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## **Reaction, Resilience and the Trumpist Behemoth: Environmental Risk Management from 'Hoax' to Technique of Domination**

"We should be focused on clean and beautiful air – not expensive and business closing GLOBAL WARMING – a total hoax!"

Donald Trump, 2013

"National Socialism has no political theory of its own, and ... the ideologies it uses or discards are mere *arcana dominationis*, techniques of domination."

Franz Neumann, 1942: 459

How can we best come to terms with the impacts of the Trump administration on environmental governance? In this article, we argue that theories of authoritarian domination under what Franz Neumann (1942) described as the Nazi Behemoth can be adapted to theorize the reactionary reworking of environmental policy-making by a new Trumpist Behemoth. Though we do not believe Donald J. Trump himself is literally a neo-Nazi, we suggest that theorizing his administration as a Behemoth highlights underlying tendencies that are often overlooked in the numbing 24/7 focus on Trump's tweets and impulsive personality. Ultimately, we argue in this way that a defining feature of the Trumpist Behemoth is its selective re-use and re-territorialization of Obama-era resilience thinking. This instrumentalism, we want to underline, illustrates especially clearly the neoliberal hegemony and political quiescence that many critics have already identified in appeals to resilience (Leitner *et al*, 2018; MacKinnon & Derickson, 2013; McKeown & Glenn 2018; Nelson, 2014; Nucleous, 2013; Sparke, 2013; Swyngedouw and Ernstson, 2018; and,

Watts, 2015). But it takes the associated trends in disaster capitalism, including the dispossession of those long disenfranchised by colonialism and racism, in still more devastating directions. Though some of the most destructive of Trump's plans were stalled during the start of his tenure by constitutional checks and organized resistance (Bomberg, 2017), we anticipate that the rest of his time in office will nevertheless enable polluting industries to expand their dominance at the expense of sustainable human-environment relations. The end result of these dynamics still remains to be seen, but as resilience rhetoric is incorporated into the Trump administration's '*arcana dominationis*', we offer this provisional account of the Trumpist Behemoth as part of the effort to theorize its authoritarian approach to environmental governance.

Our article builds on an essay we published early in Trump's presidency in which we suggested that the new administration's underlying governmental contradictions could be understood in terms of "a monstrous merging of Nazi and neoliberal tendencies" (Bessner and Sparke, 2017a: 1214). Here we seek to develop this argument further by drawing on an additional series of theories about both Nazism and the neoliberalization of environmental governance. While we therefore remain interested in the contemporary re-mixing of Nazism and neoliberalism (Giroux, 2018), our specific focus here is instead on how the mixed-up monster progeny that results - the

Trumpist Behemoth - is defined in its governmental effects by a distinctly reactionary response to 'green neoliberalism' and by the resulting re-working and re-territorialization of resilience. This means more than just emphasizing the point that "resilience thinking tends to be reactive in nature" (McKeown & Glenn 2018: 205). What we see the Trumpist Behemoth as doing differently involves making this reactive tendency truly reactionary by turning the more inclusive long-term disaster management approaches of green neoliberalism into territorially and racially exclusionary innovations in disaster capitalism.

Our use of the term green neoliberalism is inspired by earlier critical geographical explorations of its many variations (Bakker, 2010; McCarthy and Prudham, 2004; and Watts, 2015). We are interested in turn in how the Trumpist Behemoth's identity politics relates to green neoliberalism's signature emphasis on resilience. One important inspiration in this regard is Nancy Fraser's argument about the way in which the emphasis on recognition (rather in than redistribution) in Hillary Clinton's 'progressive neoliberalism' became the target for Trump's own reactionary brand of recognition concerned with the resentments of working class whites (Fraser, 2017). We see the politics of environmental resilience in green neoliberalism playing an analogous role in creating a kind of take-over target for Trump. We want to suggest in this way that the identity politics of this take-over is racist as well as hyper-nationalist, illustrating anew the racist logics

that post-colonial scholars have already argued lie latent in assumptions about insurability and security in geopolitical renditions of resilience thinking more generally (Baldwin, 2016; Bracke, 2016; and Chaturvedi and Doyle, 2015). Our point is that the Trumpist Behemoth is effectively surfacing these racist logics, connecting them to capitalist concerns with accumulation by dispossession that are thereby increasingly imagined in fascistic terms. While the administration is undoubtedly bent on increasing the business opportunities of capitalist elites and their rights to grab land and resources, it also therefore seems to be seeking to secure wealthier and whiter populations at the expense of others deemed sub-citizens and non-citizens.

