# Capitalism K – TDI – Sept-Oct

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#### Capitalism new drive for profit is the attempt to stave off its ineviable collapse within that the aff is indebted to staving off that collapse – the aff is not a radical call for the end of capitalism but is caught up within it’s operational capacity – rising wages only exacerbate the harms of systemic domination – the aff merely changes the relationship between the worker and their labor

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“Truth will sooner come out from error than from confusion.” 1 Francis Bacon’s famous pronouncement was meant to inform the progress of science. Whatever the merits of this wisdom for its intended field, its validity is now being tested for progressive social transformation. The puzzling difficulties the affluent and scientifically proficient European societies experienced in containing the Coronavirus pandemic of 2020–2021 have been a potent catalyst for radical social transformation. They have deepened the crisis of the dominant socio-economic model – that of neoliberal capitalism. This model, with its excessive stress on profit, depletion of essential public services such a healthcare, production networks spanning the globe, and commercial logic of ‘just on time delivery’ proved to have made these societies extremely fragile and their governing mechanisms inept for coping with the challenge. The acute crisis of the neoliberal hegemony, however, has not engendered an alternative. In the interlude between crisis and the conspicuously absent transformation, the sense of confusion is palpable. Corroborating Bacon’s dictum, no distinct ‘truths’ seem to be emerging for the needed overhaul of our governance know-how and models of political economy. European societies first entered this state of anxious disorientation at the close of the twentieth century when, despite the stable economic growth and low unemployment in most countries, ‘fringe’ parties and movements began to mobilize, triggering the anti-establishment upheaval that pundits have named ‘populism’. These movements signaled a spreading distress by voicing concerns with physical insecurity, cultural estrangement, political disorder and economic instability – the four elements of a new ‘order and security’ agenda of public demands (Azmanova 2004). The anxiety was further inflamed by the 2008 financial collapse and the decade-long recession that ensued, followed by the economic and medical crisis that beset the world in early 2020. This state of exasperation has been aggravated by the lack of positive utopias offering plausible alternative models of social existence. In late capitalism, Jürgen Habermas observed, one particular utopia has come to an end, namely, the socialist utopia centered on the emancipation of labor from alien control.2 The collapse, in 1989–1990, of the Soviet-style dictatorships in East and Central Europe – regimes that had claimed to have implemented the socialist ideal – deprived the Socialist and Communist creeds of their capacity to steer discontent into a constructive pursuit of a better future. With very few exceptions, the social imaginary driving most of the anti-establishment insurrections is marked not by the solidaristic spirit that typically animates utopias (this has been true even when these utopias directed their longings to an idealized past) but rather by resentment without direction, targeted at designated enemies of the moment – ruling elites, immigrants, cultural minorities. This ‘exhaustion of utopian energies’ (Habermas) has helped transform the crisis of neoliberal capitalism into what I have described as a meta-crisis (or “crisis of the crisis”): society experiences itself in perpetual crisis – a state of anxiety and animosity. The low inflammation of civil strife consumes society’s creative energies, leaving it unable to end the crisis or exit the rejected societal model.3 Yet the great exigencies of our time – from the deepened impoverishment of the poor to the impending climate catastrophe, have spawned a novel policy commitment to two familiar goals – social equity and ecological sustainability. The twin goals of social and environmental justice seem to be delineating an emancipatory trajectory amidst the metacrisis of neoliberalism. The political leadership of the European Union proclaimed a commitment to Social Europe which led to the inauguration of the European Pillar of Social Rights in 2016. A drive for a Green transition (the European Green Deal) became the flagship policy of the new European Commission in 2019.4 This indicates the emergence of a broad societal consensus for an epochal paradigm shift, akin to the shifts that enabled the postWWII welfare state and that of neoliberal capitalism in the late twentieth century. The double commitment to social and green Europe is, indeed, a challenge to the stress on competitiveness that is raison d’être of neoliberal capitalism. The strong commitment to these goals, both by political elites and broader publics, is far from sufficient for the paradigm shift to become reality. This is the case because even though the two elements of this policy shift enjoy a broad public support, they are nevertheless in tension. Thus, a Eurobarometer survey conducted in late 2020 established that environmental responsibility and climate action are seen as a top priority by 27% of EU citizens, yet jobs are the overwhelming priority for most (at 46%).5 This means that climate action would face an opposition if it is perceived to threaten employment. Moreover, businesses are increasingly vocal in their concerns that higher environmental and social standards would hurt their bottom-line and impair their competitiveness, and are actively demanding to have input in EU policy-making in order to block policy that harms their interests.6 Acting simultaneously and promptly on both goals – healing society and healing the environment, is not a matter of somehow balancing, or reconciling these goals, that is, of diminishing pollution and improving social rights. This is the case because in the current socio-economic model, with the shrinking of the welfare state, personal wellbeing has become deeply dependent on holding a job, and job-creation is, in turn, implicated in polluting practices. Thus, a transition to a social and ‘green’ Europe would necessitate a profound alteration of the way European societies manage their economies and polities. What would it take for the proclaimed commitment to a greener and more social Europe to actuate a genuine societal transformation? In other words, what are the enabling conditions for progressive radicalism in our era? Can such a radical policy shift be undertaken without the energies of an empowering Utopia? The European Left’s positioning within this emerging paradigm shift, I will argue in what follows, is preventing it from assuming a leadership role. Animated by concerns with rising inequality and the widening rift between the ‘winners’ and ‘losers’ of neoliberal globalisation, progressive politics on the Left is taking the familiar ‘class struggle’ formula of left mobilisation. I will review this diagnosis of our predicament and the solutions it issues in order to expose its poor fit to the present historical juncture. I will then chart an alternative recasting of both the analysis of the social question and the prognosis for emancipation within a formula of a broad anti-capitalist mobilisation which negates the ‘class struggle’ pattern of conflict. Both my critique of the ‘class struggle’ modality of intellectual and political militancy and the articulation of an alternative will deploy Marxian conceptual schemata, which I adumbrate in the next section. Marx and the Social Critique of Domination Sidestepping the copious debate on the interpretation and intellectual heritage of Karl Marx’ work, I have proposed to recast his critique of capitalism as an institutionalised social order (or system of social relations) into an account of domination along three trajectories (Azmanova 2018, 2020a, b). The first trajectory is that of systemic domination – that is, the subjugation of all members of society to the system-constitutive dynamic of commodity-production and capital accumulation. I refer to this core dynamic of capitalism as ‘the competitive production of profit”. Although Marx offers no systematic analysis of competition, in his treatment of capital accumulation competition is “the inner nature of capital, its essential character” (Marx 1857, Notebook 4). Being the general form of economic interaction among actors, competition is thus capitalism’s coordinating mechanism and acts as a “coercive law” through which the logic of capital accumulation is imposed on individuals and the whole society (Ibid.; 1867, ch. 10 and 12; 1885; 1894, ch. 10 and 50). Within the realm of systemic domination, social injustice occurs in the form of harm beyond the unequal distribution of social advantage and disadvantage. The object of critique in analyses of systemic forms of injustice is therefore not the way power resources (wealth, political office, respect) are distributed, but what counts as a resource and how this resource is valued as a desired good. Within a capitalist society, this valorisation of practices is sourced from the profit motive – not so much the realization of profit through market exchange, but the motivation of human activities and interactions on the basis of their likelihood to generate profit. Marx introduced this trajectory of domination in his analyses of alienation (the multifaceted estrangement of people from their humanity, their “species-essence”). Although he focused predominantly on the effect of alienation on wage labor, there is no reason to claim that the impact of the competitive production of profit is not suffered by all members of a society of commodity producers, irrespectively of their class status. The alienation thesis therefore can be taken to apply to all participants in this process: the profit motive permeates all spheres of human existence, resulting in a broad spectrum of suffered injustice. Thus, labor commodification (treating a person’s capacity to work as a good produced for market exchange) and alienation afflict all who are engaged in the process of competitive profit production, while the destruction of the environment is a harm suffered by the whole of humanity, be it in different degrees. 17 Policies of equality (such as rising wages) and inclusion (worker involvement in the management of companies) would not suffice to counter the harms of systemic domination. Emancipation from systemic domination would necessitate not redistribution, but the eradication of the operative logic of the system – in the case of capitalism, the competitive production of profit. In the current historical junction, the inventory of socially induced suffering that is incurred by the competitive production of profit spans the intensified productivist pressures that prevent a fulfilling or even healthy work-life balance, the increased health hazards as companies prioritize profit over safety, and the destruction of our natural environment. The second trajectory of critique of domination we find in Marx’s analysis of capitalism (what I have named structural domination) concerns the effect of the main structuring institutions through which the operative logic of the system is enacted. These are the institutions of the private property and management of the means of production, as well as the market as a mechanism of economic governance (i.e., a mechanism for the allocation of productive inputs and social surplus and not as a price mechanism via meeting supply and demand, which is not peculiar to capitalism).7 Within the original Marxian analysis of capitalism, exploitation is the key structural injustice in this social system. The structure of the private property of the means of production, together with the nominally free labor contract, is what allows the exploitation of labor: it gives the owners the power to extract surplus value from their workers. The particular social harm incurred by the market as a structure of commodity exchange is the commodification of labor and nature, i.e., treating human beings’ creative capacities as well as our natural environment as goods “produced” exclusively for market exchange. Raising the living standards of the working class (returning to workers, in the form of higher wages or other benefits, a bigger share of the value they produce) would not terminate exploitation. Only eliminating class differentiation by way of abolishing the private property of the means of production would do so. Finally, the third form of domination – what I label relational domination concerns forms of suffering whose source is the unequal distribution of power, that is, the power actors have in relation to (or relative to) others. The unequal distribution of material or ideational resources (e.g., wealth, knowledge, recognition) might produce power asymmetries.8 Typical forms of injustice on the plane of relational domination are inequalities and exclusion. To remedy them, it suffices to equalize the distribution of power by, say, policies of wealth redistribution and political and cultural inclusion and recognition. Marx has been adamant about the futility of what he dismissed as a bourgeois obsession with equality: An enforced increase of wages (disregarding all other difficulties, including the fact that it would only be by force, too, that such an increase, being an anomaly, could be maintained) would therefore be nothing but better payment for the slave, and would not win either for the worker or for labor their human status and dignity. Indeed, even the equality of wages, as demanded by Proudhon, only transforms the relationship of the present-day worker to his labor into the relationship of all men to labor. Society would then be conceived as an abstract capitalist. (Marx 1844) Radical social transformation, therefore, should be thought not in distributive terms (as a matter of fighting what I called here relational domination), but in terms of countering and eradicating the constitutive dynamic of capitalism (the competitive production of profit) and the supporting institutions through which this dynamic is enacted. Transformative radicalism acts on the planes of systemic and structural domination. In further elaborating a device for conceptualizing a path for progressive social change in contemporary European societies, I adopt and adapt three additional distinctive features of Marxian social analysis. First, Marx saw his intellectual endeavor as being strongly historicist in nature. He famously refused to identify himself as a Marxist, that is, a thinker subscribing to a method of socioeconomic analysis based on abstract laws derived from his historical account of nineteenth-century European capitalism (Engels, “Letter to Edward Bernstein,” 1882; Engels, “Letter to Conrad Schmidt,” 1890). In the spirit of this aversion to formulaic accounts, the critique I will offer of contemporary democratic capitalism is meant to take into account the peculiarities of our current historical juncture. The second feature of Marxian analysis I take up is the preference for critique of domination over the design of utopian blueprints for an emancipated society. Indeed, Marx has offered no detailed account of a postcapitalist society. In his writing, far from being an elaborate social model, communism is the realization of democracy as spontaneous self-organization of the people (Critique of the Gotha Programme, 1875; German Ideology, 1845). For Marx, “communism is not a state of affairs which is to be established, an ideal to which reality will have to adjust itself. We call communism the real movement which abolishes the present state of things.” (Marx, German Ideology, 1845). Thus, the emancipatory interest driving critique is sourced not from an ideal of a just society (a utopian telos) but from the ambition of reducing domination by eliminating its sources. Thus, for Marx, eliminating the private property of the means of production is not a programmatic element in the blueprint of communism as the singularly just society. It is, rather, a way of removing one of the main sources of injustice that industrial capitalism of the nineteenth century systematically engendered – worker exploitation. Putting an end to the private property of the means of production (but not of private/personal property altogether) is a way of achieving emancipation from specific sources of domination, not securing absolute freedom. Such a negativistic conception of emancipation from oppression, one aspiring to diminish suffering rather than to obtain the just society – what Amy Allen (2015) has aptly named “emancipation without utopia” – is particularly appropriate for our contemporary context marked, as it is, by the exhaustion of utopian energies. 19 Third, in the absence of guiding utopias, the critical enterprise does not aspire to spell out the features of a just social order, but instead the conditions enabling such an order and the processes for attaining it. It seeks to discern what Horkheimer discussed as “the enabling conditions for successful realization” (Gelingen von Vollzügen) of a valued form of life. This is the role that the collectivization of the means of production plays in Marx: socialization of labor, thus achieved, would in turn enable the transformation of specialized and alienated labor into creative and individuated practice. Once the productivist pressures of the profit motive are eliminated, the space opens for creative, fulfilling work that also satisfies needs. I next turn to the resurgence of radical critique of capitalism in the course of the recent crisis of neoliberal capitalism marked by ambitions to merge environmental and social justice into a novel formula of progressive politics.

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### L – Living Wage

#### The ‘metacrisis’ of capitalism is driving a wedge between the center left and right – with the distancing from the principles of neoliberalism, the affs faux radicalism is an attempt to diminish the ‘precariat’ which kills collective organizing and results in unequal distributions of power

