

VISIONS REVIEWED

LAW, ECOLOGY, AND INFRASTRUCTURAL MEGAPROJECTS

The Visions Editorial Board

Human rights cannot be separated from environmental justice, which in turn is a precondition for satisfying fundamental needs for each and every person on Earth. Democracy and participation follow, granting people the rights necessary in order to protect their own land and communities. However, it appears that environmental justice now faces a crisis of law, which is no longer capable of defending commons and territories from the greed of industrialized economy. Science and jurisprudence, mutually relying on notions of a world governed by mechanistic principles, both support a worldview of perfectible human control but together fail to govern the complex dangers posed by indiscriminate extraction and use of natural resources as well as by industrial wastes, which, as in the case of asbestos, can remain poisonous much longer than the time scales conceived of by law. On the other hand, the authoritarian approach employed by infrastructural megaprojects severely reduces the space available for shared decisions and leads to the criminalization of protest movements. Analyses of trends concerning these issues are proposed by Alessandra Algostino regarding the sentence by the International People's Court in the case of the No-Tav movement against the construction of high-speed rail track in Val Susa (Piedmont - Italy), and by Enzo Ferrara in a review of *The Ecology of Law. Toward a Legal System in Tune with Nature and Community* by Fritjof Capra and Ugo Mattei (Berrett-Koheler Publishers, Oakland-CA 2015).