For all these reasons resilience thinking plays a contradictory role for the Trumpist Behemoth. On the one side it appears as a series of Obama-era policy-making commitments to climate change adaptation that have been targeted for roll-back and defeat. But on the other side it is reactivated as a national security code word for managing environmental crises selectively and preferentially, radically reterritorializing the imagined community of resilience while also refusing any acknowledgement of the causes of the environmental crises for which this exceptional national community's resilience is to be prepared. The administration has thereby defined itself against Obama-era resilience understood as environmentally-conscious risk management that acknowledges global climate change, prepares

communities to endure disaster, and envisions forms of business-sustainability that might manage the negative environmental externalities of global capitalism. Instead of this framework, Trumpian resilience is distinguished by a red-lining of risk, its protection of privileged risk managers, and its class- and race-based abandonment of the more vulnerable.

The evidence of all the above tendencies is widespread and we can only profile a small set of examples in the space provided here. A key conclusion that we nevertheless want to defend is that the result involves a contradictory combination of calculation and candor in relation to environmental governance. Thus alongside the Behemoth's basic bureaucratic work of deregulating drilling, mining, logging, and other environmentally-damaging industries, there is the concurrent—albeit inadvertent—acknowledgement that a real alternative to global environmental catastrophe demands fundamental changes to global capitalism and real controls on privileged exploiters of the environment (Foster, 2017). Clearly the administration has no desire to restructure global capitalism, unless one counts its *ad hoc* experiments in imposing tariffs on trade (Bessner and Sparke, 2017b). Nonetheless, by adding resilience to the *arcana dominationis* of its rule, the Trumpist Behemoth makes manifest the power relations of the neoliberal anthropocene (as what critics have variously re-named the 'capitalocene', 'plantationocene', and 'anthropo-obscene') in a way

that the green neoliberalism of an earlier era tended to green-wash and depoliticize (Perkins, 2009; Swyngedouw & Ernstson, 2018; Vergès, 2017).

In the end we are suggesting that the Trumpist Behemoth is both attacking and assimilating green neoliberalism in the course of reproducing neoliberal rule for and by privileged elites. By defending this unsustainable environmental agenda in the name of authoritarian nationalism, of American global energy dominance, and of freedom for domestic fossil-fuel extraction and pollution, the administration's reactionary tendencies have led to the re-use of resilience rhetoric as a technique of domination. We do not mean to suggest that the nationalist authoritarianism of the Trumpist Behemoth is the only reason why its environmental agenda is so damaging. Traditional business interests dedicated to deregulated environmental exploitation remain an overwhelming influence in this regard. But to the extent that its authoritarian impulses and arguments have enabled the Trumpist Behemoth to increase the deregulation of industry in the name of national freedom, and to the extent that this has involved a reactionary and thus identitarian reworking of resilience, it has also highlighted how ineffectual green neoliberalism is in the face of capitalist interests that are simultaneously allied to authoritarianism.

To conceptualize how the Trumpist Behemoth has reclaimed resilience as an authoritarian technique of domination, we draw on

three interventions in the political theory of governance: Neumann's *Behemoth*, the classic 1942 critique of the structure and practice of National Socialism; the contemporary arguments about *Climate Leviathan* made by Geoff Mann and Joel Wainwright (Wainwright & Mann, 2013, 2015, 2018); and the many recent critical writings on resilience cited above. Combining these diverse theoretical approaches enables us to suggest that the Trumpist Behemoth is creating a regime of environmental governance that is committed to corporate profitability and elite insurability at the same time as it imposes blame and disposability on everybody else.