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Social protest’s unbearable lightness ‘Very dear bourgeois, sorry to disturb you, could we, please, all live in dignity?’ – pleaded a slogan of the Yellow Vests, the grassroots movement for economic justice that began in France in October 2018 protesting against a planned increase in fuel prices. It quickly spread, to become the longest-lasting and most intense protest movement in western democracies in the early 21st century. The Spanish Indignados, a movement that mobilized some eight million people in the spring of 2011, raised a similar plea for decent politics in a protest against the imposition of austerity policies following the financial meltdown of 2007–2009 and the ensuing sovereign wealth crisis. Aggrieved by high unemployment rates, welfare cuts and the bank bailout that devoured the national budget, the young Spaniards remonstrated, ‘We are not against the system, the system is against us!’ In the past decade, social protest has been widespread, witty, and weak. Even as the insurgencies on the streets and squares gave voice to ubiquitous social frustration, they also revealed the remarkably unradical nature of these popular protests, which have mainly sought to recover the relative equality of prosperity that marked the golden years of the Welfare State.1 While the immediate aftermath of the financial crisis generated some talk about a terminal crisis of capitalism (the Financial Times ran a ‘Capitalism in Crisis’ series of articles in early 2012), discourses of systemic crisis were quickly replaced by complaints about rising inequality and calls to tax the rich – a substantially more timid request than overturning a system that inflicts multifaceted harm on individuals, their communities and their natural environment. The taciturn nature of contemporary protest politics is suggestive of a peculiar condition in which liberal democracies currently find themselves, a state I will proceed to describe as the metacrisis of democratic capitalism. The scandal of democracy and the zombie state of neoliberalism The eruption of anti-establishment protests in the decade following the economic crisis of 2008–2009 has effectively disrupted the neoliberal order, provoking the search for alternatives. It put an end to neoliberal hegemony in the sense that it eliminated the certainty with which the neoliberal policy mix of free markets and open economies has been perceived to be the singularly reasonable, the only thinkable, policy formula. In the last two decades of the 20th century, this hegemony had been obtained through an ideological accommodation between the centre-left and centre-right political elites. The centre-left accepted free market capitalism, while the centre-right adopted the New Left agenda of non-discrimination, identity recognition and ecological concerns. This deal forged what Nancy Fraser has called ‘progressive neoliberalism’ – not in the sense that this form of capitalism is inherently and undoubtedly progressive, but that it incorporated elements of progressive politics exactly to achieve a hegemonic status through broad support among the dominant political forces (Fraser 2017a, 2017b ). The anti-establishment protests of the past decade, which have wrongly been labelled as populism (Azmanova 2018a, 2019), have rekindled partisan conflict and subsequently lifted the veil of inevitability that had enabled the neoliberal hegemony. These protests opened what Chantal Mouffe and Ernesto Laclau have called a ‘space of indeterminacy’ – the possibility for change without a distinct telos, without a preset direction. Will progressive political forces be able to harness the brewing social discontent and give it direction? The first obstacle to the project of progressive politics is the fact that the rupturing of neoliberal hegemony has not altogether uprooted neoliberal capitalism. Despite much political rhetoric about change, most of the policies that triggered the financial meltdown 10 years ago are still in place. This is the case because the policy rationale and political mentality of neoliberalism remain intact. The policy rationale of neoliberalism is the pursuit of national competitiveness in the global economy as a top policy priority (trumping, say, growth or employment), which entails the further deregulation of the domestic economy. The liberalization of product- and labour-markets persists, even as trade wars are being launched. Apart from efforts to raise the minimum wage, there have not been endeavours to curtail the reign of the free market in national economies, as it is believed that this would damage these economies’ competitiveness in the global marketplace. The political mentality of neoliberalism consists in absolving the state of social responsibility by offloading that responsibility (e.g. for our becoming employable and remaining employed, or for safeguarding the environment) onto individuals and communities. This devolution of responsibility also plays out in calls for more democracy. Thus, democracy, to draw on Jodi Dean’s analysis of our contemporary, ‘communicative’ capitalism, becomes a neoliberal fantasy.2 Moreover, captive of the prosperity fancy, democracy has become an efficient instrument for enacting neoliberal capitalism. The mechanism of democratic elections gives political existence, in the form of ruling coalitions with a democratic mandate, to the powerful capital–labour alliance advocating those very policies of national competitiveness (e.g. deregulation of labour markets and reliance on cheap fossil fuels) that undercut policy commitments to social and environmental justice. As the social safety net has been continuously reduced, individuals’ reliance on employment as a source of livelihood has increased. As a result, the policy agenda for jobs and growth has come to supply the political common sense through which capital and labour unite in support of neoliberal hegemony.3 Thus, even at the nadir of the financial meltdown, the democratic vote tended to go either to the centre-right, that was the main author of those policies which inaugurated the neoliberal transition in the 1980s (privatization of public assets and deregulation of the economy), or to the far-right, which does not pose a serious challenge to neoliberalism. The far-right transforms the conflict between capital’s imperatives for growth and society’s imperative for integration into a conflict between ‘our’ national capitalism (our jobs and our growth) and ‘their’ global capitalism. These economic tensions are further politicized as cultural ones (fear of immigrants who deprive us of our jobs while eroding our cultural cohesion) into a novel phenomenon I have discussed as ‘economic xenophobia’ (Azmanova 2011a). Throughout this process, the institutions of democratic participation are not just weakened; they are effectively used to foment support for the very economic policies causing the social malaise through precarious employment and slashing social insurance and budgets for public services. We thus face what we might call the ‘scandal of democracy’ (akin to Immanuel Kant’s notion of ‘the scandal of reason’)4 – much as we rely on democracy to save us from capitalism’s most nefarious effects, democratic politics, be it inadvertently, becomes the mechanism that enacts capitalism’s logic. That is why, within the framework of capitalist democracy, progressive political forces will always face the dilemma of either serving the short-term interests of their electorate in perpetuating the dynamics of capital accumulation upon which the fortunes of the ‘little man’ depend or serving the longer-term societal interest in protecting human beings and the natural environment from those very dynamics. As a consequence of the perpetuation of the very policies that cause the experience of crisis, neoliberalism escapes its death. It is neither fully recovered nor is it being replaced by an alternative model. It is in a zombie state. The missing crisis of capitalism One of the peculiarities of zombie neoliberalism is the perpetuation of the discourse of crisis. We have been stuck in a narrative of crisis for over a decade now. On the left, there is the anticipation and celebration of an impending terminal crisis of capitalism. On the right, this takes the shape of a narrative about the unwelcome disorder of an economic mechanism that is essential for societies’ well-being – something worth saving through the competence and will of the ruling elites set on a noble mission to heal the engine of prosperity. We have thus entered the realm of what French philosopher Jacque Derrida has named ‘crisis of crisis’ – even as the word crisis has deserted our vocabulary, the idea that the present world is in crisis persists (Derrida 2002 [1983], 71). I would refer to this rare condition of a crisis entering its own crisis with the term ‘metacrisis’. I fashion this notion after the concept of a ‘metastable state’ of an entity, which is used in physics and chemistry to describe a particular energy state of a system that has a shorter lifetime than the lowest (ground) energy level but a longer lifetime than the ordinary energy state.5 This intermediary state of agitation would be akin to an organism being in a state of a low fever or persistent anxiety – which is indeed how our societies find themselves a decade after the financial collapse of 2007–2009: the energies of the initial experience of social crisis have been dissipated, yet society has not recovered its sense of normalcy, of stable well-being. It is beset by chronic inflammation; it is in stasis – a term with which Thucydides depicted the pervasive civil strife that blocked the normal flow of democratic politics in the Greek polis (Price 2001). Such a protracted state of crisis defies the very definition of crisis as a brief moment of extreme challenge to an entity’s existence that marks a turning point in its life. There are, in principle, three possible exits from a crisis: death, restoring the ‘pre-crisis’ condition or transitioning to a new state. We are in a very peculiar historical conjuncture – none of these three options apply. Strategies for coping with the financial crisis have not solved the larger social crisis; short-term crisis management has become a new normal – we are stuck in perpetual crisis management. The radicality of the crisis is avoided, but the crisis itself is not solved. The very crisis is in a crisis: we are stuck into a metacrisis. One feature of a metastable state of a system (as the notion is used in physics) is particularly befitting the diagnosis of current-day liberal democracies as being in metacrisis. A metastable state is an energy trap, in which the entity does not have sufficient energy to transition into another state. This is evocative of the entrapment our societies have experienced during what has become known as the Great Recession – the decade after the crisis of 2007–2009 when, even as the economy has returned to growth, a sense of unease is pervasive, but this unease fosters no attempts at radical transformation. The deflation of socialist utopia Why is it that no alternatives have emanated from the disruption of neoliberal hegemony? Why are we stuck in a metacrisis at a time when society is so roiled by discontent? One factor, that is not so much causing the metacrisis of capitalism as is constitutive of it, is the remarkable absence of utopias – what Jurgen Habermas has discussed as the ‘exhaustion of utopian energies’ – the vanishing of ‘alternative life possibilities that are seen as inherent in the historical process itself’ (Habermas 1991 [1984], 50). In his discussion of the crisis of the welfare state in the 1980s, Habermas observes that, even as utopian projections of the present into a better future have not altogether disappeared, one particular utopia has come to an end – the socialist utopia centred on the emancipation of labour from alien control (Habermas 1991 [1984], 52–53). In recent years, however, the idea of socialism has made a comeback. Membership in the Democratic Socialists of America has increased tenfold between 2016 and 2018 in the very bastion of capitalism – the United States, thanks largely to the phenomenon of socialist millennials.6 Still, discredited by the experiments with autocratic socialism in the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, the socialist utopia has lost much of its capacity to unite the diverse strands of anti-capitalist resentment. For many, the idea of socialism (with its post-1989 connotations) is a hindrance to giving their support to anti-capitalist policies. In this way, paradoxically, socialism has currently become a liability to anti-capitalist mobilization.7 Amidst the economic crisis, the most successful (in terms of electoral gains and policy impact) political mobilizations have been guided not by aspirations for socialism but rather by notions of economic patriotism and even xenophobia. These collective mobilizations have been void of utopian ambitions. Even as the political families of the Left and the Right have maintained their leadership in electoral politics, the fault line of conflict is no longer the familiar capital versus labour divide that has shaped the map of electoral competition since the industrial revolution in the 19th century. This cleavage was gradually erased under the capital–labour collaboration for growth, jobs and redistribution which was forged in the framework of the postwar welfare state. Recently, a new divide has emerged – one that reflects conflicting attitudes to the (perceived and anticipated) social impact of the new economy of open borders and technological upheaval. Those who celebrate the new economy as inherently progressive congregate around an ‘opportunity’ pole; on the opposite side of the barricades, around a ‘risk’ pole gather those for whom the new economy translates as a loss of livelihoods, physical threats and cultural disruption (Azmanova 2011b). There is no positive sense of direction (a utopia), in these two positions – nothing akin to the Socialist ideal that guided the eruptions of 1848 and 1917, the irreverent anti-consumerism of 1968 or the liberal communism (the redemption and renewal of communism) that motivated much of 1989. Neither the opportunities nor the risks of the new economy, even as they currently structure social conflict, can supply the material for powerful utopias that could guide the collective imagination in the search for a novel socio-economic order. Precarity capitalism The reasons for the exhaustion of utopian energies and the weakness of emancipatory action that mark our particular historical moment concern the massive social destabilization that defines the current stage of capitalism – which I have described as ‘precarity capitalism’ (Azmanova 2020). Judith Butler (2004) has drawn the distinction between precariousness as a general human condition of vulnerability, rooted in our interdependence on each other, and precarity, which is socially generated. A series of scholars have further recorded and discussed the immiseration caused by persistent unemployment and precarious employment, the spreading of in-work poverty and subsequently the formation of a new class, a ‘precariat’ (akin to the proletariat of the 19th century) whose wages are low, flexible and unpredictable (Apostolidis 2018; Standing 2011; Wright 2019).8 So far, while the notion of precarity has been reserved only for the ‘losers’ in the distribution of economic resources, I have proposed seeing this as an overarching social condition also afflicting the purported winners in the game of profit-production. The active offloading of social risk to society, which public authority has actively undertaken over the past 40 years, has created a condition of generalized social precarity from which the labour-market insiders – skilled workers with well-paying jobs as well as owners of capital – are not sheltered. While labour-market deregulation has translated for many into long-term unemployment or insecure and poorly paid jobs, for others it has become the source of more stressful jobs with longer working hours, impaired work-life balance and damaged mental health. Thus, the increased competitive pressures of globally integrated capitalism have created not just a precarious class but a precarious multitude: precarity is what is ailing the 99% (Azmanova 2020, 137–68). The condition of generalized precarity has formidable consequences for the prospects of progressive social change. Economic instability, especially in the absence of motivational utopias, nurtures conservative and often reactionary instincts – a socio-psychological attitude Erich Fromm (1941) has discussed as ‘fear of freedom’. Although the economic crisis of 2007–2009 roused hopes on the left for the radicalization of protest into an anti-capitalist upheaval, as we noted, the democratic vote over the past decade has gone consistently to the right, giving expression not to desires for radical change but rather the opposite – a longing for safety and security. The anti-precarity agenda of social concerns with physical insecurity (terrorism), political order, cultural estrangement and economic insecurity that emerged on the far-right margins of the political spectrum at the turn of the century has been, in recent years, absorbed in the positions of centre-right and even some centre-left parties.9 Within this context, the Left has re-engaged in social criticism and political mobilization along two trajectories. On the one hand, a revival of class politics takes shape through a fight against inequality (the rich being cast as the class enemy). On the other hand, calls for saving democracy serve as an overarching platform for progressive forces. In the remainder of this analysis, I will contend that these two trajectories of mobilization will not lead to an emancipatory political project because they are derived from incorrect diagnoses of the current historical juncture and are therefore inadequate responses to the social emergencies of our times. Let me first address the project of saving and/or radicalizing democracy. In her latest analysis, Chantal Mouffe (2018, 41) observes that ‘the main targets of the “movement of the squares” were the shortcomings of the political system and the democratic institutions and that they did not call for “socialism” but for a “real democracy”’.10 Indeed, the political and economic oligarchies that emerged over the past 30 years, and the intensified assault on liberal values by proto-fascist movements, has done terrible damage to our democracies. Urgent action is necessary. However, the political infrastructure of democracy – from competitive elections to street protests, as we noted, is also giving political expression to a powerful capital–labour alliance in support of growth and jobs – an alliance that systematically blocks or undermines environmental policy commitments. If we are to obtain both social and environmental justice (the ambitions of the Green New Deal), it would not suffice to radicalize democracy as such radicalization is only likely to enhance the political power of the capital–labour alliance against the environment. However, neither would it be expedient to attempt to break the capital–labour alliance by reviving class conflict as it is currently being attempted through demands for wealth tax and collectivization of property. This is the case because only a very broad alliance of social forces would be able to simultaneously obtain social and environmental justice. This would require not breaking but subverting the existing capital–labour alliance – directing it towards a radical transformation of the manner in which society reproduces itself. Let me address this point in more detail. Subverting capitalism In his last book, the eminent Marxist sociologist Erik Olin Wright reviews five ways (or ‘strategic logics’) for anti-capitalist mobilization – smashing, dismantling, taming, resisting and escaping capitalism (Wright 2019). This taxonomy of anti-capitalist strategy is based on an understanding of capitalism as an economic system defined ‘by the combination of market exchange with private ownership of the means of production and the employment of wage earners recruited through a labor market’ (Wright 2019, l.886). Thus, the various anti-capitalist strategies Wright reviews target changes within these core structures of capitalism and/or neutralize harms produced by these structures. These strategies are carried out either through bottom-up, civil society-centred initiatives of resisting and escaping capitalism or through top-down, state-centred strategies of taming and dismantling capitalism. Wright advocates a new strategic configuration – namely, eroding capitalism by persistently building more egalitarian, democratic and participatory economic relations. This is to eventually displace capitalism from its dominant role in the system (Wright 2019, l.871). Wright’s analysis of the attainable possibilities for transcending capitalism simultaneously advances the critique of capitalism and illustrates the limitations of currently prevailing forms of Marxism. While Marx discussed capitalism as a system of social relations organized around the commodity relation (i.e. a system centred on the production, exchange and consumption of goods deliberately produced for the market in view of making profit), most contemporary discussions of capitalism reduce it to the institutions structuring these relations – namely, wage labour and the private property of the means of production. Such analyses see the ultimate overcoming of capitalism as a matter of socialized labor.11 However, this familiar scenario of progressive politics is inadequate to the exigencies of our historical moment. This is the case because, even if the currently most radical goals of the Left are achieved – the eradication of the private property of the means of production (the main structuring institution of capitalism), this would not automatically eliminate the extractive and destructive ways in which wealth is produced and consumed. The grave social injustices of our time – the generalized social precarity I discussed earlier as well as the environmental devastation – are outcomes not of the unequal distribution of wealth and the private nature of property holding (i.e. of the structuring institutions of capitalism and their distributive outcomes) but of the very dynamics that constitute capitalism – the pursuit of profit. As the experiment with state socialism in East and central Europe made clear, societies in which the means of production are collectively held and resources are distributed relatively equally might still be engaged in a competitive pursuit of profit with all its deleterious impact on human beings, our communities and our natural environment. In view of the particular exigencies of our times, this means that neither the traditional social-democratic agenda of redistribution nor the Socialist agenda of elimination of private property posit the right targets. It is the elimination of the key operational dynamic of capitalism – the competitive pursuit of profit – that should be the central objective of radical emancipatory political action and social practice.

