Ranjan Datta (ed.), *Decolonizing in Practice: Reflective Learning from Cross-Cultural Perspectives.* Toronto: Canadian Scholars, 2023. 279 pages. ISBN 978-1-77338-380-4. $59.95 paperback.

Adding to the canon of scholarship on decolonization, the book *Decolonization in Practice* brings together the reflections, research, and practices of scholars and practitioners across cross-cultural communities. Edited by Ranjan Datta, the Canada Research Chair in Community Disaster and assistant professor of Indigenous Studies at Mount Royal University in Alberta, *Decolonization in Practice* moves beyond mere theoretical discourse to offer deeply profound, embodied, and applied expressions of decolonization.

This book is structured into five distinct parts, each focusing on different communities' reflections on decolonization. The book creates a space for Indigenous, feminist, racialized, immigrant, refugee, disabled and intersectional scholars and community practitioners living on Turtle Island to voice their efforts at decolonization *in practice*. While the decolonization efforts largely emerge from practitioners and scholars on Turtle Island, several authors contextualize their experiences and understanding of settler-colonialism both internationally and here on Turtle Island) bringing greater depth to this anthology.

Privileging Indigenous voices, the first section provides a deeply nuanced exploration into the ongoing endeavours of Indigenous scholars and practitioners to reclaim, revitalize and recentre Indigenous epistemology and Indigenous sovereignty. The essays included in this section emphasize the importance of land, language, stories, ceremony, and community in the decolonization process.

A highlight of Part One is the essay by Karen Pheasant-Neganigwane, who characterizes a lifetime of being at the intersection of Indigeneity and academia as a “soul wound”. Beyond a pedagogical approach, she describes the shiibaashka/igan (jingle dress dance) as a dance of healing in the face of ongoing colonial violence. As one of the most tangible and courageous examples of decolonization in practice, Pheasant-Neganigwane’s story of performing the shiibaashaka/igan in response to racist comments made by several students in an Aboriginal Education course is moving. A gifted storyteller, Pheasant-Neganigwane’s words have the power to transport the reader to that room and its suffocating silence of racism and colonialism. And as Pheasant-Neganigwane rises to perform the shiibaashka/igan, the reader is metaphorically moved to rise and dance in solidarity as well.

In the second part of the book, racialized immigrant women and children offer their experiences of navigating and resisting systemic oppression on Turtle Island. These stories are poignant and varied, reflecting the unique struggles at the intersection of race, gender, and immigration. The contributors discuss their respective journeys of learning to honour the Indigenous lands upon which they now live, while also maintaining their own cultural identities and knowledges.

Part Two ends with a notable contribution from Prarthona and Prokriti Datta, Ranjan Datta’s teenage daughters, who offer their honest perspectives on learning and community building through land-based education in a community garden. When discussing intergenerational knowledge, Western culture has long recognized the importance and contribution of elders to knowledge transmission. However, in many Indigenous cultures, the exchange of knowledge is not unilateral from elder to child but rather is a reciprocal process where both elders and children teach and learn with and from each other. There is no finer example of Datta’s decolonization in practice than the inclusion of his daughters’ reflections in the book. Resisting the Western adage

that “Children should be seen not heard”, in *Decolonization in Practice*, children’s voices are not only heard but amplified to a broader audience and recognized through authorship. Following Datta’s lead, I too am encouraged to engage the voices and knowledge of children. Below, my teenage son offers his review and reflections on Prarthona and Prokriti Datta’s essay.

My name is Ludo Van Bewer, I am 14 years old and was born and raised on Treaty 1 and the historic homeland of the Métis Nation. I am Red River Métis and francophone on my mom’s side and of English and German ancestry from my dad’s side. Prarthona and Prokriti Datta’s essay describes the problems with Western education: how it has a limited relationship with the land and other living things; is human-centered learning; and only sometimes teaches things that actually help students in their lives. By learning and playing in a community garden, Prarthona and Prokriti learned so much, including learning knowledge of the land, plants, animals, insects, and stories of the history of Indigenous Peoples in Canada, and of their own culture and ancestry.

I’m glad that Prarthona and Prokriti Datta learned so much in the community garden and developed a stronger understanding of the circle of life and of the importance of all things and beings in the world. I learn best when I am on the land as well. For example, I have learned so much about our rivers and waterways while attending a Métis canoe/kayak camp, and have learned about plants and Indigenous Knowledge when I went out medicine picking with my mom, my sister and an Elder. But, like Prarthona and Prokriti, a lot of land-based learning occurs in the community and not during school time. I had the best school experience this year because my teacher used the land during school time to help us learn. We went outside every day, to a park nearby or walked to the Forks (a historical Indigenous meeting ground and where the Red and Assiniboine Rivers meet). During this time, he would tell us stories about the land, or would teach us math and science concepts. We also learned to be respectful of the land and of each other. By taking us outside the school, my teacher also showed us respect by trusting that we would behave and be respectful. When I told my mom about how much I learned this year, my mom said “this type of learning works really well for you, eh?”. I disagreed. Land-based learning is good for all students, not just Indigenous students, and should be included in all schools.

Part Three brings together the voices of colour settlers, refugees, and disabled women, exploring the intersectionality of their experiences. Despite its brevity, this section is notable for its inclusivity. The narratives in this section serve as a reminder of the global scope of decolonization struggles and the need for solidarity across different contexts, as well as the cumulative challenges experienced by individuals living at the intersection of multiple marginalized social identities. In particular, Tasnin Jaisee’s essay on her lived experiences at the intersection of race and disability in Bangladesh and Canada is illuminating. While the struggles of disabled people have often been underrepresented within decolonization movements, with the inclusion of this essay, *Decolonization in Practice* addresses a critical gap in decolonization scholarship.

The fourth part of the book provides critical insights into the experiences of Black and Asian, immigrant communities. Within this section, a decolonial lens is applied to exploring the experiences of climate risk for Sub-Saharan immigrants in western Canada, thus affirming the interconnectedness of climate change and decolonization. In the final essay of this section, Yi Chien Jade Ho reminds the reader that anti-racism and anti-gentrification in Vancouver’s Chinatown are not metaphors or proxies for decolonization. Rather than inclusivity or belonging, she calls for a radical reorientation that emphasizes relationship-building and Indigenous solidarity.

In the final part of the book, Rhonda Rosenberg offers her thoughts on working as a settler anti-racist practitioner within a multicultural organization. Her insights emphasize the importance of self-reflection and intersectionality, along with the inclusion and leadership of community members and youth for developing and implementing various anti-racism and decolonization programs and practices.

While scholarship on decolonization remains largely theoretical, *Decolonization in Practice* resists theoretical and academic modes of knowledge production and instead focuses on the embodied practices of Indigenous, racialized, immigrant, refugee and disabled scholars and activists. Through the sharing of these various decolonial practices, the anthology troubles dominant epistemological frameworks and knowledge systems. Colonialism divides and conquers, often positioning colonial subjects in conflict with each other. However, *Decolonization in Practice* navigates this tension by weaving various histories, movements, experiences and identities to help bridge colonial divides while remaining steadfast in its overarching aim of aligning itself with Indigenous sovereignty and justice. While valuable to all, this anthology would be particularly well received by readers seeking to understand decolonization beyond its theoretical scope, and those seeking to imagine different decolonial futures on Turtle Island.

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