### ***Materialism and Expansionism from the Nazi to the Trumpist Behemoth***

Franz Neumann (1900-1954), a social democratic lawyer and political theorist forced to flee Nazi Germany after Adolf Hitler assumed power in 1933, provided in *Behemoth* one of the most comprehensive accounts of National Socialist governance. The book addresses in detail Nazism's authoritarian elevation of the *Führer*, its corporatist ties to industrialists, its construction of a monopolistic economy, its militaristic pursuit of 'racial imperialism', and its racialized assumptions about nation, blood and belonging in a *Grossdeutsche Reich*. In the next section, we explore how Neumann's analyses of Nazism must be adapted to come to terms with the Trumpist Behemoth. But first we



here pursue the question of political sovereignty and state-making which are central to Neumann's account of Nazism, and which offer an entree into the tensional space of national sovereignty *versus* global sovereignty that have been taken up by Mann and Wainwright in their account of *Climate Leviathan*.

While the racial and religious geopolitics of the Trump regime are undoubtedly different from those of the Nazis, we believe there are some important political geographical arguments in Neumann's analysis of the *Grossdeutsche Reich* that help us understand the implications of the Trumpist Behemoth. Specifically, through a critique of Carl Schmitt's geostrategic discourse, Neumann offers an analysis of Nazi expansionism that provides insights into Trumpist geopolitics, especially the administration's declared national security strategy of 'global energy dominance'. In *Behemoth*, Neumann argues that Schmitt's justification for Nazi expansionism was at base about what we would now call -- following David Harvey -- the need for a spatial fix for German capital. He thereby summarizes Schmitt as arguing that "[l]arge-space economics, precedes large-space politics" (Neumann, 1942: 156-7). Neumann argues in this way that Schmitt's justifications for German *Lebensraum* were premised upon the economic interests of German industry.

Neumann's materialist critique of Schmitt connects in turn to Wainwright and Mann's critical political-economic arguments. They too

focus on the economic tendencies pushing state-making in transnational and expansionist directions, thereby producing the effects of a “planetary sovereign” that they term, re-working Schmitt, Climate Leviathan. But unlike Schmitt’s own authoritarian investment in *Lebensraum*, and more in the spirit of Neumann’s critique, Mann and Wainwright argue that such a sovereign is likely to emerge when the urgency of “climate-induced disruptions of accumulation and political stability” force “the dominant capitalist nation-states” to establish a power structure able to manage an increasingly interrupted global capitalist system (Wainwright and Mann 2012: 6). Under Climate Leviathan, Wainwright and Mann maintain, *capitalism itself* comes to be seen as the best means to end climate change, inevitably giving rise to new varieties of green neoliberalism. Just as Neumann connected the expansion of the Nazi Behemoth to capital’s spatial expansionism, then, Wainwright and Mann connect the contemporary transnational expansion of sovereignty to these very same tendencies.

Nevertheless, Wainwright and Mann do not argue that the creation of a pro-capitalist Climate Leviathan is guaranteed. Rather, they insist that there are three additional alternatives that could emerge in response to global climate change: Climate Behemoth (comprised chiefly of reactionary yet capitalist refusals of planetary sovereignty); Climate Mao (consisting of anti-capitalist adaptation through planetary sovereignty); and Climate X (imagined as an anti-

capitalist anti-Leviathan adaptation in which the political is no longer organized by sovereign exceptions). Wainwright and Mann diagram the four possible political responses to global climate change as a 2x2 table (see Figure 1).

	Planetary sovereignty	Anti-planetary sovereignty
Capitalist	Climate Leviathan	Climate Behemoth
Non-capitalist	Climate Mao	Climate X

Figure 1: Four political responses to climate change as diagrammed by Wainwright and Mann (2012)

While there are undoubtedly dangers of radical reductionism involved in any attempt to map political possibilities on such a grand scale with so simple a grid (see Lothman, 2013; and Braun, 2014), we nevertheless think that the tensional oppositions diagrammed by Wainwright and Mann provide a useful window into the Trumpist Behemoth. They compel us to analyze the regime as emergent in and through opposition to the other identified tendencies. It is in this way that we are conceptualizing the Trumpist Behemoth as organized in opposition to the cosmopolitan globalism of green neoliberalism.

Wainwright and Mann themselves posit the anti-planetary sovereignty, pro-capitalist Behemoth as an important potential challenge to the pro-planetary sovereignty, pro-capitalist Leviathan.