#### Its not a question of how much the plan gives but the question of the wage itself

Dinerstein, A. C., & Pitts, F. H. (2018). From post-work to post-capitalism? Discussing the basic income and struggles for alternative forms of social reproduction. Journal of Labor and Society, 21(4), 471-491. Accessed 8-4-24 CSUF JmB TDI

Today, the post-work society has become a hot topic of debate, taking hold in the unlikeliest of quarters including UK Labor Party policy seminars and the World Economic Forum in Davos. This has unfolded in a historical context of the crisis of the relationship between employment and broader social reproduction. In this article, we expose and critique the nascent “post-work” political imaginary and its claim that a postcapitalist society can be aided into existence by the implementation of transitional policies centered on automation, a universal basic income (UBI) and, somewhat less problematically, the reduction of working hours. In making this claim, we suggest, many accounts of the post-work prospectus (PWP) run the risk of reifying work as something apart from the social relations of subsistence and social reproduction in which it is imbricated. This then allows the proposal of a UBI, which relies on money as a neutral unit of exchange and account rather than something that itself carries these antagonistic relations of production and consumption. Hence, rather than heralding a “utopian” vision (van Parijs, 2013), we instead find attending the UBI an abstract “bad utopia” that only insufficiently breaks with the present. We focus on the most sophisticated and extended expositions of this thesis, which tend not to state in simple terms that the escape from work is synonymous with or a catalyst of the escape from capitalism. But the bold, attention grabbing titles they appear under do tend to play upon the association of the two that characterizes much of the way they have been received in the public sphere; for instance, Inventing the Future: Postcapitalism and a World Without Work (Srnicek & Williams, 2015). The latter authors reject what they misleadingly call “folk politics” and propose, instead, that the left should demand four things: full automation, the reduction of the working week, the provision of a basic income and the diminishment of the work ethic (p.127). While they forewarn that these demands that emblazon the cover of their book “will not break us out of capitalism,” only “neoliberalism,” they do suggest that their implementation could “establish a new equilibrium of political, economic and social forces” that would create “even more potential to launch to greater goals” (p. 108). This suggests that Srnicek and Williams's post-work position could be critiqued only insofar as the critique centers on these goals “and not the horizon of post-capitalism” (Stronge, 2017). As such, here we focus on how these transitional demands, shared in common with other post-work thinkers, relate to the end goal of a postcapitalist society, rather than imputing to them any directly postcapitalist content of their own. Postcapitalism, in the work of Mason (2015a) for instance, hinges on a transitional period running out of the present and into the future. But this, we argue, will not come through the suite of options presently on offer which purport to escape work alone—principally, automation and the UBI—and not the social relations and social forms that characterize capitalist society, among them value, commodities, and money. From the theoretical perspective advanced here, work as such is not the central social relationship that defines capitalism, and any attempt to define a postcapitalist society based on a set of transitional political prescriptions that address only work and stop short of addressing all the other relationships of capitalist society will obstruct rather than facilitate the development of an alternative to the latter. We focus instead on how work itself is undergirded at one end in a set of antagonistic social relations of separation from and dispossession of the means of production and the reproduction of labor-power, and, at the other end, in the form its results assume as value-bearing commodities exchanged in the market by means of money. Theoretically, we combine in this article two radically revisionist schools of contemporary Marxism. First is the social reproduction approach. Social reproduction is “a broad term for the domain where lives are sustained and reproduced” (Zechner & Hansen, 2015). This suggests that capitalism is characterized as much by what supports a society of work as work itself, and that the work relationship is not the only relationship that needs to be undone for capitalism to be abolished. It is labor power and its reproduction by a range of actors and activities that counts, rather than labor and its performance by workers alone. A social reproduction approach is also advocated by Marxist feminists. Bhattacharya (2018) contends that the separation between production and social reproduction has been historically created. Bhattacharya begins from Marx's understanding of the valorization of capital as comprising “moment[s] of a totality” such that “each social process of production is at the same time a process of reproduction” (Marx, 1976, p. 711). This approach allows us to move on from a productivist Marxism without abandoning Marx, thereby making a multiplicity of forms of oppression apparent beyond the traditional class relation. Thus, production and social reproduction do not take place in the economic and the social spheres, respectively, but are both fields of labor conflict and struggle (Bhattacharya, 2018). The crisis of social reproduction is simultaneously a crisis of the separation of production and social reproduction. We complement this social reproduction understanding of the social relations that characterize capitalist society with Marxian value-form theory to comprehend the “social forms” that render capitalism an historically specific social formation (Pitts, 2017). This suggests capitalism's specificity pertains not to work alone but to the forms taken by its results: commodities, value, and money. We draw on Open Marxist scholarship to explore how the state itself constitutes one of these historically specific capitalist social forms, and the implications this holds for how we understand radical policy proposals (Bonefeld, 1993; Clarke, 1991; Holloway, 1995, 1996). The relationship between these forms of mediation and social reproduction differs from how Marx has traditionally been conceived: The distinctiveness of Marx's theory lay not so much in the idea of labour as the source of value and surplus value as in the idea of money as the most abstract form of capitalist property and so as the supreme social power through which social reproduction is subordinated to the power of capital. (Clarke, 1988, pp. 13–14). Combined, these approaches to the relationship between social reproduction, social forms, and social relations suggest that the escape from “work” need not open the path to postcapitalism, and indeed may even prevent it. Either way, the attainment of both post-work society and post-capitalist society is not nearly so easy as those who propose each would have us believe. For instance, that we must work presupposes relations of distribution that relate less to labor than life itself: it is capitalist work. Our contention is that the relations of social reproduction do not fade away with the diminution of “paid work” via automation and the supplement of a UBI. With the abovementoned understanding of value, not only those “working” and “producing” but capitalist society itself is subsumed under the money-form. Re-evaluating what we understand by “work” and its commodification and monetarization, we might therefore also say that the association between a post-work array of transitional demands and the attainment of a postcapitalist society is not nearly so strong as popular accounts suggest. The theoretical perspective advanced here thus illuminates how the transitional vista of automated worklessness supported by a UBI rests on a continuation of the money wage in all but name and the presence of a strong state that becomes the wage-payer of both first and last resort, with attendant consequences on the capacity of people or workers to resist and contest the conditions or pay to which they are subject. This foreshortening of the capacity of workers to struggle in turn foreshortens the capacity of the range of transitional measures post-work thinkers cite to lead us into a postcapitalist future. By falsely cleansing the world of the contradictions of capitalist society, the dynamism of these contradictions is neutered. We will use the current uptake of the UBI among authoritarian populists as an example of where this negative potential might travel politically, with specific reference to the possible adoption of the measure by the Modi government in India. This example highlights the potential consequence inherent in the UBI of quashing class struggles in, against and beyond the state- struggles without the presence of which the incentive on the part of employers to automate production and replace workers with robots will be much diminished. As such, the transition promises to be the premature Thermidor of the proposed end destination. We suggest the politics of social reproduction as an alternative prospectus for radical change within and beyond capitalist society. This engages with the present struggles for alternative forms of social reproduction. We take one specific example of this—the UWOs established in post-crisis Argentina—as a model for how the relationship with work, subsistence, and money can be reconstituted in such a way as to work through the contradictions of labor, money, state, and social reproduction without wishing them away. We explore the potential uptake of similar models in the UK context. We conclude by suggesting that the potential solution to the impasses of the PWP is to work within contradictions and expand them. Most notably this relates to class struggle recoded not only as struggles within workplaces, but without in the sphere of social reproduction. An understanding of social reproduction as the central terrain on which capitalism establishes itself shifts our focus to how class actors resist within it. This alternative prospectus has a major contribution to make to ongoing attempts to fashion critical and radical responses to the crisis of work and the wage. From this perspective, technology and automation cannot be reified as neutral forces the unfolding of which will deliver us a workless world supported by the intervention of the capitalist state as the new wage payer. Rather, even on the terms of the postcapitalist prospectus itself, and in the absence of convincing evidence that automation will lead to technological unemployment on the scale anticipated, class struggles would be necessary to accomplish the kind of economy-wide automation of production on which their vistas of the future hinge (Spencer, 2018). But in that literature addressed in this article, post-work society is seen as the accomplishment of a kind of “end of history” that closes contradictions and liquidates struggles for better alternative and non-capitalist forms of social reproduction. For the absence of this factor, their utopia is an abstract one. By centering struggle and social reproduction as we do here, the possibility awaits that concrete utopias can be delineated and situated within practice and policy. The postcapitalist prospectus has stimulated a renewal of bold left programs for governing the future, expressed in the recent electoral pitches of socialists in the United Kingdom and France. We end, therefore, by considering the kind of politics that could translate our alternative perspective into such a policy platform today. 2 | THE POST-WORK PROSPECTUS Although it has appeared in different guises (Aronowitz & Cutler, 1998; Aronowitz & DeFazio, 2010), the true origins of the contemporary PWP rest in a few formerly obscure pages from Marx's (1973, pp. 704–6) Grundrisse—the “Fragment on Machines” (see Trott, in press). Later surpassed by the development of his value theory to address abstract labor rather than simply concrete labor alone, here Marx forecasts a future wherein machines come to replace direct human labor in the process of production, rendering the law of value obsolete (Pitts, 2018). Despite its insignificant theoretical and textual stature, its reception caught fire through promotion by postoperaists like Antonio Negri who associated it with changes afoot in contemporary capitalism (Hardt & Negri, 2001). What is new today is the enthusiasm with which it has been met in the formal political sphere in response to technological shifts. Today, its scenario of postcapitalist worklessness finds itself popularized by the likes of Mason (2015b). Popping up in the pages of broadsheet newspapers, its ideas now inform public debate (Beckett, 2017, 2018). The strategic opportunities opened up by the current phase of capitalist restructuring apparently promise the revitalization of progressive left politics. The empirical and theoretical contributions to the PWP are rich and varied, but it is possible to isolate several shared emphases and central propositions offered by Srniceck and Williams and Mason. First, the development of information technology is “accelerating.” Allied with crisis tendencies in the current phase of capital accumulation, this terminates in a post-capitalist future. Second, dynamics of automation and new cooperative commons potentiate a post-work society of abundance and leisure. Third, progressive left politics must surpass limited, reactive, and parochial “folk politics,” reconfiguring itself around a populist-hegemonic post-work agenda demanding reduced working hours, full automation and a UBI (Srnicek & Williams, 2015). Although Srnicek and Williams avoid the technological determinism sometimes associated with such thinking, devoting a chapter to the political program by which their stated aims can be achieved, a crude technological determinism underpins many accounts of automation and informationalization (Spencer, 2017). With the waning of work in an age of intelligent machines, we are told, technological unemployment renders the wage insufficient to secure workers' subsistence. Their labor-power— the pure potential to labor—must be reproduced through other means. This is where the UBI steps in. It is important to note here that the UBI is not posed as a silver bullet, but works in tandem with foregoing technological trends to accomplish the outcome of a postcapitalist society of automated worklessness. It provides a state-sponsored supplement to ensure the reproduction of labor within a capitalism on the wane, so as to open the way to a postcapitalist society beyond it. In the scenario Mason projects, the UBI necessary to sustain a working population would have to be socialized in the hands of the state (Mason 2015a, p. 286). This is because, due to the rise of free machines that enable production at zero marginal cost and render impossible attempts to impose scarcity on goods, data and services, the conditions for capitalist profit are eroded and “the tax base in the market sector of the economy would be too small to pay for the basic income.” As such, the payment of a UBI implies a certain kind of state and a certain kind of relationship to it, not to mention the retention of money and the social relations it expresses. In the following, we will take apart this complex of ideas and suggest that the PWP obstructs rather than opens the way to a postcapitalist society precisely because of the continuing role of the state and money as forms of capitalist social relations in proposals for a UBI, and the absence of labor struggles they imply. 3 | PROBLEMATIZING THE UBI: WAGE AND THE MONEY-FORM The PWP, by focusing on transitional demands like full automation, a UBI and the reduction of the working week, appears to suggest that the problem with capitalism is that it makes us dependent upon “work,” and the solution is to have less of the latter. This takes “work” as the basis of capitalism as an exploitative system. The implementation of the UBI appears progressive for it frees us from this exploitation. It makes everyone semiautonomous from work. To this point, we present two objections. First, this is a limited understanding of capitalism that lends too much weight to work itself and not enough to what makes work necessary in its determination as wage labor and the specific kinds of results it assumes. Value, commodities, and a certain historically-specific set of antagonistic social relations based not around the human performance of labor, but the reproduction of human life as labor-power and its mediation through abstract social forms, are not even mentioned in these proposals. Second, such visions are based on a misconstruction of the nature and determination of the “wage.” The UBI, Mason contends, pays people “just to exist.” But this is “only a transitional measure for the first stage of the postcapitalist project.” The “socialization” of the wage through “collectively provided services,” or its abolition, follow (Mason 2015a, pp. 284–286). Payment “to exist,” coupled with automation, allows networked, autonomous experimentation in place of labor. As such, Mason suggests that the UBI would be a transitional step toward the abolition of the wage. But even this may retain the separation of people from independent, non-commodified means of living. The social conditions undergirding the wage would continue, with or without the wage itself. The social conditions for the sale of labor-power would remain, with or without a buyer. This is because the wage is not a reward for expended labor but a payment to keep workers in the condition that they can and must labor (Critisticuffs, 2015). The wage subordinates human life to “money as command” (Cleaver, 1996). We acquire what we need only as commodities bearing a price. Money is value-in-motion. Marx's critique of political economy destroys Adam Smith's belief that money “is simply an instrument of accounting and exchange that has no substantive economic significance” (Smith cited by Clarke, 1988, p. 32). Marx revealed that in capitalist societies money is not simply the means of exchange or an innocent mediation but the concrete expression of value, the substance of which is abstract labor (Dinerstein, 2015, p. 21). As the most abstract form of capitalist property (Clarke, 1992), money is both the means of exchange among “equal” citizens, and the proof of the expropriation of labor. Despite its insubstantiality, money dominates and expands across the whole social and existential condition (Lilley & Papadopoulos, 2014). Srnicek and Williams (2015), meanwhile, argue that the UBI would overcome the wage relation and the stigmatization that accompanies welfare in countries like the UK by abolishing means testing in favor of universal, undifferentiated support (p. 120). In this, Srnicek and Williams correctly identify some of the same issues around the separation from the independent individual and collective means to reproduce the means of living that are at the center of our critique. They recognize the antagonistic constitution of class society in a certain set of relations centering on social reproduction, and propose to “loosen the practical grip of the wage relation” as a way to foreshorten it (Stronge, 2017). However, it is an individual response to collective problems (Coyle & Macfarlane, 2018). The UBI only retains and further individualizes the same individual reproduction of labor-power in a different appearance of the wage relation that stops short of its abolition by means of the abolition of the money form tout court. It may seem counterintuitive to contend that the UBI marks a continuation of the wage relation. But the idea that the UBI facilitates an escape from the wage mistakes the wage as a payment for the reproduction of the potential to labor for a payment for labor performed. The wage—whether in the form of earnings or benefits, accrued as an individual or as a household—guarantees that our labor power is reproduced and, in a world where humans exist as labor power, the reproduction of life itself. Without the abolition of money, which, as mentioned at the outset, is “the most abstract form of capitalist property” and “the supreme social power through which social reproduction is subordinated to the power of capital,” the UBI merely secures the reproduction of humans on this same basis (Clarke, 1988, pp. 13–14). Whether we work or not is irrelevant in this case, because our potential to do so in a world where the means of production are beyond our control would be carried over regardless—possibly pending the reintroduction of labor at some future point necessitated by war or crisis sparked by the retention of a state and economy left largely intact by the absence in the PWP of any intent to significantly restructure the ownership of property on which capitalist society rests. Nowhere is the question of material ownership posed, only transformation of intellectual property laws deemed unfit to capture the capitalist state of play in a data-driven networked society (Mason, 2015a). With the UBI, the state directly superintends the rule of money. So, while UBI may apparently free us from (un)employment and the wage relation, it makes us more dependent on the command of money and the state. Money and the state are not neutral entities to be appropriated at will but economic and political forms of capitalist social relations. In other words, they are “forms assumed by the basic relation of class conflict in capitalist society, the capitalist relation, forms whose separate existence springs, both logically and historically, from the nature of that relation” (Holloway & Picciotto, 1977, pp. 121–122). If we steer away from work and focus on the totality formed by production and social reproduction, we can see that the obstinacy of both the presence of the state and the distribution of money mean that no “postcapitalism” need attend UBI's post-work idyll, as is proposed in the programmatic statement of transitional demands that characterize the abovementioned proposals. Indeed, by bolstering their power, the transitional route to postcapitalism through a postwork society may well foreclose the very thing it sets out to achieve.

