

Moneyland by Oliver Bullough

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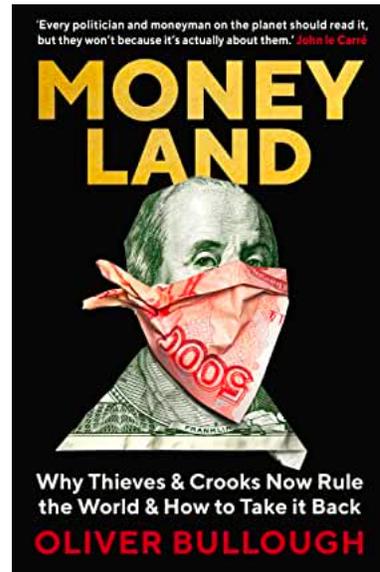
In August of 2011 I rode the AmTrack to Colorado. It is the best way to experience the mountains up close. On that ride there was a person who explained why all the trees were dying. She had a jar with a black mountain pine beetle in it. Later I found this information on the beetle. “For many years, Diana Six, an entomologist at the University of Montana, planned her field season for the same two to three weeks in July. That’s when her quarry — tiny, black, mountain pine beetles — hatched from the tree they had just killed and swarmed to a new one to start their life cycle again. Now, says Six, the field rules have changed. Instead of just two weeks, the beetles fly continually from May until October, attacking trees, burrowing in, and laying their eggs for half the year. And that’s not all. The beetles rarely attacked immature trees; now they do so all the time. What’s more, colder temperatures once kept the beetles away from high altitudes, yet now they swarm and kill trees on mountaintops. And in some high places where the beetles had a two-year life cycle because of cold temperatures, it’s decreased to one year.”

Oliver, in his thorough examination of how “Moneyland” came into being, mirrors the spread of the beetles. https://e360.yale.edu/features/whats_killing_the_great_forests_of_the_american_west

This tiny beetle was killing the trees which would later be the kindling for so many of the fires that have raged through the mountains ever since. On page 271 of Moneyland you will read; “Offshore (and onshore) bandits are looting the world, and this looting is undermining democracy, driving inequality and sucking ever-greater volumes of wealth into Moneyland, where we can’t follow it.” These bandits, will someday find that the world they have sucked the life out of will become inhospitable to even their own lives. All through reading this book I kept hearing that sucking sound and was surprised to find on the last page my intuition was shared by the author himself.

This fear based living which is a thinly disguised bravado tries to drown out the truth created by the *egoic mind* “But if you don’t believe that infinite love is the center of the universe, you live in a scarcity model where there’s never enough—food, money, security, health care, mercy—to go around. You can’t risk letting go because you’re not sure you’ll be refilled. If you’re protecting yourself, if you’re securing your own image and identity, then you’re still holding on. Your ego remains full of itself, which is the opposite of *kenosis*. *This is the nature of almost all human institutions and systems created by the egoic mind*. You can take such a pattern as a sign that one lives in God. People filled with the flow will always move away from any need to protect their own power and will be drawn to solidarity with the powerless, the edge, the bottom, the plain, and the simple. They have all the power they need—and it always overflows, and like water seeks the lowest crevices to fill. No wonder Christians begin their spiritual journey by being dipped into water.” <https://www.catholicregister.org/faith/item/29488-pope-invites-young-people-to-pledge-to-build-a-new-economy>

Ultimately, unless we turn around and accept our individual complicity with this banditry we will certainly create the conditions for the growth of this sucking system becoming like the rapidly growing hordes of beetles. In an article in Aeon recently I read; “Collapse, then, is a double-edged sword. Sometimes it’s a boon for subjects and a chance to restart decaying institutions. Yet it can also lead to the loss of population, culture and hard won political structures. What comes from collapse depends, in part, on how people navigate the ensuing tumult, and how easily and safely citizens can return to alternative forms of society. Unfortunately, these features suggest that while collapse has a mixed track record, in the modern world it might have only a dark future.” <https://aeon.co/ideas/civilisational-collapse-has-a-bright-past-but-a-dark-future?>



I encourage you to read this book so as to be able to navigate the tumult that is certain to come. When the money launders finally suck the juice out of the system they have created, my hope is that those drawn to solidarity with the powerless will help to avoid the dark future that might await our children and grandchildren.