalist world system. At the same time, it is in the interest of **AMBIENTES** to be present in an international arena of discussions, beyond Brazil and Latin America; hence the choice of English as the special issue's language, as it is the *lingua franca* of today's world. In our understanding, while it is necessary to denounce and mitigate cultural and linguistic Anglocentrism, it is also necessary for the voices of the Global South to be heard on this linguistic platform, but without the control mechanisms imposed by corporate publishers and journals based in the Global North. To this end the special issue will bring together authors from a wide range of international contexts and disciplinary traditions. Authors will be invited to share insights into how necropolitics is understood, experienced, navigated and resisted by the communities and classes that live within the 'sacrifice zones.' Collectively and individually contributors will document the material, embodied and other effects for life within these places. Together we will ask, to what extent and under what conditions are collective action and organising towards naming, mitigating, and reversing necropolitical exploitation and suffering becoming possible? What concrete forms do

solidarity and struggle take? What (alternative) political visions, ideas and aspirations animate the movements of people involved?

Proposed Topics:

Potential contributors will be invited to submit abstracts that indicate how they will apply and interrogate the concept of necropolitics with reference to the concrete forms it takes for social groups, environments, territories, and places *and* to its material, embodied and other effects for life and lives within those places. Themes to be addressed in the special issue could be the following, *ideally with a Global North and Global South writer for each*:

- 1) *Necropolitics and the living and lived legacies of colonialism and empire: Necropolitical power and the violence of borders.*
- 2) *Necropolitics in the environments, territories and places of the sacrifice zones: multi-scalarity and multiple facets of injustice.*
- 3) *(Changing) techniques and technologies of subjection: racialisation, class and gender and their intersections with necropower.*
- 4) *The mediatization, aestheticization and rationalization of necropolitical power.*
- 5) *Rethinking (in)justice, doing justice: political challenges and theoretical frameworks.*
- 6) *Ecopolitical and anti-capitalist struggles against necropolitical subjection: Communities, social movements and their struggles.*
- 7) *The arts, practices and tactics of resistance to necropower.*

Timeline:

Abstracts are due by **Friday May 2nd, 2025**. Please email your abstracts to both editors.

Selection of papers will occur quickly, and we will endeavor to inform authors of inclusion by **Friday May 30th, 2025**.

Completed first drafts of papers are due by **Friday October 31st, 2025**.

Abstract Length and Focus

- Abstracts should be in the region of 250 to 300 words.
- Abstracts should clearly explain how the proposed chapter will apply the concept of necropolitics within the context of the paper, and which if any of the listed themes it addresses.
- Please also include a short bio for each author/co-author – 100 words maximum.
- Chapter length is expected to be **a maximum** of 8,000 words including abstract and references.

PAPERS SHALL BE IN ENGLISH. For the final version of the articles, authors must provide, in addition to a short abstract (250-300 words) in English, also two other abstracts, in Portuguese and Spanish. One of these, at the author(s)' choice, may be a long abstract (900-1,000 words).