### L – Wealth Redistribution

#### Wealth redistribution is not the end all be all for capitalism – but it’s a logic of restructuring that prioritizes neoliberal mindsets of individualism and consumerism that results in environmental destruction

Azmanova, A. (2024). The Road to the European Social Green Deal: Class Struggle or Counter-Hegemony. In Marx and Europe: Beyond Stereotypes, Below Utopias (pp. 13-24). Cham: Springer Nature Switzerland. Accessed 8/4/2024 CSUF JmB TDI

Green-and-Participatory Socialism as a Neoliberal Ruse Bridging environmental and social justice is a promising avenue for the emergence of a radical alternative to neoliberal capitalism. Such efforts, however, encounter a triple difficulty. First, social and environmental justice cannot be easily reconciled by pledging allegiance to both. The struggles for ecological and social justice have not only taken place on separate battlefields, they have been in permanent conflict with each other. Advocates for a grand Green transition have always had a little ’red’ problem. In the famous words of one Yellow Vest protester: “The elites talk about the end of the world; we talk about the end of the month” (Rérolle 2018). There are solid reasons for the advocates of social and ecological justice to be political ‘frenemies’. The political economy of capitalism has made livelihoods strongly dependent on employment in polluting industries, and consumers’ purchasing power in the context of neoliberal globalisation has become dependent on cheap imports whose competitive prices are secured via polluting practices. This has engendered a powerful capital-labour alliance that has been opposing environmental policy ever since ecological concerns gained public attention in the 1970s. Reassurances that the Green transition would create in the future more jobs than it will eliminate are not compelling when livelihoods are at stake now. We cannot expect working people to be impassioned about a Green transition when their economic survival – here and now – is threatened by such a transition. The second weakness of the Green democratic transformation platform is its narrow understanding of social justice in terms of fighting inequalities. Since pundits and academics drew public attention to the spectacular growth of inequalities in the West, social justice has been approached as a matter of fighting inequality via wealth redistribution. Thus, in a formula of ‘participatory socialism’ that is gaining popularity, the eminent French economist Thomas Piketty has articulated two pillars of progressive social reform towards a post-capitalist future. The first pillar is a dramatic redistribution from rich to poor, sourced from income and wealth taxation. A wealth tax is to provide the funds for a capital endowment inheritance for all – 120.000 euro each is to receive at age 25. The second pillar is increased worker involvement in the management of companies, for instance, by giving employees half of the seats on the board of large companies (Piketty 2019).9 Although proposals for a dramatic redistribution of wealth and power from rich to poor, from capital to labor, are now being advocated as a form of radical opposition to neoliberal capitalism, the departure from neoliberal convention is only apparent. Thinking in terms of inequality engages a logic of comparison between individuals and presents the idea of social justice in individualistic terms – as a matter of personal circumstances, of private wealth. Such a focus on individual circumstances is a trademark of the neoliberal mentality. Thus, even as we engage in the worthy struggle against inequality and exclusion, we in fact remain captive of the neoliberal imaginary, which views society as composed of individuals solely responsible for their lives. This eliminates the notion of collective wellbeing that has always been fundamental for Socialism as it espoused a solidaristic economy without emphasizing neither equality nor prosperity. Equality-within-prosperity is not a socialist ideal; solidarity in wellbeing is. It might be worth remembering that Marx did not advocate economic equality in his vision of a just social order. Marx’s formula of distributive justice under communism mandates not equal distribution of existing resources but rather allocating them according to the dictum “from each according to their ability, to each according to their needs” (Marx 1875, 27). A privately-wealthy society, even if not too unequal, can still be publicly poor as long as essential public services are missing or deficient of funds. In his critique of the celebrated egalitarian affluence achieved under the post-war Welfare state in western democracies, John Kenneth Galbraith (1958) observed that these privately wealthy societies, even if fairly equal, were publicly poor as essential public services were being starved of funds. We might also do well to recall that totalitarian regimes in Eastern Europe created societies that were egalitarian but certainly not solidaristic as the combination between discretionary political power and poorly governed economy created an atmosphere of mutual mistrust and competition for scarce resources. 21 Pledges to oppose neoliberalism by fighting inequality now invoke the policy formula of growth-and-redistribution that had ensured the (relative) equality in prosperity of the post-WWII welfare state. However, this prosperity – obtained via intensified production and consumption – proved deleterious for the environment. The return to the post-war welfare state, to Social Europe of the inclusive prosperity of the 1960s should be undesirable, even if it might be obtainable. A third core element of popular proposals for a radical left alternative to neoliberal capitalism is the democratization of the control over productive capital – either via the socialization of the means of production or through significant involvement of workers in the management of companies. This is the second pillar of Thomas Piketty’s proposal of ‘participatory socialism” which is representative of political and intellectual ambitions on the Left. Indeed, such proposals are in line with Marxist orthodoxy. Marx and most of his contemporaries saw emancipation primarily as a matter of liberation of labor from exploitation. This has been the predominant position of the Left in the course of the twentieth century. This objective has been pursued along two paths. The Social Democratic solution ran along the trajectory of fighting relational domination. The animating idea is that wealth redistribution from capital to labour would diminish exploitation. Similarly, the increase of worker representation on company boards – as advocated by eminent public figures such as US senator Elisabeth Warren as well as in programmatic documents of the European Left – would diminish the power asymmetry between labor and capital. If a Social democratic alternative to the neoliberal consensus emerges along the trajectory of relational domination (fighting inequality and exclusion), the more radical path preferred by the Socialist left is along the path of structural domination – the expropriation of the means of production and the socialization of the economic process. However, even as these proposals go a long way in countering relational and structural domination, they do not diminish systemic domination – they do not necessarily abate the competitive production of profit and its attendant alienation, as the experience of “real socialism” in Eastern Europe and elsewhere has made clear. One could take this argument further and note that against its purported emancipatory ambitions, such proposals in fact strengthen neoliberal capitalism. In conditions of globalised capitalism through market integration, even state-owned companies or companies owned by the workers they employ, would behave like capitalist actors in the pursuit of profit. Involving workers in the companies’ management would only increase workers’ vested interest in the capacity of their company to pursue profit – with all the familiar negative impact on human beings and nature: from self-exploitation, poor work-life balance, mental health disorders, and extractive economic practices that destroy the ecosystem. Thus, the solutions to relational and structural injustice that proposals like Piketty’s ‘participatory socialism’ advance would inadvertently deepen systemic domination as it will enhance the logic of competitive pursuit of profit that is constitutive of capitalism. Such modes of critique are trapped in what I have called the paradox of emancipation: as we seek inclusion and equality within one model of well-being, we further validate that model, together with all the injustices it might contain beyond inequality and exclusion (Azmanova 2020a, b). If we redistribute wealth in an egalitarian manner, this will neither help us have better public services nor will it do much to safeguard the natural environment – the two grave concerns of our time: the public commons and the ecosystem.

### L – Right to Work

#### The aff hates unions

James Richard Marra, 5-10-2017, "What's Wrong With the "Right to Work": A Marxist Critique — Hampton Institute", Hampton Institute, https://www.hamptonthink.org/read/whats-wrong-with-the-right-to-work-a-marxist-critique Accessed 8/4/2024 CSUF JmB TDI

At this writing, 28 US states have instituted "Right to Work" laws (RTWLs). These laws prevent labor unions from excluding non-union workers from receiving improved wages and benefits gained through union negotiations with employers, as well as worker-empowering services such as grievance assistance. These laws also bar unions from requiring non-union employees to pay a fee to unions to offset the costs of union work and services. This legislation extends established Federal law that protects a worker's right not to join a union, and the Taft-Hartley Act, which requires that unions exclusively represent all employees regardless of union membership status. Neo-liberals dislike unions and wish to diminish their ability to organize and advantageously negotiate contracts with employers. They disparage union demands that all employees who the receive benefits of union work pay their fair share. Neo-liberals cast these complaints in legal language rights, which resonates among Americans. In 2014, GALLUP found that 71% of those polled approve of RTWLs because they agree with proponents that no American "should be required to join any private organization, like a labor union, against his will." RTWL advocates such as The National Right to Work Legal Defense Foundation remind workers that the Foundation defends the workers' right to personally bargain with employers, and celebrates the right of every American to employment without the government compelling them to join a union. For Neo-liberals, workers' labor power is their exclusive private property and the law should insure its unrestricted sale to employers. In contrast, Marxists argue that appeals to a right to sell labor power rest upon an established a capitalist conception of private property, which is a structural basis of the capitalist wage system. Marx argues that capitalist law invests workers with an exclusive ownership and control over their labor power. However, upon exchanging that labor power (as a commodity) for money (wages), it becomes the private property of the employer. It is upon these dimensions of ownership rights that Marx's bases his class explanation of the exploitive and alienating capitalist economic system. These rights obtain meaning and scope within a capitalist legal superstructure, described by Gerald Allen Cohen as "a set of non-economic institutions, notably the legal system and the state." (p. 216) This legal order defines rights within the capitalist economic structure (the forces and social relations of production), and institutionalizes private property rights and production relations in legal terms. The legal superstructure enshrines rights in way that insure the best "fit" between capitalist social relations and the prevailing forces of production to maximize the effectiveness of the prevailing productive forces. It is indispensible to capital that workers freely sell their labor power. The superstructure sanctions this right because capitalists wish to legally expedite a "free circulation of labor," which facilitates the centralization of sufficient labor power to maximally exploit the prevailing productive forces. Concerning the growing scale of agriculture and, with it, the end of "settlement laws" in Medieval Europe, Cohen explains: The productive forces demanded "large scale production on modern lines" with larger aggregation of labor, and therefore new material relations of production. These in turn required "free circulation of labor," the right to move, which was then denied. Since the law forbade movement, it was broken, ignored, and finally scrapped, new social production relations forming on its ruins. (p. 167) The legal superstructure determines the power relations of private property. It enables the good working order of the prevailing economic structure through legal means by establishing rights over the ownership and sale of labor power. RTWLs institutionalize a power asymmetry between employers and unions; financially encumbering unions and diminishing their ability to organize effectively and negotiate for improved wages and benefits from a position of financial strength. A central problem for Marxists who wish to explain RTWLs with reference to class dynamics is to recognize and avoid the biased preconceptions of capitalist rights talk. As Cohen suggests, "The problem…is to (i) formulate a non-legal interpretation of the legal terms in Marx's characterization of production relations, in such a way that (ii) we can coherently represent property relations as distinct from, and explained by, production relations ." (p. 219) [Author's italics] To do this, Cohen develops a "rights free" semantic that renders rights as "powers." Powers are just the ability of persons to do A, regardless of whether A is normatively a legal or moral act. A revealing way to explore how laws reflect capitalist power relations is to consider Cohen's three "dimensions of subordinate status." Cohen defines the working class as comprising people who (p. 69): 1) Produce for others [superiors] who do not produce for them 2) Within the production process,…are commonly subjected to the authority of the [superiors] 3) In so far as their livelihoods depend on their relations to their superiors,…tend to be poorer than [their superiors] To transform these dimensions in to talk of power, we simply replace the word "right" with a matching "power." Then, in order to divorce rights talk from powers, we also require that the: Possession of powers does not entail possession of the rights they match [nor vice versa]…Only the possession of a legitimate power entails the possession of the right it matches, and only the possession of an effective right entails the possession of its matching power. (p. 219) Considered in this way, the workers' right to sell their labor becomes the power to produce for their superiors, acquiesce to the authority of employers and managers, and generally be poorer than their superiors. Cohen makes clear the relevance of this perspective to class struggle: No superior has rights over his [the worker's] labor power. His subordination ensues because, lacking means of production, he can ensure his survival only by contracting with a capitalist whose bargaining position enables him to impose terms which effect the worker's subordination. Through unionization proletarians improve their bargaining position and their consequent lot in all three dimensions of subordination. When the reduction of subordination is substantial, we may also speak of a reduction of proletarian status. (p. 70) For unions to break free of the dimensions of capitalist subordination, organizing and worker solidarity are crucial. Cohen argues that workers can establish "a self-aware" group consciousness whose political dispositions reflect the Marxist critique (p. 77), one that views union membership outside of the Neo-liberal narrative of rights that dominates the American culture . This consciousness would realize that the right to private property remains a Neo-liberal legal construct whose function is to institutionalize beneficial social relations for the capitalist. The Economic Policy Institute reported on the benefits non-RTW states offer to workers and their unions. No matter how you slice the data, wages in RTW states are lower, on average, than wages in non-RTW states. As shown in great detail in Gould and Shierholz (2011), these results do not just apply to union members, but to all employees in a state. Where unions are strong, compensation increases even for workers not covered by any union contract, as nonunion employers face competitive pressure to match union standards. Likewise, when unions are weakened by RTW laws, all of a state's workers feel the impact If socialism intends to replace the economic structure of capitalism, these data suggest that opposing RTWLs leads to significant economic and political gains for workers. Socialist activists and union organizers struggling against the enactment of RTWLs can bolster their advocacy by illuminating that Neo-liberal semantic of rights that conceals the subordinating power relations of capitalism.

### L – International Law

#### The aff is a neoliberal response to a declining US led international order one that attempt to restructure its colonial nature