“Behemoth is Leviathan’s greatest immediate threat,” they declare, “and, while unlikely to become hegemonic, may well remain disruptive enough to prevent Leviathan from achieving a new hegemonic order” (Wainwright and Mann, 2012). Writing well before Trump announced his presidential candidacy, they nonetheless anticipate something like the Trumpist Behemoth:

Consider the persistence of a more-or-less conspiracist climate denialism in mainstream political discourse, especially in the USA. ... The disproportionate influence of this proudly unreasonable minority, agitated by the ill-gotten riches of a handful, will persist (Wainwright and Mann, 2012: 13).

This suggests that Trump himself is not *sui generis*, as so many liberal and conservative commentators have claimed, but instead embodies reactionary tendencies long present in American culture. Taking this longer-range view, we will now evaluate how older models of authoritarianism and corporatism can also be seen as organizing the Trumpist Behemoth.

### ***On the Behemoth’s Techniques of Domination***

Two particular political patterns critiqued in Neumann’s *Behemoth* distinguish the Trumpist Behemoth as well: namely, i) authoritarianism, and ii) corporatism. Given the fast-paced 1930’s history of *Gleichschaltung* (the Nazi ‘bringing into line’ or ‘synchronization’ of all federal, state, and municipal affairs), we must here state that there has not been, and likely will not be, a

corresponding Trumpist *Gleichschaltung* (Neumann, 1942: 51-55). Indeed, America's federal system combined with the commitments to states' rights by American conservatives create significant barriers to Trumpist national synchronization. Nevertheless, following Foster, the comparisons are still important to note (Foster, 2017b).

i) *Authoritarianism and the Leader*

The authoritarianism outlined in Neumann's account of Nazism had three distinguishing features. First was the embrace of radical opportunism, with pronouncements being made and jettisoned as fast as the historical context evolved (Neumann, 1942: 37). Second was the consolidation of absolute authority in the hands of the *Führer* (Neumann, 1942: 44). And third was the privileging of action and reaction over deliberation and evaluation, legitimated after Schmitt in terms of the inherent legitimacy of the leader's decisions (Neumann, 1942: 45).

Each of these aspects of Nazi authoritarianism offers some purchase on the Trumpist Behemoth. Although US courts have so far halted Trump's attempt to consolidate all governmental authority in the executive, the unwillingness of Republicans in Congress to challenge the president means that the presidential bully pulpit has become ever more bullying, amplifying forms of intimidation already long established in business (Reid, 2017). Since his assumption of

office in January 2017, Trump's authoritarian inclinations have been especially apparent, with the president and his surrogates regularly raging against the mainstream press, "fake news," and enemies real and imagined. In so doing, Trump and his administration have inflamed old American traditions of racist, masculinist, and xenophobic cultural politics (Falk, 2017; Rosa and Bonilla, 2017). Indeed, as Henry Giroux has argued, Trump can be thought of as "both a symptom and enabler of this culture, one that enables him to delight in taunting black athletes, defending neo-Nazis in Charlottesville and mocking anyone who disagrees with him" (Giroux, 2017).

Following Neumann, we can further trace how the Trumpist Behemoth has been characterized by a vulgar decisionism, especially in terms of environmental governance. The most egregious example of this is Trump's denial of evidence of climate change, and his repeated insistence on it being a hoax (De Pryck and Gemenne, 2017). Early on, in an interview with the *New York Times* given in late November 2016, Trump unabashedly defended his denialism in a rambling, stream of consciousness rant that also illustrated his narcissistic, self-sanitizing, and extraordinarily privileged albeit bunkered worldview (Trump, 2016). His avowal of interest in "clean air" and "crystal clean water" in the interview and elsewhere might further be interpreted as a twenty-first century example of older fascist professions of desire to defend the purity of the *Heimat's* cleanliness

and ecology (Theweleit, 1987). Certainly, as feminist geographers have underlined, when these sorts of assertions of identity are intertwined with Trump's masculinism and white supremacy they articulate a fascist body politics (Gökariksel and Smith, 2018). Yet unlike the Nazis who imagined that their racialized and sexualized national identity would transcend traditional class formations, Trump presents his environmental credentials in an explicit class form. Specifically, Trump tends, as in the *New York Times* interview, to tie his putative environmental interests to the privileged landscapes of expensive golf courses, and through these to his larger—which is to say, smaller and ultra-enclaved—corporate *Weltanschauung*. In the same way, regulation is imagined by administrators of the Trumpist Behemoth as necessarily a restriction on the freedoms of affluent executives to make decisions (Talbot, 2018).