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It is widely agreed that the US-led liberal international order (LIO) is at the very least in transition, if not in crisis.1 This article raises a number of significant questions with the aim of clarifying the current conjuncture in the US-led LIO, with particular attention to the academic ‘theory’ (liberal internationalism) that underpins the system. Above all, it asks: is liberal internationalism a legitimating ideology more than it is a description or theoretical explanation of the existing system? I explore this question by considering several specific sub-questions, the cumulative effect of which is to provide pathways to address the main issue: How did we get here? Who built the order? What were the foundational principles in theory and practice? How has the international order’s leadership managed change within it since 1945? I address these questions by considering detailed examples of actual practice by US and allied elite leadership groups at key moments: first, in conceptualizing and building the order, both during and immediately after the Second World War, by exploring the creation of the South Korean state; and second, in looking at the management of change and challenges—in particular, the (re-)emergence of China as a Great Power. Both cases are claimed by leading liberal internationalists as primary examples of the successes of the LIO: hence, examining these cases in some detail allows us to compare liberal internationalist rationales—and the stated aims of policy-makers—with historical and contemporary evidence. The overall finding is that liberal internationalist thinking/theory is, in effect (albeit unconsciously on the part of its proponents), a legitimating ideology rather than an effective explanatory frame for understanding the way in which the LIO actually works. That conclusion is reached, in part, by suggesting the applicability of a rather different perspective on the operations of the LIO and US power: specifically, a synthesized Gramscian–Kautskyian framework, explained below. The key point is that the LIO is a class-based, elitist hegemony—strongly imbued with explicit and implicit racial and colonial/imperial assumptions—in both US domestic and foreign relations. At home, this analysis helps to explain in part the phenomenon of the ‘left behind’ white working/middle class, including the affluent but economically anxious voters whose salience on the right has transformed US politics since the Reagan revolution of the 1980s.2 Responding to the (minorities’) rights revolution of the 1960s, and the loss of economic opportunity and decline in living standards due to technological change and the global redistribution of industry,3 white working- and middle-class voters drifted towards the Republicans as the party of low taxes and fiscal conservatism.4 This delivered little in material terms, however; and, as inequality increased with market freedom and real wages stagnated, workers in the ‘rust belt’ and other areas grew increasingly dissatisfied with the status quo of establishment politics, their frustration exacerbated by anxieties about ethno-racial diversity and American identity as the United States moves towards a society in which whites are a minority.5 The result was the election as president in 2016 of Donald Trump on an overtly anti-conservative and barely concealed white identity platform at home and a programme of protectionism and non-interventionism—America First—abroad.6 Yet political dissatisfaction or disaffection was not confined to the political right.7 ‘Occupy Wall Street’ and other movements and groups vented their anger at the inequalities of power, wealth and income, particularly in the wake of the Iraq War and the 2008 financial crisis.8 In external policy, the analysis helps to explain the difficulty, perhaps the impossibility, of the US readily embracing a more diverse international order, as well as the character of that very embrace.9 Accepting nations of the global South on an equal footing may become a strategic necessity, but the process remains problematic given the racialized discourses of western power over the past several centuries, fortified in the United States by the experience of the slave trade, slavery, the ‘Jim Crow’ era, Orientalist views of Asians, and other factors.10 Class power helps to explain the strategic embrace of foreign elites as the sources of change and the agents of American influence, however diluted it may have been due to target states’ national interest considerations. Those at the apex of America’s hierarchies sought to forge alliances with and incorporate their foreign elite counterparts— with their full cooperation—in South Korea and China.11 Hence, the liberal internationalist ‘successes’ in the cases of South Korea and China must be qualified by considering the repercussions of developing market-oriented societies marked by economic inequality, rising social unrest and varying degrees of political repression. In ‘successful’ China and South Korea, as in India and other emerging powers, there remain major challenges underpinned by profound inequalities in power, wealth and income, associated with a politics that is frequently class-based but also heavily racialized and xenophobic.12 Why choose South Korea and China as key cases? Although these are two very different states, varying in global significance, and analysed at different periods of historical time, they do allow us to test out important claims made by liberal internationalists. South Korea is considered as a key test at the very birth of the US-led order—at a time when we might expect the new principles embodied in the UN, such as the rule of law, the lessons of the Nuremberg and Tokyo war crimes trials, the Geneva Conventions and the rights of civilians in combat zones, to be pursued with some determination if not fully achieved. Given the fervour of anti-colonialism at the time, and US claims to champion that cause, we might also expect the behaviour of the international system’s leading power to differ sharply from that of colonial rulers in what became known as the Third World. The case of South Korea tells us a great deal about the practical application of a new international system developed by US power within an international system of rules, applicable to hegemon and others alike, a key liberal internationalist claim. China’s integration into the US-led international system from the late 1970s also tells us a great deal about the character of the international order, especially about how significant change is managed within it and what the embrace of diversity means in practical terms. By the 1970s, the US-led order was facing challenges, of course—from West Germany and Japan, for example, and the oil-producing states—not to mention demands from the G77 for a New International Economic Order (NIEO), and was also recovering from defeat in Vietnam and the legitimacy crisis following the Watergate scandal. For liberal internationalists, the integration of China is claimed as a success story both for the liberal order and for China. Yet, without denying the country’s dramatic increase in economic power, I question the character of China’s success, given the high levels of internal turmoil and the extremes of inequality that are giving rise to major political and economic instability. China, then, is a test of the claim that the liberal order rewards societies as a whole; a Gramscian–Kautskyian counter-argument would suggest that it is largely the Chinese ruling elite and its business allies, not the mass of ordinary Chinese, who have been accommodated in the US-led international system. Liberal internationalism: theory, ideology, practice Liberal internationalism is an ambiguous, multifaceted approach to understanding, explaining, justifying and practising international politics. One aspect of it is as a positive theory taught in academic International Relations (IR), derived from liberalism as applied to international affairs, explaining how the foreign policies of leading states, especially the United States and Britain, work. It is also a normative world-view, used by some of its proponents to indicate what the world ought to look like and how it might, and frequently does, work. Liberal internationalism, therefore, is also a set of policies, institutions and established practices.13 As an IR theory, the key pillars of liberalism, as embodied in liberal societies, are limited government, individual freedom, private property, pluralism and tolerance, progress, institutions and cooperation for peace, and interdependence. As a theory of US foreign policy, which is the object of analysis here, it encompasses democratic values, economic interdependence, international institutions as a framework for cooperation in addressing global crises and problems, and the broad promotion of general welfare. Emerging historically from the era of rising anti-colonialism and anti-imperialism, with the United States and Britain in the lead, the US-led order laid claims to being opposed to colonial rule, and in favour of national and human rights, within a system of international power undergirded by rules binding hegemon and others alike. It was promoted not as a continuation of empire by other means, but as a new system based on universalistic principles applicable to all regardless of race, colour or history. For my immediate purposes, it is unnecessary to disentangle the positive from the normative, the theoretical from the practical, because this framework of thought emerges both from deep principles and also as a set of solutions to international problems, especially world wars. Hence, liberal internationalism is frequently referred to as Wilsonianism, after the internationalist programme promulgated by US President Woodrow Wilson after the First World War that included the formation of the League of Nations, the forerunner of the longer-lasting post-1945 United Nations system. I argue here that, as a theory, it operates as ideological legitimation even when its proponents offer reform; it justifies the status quo. In that regard it differs little overall from other theories like Marxism, for example, or realism. But because it is the principal system of ideas and practices, and ideals, that are used to explain, implement and defend the present international status quo, I would suggest that it elides too much to be fully validated beyond the circle of its proponents. Of course, it explains aspects of the world’s functioning; but its interpretation tends to be benign: crises and challenges are explained as resolvable within the system’s governing principles through socialization, integration and assimilation. I use the term liberal internationalism, then, as an amalgam to suggest that, while it is all of the above, upon reflection it serves within academia and in IR as a positive theory of how things actually are—that is, as the opposite of an ideology. It purports to be able to explain the world, at the same time as its adherents are normative supporters of the theory. I show that it is actually ideological, because it elides key factors of how the liberal world order actually works, and that other theories suggest better ways of explaining the world. In the next section of the article, I analyse liberal internationalist ideas and claims in more depth and more critically, with a view to identifying key elements of a more viable framework to explain the LIO—a critical theory influenced by the work of Antonio Gramsci and to some extent synthesized with the work of Karl Kautsky. The principal aim of this article is to identify the weaknesses of liberal internationalism in practice with the purpose of opening space for subsequent theorizing. In sum, what appears to be missing from liberal internationalism is any recognition of domestic power inequalities—such as those based on class and race—its broad attachment to (democratic) elitism, and its hierarchical approach to other powers, especially in the global South. While Wilsonian liberal internationalism is widely recognized as privileging a belief in the free movement of people, capital, goods and services, less attention has been given to its origins in a time when ‘international relations’ was overtly understood as ‘race relations’, and its consequent implication in managing overtly racialized imperial power after the First World War.14 The Wilson administration’s role in racially segregating the US federal government had its foreign policy counterpart in a belief in an eventual, but far distant, self-government of the colonies and opposition to a Japanese proposal for a racial equality clause in the charter of the fledgling League of Nations.15 The development of liberal internationalism, then, was symbiotically bound to Wilson’s conviction that US intervention in world affairs was essential, and to what were effectively parastatal organizations created both by the federal executive and by private foundations—the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, among others. Wilsonian ‘theory’ was practical, idealistic and ideological from the very beginning. It is also the case that, long after overt racial discourses became politically damaging, subliminal racial thinking remained—and (unconsciously) remains—a significant element of liberal internationalism, affecting its analyses of the politics of domestic and global demographic power shifts.16 Nevertheless, liberal internationalists are cosmopolitans—opposed to narrow nationalism and trade protectionism, within a US-led international system. But its core ideas—rule of law, superiority of the western idea (however lightly worn), a rules-based institutional order open to all, in principle—are deeply embedded in US political-intellectual elite think-tanks, university public policy schools, corporate media and the leaderships of both main political parties,17 the core of the white Anglo-Saxon Protestant establishment.18 Importantly, however, there are influential voices in the emerging powers and regions that support the liberal international order by calling for internal reform to take account of the changing distribution of global power away from the West and towards the ‘rest’.19 The upshot is a broad consensus around certain core ideas: that the post-1945 rules-based world order, whatever its weaknesses, serves the world well by spreading prosperity and maintaining peace; and that, although it cannot continue unreformed, the US-led system draws on deep resources—economic, military, systemic and ‘soft’—that bestow upon it continuing strengths to contain, engage, manage and socialize emerging powers. Charles Kupchan lists a range of problems requiring US leadership, even if only within a suitably reformed international system reflecting ‘the real distribution of power’.20 John Ikenberry of Princeton University, the leading proponent of this school of thought, makes significant claims as well as several unquestioned assumptions, undeveloped allusions to core powers’ violent and other connections with the periphery, and a number of significant silences. He claims, for example, that the United States is a fully functioning democracy, yet fails to acknowledge evidence of the power of racialized, class-based elites. For critical theorists, such as Robert Cox, Stephen Gill and Craig Murphy,21 the international relations of elites across states and societies operate to reproduce extant patterns of power and manage or engineer change to the benefit of elites in a generally zero-sum game in which broad masses and lower classes lose out. This is clearly a far cry from liberal internationalist claims associated with the benefits of globalization, notwithstanding proposed ameliorative remedies against the harshest effects. Likewise, claims about the centrality of the rule of law occlude consideration of significant violations in practice. The question of imperial power is hardly addressed, and there is a general Eurocentric neglect of the significance of global areas beyond the core to the ‘welfare’ and cohesion of the core itself. There is a clear link between Ikenberry’s overt theory of American democracy and its liberal-hegemonic world role. The United States, and the western order it built, is characterized as a pluralistic liberal market democracy that is broadly inclusive and tolerant of ethnic diversity. The US-built security community exhibits its leading state’s internal character as a plural one and, very significantly, one in which the United States is bound by rules.22 Yet liberal internationalists’ underlying assumptions effectively deny the findings of numerous well-researched studies challenging American democracy’s principal claims.23 As far as Ikenberry and Deudney (and many others) are concerned, the ‘western idea’ is a significant part of the strength of the US-led order.24 The West, a spectacularly successful ‘civilizational heritage’, was underpinned by America’s New Deal liberalism, and extended globally via Bretton Woods, the Marshall Plan and NATO. In effect, this vision and programme aimed to defuse domestic class conflict and the threat of war through ‘activist government, political democracy, and international alliance’. That system is in principle capable of assimilating emerging powers, given the universalism of its values and its tolerance of ethnic differences, although others joining this privileged grouping are expected to conform to its rules and accept US leadership. Western order is exclusive also because special rules apply within its zone of peace. Beyond it, conversely, other rules apply—cruder, neo-imperial and violent, although the implications of this contrast are left unaddressed.25 By drawing a line around the West, Ikenberry cuts off the rest of the world while addressing questions about the sources of world order which, empirically, lie in a symbiotic relationship between core and periphery. Yet, even within the ‘greater’ West, Japan and South Korea were not accorded the same treatment as western Europe.26 The LIO really was conceived and developed as a system of the West and the rest, in a zero-sum game. As Donald Tusk, President of the European Council, noted on Twitter in May 2017, the whole point of ‘Euro-Atlanticism’ was to ‘prevent post-West world order’.27 Yet the claim persists that this is no empire, despite America’s privileged place at the top of the ‘hierarchical political order’, because its hegemony is built on ‘consent’ and bounded by law. Power, which was necessary at the creation, faded away as consensual hegemony developed. This interpretation, of course, elides America’s overwhelming military superiority, including in and over Europe. Beyond Europe, however, Ikenberry concedes that American hegemony remained hierarchical, ‘with much fainter liberal characteristics’,28 again closing off an avenue of analytical and empirical analysis that might threaten the intellectual edifice of the LIO. The (unconsciously) racialized world-view of Ikenberry’s Eurocentrism is subtly buttressed by Walter Russell Mead’s exploration of the significance of superior Anglo-Saxons who win wars, build world structures, and govern efficiently owing to ethno-cultural, not biological, characteristics.29 Mead’s interpretation of Anglo-Saxonism makes it appear benign, assimilative and universal— a scaffolding to support Ikenberry’s more overtly institutional analysis. Assimilating minorities, however, is not embracing diversity—learning from other cultures and creating something new; it is maintaining conformity to the cultures of the powerful, dominant group.30 Looking to the future, as new global powers emerge, Mead advises America to both embrace and contain them, retaining military superiority should ‘rising’ powers become ‘opponents’.31 Mead complements the prescriptions of other liberal-realist internationalists, all seeking to incorporate, assimilate and mobilize emerging powers to absorb difference and produce conformity. The liberal view is challenged by scholars who argue that the New Deal order effectively represented a political compromise, made in order to attain class peace and greater productivity, that mainly benefited major corporations while incorporating organized labour and thereby drawing its teeth. The postwar settlement was a narrow one—excluding racial minorities, unskilled and unorganized labour, and women—and relied on war and a heavily militarized economy that arose with the war in Korea and led directly to that in Vietnam.32 Liberal internationalists’ accounts elide the class, gendered and racial bases of the order, both at home and abroad. Ikenberry paints an appealing picture of a liberal order that delivered material benefits and security to all, while also raising some doubts about the operation of the system, especially with regard to the inequality of rewards generated by globalization and its potential political consequences. Those consequences are regarded by Ikenberry as posing the greatest threats to the stability of the liberal order, laying bare a central mechanism and dynamic of the system itself: market-driven class inequality, exacerbated in a society in which racialized class politics is salient.33 Yet Ikenberry never mentions class, race or gender—an omission central to critical theories of the making of the LIO.34 The other key omission is the role played in building the order by violence and outright war—not just the Second World War but also the Korean War, the ‘hot’ war at the birth of the order that propelled the formation of NATO, the rearmament of Germany, the security alliance with Japan and indeed the US military– industrial complex.35 Accordingly, a key focus of consideration here is wartime planning for a new world order and the manner of its foundation as a direct result of military violence that violated the UN Charter, international law, the lessons of the Nuremberg and Tokyo war crimes trials, and the 1949 Geneva Conventions. Wars ‘out there’ secured the core ‘over here’.36 And, of course, what is referred to as benign ‘liberal internationalism’ is what Mark Mazower refers to as ‘imperial internationalism’—trying to maintain a global hierarchy established by centuries of colonial and semi-colonial rule over what is now called the global South.37 Finally, the construction of the postwar western order was constitutive of a political, social, economic and ideological ‘vital center’, as Schlesinger terms it38—opposed to both right-wing nationalists and left-wing anti-imperialists. This entailed the acceptance by core forces of the ‘New Deal order’ that the price of class harmony, stability and mobility at home was the export and continuation of inequality,39 and therefore military violence, on the periphery; and that the removal of vast quantities of raw materials required a global military basing strategy, both to protect allied trade and to deny it to adversaries.40 Ikenberry accurately notes that the internal character of the leading state in the liberal order has an impact on the international system it built; but I diverge from his presentation of this impact as the externalization of a democratic regime. He elides the racial, class and gendered character of American historical, economic and political development—including that of Wilsonianism itself.41 His conclusion, however, is accurate, even if he fails to recognize its significance in the building and maintenance of the liberal order: ‘Access to resources and markets, socioeconomic stability, political pluralism, and American security interests—all were inextricably linked.’42 The framework that may best fit the actual underlying engine of liberal orderbuilding and maintenance, however, must also incorporate understanding of the ‘soft’ processes of socialization or incorporation. Violence is a powerful tool, but always and everywhere it is connected with the processes of non-violent elite socialization and alliance-building. It is one of the great strengths of Ikenberry’s analysis of international order that elite socialization is considered so significant.43 Yet a critical view of elite socialization in the building and perpetuation of hegemony views it not as a reflection of a democratic and benign foreign policy, but as incorporation into hegemonic agendas or ‘domestication’.44 In the Gramscian perspective, capitalist Great Powers, including the United States, are deeply unequal at home and imperialistic abroad, ultimately pursuing the interests of their ruling classes and elites, whether embedded in private, public or state– private realms.45 Their hegemony is a combination of persuasion and coercion involving a ‘state–society complex’.46 Admittedly, liberalism gives an account of elite socialization processes that overlaps with Gramscian approaches. However, liberal approaches see it as relatively benign, politically neutral or representative of democracy/popular sovereignty.

### L – Precarity

#### The 1AC invests in a labor relations that shifts from collective to individual risk management a product of neoliberalism to forgo labor regulations

Van Dyk, S. (2018). Post-wage politics and the rise of community capitalism. Work, Employment and Society, 32(3), 528-545. Accessed 8/4/2024 CSUF JmB TDI

Much has been written about precarious work and job insecurity, with particular attention being paid to the deregulation of waged labour. This article shifts the focus beyond precarious paid employment to look at the governance and practice of non-waged work that contributes to maintaining the public infrastructure and securing livelihoods. There is currently a growing interest in and promotion of voluntary work, neighbourly help, sharing economies, active ageing, multi-generational co-housing projects as caring communities, prosumer activities and open-source projects. The argument put forward is that, although these activities are highly heterogeneous and seemingly unconnected, they are nonetheless pillars of a new post-waged work regime that ‘tops up’ and in some cases even replaces paid employment. This regime is fuelled by a new politics of community that offers values such as conviviality and voluntariness rather than monetary value in the form of wages. The prevailing view is that community spirit and voluntary activity are noble pursuits; meanwhile, the potential precariousness and the informality of these activities is quietly ignored – as is their systemic role in late modern capitalism. To be sure, neither the importance of non-waged work nor the recourse to communitybased ideas is entirely new. However, major socio-economic changes are bringing about a qualitatively new form of precarious post-wage regime. Taking up the Marxist-feminist argument that ‘capital’s lifeblood is unpaid work’, Dowling and Harvie (2014: 882) argue that we are witnessing ‘the attempt to extend the realm of unpaid work that can be appropriated’ (Dowling and Harvie, 2014: 882); yet this realm is itself being restructured by social, technological and demographic forces. Whereas (women’s) care work has increasingly come under critical scrutiny as an unwaged social resource (Daly and Lewis, 2000; Federici, 2012), the political economy of the post-waged work regime beyond private households has yet to be analysed. To explore these issues, this article offers a conceptual framework that brings together apparently unconnected phenomena. It posits the idea that the growing importance of post-waged work is fuelled by the bewildering multiplicity of activities involved and that the common factor underlying these activities is a new politics of community. Contrary to popular debates about the decline of wage labour and the rise of postcapitalism (Mason, 2015; Rifkin, 2014), it is argued that the post-wage regime does not transcend capitalism but instead provides a new basis for value extraction, appropriation and exploitation. Is there a new era of community capitalism on the horizon?1 The argument is developed in several stages.2 First, the socio-economic processes of transformation mentioned above are outlined briefly in order to indicate how they contribute to the post-wage regime. This is followed, second, by some general remarks on the appeal of the community concept. Third, the concept of post-waged work is clarified and explicated using examples of post-wage policies from the German context. Fourth, the diverse roots of the nascent post-wage regime are discussed: alongside a state-led politics of post-waged work, there is also a growing grassroots post-wage movement ‘from below’. The article argues that the affirmation of community connects the diverse actors with one another and might be a reason why the problematic implications of postwaged work tend to be overlooked. The article concludes by considering whether community capitalism might develop into a future hegemonic project. Social transformations leading to the rise of post-wage politics Without a doubt, fundamental changes to the welfare state in most industrialized countries are a key to understanding the growing importance of post-waged work. Although country-specific in practice, these changes generally involve a ‘decentralization of social policy’ (Möhle, 2001: 271), a ‘return of social insecurity’ (Castel, 2009: 21) and an ‘imperative to participate’ (Bröckling, 2005: 22). The existence of a social ‘safety net’ based on citizens’ rights and a ‘no questions asked’ approach is no longer taken for granted. There has been a transition from state-led provision to greater self-reliance and from collective to individual risk management. The politics of activation and retrenchment is accompanied by an underfunding of public social infrastructure (Gornig et al., 2015: 1023) along with a state-led deregulation of labour relations, resulting in the rise of precarious work (Castel and Dörre, 2009). There is a wealth of literature on welfare state change based on activation and austerity that links these shifts to the revival of informal, community-building mutual support and voluntary work as a gap filler (e.g. Lessenich, 2008; Milligan and Conradson, 2011; Muehlebach, 2012). However, the heterogeneity of post-waged work is rarely addressed, and many authors identify welfare state retrenchment as the driving force behind community governance. Current social transformations are far more multi-layered than this suggests, though. For one thing, fundamental changes are underway in gender relations, with more and more women entering the labour market. As a result, the amount of time available to them to serve as a full-time, unpaid ‘secret resource of social policy’ (BeckGernsheim, 1991: 66, author’s translation) is significantly reduced; as empirical research shows, men do not step in to fill the gap (Koppetsch and Speck, 2015). However, the true extent of the crisis of social reproduction (Jürgens, 2010) only comes to light if demographic changes are addressed concurrently. Of course, the widespread notion of an ‘old age crisis’ (World Bank, 1994) is problematic, since it suggests a naturalized crisis rooted in old age itself and not in the socio-economic conditions of the ageing society. However, in Germany, for example, about 3.4 million elderly people are dependent on care while there is an estimated shortfall of 500,000 professional care workers (Haubner, 2017; Prognos, 2012). Even considering such dramatic changes, the picture of the emerging post-wage regime is still not complete: current post-wage practices are further fuelled by technological change, first and foremost by digitization and new virtual networks and communities. The ‘internet of things’ (Rifkin, 2014) increasingly connects everything and everyone, relying on diverse forms of non-waged activities. Users establish self-help and counselling networks, they act as prosumers and share information to improve goods and services, they offer music, cars and flats on internet platforms, and they share knowledge. Although there is disagreement over which of these activities should count as labour and which as social interaction (Terranova, 2000), Srnicek convincingly identifies data as the raw material of the digitized economy ‘and the activities of users [as] the natural source of this raw material’ (Srnicek, 2017: 40, emphasis in original).3 Finally, and importantly, the economic crises from 2008 onwards are proving to be a threat to the hegemony of neoliberal capitalism, creating a new context for the political economy of post-waged work and community politics. These multiple crises, accompanied by ‘the alchemy of austerity’ (Clarke and Newman, 2012: 299), have aggravated social inequalities and divisions. Even though Crouch (2011) rightly identified ‘the strange non-death of neoliberalism’ immediately after the crisis erupted and even though there is ample evidence of the ongoing influence of neoliberal ideas and politics (Bischoff and Steinitz, 2016: 67f.; Schmidt and Thatcher, 2013), the system’s hegemony has come to be contested. Social protests around the world (Sitrin and Azzelini, 2014), the electoral victories of radical left-wing parties in Greece and Spain, controversies within the European Union about (German-led) austerity policy, and the problematization of growing inequalities by former neoliberal ‘hardliners’ such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF, 2014) – these are signs of a dwindling hegemony and of ‘a problem of consent’ (Clarke and Newman, 2012: 306) regarding radical austerity. At the same time, the current rise of right-wing political movements and parties may herald ‘the end of progressive neoliberalism’ (Fraser, 2017), including its emancipatory promises. Against this backdrop, it shall be discussed whether community capitalism might evolve into a new hegemonic project that stabilizes capitalism on a new basis.

## Impact

### ! – Extinction

#### Capitalism makes extinction inevitable- biosphere collapse, warming, fascist backsliding, and resource conflict

Dr. Ted Trainer 22, Conjoint Lecturer, Social Sciences, University of New South Wales, "Where Is Capitalism Taking Us? 2: The Longer Term Trajectory," in Capitalism: Why We Should Scrap It, Chapter 8, 03/07/2022, pg. 96-104. [language edited]

Let us step back and consider again the global situation sketched in Chapter 3. It was explained that the increasingly serious range of problems, including environmental destruction, resource depletion, deprivation of the Third World, conflict over access to resources and markets, and the deterioration of social cohesion, are direct consequences of the fact that there is far too much producing and consuming going on. The main argument in this chapter is that this society is not capable of dealing with this situation, and that it will inevitably culminate in the more or less catastrophic breakdown of society on a global scale. Before detailing that argument some aspects of the trajectory should be considered further. What will happen? Following is an attempt to sketch the most likely trajectory ahead. The multi-factored limits to growth noose will tighten, hopefully slowly but probably too quickly. Many of its elements are already gathering force and compounding to increase difficulties towards a time of great and terminal troubles. As explained, the key determinants of our near-term fate seem to be the future of fracking and of debt. Most likely is a relatively sudden end of the debt fuelled tight-oil venture which then triggers a global debt crisis and a far more serious global economic collapse than the 2008-2009 GFC. There are varied expectations regarding the time scale; Ahmed (2017) explains why it could be a matter of a decade or so before the Middle Eastern failed states become unable to maintain oil exports. Tverberg and several others have a similarly short-term expectation. Randers (2012) however expects the disruption to impact around 2070. Immiseration. But the most important determinant of our fate is probably not directly to do with biophysical limits. It is the extent to which the long-suffering and docile masses will go on tolerating how they are being treated. For at least 6,000 years people have been astoundingly passive, putting up with tyrants, kings, and general rule by usually brutal and greedy elites. But over the last two or three decades people in rich countries have become seriously discontented with their situation, recognising that governments do not attend to their needs. One result is the worldwide decline in belief in democracy. Others are the advent of Trump, Brexit, right-wing populism and support for fascism. Guy Standing analyses this well (2012), pointing to the way financialisation is replacing Neoliberalism with domination by the accumulation of assets on which rents can be drawn while casting more and more people into the “precariat”. This is a class struggling with insecurity and personal debt. The hard-won achievements of old labour, secure jobs and good wages etc., are being swept away and replaced by “gig” economies in which the precariat suffers high indebtedness and struggles to find intermittent work, pays high rents (e.g., for mortgages, accommodation, student fees.) Below them is the “lumpenproletariat” of chronically unemployed, aged, infirm, homeless and excluded. The above chapter on the US points to the Walmart-gutted towns, impoverished casual labour, rural poverty and dying country towns, and the social wreckage generating the opioid crisis and other harmful effects. It is not surprising that this produced such support for a Presidential candidate promising to “drain the Washington swamp” seen to be responsible for the situation. The decline in regard for democracy that is underway is another consequence of immiseration. People are becoming less satisfied with the capacity or willingness of the system to attend to their problems and fix things. The Australian National University’s recent Australian election survey shows distrust of politicians rose from an already high 63% in 2014 to 76% in 2016. Another question found 56% think the federal government is run for a few big interests. (Yeginsu, 2018.) Tverberg (2021) sees how low disposable household income is now a major determinant of what is happening to the oil industry. The crisis of low prices and rampant bankruptcies in the petroleum industry has not been due to running into scarcity as the “peak oil” thesis once predicted, but to falling demand because large and increasing numbers of people cannot afford to purchase goods at previous rates. This is a most important and somewhat overlooked causal factor in the discussion of global economic woes. Consider the following evidence on it. There has been negligible increase in household disposable income for 60-80% of Australian households since 2012, while prices have risen and the income of the rich has risen considerably. Similarly in the US real incomes for most workers have barely risen in 40 years and the minimum wage has been at $US15,000 p.a. for years. (Hutchins 2018.) Stasse (2020) refers to literature on “…an unprecedented squeeze on living standards for ordinary households.” Wright (2019) says that in the US “…average hourly pay is below what it was in 1973; 40 percent of adults lack the savings to pay for a $400 emergency expense.” The shrinking middle class and rising precariat class are part of the phenomenon, and it is evident in the rise of household debt, now very high in Australia. Karp (2020) says in the US households’ debt-to-income ratio was less than 40 percent in 1950 but is now120 percent, and since 1985 the wealth share of the bottom 90 percent of adults declined from 40 percent to 27 percent. Indices of increasing hardship at the bottom are clear. In the UK. MacFarlane (2019) reports, “Rough sleeping in England has increased by 165 per cent, while homeless deaths have more than doubled. The number of people using food banks has increased to 1.6 million … up from just 26,000 in 2009. 14 million people are living in poverty … the UK population is still 1.6 per cent poorer than it was more than a decade ago on average.” Menadue (2020) reports that in Australia, “Homelessness is also increasingly significantly. It rose by 30% in the decade to 2016.” These observations point to a killing of the goose that was laying golden eggs, a failure to attend to the way the drive to extract as much wealth as possible eventually undercuts the capacity to go on siphoning it out, by leaving most people with too little purchasing power. This situation is a consequence of the success of the capitalist class. Their dominance has meant that they have been able to ride over the resistance that might have got them to make sufficient concessions to defuse the problems they were causing. Streek (2014) puts it in terms of capitalism becoming its own worst enemy. “It has eliminated criticism and oppositional moves, which would have pushed it to adapt…” The accumulating power has also led to corruption, which in time reduces a system’s capacity to respond to challenges. Streek (2014) points to the way the GFC revealed “…rating agencies being paid by the producers of toxic securities to award them top grades; offshore shadow banking, money laundering and assistance in large-scale tax evasion as the normal business of the biggest banks with the best addresses; the sale to unsuspecting customers of securities constructed so that other customers could bet against them; the leading banks worldwide fraudulently fixing interest rates and the gold price, and so on.” He notes the billions of dollars in fines for these offences which several large banks have had to pay recently, including by some major Australian banks. In more recent years several inquiries and revelations have detailed similar criminal behaviour on the part of mainstream institutions, especially via the Australian Banking royal commission, and exposures of global tax haven and laundering operations. The advent of cannibalism. Collins (2021) and others point to the way the economy’s increasing difficulties have led it to enter a “catabolic” or “cannibalistic” phase. As the capacity to do good business producing useful things deteriorates, investors turn to activities that plunder the economy. It is as if a hardware firm has to start selling the corrugated iron on its own roof to stay in business. The illicit drug industry and the Mafia are similar; rather than producing new wealth effort goes into extracting previously produced wealth. Much financial activity is of this nature, such as “short selling”, “asset stripping” and getting hold of assets that enable rents to be extracted. In the GFC a lot of money was lent to home buyers incapable of meeting the payments, because investors could not find less risky outlets. When the borrowers could not pay their interest instalments their houses were repossessed by the banks and sold off. Similarly in the US some of the money in the worker’s pay packet is put into a pension fund run by the corporation, to be paid back on retirement, but many corporations have taken these funds to invest, and “lost” them. Often they were lent to smart operators in the financial sector to put into speculative ventures, siphoning out fees in the process. Sometimes money is borrowed to buy weak firms, arrange for them to borrow too much and thus drive them into bankruptcy, and then sell them off, and because the pension money has become an asset of the firm it goes to the lenders and is lost to the workers who earned it and set it aside. So, accumulation and profit making are being kept up by activities which enrich big and smart investors (lenders) by getting hold of the wealth of little/naive investors (borrowers), through granting them loans they cannot repay. Another common mechanism is simply commercialising activities that the state once carried out without charge. This is an aspect of “financialisation” discussed in Chapter 4. A good example is where students must now pay for college and university education, meaning large loans must be taken out and large interest payments then flow to lenders from the earnings of parents and students. Again the process does not involve lending to produce anything, it just enables wealth previously produced to be acquired by lenders. Collins (2021) and others see this process accelerating as the ever-increasing volumes of accumulated capital find it increasingly difficult to find investment opportunities in producing anything of value. Streek (2014) says, “… the struggle for the last remaining profit opportunities is becoming uglier by the day.” Collins (2021) says. “… catabolic capitalists will stoke the profit engine by taking over troubled businesses, selling them off for parts, firing the workforce, and pilfering their pensions.” As difficulties increase for governments and their revenues decrease they will come under greater pressure to give business the conditions it wants in order to stimulate economic activity. “Regulatory agencies that once provided some protection from polluters, dangerous products, unsafe workplaces, labour exploitation, identity theft, and financial fraud will be dismantled … Public safety will be stripped down, privatized, and sold to those who can still afford it. Court budgets will shrivel, privatized prisons will exploit convict labour, and police will seldom respond to everyday crimes. Instead, private security firms and gated communities will guard the wealthy … catabolic capitalists will pick over the carcasses of bankrupt governments. Crumbling public transportation and decaying highways will be transformed into private thoroughfares, maintained by convict labour or indentured workers. After pressuring bankrupt governments to sell off public utilities, water storage, and waste management systems, corporations will deliver these essential services only to the businesses and communities who can afford them. And, as public schools and libraries go broke, exclusive private academies will employ a fraction of the jobless teachers and professors to educate a shrinking class of affluent students.” End game. A number of analysts see the foregoing phenomena as aspects of a terminal decline, partly driven by increasing resource and ecological difficulties, partly by worsening inequality and “immiseration”, and partly by deteriorating “legitimacy”. Rising discontent in Europe and the US is evident in support for populist and fascist movements. Blame is usually put on the wrong targets, especially immigrants. That the squalor is due to capitalism is not recognised, thanks largely to the weakness of Left parties and the fine work done over generations by those keeping capitalist ideology in good shape. In my lectures on Marx I point to a list of things which I and others think he got wrong. But there are some extremely important things I think he got right. One is that capitalism is shot through with serious contradictions such as the fact that the interests of workers clash with those of the class that owns capital. Another extremely important point he made is that as the system matures immiseration will eventually increase. This is what we are seeing now (Marx’s timing was way out.) As the rich and super-rich cream off increasing proportions of wealth the masses are increasingly having to struggle to get by, and are therefore less able to keep up the purchasing that is the life-blood of the system. And they are more and more discontented. Most importantly, he saw that these tendencies would result in the system’s self-destruction. The question is, when will people finally cease putting up with what the system does to them? When will they realise that the system is not designed to work for them? When will they see that it cannot but worsen their situation as time goes by? When will they realise what is causing their plight? The tightening limits will intensify the immiseration as governments are forced to cut spending on welfare etc. and to drive worker’s conditions down and give more favours to the rich in order to get the economy going. Governments struggling to control dissent and to help capital are very likely to adopt fascist options, but unlike in the 1930s, now the materials necessary to maintain armies, large bureaucracies and secret police and stage mass rallies will not be available, so descent towards a warlord dominated feudalism becomes plausible. In some Third World regions and even US cities this seems to be happening, for instance in the form of drug gangs. Many analysts have tried to draw attention to where these limits are taking us. Mason (2003) for instance sees the many problematic trends culminating in “The 2030 Spike”, the title of his book. As noted above, among those who discuss the multi-dimensional global breakdown likely to be brought on before long by limits and scarcity are Korowicz (2012), Morgan (2013), Kunstler (2005), Greer (2005), Bardi (2011), Duncan (2013), Gilding (2011), Randers (2012) and Streeck (2014). Some foresee more or less totally catastrophic collapse, the end of Western civilisation, with a die-off of billions. The next collapse might not be the final one; some foresee “... a long and bumpy road down”. Randers (2012) expects the time of troubles to be around 2070. However, Ahmed (2017), Tverberg (2021), Mason (2003) and other “collapsologists” give reasons to expect it to be before 2030. The hope must be for a protracted Goldilocks depression, one that is not so severe as to destroy the chances of salvage, but savage enough to jolt people into recognizing that they must shift to the local, cooperative and frugal self-sufficiency detailed in Chapter 10. The situation will at best be confused and chaotic, with governments and “leaders” continuing to not understand the fundamental causes and quick to blame the wrong things. The present tendencies to right-wing populism and fascism are likely to gain momentum, supported by many in privileged classes who will call for repressive measures to restore order and protect their security and property. Many in angry lower classes will want strong leaders willing to break rules. (A recent survey found this to already be true of a majority of UK people; Walker, 2019.) Capitalism will again morph into its fascist form whereby an authoritarian central government rules in cooperation with a selected few big capitalist firms. It is highly unlikely that there will be sober, clear headed rational thinking about causes and solutions. Poor and struggling governments will be even less capable of analysing or dealing with the situation effectively than they are now. The international possibilities are similarly disturbing. Dominant powers will surely become more aggressive in their efforts to control sources of scarce resources and markets. Third world governments wallowing in debt are likely to allow corporations to cause greater environmental destruction and to generate revenue, and to resort to increasingly repressive measures to control dissent over deteriorating living conditions. (Ahmed, 2017). The problems cannot be solved. The conventional assumption is that the problems can and will be solved by the institutions and processes of present society, such as by parliaments implementing effective policies in line with international agreements and resolutions, and ordinary people accepting legislated adjustments to their circumstances. But from the perspective of The Simpler Way, this expectation is now clearly mistaken. Given the foregoing account of the nature and magnitude of the problems, the institutions and political process of this society are not capable of recognising the situation and rationally facing up to it and making the enormous and difficult changes required to solve it. Consider the following reasons. The enormity of the changes required. Even the Degrowth literature generally fails to adequately represent the magnitude and difficulty of the reductions required. (Again, for the numerical case see Trainer, 2021a). Chapter 3 explained that rich-world volumes of production and thus consumption of resources must be cut by up to 90%, meaning that most of the present quantities of industry, transport, travel, construction, shopping, exporting, investing etc. have to be phased out. How could this possibly be done? This is the “degrowth conundrum”. It cannot be a matter of just closing a coal mine and transferring the workers to other jobs, because the amounts of production, work and jobs have to be cut dramatically. It would have to involve the creation and massive implementation of totally new social structures and procedures, whereby most people could live well without producing anywhere near so much as before. This could not be done unless it involved historically totally unprecedented, massive and rapid cultural change, to widespread public understanding and acceptance of the extremely radically new systems and values. And governments cannot impose or make the new ways work. Chapter 10 will make it clear that this could only be done by conscientious citizens who are eager to build and operate the new local systems. There isn’t time Even if the understanding and the will existed, it is difficult to imagine that the enormous required could be carried out in a few decades. They involve reversing what have been some of the fundamental ideas and values that have driven Western civilization over the last two hundred years, and scrapping and replacing vast systems and structures. Yet it is probable that the following three main global threats each give us no more than ten years. Carbon. According to various estimates the “carbon emissions budget” associated with a 67% chance of limiting temperature rise to under 1.5 degrees will have been exhausted within about twelve years. (Levin, 2018, Steffen, 2020.) Many insist that this one-in-three chance of failure is far too high to be acceptable. A more responsible target would significantly reduce the budget, and therefore the time left to move off fossil fuels. Note also that these estimates do not take into account the positive feedbacks, such as warming causing loss of snow causing absorption of more solar heat. Currently there are around 490 new coal-fired power stations being built around the world, with 790 planned. (Global Energy Monitor, 2020.) By 2050 energy demand is likely to be around 890 EJ/y, 56% higher than at present. (Minqui, 2019.) Input from renewable sources would have to increase by 27 EJ every year but the current rate of increase is only 0.72 EJ/y. (Our World in Data, 2019.) This equates to building 1.5 million 2 MW wind turbines every year, costing over 6% of world GDP not including the cost of energy storage, grid strengthening and distribution. And plant built now will probably only last twenty years, less than half as long as coal-fired plant. There will be at least formidable difficulties in developing satisfactory renewable energy solutions for emissions from the 80% of demand made up by the heavy land transport, agriculture, military, shipping and aircraft sectors. (Trainer, 2017.) These numbers would seem to completely rule out any possibility that acceptable emissions targets can be met in the time available. Petroleum. It is likely that a major and permanent collapse in oil availability will occur, possibly within a decade. (Ahmed, 2017.) It is generally recognized that the supply of conventional petroleum peaked around 2005 and has declined significantly since then. World supply has continued to increase due to the remarkable rise in output from the advent of “fracking” in the US “tight-oil” regions. However, there are strong reasons for expecting this source to peak and decline soon. (Hughes 2016, Cunningham 2019, Whipple 2019, Cobb, 2019.) T0 2020 the major producers have not made a profit in any year of operation while accumulating a debt of over one quarter of a trillion dollars. It seems that an oil price high enough for producers to break even is too high for the economy to avoid recession. Unless there are major technical breakthroughs reducing costs, which are not thought to be likely, at some point in the near future lenders will probably cease providing capital to the fracking sector. A major factor increasing costs is the decline in the energy return on the energy that has to be invested to produce energy. There is a strong case that it will either not be possible for renewable energy sources to replace fossil fuels or that it will be too expensive. (Trainer, 2017.) As noted above, only 20% of demand is in the form of electricity, which is the easiest task. It will be much more costly to run heavy trucks, farm tractors, mining equipment, ships and aircraft on renewables. Ahmed (2017) presents a persuasive case that most Middle East oil-producing nations are encountering such serious ecological, food, water, population growth and climate problems that their capacity to export oil could be largely eliminated within ten years. Meanwhile the amount of energy it takes to produce a barrel of oil is increasing significantly (Brockway, et al., 2019). Despite these alarming observations the precariousness and urgency of the petroleum situation is attracting little attention. Debt. After remaining more or less stable for decades, global debt has quadrupled since 1999. (Hienberg, 2018.) It is now equivalent to around three times global GDP, is far higher than before the GFC, and is regarded by various economists as inevitably bound to crash soon. (Brown, 2018, Lu, 2020.) In addition to these three major factors many other biophysical difficulties are reducing the capacity of economies to deal with the accelerating problems tightening the limits noose, including water scarcity, fisheries decline, deteriorating mineral grades, accelerating costs of ecological disruption such as climate change, agricultural soil damage and loss, chemical poisoning of ecosystems, species loss, ocean acidification and sea rise. A [collection] ~~holocaust~~ of extinctions appears to have begun, now possibly including insects and thus jeopardising pollination of food crops. These and other factors will cut into the diminishing resources available to apply to solving system difficulties. Existing political institutions are not capable of making changes of the magnitude required. Our institutions are reasonably good at making small changes. Elections are usually won by small margins and therefore governments cannot afford to irritate significant numbers of voters or they will be thrown out. But they cannot adopt policies that go against the vital interests of significant sectors. This situation is partly a consequence of the self-interested, competitive, individualistic ethos built into present cultural and political systems. Burdens are not shared fairly or appropriately but are typically left to groups least able to avoid them. Because dealing with the global predicament effectively would be seen to involve painful adjustments on a massive scale people would be acutely sensitive to perceived inequities in the changes they were called upon to make. Fierce resistance, disputes and appeals would surely proliferate over the new options presented, the changes in locations, and especially the dramatically reduced levels of income, purchasing and consumption. Authoritarian governments can force big changes through but current democracies are much less able to. The problems interact, compound and positively feedback. Often solving one problem increases difficulties in other areas, especially by increasing energy demand. More importantly, problems often have multiplicative interactive effects. For instance, Ahmed’s analysis of Middle Eastern oil producers shows how climate change, drought, rising temperatures, soil loss and rapid population growth are combining to generate intractable challenges for governments. As their capacity to cope declines they resort to repression in an effort to contain discontent and maintain order, which feeds back to generate more discontent, further disrupting productive systems and capacity to cope. Thus the difficulties now being experienced due to climate change are likely to be swamped soon by a tidal wave of many compounding positive feedback effects. Several analysts including those listed above have detailed how the combined effects are likely to trigger sudden and catastrophic breakdown in the global economy.