These ideological commitments to a CEO worldview in turn inform the Trumpist Behemoth's more practical deregulatory agenda such that every new reaction to an environmental crisis leads the president and his administration to turn the associated disaster into capitalist class opportunity. Most egregiously (at least at the time of revising this article in the summer of 2018), Trump and his interior secretary Ryan Zinke responded to the largest ever wildfires in California history with demands for new business freedoms from environmental regulations. While Zinke propounded the timber

industry line that more logging would help, Trump tweeted that it was water controls that also needed deregulating. "California wildfires are being magnified & made so much worse by the bad environmental laws," he asserted, "which aren't allowing massive amounts of readily available water to be properly utilized. It is being diverted into the Pacific Ocean. Must also tree clear to stop fire from spreading!" (Brown, 2018). This ignorant argument was also combined with an interested refusal to consider what scientists have shown to be the real contributing role of climate change to the underlying environmental risk (Abatzoglou & Williams, 2016). But notable too was the knee-jerk enthusiasm for a policy response involving more corporate deregulation. It is to all the other associated corporate collusions of the Trumpist Behemoth that we now turn.

ii) *Corporatism and the Monopolistic Machinery of Rationalization*

In *Behemoth*, Neumann argues that one of Schmitt's most important contributions to Nazi rule was to accommodate corporate business interests in Hitler's regime legally by declaring that the ideal "Germanic totality" was one in which "a strong and powerful state [had] full political control but left economic activities unrestricted" (Neumann, 1942: 49). Here, Neumann usefully underlines the *laissez-faire* elements of the Nazi regime before going on to highlight how the resulting mix of political authoritarianism and economic liberalism led



Hitler and his cronies to leave corporate monopolies intact and create spaces for big industry to expand profit-making (Neumann, 1942: 221-361). Neumann's account thus rejects the notion that Nazi rule was premised upon complete state control of capital, which accords with the emphasis other critical scholars have put on the Nazi interest in creating a legal process for so-called 're-privatization' (e.g. Poulantzas, 1974).

There are also clear concurrences between Nazi re-privatization and the contemporary neoliberal push to re-privatize public services, spaces, and lands. In the last year, representatives of the natural resource extractive industries and members of the finance, real estate, and insurance industries have supported the Trumpist Behemoth in its rejection of global environmental crisis management by taking advantage of Trump's own instincts as a real-estate mogul. This corporate phalanx has thereby turned the Trumpist Behemoth into a battering ram designed to demolish the administrative state, or to be more precise, the administrative state of green neoliberalism bequeathed by the Obama Administration.

The executive machinery assembled by Trump to direct this battering ram is quite different from the Nazi *Führerstaat*, which, as Neumann describes, placed the entire German economy on a scientifically-planned, productive, and well-organized war footing (Neumann 1942: 249). In lieu of such rationalized planning, Trump has

adopted a science-denying, destructive and *disorganizing* approach. Yet, because the Trumpist Behemoth is composed of a mix of industry and government leaders who have spent their careers fighting federal environmental protection, it is an effective demolition machine that is effectively using climate change denialism to undermine environmental protections (Lipton and Ivory, 2017). As well as the aforementioned interior secretary Zinke, other protagonists involved include: Mick Mulvaney, the Director of the Office of Management and Budget, who has said that he's "not yet convinced that it is a direct correlation between man-made activity and the change in the climate," and who has sought to eliminate funding for climate research and green energy programs; Rick Perry, the Secretary of Energy, who has said that "the science is out" on climate change and who has also restructured the energy department to focus less on technologies aimed at reducing carbon emissions; Sonny Purdue, the Secretary of Agriculture, who has said that "Liberals have lost all credibility when it comes to climate science" and whose staffers at the USDA have told employees to avoid reference to climate change; Jeff Sessions, the Attorney General who has said that CO<sub>2</sub> is "really not a pollutant. It's a plant food"; Kirstjen Nielsen, Homeland Security Secretary, who has said of climate change that she "can't unequivocally state it's caused by humans," and who nevertheless has oversight over the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA); and Mike Pompeo, the CIA