### ! – Imperialism

#### Global capitalism is in a crisis – its only response is a drive for resources through resources and economic imperialism

Robinson, W. I. (2024). Imperialism, Anti-Imperialism, and Transnational Class Exploitation. Science & Society, 88(3), 319-329. Accessed 8/3/2024 TDI

Imperialism has become among the left what Raymond Williams referred to as a keyword—the problem of the meaning is “inextricably bound up with the problems it was being used to discuss.” For Williams (1976, 13–14), these words “could not really be thought through and some of them cannot even be focused unless we are conscious of the words as elements of the problem.” If imperialism, as one such keyword, “is understood primarily as an economic system or external investment and the penetration and control of markets and sources of raw materials, political changes in the status of colonies or former colonies will not greatly affect description of the continuing economic system as imperialist,” he concludes. “Like any word which refers to fundamental social and political conflicts, imperialism cannot be reduced, semantically, to a single proper meaning. Its important historical and contemporary variations of meanings point to real processes which have to be studied in their own terms” (Ibid., 131–132). What then is the “problem” of imperialism, the “real processes that have to be studied in their own terms”? In the summer of 2023, I published three essays (Robinson, 2023a; 2023b; 2023c) that attempted to answer the question of imperialism and anti-imperialism in the context of the radical changes in world capitalism over the past half a century and of the current escalation of geopolitical conflict. Politically, I critiqued a self-declared “anti-imperialist” left that readily condemns capitalist exploitation and repression around the world when it is practiced by the United States and other Western powers or governments they support, yet turns a blind eye to, or even defends repressive, authoritarian, and dictatorial states simply because these states face hostility from, or are in competition with, Washington. This “anti-imperialist” left insists that there is one single enemy, the United States and its allies, in a Manichean tale of “the West and the rest” that has substituted a realist for a Marxist political and theoretical framework. As socialists we cannot oppose imperialism while legitimating capitalist exploitation and repression in the name of fighting a U. S. empire. I will try to further within the space constraints here the argument put forward in my summer 2023 essays. We need, I maintain, a profound rethinking of imperialism and anti-imperialism. I am by no means convinced that we should retain the term, if not the concept, of imperialism in place of coming up with new ways to conceive and speak of transnational exploitation and political and military interventions of states in relation to that exploitation. The critique of imperialism and anti-imperialism must start from an analysis of the transformations that world capitalism has undergone through capitalist globalization. Global capitalism is a new epoch in the ongoing and open-ended evolution of world capitalism characterized by the rise of truly transnational capital, the integration or re-integration of every country, often violently, into a globally integrated system of production, finance, and services, and an unprecedented concentration and centralization of capital on a world scale in transnational capital (see, inter alia, Robinson, 2004; 2008; 2014; 2018). The leading fractions among local capitalists from around the world have been swept up into these globalized circuits of accumulation. There are now powerful contingents of the transnational capitalist class (TCC) in most countries of the world. It is through this globally-integrated production, financial, and service system that global capital controls resources and exploits global labor. While the TCC as the hegemonic fraction of capital on a world scale is not tethered to territory and while it has to rely on and also contend with national states, it does not identify with any one nation-state. Colonialism and imperialism are the historical processes through which capitalism expanded outward and conquered the world over the past five centuries. Capitalism is by its very nature expansionary. A state of stasis is a state of crisis. Its agents must constantly enlarge the frontiers of accumulation, impose the value form on more and more spaces, seize new resources, exploit fresh supplies of labor. In this sense, imperialism refers to an economic (class) relationship facilitated by extra-economic political, military, and ideological processes. Lenin and his generation of Marxists analyzed world capitalism in an earlier moment of its evolution. They advanced not a nation-state but a class-based theory of imperialism. They analyzed the rise of powerful national capitalist monopolies, the competition among these to seize new markets overseas for over-accumulated capital and new sources of labor and raw materials, and conflict and rivalry among these national capitalist classes through their respective states. Their analysis was not wrong; it is outdated. As capital expanded out violently from its original Western heartland it plundered and exploited the colonial regions and extracted out of them surplus value that was accumulated in metropolitical centers. But these relations of appropriation and exploitation, and the subsequent flows of surplus value, now take place all over the world and do not resemble the earlier structure in which Western colonial capital simply syphoned out surplus value from the colonies and deposited it back in colonial coffers. We need to theorize capitalist expansion and the worldwide class relations of exploitation in new ways; in particular, we need to ask who is doing the exploitation and who is being exploited? If imperialism refers to the appropriation of resources and the exploitation of labor by capital across national borders and the flow of the surplus value therein extracted back across borders then there is no doubt that such imperialism now occurs all over the world, in multiple directions, and there are numerous imperialist states, including in the former Third World. This proposition is problematic — not, however, because it implicates so-called “oppressed nations” in the former Third World in the global webs of imperialist exploitation, but because, to begin with, it frames imperialism in terms of oppressed and oppressor (or imperialist) nations. A nation cannot exploit another nation. This is an utter reification. Classes exploit and are exploited. Imperialism has always been a violent class relation not between countries but between global capital and global labor, a class project mediated, however, through a world economy politically divided into national jurisdictions and by the uneven accumulation of capital on a world scale. Our challenge is how to understand this relationship in the contemporary era of globalized capitalism, that is, the relationship of transnational capital and class to the state, and specifically to the nation-state. With the rise of powerful contingents of the TCC in many countries of the former Third World, transnational capitalists from so-called “oppressed nations” appropriate resources and exploit labor around the world. As I noted in my summer 2023 essays, this transnational capital is not just “Northern” or “Triad” capital. It includes the rise of powerful transnational corporate and financial conglomerates from the formerly colonized countries that now export their capital around the world in the same way as European imperial powers did in Lenin’s day.1 The Brazilian-based transnational conglomerate, Vale, one of the world’s largest integrated mining companies, ceased being a “Brazilian” company in the twenty-first century (Aguiar, 2023). It has operations on every continent and exploits tens of thousands of workers in the traditional North American and European core. But there are countless other examples. The Indian-based Tata conglomerate is the single largest manufacturing employer (and therefore capitalist exploiter of labor) in the United Kingdom (The Economist, 2011). Chinese-based corporations operate in every continent, including throughout North America and Europe, where they exploit U. S. and European workers. Mexican-based transnationals invest throughout Latin and North America and beyond, exploiting workers of all nationalities. Gulf-based capitalists export capital around the world. Moreover, when we set about to analyze the structure of global capital we find an expanding complex of interlocked networks that crisscross the world and a very high degree of transnational integration, especially through the circuits of global finance. But this frame remains problematic. It leads to the conclusion that China, Brazil, India, and so on, are now imperialist powers, each with more or less power and exploitation in the international order in a hierarchy of imperialists and the relationships among them. Were we to be systematic with such an approach we would have to conclude that few countries are not imperialist. In recent years the central African nation of Rwanda has sent troops to the Central African Republic and Mozambique, and will likely deploy more to Benin and elsewhere, to fight local insurgencies. Financed but only in part by the European Union, these troops have opened up space for Rwandan corporations to seize local mining, land, and industrial concessions. As The Economist (2023) reports: “These deployments appear to serve two broad aims: to make money and to influence people. [The] payback appears to be through Rwandan firms getting rights to mine minerals. [Rwandan president] Mr. Kagame acknowledged as much, saying that since Mozambique and the Central African Republic had no money, they had agreed to ‘find another way’ to compensate Rwanda. A number of Rwandan companies have piled into both countries. Many of them are linked to Crystal Ventures, a sprawling holding company that is the investment arm of Rwanda’s ruling party. Wherever the army goes, Crystal Venture follows.” The article goes on to note that more than 100 Rwandan companies — from agribusiness and mining to consumer goods and retail — are registered in the Central African Republic and are also making deals in Mozambique.2 It is clear that we need to replace the notion of imperialism as a relationship among countries in favor of an analysis that focuses on the webs of transnational class exploitation mediated through states. My detractors will raise at least two objections: the center-periphery structure of world capitalism and the massively outsized role of U. S. control and interventionism around the world. On the first, there remains an international division of labor and a center-peripheral structure of transnational class relations forged through the centuries of colonialism and imperialism. While this structure has been experiencing substantial transformations that I cannot address here,3 it remains true that labor is more intensely exploited in the former Third World and the absolute savagery of capital more fully on display. Most on the left see the greater intensity of exploitation, or super-exploitation, to follow Marini, as something that benefits only capitalists from core countries, or worse still, they see it has something that benefits nations. Yet the relationship of the core-periphery structure of the world economy to global capitalism cannot be understood in terms that correspond to earlier centuries, and especially not in terms of some bourgeoisie in peripheral regions oppressed by metropolitan capital and prepared to join class alliances with workers and peasants of the countries where they (but not necessarily their capital) reside. The toiling masses of Africa are superexploited by transnational capital. But who is doing this exploitation is not an “oppressor nation” and not necessarily Western-based capital but transnational capitalists from around the world, including by Rwandan state and private capitalists. Chinese private and state corporations control most of the production of cobalt in the Congo, in the process brutally exploiting Congolese miners and plundering the country. That cobalt goes back to industrial circuits in Asia where iPhones and other electronic equipment are manufactured by transnational capital and marketed around the world. And when we study the actual structure of ownership of Apple, to take the case of iPhones, we find that transnational capitalists and financial holding companies from around the world are invested in the company (Robinson, 2022). Rwanda’s political-military role in central Africa brings home the relationship between political-military intervention and economic exploitation: where Rwandan troops go they open up space for Rwandan capitalists. It may be absurd to characterize Rwanda as an “imperialist nation.” Yet it is doing exactly what much on the left would describe as imperialism, which underscores just how outdated is much of the left’s conception of imperialism. How, then, is transnational capitalist exploitation possible? How can we understand the political and military processes that facilitate these worldwide relations of exploitation? Capital cannot reproduce or expand without the state. That has been true throughout the whole history of world capitalism and remains true today. In this age of globalization the world has to be pried open to transnational capital and then kept open to it. All threats to its freedom to exploit and accumulate have to be suppressed. This effort requires political, military, and economic instruments, ranging from coups d’état and military interventions, to economic sanctions, structural adjustment programs, free trade agreements, the mechanisms of debt and financial leverage, lawfare, and so on. The U. S. state has played the preponderant role to date in this process of capitalist globalization, in making the world available to and safe for transnational capital. It continues to act as a battering ram to force open space for capital to accumulate and as a wrecking ball to smash apart any resistance to it. Many on the left would characterize this U. S. interventionism around the world as intended to advance the interests of “U. S. capital,” or of “U. S. interests” in competition against or alliance with other powers. Phrases such as “national interests” (as in “defending U. S. interests”) are meaningless and have no place in Marxist analysis. What we really mean to ask is, what are the class interests behind what the U. S. state does around the world? The U. S. state has served over the past half century of capitalist globalization as the most powerful weapon in the arsenal of global capitalism through which the mass of the world’s poor and working peoples have been contained and controlled, the world is further pried open for transnational corporate plunder, and states perceived as threatening the unfettered accumulation of capital are attacked. However, as I have shown elsewhere, rather than sealing off intervened regions to capitalists from other countries U. S. interventions have opened them up to transnational capital regardless of national origin. The United States props up repressive governments in Latin America as does France in Africa, whereas in these same countries Chinese or other transnational investors exploit labor but do not intervene politically or militarily to prop up repressive states. What is the relationship here between Western intervention and Chinese capitalist exploitation? As socialists we must oppose not just political and military intervention but also the class exploitation that it makes possible. Today, capitalists based in China or Brazil or India, for instance, do not need to exert military aggression or to colonize in order to freely export their capital and exploit labor and resources around the world. That was historically accomplished by Western colonialism and imperialism. There is nothing intrinsically — as distinct from historically — Western about imperialism. It historically had a Western identity because capitalism was born in the West and expanded out from there. But things are now changing rapidly. Global capitalism is mired in a structural crisis of over-accumulation, a political crisis of state legitimacy, capitalist hegemony and international conflict, and an environmental crisis of the planetary ecosystem. We are moving towards a general crisis of capitalist rule, a period of worldwide instability and chaos that drives geopolitical confrontation and the recklessness of a declining hegemonic power. The crisis sharpens the contradiction between a globally integrated economy and a nation-state-based system of political authority and capitalist reproduction. While transnational capital pursues endless worldwide accumulation the capitalist states that facilitate this accumulation within their respective territories have a contradictory mandate. They must also achieve legitimacy and reproduce the national social formation of the countries over which they rule, keep the domestic order from fracturing, sustain growth, exercise social control, and compete with other states to attract transnationally mobile capital. Unlike global capitalists, state and political elites reproduce their status within the nation-state and its relation to other states and the international system. States and state elites, in order to reproduce themselves, must reproduce transnational capital. By reproducing the conditions for capital accumulation capitalist states generate problems that they must then attempt to resolve and that may place them in conflict with one another and with transnational capital. While states come under pressure from capital to serve its accumulation imperative they also come under pressure from working and popular classes, especially as class struggle and political conflict heat up as we are now seeing. The structure of global capital and the relationship within that structure between transnational capital and local, national, and regional fractions is a matter of empirical research, as is the possibility that state capital, in which state managers and capitalists overlap, may be pulled into conflicting directions. The economic and the political are two moments in a larger totality. They form a contradictory unity. Moreover, to say that transnational capital is not tethered to territory is not to say that it is not tethered to national states, not as geographic spaces but as centers of power. The extent to which clusters of transnational capital may retain special relationships with the nation-states from whose cocoon they sprung is as well a matter of empirical research. But we do not want to confuse national capital that operates outside of national borders with transnational capital. I have been forced by space constraints here to simplify, especially with regard to complex levels of mediation. No historic process is static; all processes are subject to reversals that do not return us to the status quo ante but to a new set of circumstances. As the global capitalist crisis intensifies it is pushing states towards nationalism, populism, and protectionism, whether this refers to U. S. protectionism or the Chinese state’s crackdown on tech billionaires. The TCC faces mounting pressure to open up new outlets for overaccumulated capital that push clusters of transnational capital towards hyper-competition over shrinking shares of surplus value. But there is no evidence that these pressures are what drive state rivalries and geopolitical conflict. The TCC has opposed protectionism and state interference in accumulation strategies. Capital’s rationale for going global was to escape national economic, techno-industrial, and social constraints on the rate of profit and it has no intention of returning to the confines of the nation-state. The U. S. and the Chinese states have been taking measures to undercut transnational capital integration and to place controls on the TCC against its wishes. The US Chamber of Commerce has opposed US tariffs, whether under Obama, Trump, or Biden, and other restrictions of the freedom of transnational capital. The TCC wants access to the whole world without state interference. The Biden administration has restricted investments in Chinese entities involved in semiconductors, microelectronics, and artificial intelligence systems. But U. S.-based tech transnationals do not support these policies. Nvidia, Intel and Qualcomm, three of the world’s largest chip makers, have opposed the White House restrictions (Tripp, McCabe, and Swanson, 2023). Elon Musk, Tim Cook, and Bill Gates have been among a flood of high-profile business executives who have visited China in recent months to discuss their expanded presence there (Lili, 2023). We are moving into a multipolar or polycentric world polity within a single integrated global economy exhibiting several centers of intense transnational accumulation such as the North American free trade bloc, the European Union, and a Sino-centric Asian economic region, each interlocked with one another. As I argued in my summer 2023 essays, the emerging global capitalist pluralism may offer greater maneuvering room for popular struggles around the world, but a politically multipolar world does not mean that emerging poles of global capitalism are any less exploitative or oppressive than the established centers. I am not satisfied with attributing escalating international conflict simply to “inter-imperialist rivalry” without further clarity as to how we understand imperialism and the relationship between transnational capital and the state in this third decade of the twenty-first century. The U. S. state remains at this time the greatest threat to the world’s people, the command center of the carnage that is global capitalism. But in opposing U. S. interventionism socialists must not excuse capitalist exploitation and state repression in other countries around the world or fail to support those resisting such exploitation and repression. As the crisis intensifies a socialist politics demands an uncompromising proletarian internationalism, or transnationalism, one that does not support one geopolitical bloc over another in place of supporting working and popular class struggles in each country and bloc.