Director, who has equivocated: “there’s some who think we’re warming, there’s some who think we’re cooling,” and who has contributed to Trump's National Security Strategy documents in ways that, as we shall review below, turn the terminology of "resilience" into a euphemism for avoiding any mention of climate change (Holden and Lin, 2018). There are many other personalities involved, of course, including the disgraced Scott Pruitt who has had to resign from directing the Environmental Protection Agency due to personal scandals that went beyond his pro-polluter agenda; and Trump's Supreme Court Justice appointee Neil Gorsuch who is widely expected to take a conservative approach to reviewing suits brought against federal agencies for failed enforcement of environmental law (McClammer, 2018). But even this brief review of its leading personalities highlights how the Trumpist Behemoth is staffed with skeptics of climate science who are ready to rationalize roll-backs of environmental protection with denialist discourse. Serving under these leaders, scientists across a wide range of federal agencies have increasingly been prevented themselves from measuring or even mentioning climate change and related challenges (Dillon *et al*, this issue; and Columbia Law School, 2018).

While Trump has not fully adhered to a campaign boast that he would eliminate the EPA (which Trump told Fox News was really the ‘Department of Employment Prevention’), his administration has still

imposed huge budget cuts on the agency and freed corporate polluters that the EPA is supposed to regulate from any rigorous oversight and control (Talbot, 2018). For related reasons, the EPA has experienced a huge loss of over 1500 staff, including 260 scientists, 185 "environmental protection specialists," and 106 engineers, while making less than 400 new hires (Dennis *et al*, 2018). Before he resigned, Pruitt also worked to start reducing Obama-era clean-car standards and to slash support for the EPA's Ann Arbor laboratory, where vehicles are tested for emissions (Talbot, 2018). Subsequently, in August 2018, the administration announced its intent to freeze fuel efficiency standards for cars and contest the right of states such as California to set more stringent requirements to reduce carbon emissions (Davenport, 2018). And in September 2018, it proposed to roll back Obama-era rules intended to reduce leaks of methane from oil and gas facilities.

More widely Trump's team has worked with congressional Republicans to create a remarkable 'machinery of rationalization,' to borrow Neumann's term, that has systematically rolled-back the limited environmental protections that had been advanced under the resilience initiatives of the Obama years. Over fifty federal environmental rules have been identified for elimination (Popovic & Albeck-Ripka 2017). Tax-cuts for developers, deregulation of polluters, and re-privatizations of public land are all being advanced with

arrogant haste on an unprecedented scale. National monuments designed to protect fragile environments have been shrunk, formerly protected spaces such as the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge have been targeted for oil drilling, Obama's Clean Power Plan has been reversed, maritime oil exploitation off both the west and east coasts has been set in motion, and new oil pipeline approvals that had been held in check during the Obama years are being green-lighted with alacrity. Trump's record on global climate initiatives is similarly destructive. He has stopped funding both the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Green Climate Fund, and, in his showpiece nationalist reaction to Obama's green neoliberalism, the president also initiated the withdrawal of the United States from the Paris Climate Agreement in the name of putting America First.

### ***The Reactionary Reworking and Reterritorialization of Resilience***

Notwithstanding its appeals to nationalist exceptionalism, the contradictions of the Trumpist Behemoth repeatedly raise the question of how to reconcile the promises of increased 'homeland security' with the deregulatory fight against environmental protection (Mann and Wainwright, 2018: 46). Or to put the contradictions in truly Trumpist language: How can America win climate change? (Conway, 2017). Trump himself, perhaps unsurprisingly, does not seem particularly bothered by these contradictions. Instead of taking the environmental

risks seriously, the president seems to think that national security is protected if one increases jobs in the newly deregulated 'hard man' polluting sectors of the economy while simultaneously building up border defenses. As his 2016 *New York Times* interview also illustrated, in Trump's imagination the wealthy will go on living free from the worries of climate change in oases of affluence protected by hardened barricades. But the federal managers working under Trump cannot afford to be so detached, especially given the fact that the environmental crises produced by climate change, from hurricanes to floods to fires to droughts, have already destabilized both the United States and the world. The Department of Defense (DoD) has been especially concerned with the resulting destabilization. Yet while military chiefs deliberate their 'responsibility to prepare', invoke 'whole of government' responses, and plan for hardening bases, building sea walls, and adapting to a global geopolitical landscape transformed by environmental crises, they now only talk about adaptive security responses rather than wrestling with the causes of catastrophe (CSAG, 2018; Klare, 2017). This is where the reworking of resilience has proved so useful.

One clear example of the resulting re-working of resilience has come in the form of the administration's self-described "America First" US National Security Strategy (NSS) published in December 2017 (NSS, 2017). In lock step with the denialism reviewed above, not a word is

said in the NSS about the threats posed to national security by global climate change. The word climate itself is in fact only used four times, and, revealing of the Trumpist Behemoth's enduring neoliberal mindset, three of these references are to the need for "transparent" and "investor-friendly" "business climates" (NSS, 2017: 20, 21, & 22). Only once in the NSS is climate used in an environmental sense. "Climate policies will continue to shape the global the global system," it says, before proceeding to insist that this demands "U.S. leadership" in order to counter an "anti-growth energy agenda" associated with said climate policies. By contrast, the words resilience and resilient are used repeatedly throughout the NSS, including in a special section commandingly entitled: "Promote American Resilience" (NSS, 2017:14). The section explains how the US government should "help Americans remain resilient in the face of adversity" by improving risk management, building a culture of preparedness, improving planning and incentivizing information sharing. But the information to be shared is clearly not meant to include any scientific information about the threats posed by climate change. Instead, it is supposed to be information about foreign threats and anything else that might jeopardize America's so-called energy dominance. This dominance is in turn made so central to the overall argument that at one point the NSS insists that it is American energy dominance itself that "ensures that markets are free and U.S. infrastructure is resilient and secure"

(NSS, 2017: 22). Thus is resilience reimagined and reterritorialized in radically exceptionalist "America First" terms. Not a response to the climate change dangers created by an over-reliance on fossil fuels, it is re-presented as actually being dependent on American energy dominance and allied forms of military "overmatch" (NSS, 2017: 28). At odds with green neoliberalism's more globalist geoeconomic concern with the environmental sustainability of global capitalism, the NSS nevertheless thereby recycles resilience rhetoric geopolitically in a way that covers for its climate change denialism while conveying at least a little enduring attention to systemic risk.

To be sure, none of the above patterns are entirely unique to the times of Trump. The 2002 National Security Strategy crafted by Condoleezza Rice for the Bush administration also mixed exceptionalist geopolitical assertions with the reworking of geoeconomic terminology in its attempts to conjugate outright American dominance with concerns about global system coordination (Sparke, 2005: 271). In another way, DoD leaders previously deployed the language of resilience during the Obama presidency to talk about foreign policy (CCS, 2018). But, in a novel departure, what we see with the Trumpist Behemoth is other federal agencies, including the EPA, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), the Department of Agriculture, and the Federal Highway Administration, also all now recycling resilience rhetoric



domestically as a strategic euphemism (Green, 2017; Milman 2017; Mooney and Rein, 2017; Talbot, 2018). The whole administration has found it useful in this way to rework resilience as a technique of domination, a technique that seeks to secure public acquiescence by focusing on disaster management rather than on the causes of environmental disasters. To illustrate this pattern let us first review how administration leaders scrambled to respond to the epic hurricanes of 2017 without mentioning climate change.

In the lead-up to Hurricane Irma in September 2017, Pruitt asserted that it was “insensitive” and “misplaced” to talk about the environmental causes of such storms when the focus should be on helping people recover (Diaz, 2017, Paulson, 2017). Similarly, in November a FEMA manager responded to a reporter’s questions about the connections between climate change and ‘natural’ disasters by affirming that while “[t]here are plenty of people who want to debate the vocabulary,” his mandate was merely to “reduce the costs of future disasters” and contribute to local “resilience” (quoted in Plumer, 2017). Other government officials have also employed this kind of euphemistic phraseology. For instance, a DHS bureaucrat told CNN that “[r]egardless of what causes disasters, it's our job within the Department of Homeland Security and FEMA to manage the consequences." A different FEMA administrator likewise avowed that “we always have to look at not just the response, but the preparedness

and the resilience" of organizations in the face of disaster (Green, 2017). As these remarks suggest, 'resilience' is re-used repeatedly in this way as a euphemism that enables agents of the Trumpist Behemoth to manage environmental disasters without mentioning climate change, reterritorializing connected phenomena as a series of local crises that can be tackled with a show of quick and highly targeted interventions.

In practice, however, not everyone receives the government help required to defend against or recover from climate catastrophes. There is instead a racist logic embedded in the Trumpist Behemoth's resilience speak that is linked to ideas of who truly deserves to be protected from environmental crisis (Miller, 2017). Or to re-use the language of the NSS in a way that further illustrates its reterritorialization of resilience: "In difficult times, the true character of the [Trumpist Behemoth's vision of the] American people emerges" (NSS, 2017: 14, our adaptation). It needs noting that this type of racializing approach to apportioning resilience and risk in the Anthropocene is global in scope (Vergès, 2017). As Andrew Baldwin has argued, there is a racist rationality running right through resilience thinking, especially when it comes to anticipating the challenges of climate change adaptation. Specifically, Baldwin suggests that resilience thinking imports a form of red-lining of risk, race, and responsibility common in insurance and real estate business: "if

insurability is an index of adaptability and thus a key trait of a valued life under changing climatic conditions, then insurability must also be understood to imply its opposite, uninsurability, where uninsurability signifies unvalued or devalued life” (Baldwin, 2016). But not surprisingly, Trump—who is himself no stranger to real estate red-lining—appears especially drawn to these racist ways of justifying abandonment in the face of environmental crisis. This was especially clear in his response to Hurricane Maria, which wrecked Puerto Rico in the autumn of 2017.

Less than two weeks after Maria devastated communities across the island, Trump took to Twitter to claim that Puerto Rico had already faced “a financial crisis ... largely of their [sic] own making.” Trump immediately followed this tweet with two others, the second of which declared that “[w]e [i.e., the federal government] cannot keep FEMA, the Military & the First Responders, who have been amazing ... in P.R. forever!” By juxtaposing his victim-blaming comment with the assertion that the United States would soon abandon the island, Trump implied that Puerto Rico’s supposed fiscal irresponsibility justified his neglect of its people. Adding a neoliberal-turned-neopaternalist twist to the United States’ colonial relationship with the island, Trump indicated that Puerto Ricans would need to prove their resilience by surviving Maria’s aftermath without official U.S. assistance. Trump had no

interest in considering the deep-rooted and ongoing neocolonial causes of Puerto Rico's precarity (Arbasetti *et al*, 2017).

The Puerto Rican example reveals that in the Trumpist Behemoth resilience-speak reinforces a form of sub-citizenship that is tied not only to the global inequalities produced by neoliberalism, but also to the racialized and neopaternalistic responses to these inequalities (Adams, 2012; Mitchell and Sparke, 2016; Sparke, 2017). Viewed from a critical long-term perspective, this sub-citizenship was clearly a continuation of enduring colonial subjugation in what Yarima Bonilla terms the 'archipelago of neglect' (Bonilla, 2018; Font-Guzman, 2017; Rodríguez Soto, 2017). But by blaming Puerto Rico's debt-encumbered denizens for their own suffering, the administration's response also indicated how the Trumpist Behemoth effectively redlined resilience, dividing those deemed deserving of recovery from racialized others who are ignored and abandoned, or worse, re-targeted for more dispossession (Klein, 2018).

### *Conclusion*

We have argued that the Trumpist Behemoth is a mixed-up monster regime that is in the process of rejecting the green neoliberalism of the Obama era by reworking its rationalities and rhetorics of resilience as *arcana dominationis*. While both scholars and pundits have repeatedly—and correctly—noted that Trump and his

coterie are undisciplined, this by no means assures a speedy collapse for the regime. Indeed, in some respects the Trumpist Behemoth thrives on chaos. The general air of scandal that surrounds the president has not prevented him from appointing dedicated officials who enact his reactionary preferences. In this way the Trumpist Behemoth is institutionalizing reactive, short-term, and exclusionary approaches to climate management that protect the wealthy and the white at the expense of everybody else. Yet it is important to emphasize that these Trumpist tendencies are an apotheosis of previous trends in disaster capitalism that have already disenfranchised large masses of people in both the United States and the world. And people continue to resist these trends, including in Puerto Rico (Klein, 2018; Werner, 2017). For this reason, if we want to bring this fossil-fueled Behemoth to justice and imagine alternatives to its neoliberal-neopaternalist world order, we also desperately need to learn from the resistance—as well as the resilience—of all who have already endured its cruelties and indignities in years past.

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