### 2NR – Unsustainability

#### The system is built to plunder its own economic, social, and political foundations.

Fraser, 22—Henry A. and Louise Loeb Professor of Political and Social Science at The New School (Nancy, “Food for Thought: What Should Socialism Mean in the Twenty-First Century?,” *Cannibal Capitalism: How Our System Is Devouring Democracy, Care, and the Planet—and What We Can Do about It*, Chapter 6, pp. 145-150

Second, in the narrow view, capitalism's chief irrationality is its built-in tendency to economic crisis. An economic system oriented to the limitless accumulation of surplus value, appropriated privately by for-profit firms, is inherently self-destabilizing. The drive to expand capital by increasing productivity through technical advances results in periodic drops in the rate of profit, the overproduction of goods, and the overaccumulation of capital. Attempted fixes like financialization only postpone the day of reckoning, while ensuring it will be all the more severe when it does arrive. In general, the course of capitalist development is punctuated by periodic economic crises: by boom-bust cycles, stock market crashes, financial panics, bankruptcy chains, mass liquidations of value, and mass unemployment. Finally, the narrow view proposes that capitalism is deeply and constitutively undemocratic. Granted, it often promises democracy in the political realm. However, that promise is systematically undercut by social inequality, on the one hand, and by class power, on the other. Then, too, the capitalist workplace is exempt from any pretense of democratic self-governance. It is a sphere where capital commands and workers obey. In general, then, the narrow view ascribes three chief wrongs to capitalism-injustice in the sense of class exploitation; irrationality in the sense of propensity to economic crisis; and unfreedom in the sense that democracy is undercut by social inequality and class power. The trouble arises, in every case, from the internal dynamics of capitalism's economy. Thus, the wrongs of capitalism reside, on the narrow view, in its economic organization. This picture is not so much wrong as incomplete. While correctly identifying the system's inherent economic ills, it fails to register a range of non-economic injustices, irrationalities, and unfreedoms, which are equally constitutive of it. When we adopt the expanded, "cannibal" conception, by contrast, these additional wrongs come clearly into view. First, the cannibal view of capitalism unveils an expanded catalogue of injustices. Far from residing exclusively within the system's economy, these are grounded in the relations between the capitalist economy and its non-economic conditions of possibility. A case in point is the division between economic production--where necessary labor time is remunerated in cash wages--and social reproduction--where it is unpaid or under paid, naturalized or sentimentalized, and recompensed in part by love. Historically gendered, this division entrenches major forms of domination at the heart of capitalist societies: women's subordination, gender binarism, and heteronormativity. Similarly, capitalist societies institute a structural division between (doubly) free workers, who can exchange their labor power for the costs of their reproduction, and dependent "others," whose persons, lands, and labor can simply be seized. This division coincides with the global line. Hiving off the "merely" exploitable from the downright expropriable, it racializes the latter group as inherently violable. The result is to entrench a range of structural injustices, including racial oppression, imperialism (old and new), indigenous dispossession, and genocide. Finally, capitalist societies institute a sharp division between human beings and nonhuman nature, which cease to belong to the same ontological universe. Reduced to a tap and a sink, nonhuman nature is opened to brute extractivism and instrumentalization. If this is not an injustice against "nature" (or against nonhuman animals), it is at the very least an injustice against existing and future generations of human beings who are left with an increasingly uninhabitable planet. In general, then, an expanded view of capitalist society makes visible an expanded catalogue of structural injustices, which includes but far exceeds class exploitation. A socialist alternative must remedy these other injustices, too. Far from "merely" transforming the organization of economic production, it must also transform the latter's relation to social reproduction, and with it, the gender and sexual orders. Equally, it must end capital's free riding on nature and its expropriation of the wealth of subjugated peoples and with that, racial/imperial oppres sion. In sum, if socialism is to remedy capitalism's injustices, it must change not "just" the capitalist economy, but the entire institutionalized order that is capitalist society. But that is not all. The expanded conception also enlarges our view of what counts as capitalist crisis. We can now see some built-in self-destabilizing propensities, above and beyond those internal to capitalism's economy. There is, first, a systemic tendency to cannibalize social reproduction--hence to provoke crises of care. Insofar as capital tries to avoid paying for the unwaged carework on which it depends, it periodically puts enormous pressure on the chief providers of that work: families, communities, and, above all, women. The current, financialized form of capitalist society is generating just such a crisis today, as it demands both retrenchment of public provision of social services and also increased hours of waged work per household, including from women. The expanded view also makes visible an inherent tendency to ecological crisis. Because capital avoids paying anything close to the true replacement costs of the inputs it takes from nonhuman nature, it depletes the soil, befouls the seas, floods carbon sinks, and overwhelms the carbon-carrying capacity of the planet. Helping itself to natural wealth while disavow ing the latter's repair and replacement costs, it periodically destabilizes the metabolic interaction between the human and nonhuman components of nature. We are smack up against the consequences today. What threatens to incinerate the planet is not, after all, "Humanity" but rather capitalism. Capitalism's tendencies to ecological and social-reproductive crisis are inseparable from its constitutive need for expropriated wealth from racialized peoples: its reliance on stolen lands, coerced labor, and looted minerals; its dependence on racialized zones as dumping grounds for toxic waste and on racialized peoples as suppliers of underpaid carework, increasingly organized in global care chains. The result is an entwining of economic, ecological, and social crisis with imperialism and racial-ethnic antagonism. Neoliberalism has upped the ante here as well. Finally, the enlarged view of capitalism discloses a structural tendency to political crisis. Here, too, capital aims to have it both ways, living off public goods for which it tries not to pay. Primed to evade taxes and to weaken state regulations, it tends to hollow out the very public powers on which it depends. The current, financialized form of capitalism takes this game to a whole new level. Megacorporations outgun territorially tethered public powers, while global finance disciplines states, making a mockery of elections that go against it and preventing anti- capitalist governments from addressing popular claims. The result is a major crisis of governance, now paired with a crisis of hegemony, as masses of people across the globe defect from established political parties and neoliberal common sense. In general, then, the expanded view shows us that capitalism harbors multiple crisis tendencies above and beyond the economic. As explained in chapter 5, I follow Karl Polanyi (and James O'Connor) in understanding the former as "inter-realm" contradictions, lodged at the joints that separate, and connect, the capitalist economy to its non-economic background con ditions of possibility. Bound to the four-D logic I explained in the previous chapters, capital has a built-in tendency to erode, destroy, or deplete--but in any case, to destabilize--its own presuppositions. Like the ouroboros, it eats its own tail. Self-cannibalization, too, forms part of what is wrong with capitalist society-and of what socialism must overcome.

#### Secular stagnation. Growth rates will hit zero by mid-century, driving structural crisis.

Li, 23—professor of economics at the University of Utah (Minqi, “Secular stagnation and fiscal crisis in the United States and China,” The Japanese Political Economy, May 11, 2023) [Figure 1 omitted]

Over the past several decades, economic growth rates have slowed down throughout the advanced capitalist economies. Figure 1 shows the 10-year trailing average growth rates of real GDP for the United States and the OECD countries. The underlying trend growth rate of the US economy declined from about 4 percent in the 1960s to about 3 percent in the 1970s and 1980s. After recovering to about 3.5 percent in the 1990s, the US economy’s trend growth rate has declined further to about 2 percent over the last two decades. Similarly, the OECD countries’ average economic growth rate declined from about 5 percent in the 1960s to about 3 percent in the 1980s and 1990s. In recent years, the OECD countries’ average economic growth rate has been around 1.6 percent. In this context, economists as well as scholars in other disciplines have debated the long-term implications of the structural slowdown of economic growth that has become known as “secular stagnation.” The concept was originally proposed by Alvin Hansen in the middle of the Great Depression of the 1930s. Hansen (1938) was worried about the exhaustion of investment opportunities and a possible end of long-term economic progress. In September 2013, writing for The New York Times, Paul Krugman raised the concern that persistent shortfall of aggregate demand could lead to “secular stagnation” though he dismissed the possibility by arguing that fiscal deficit spending in principle could have virtually unlimited ability to stabilize demand (Krugman 2013). In November 2014, at the IMF’s 14th Annual Research Conference, Larry Summers argued that secular stagnation caused by insufficient demand could be the underlying reason for the failure of the US economy to return to full employment (Summers 2013). While economists influenced by the Keynesian theory emphasize insufficient demand as the underlying cause for “secular stagnation,” Robert Gordon argues that a substantial slowdown of the pace of technological progress has led to the recent decline of economic growth rate. Gordon (2016) argues that the historical growth rate of US per capita real GDP around 2 percent was made possible by the exceptionally long-lasting and widespread Second Industrial Revolution that started in the late 19th cen- tury and had spillover effects that lasted until the mid-20th century. By contrast, the Third Industrial Revolution that started in the 1990s has been limited to telecommunication and several related fields and appears to have petered out. In the future, the trend growth rate of the US per capita real GDP is likely to return to its pre-20th-Century “norm” of about 1 percent. From the ecological perspective, the entire process of modern economic growth has been made possible by the unsustainable exploitation of natural resources and environmental space. In the famous 1972 report, Meadows et al. (1972) argued that unrestricted consumption of resources and environmental degradation would eventually lead to a catastrophic decline in population and industrial capacity. In a later updated study, Randers projects that, because of the decline of the labor force and the slowdown of productivity growth, the global economic growth rate will steadily decline in the future. By the mid-21st century, Randers expects that the US and OECD economies will begin to experience zero or even negative growth (Randers 2012, 62–98, 265–299). According to the World System Theory, the essential feature of capitalism as a historical system has been the pursuit of endless accumulation of capital, and therefore, capitalism cannot survive with persistent zero or negative growth. According to Wallerstein (2004, 76–90), the rise of capit- alism was made possible by a specific set of historical conditions that favored capitalist expansion. However, long-term capitalist accumulation has led to several secular trends: the secular tendency for the workers to develop stronger bargaining power pushing up the labor cost; the secular tendency of resources depletion and environmental degradation that tend to raise the costs of material inputs; and the secular tendency for both the workers and the capitalists to demand more state services driving up the taxation cost. The long-term tendencies of rising labor, material, and taxation costs would depress capitalist profitability. As the capitalist system fails to meet the rising demands from the workers and effectively address the requirements of ecological sustainability, while maintaining a satisfactory level of profitability for the capitalists, the system will enter into a structural crisis that can no longer be resolved within its own historical framework.

### 2NR – Cap Bad – Space

#### Space colonization doesn’t solve existential risks.

* Short- and long-term risk assessment should focus on protecting earth
* Earth gets riskier as tech advances which raises the risk that our impact happens before colonization
* Even if tech gets there, future social and economic context prevents missions
* Risk Dynamics Paradox – existential risks are rooted in human psychology, so they’ll follow us to space – Bostrom agrees!

Szocik 19 [Konrad Szocik, Assistant Professor of Philosophy at the University of Information Technology and Management in Rzeszow, “Should and could humans go to Mars? Yes, but not now and not in the near future,” 2019, *Futures*, Vol. 105, pp. 54-66, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.futures.2018.08.004,

I argue, following other authors (Baum, 2009; Baum, Denkenberger, & Haqq-Misra, 2015; Jebari, 2015; Sandberg, Matheny, & Ćirković, 2008; Turchin & Green, 2017) that human space settlement is not able to reduce and/or to exclude the risk of human extinction. For this reason, it should not be perceived in terms of space refuge. In terms of both short-term and long-term perspectives of risk assessment, it would be better to protect humans on Earth.5 I reject the supportive role which could be played by human space settlement after a catastrophe on Earth, i.e., a recovery coordination mission. Due to so-called the paradox of technological progress discussed in the last section, further putative progress in space technology will be counterbalanced by increasing anthropogenic risks including, among others, overpopulation and limited resources (these anthropogenic threats are unavoidable in near future, in contrast to other risks that are only more or less probable but not unavoidable). Permanent lack of strong rationale for human mission to Mars – both now and in the near future – leads to paradoxical situation. Even if in some point in the future the minimum level of advancement in human deep-space technologies will be achieved, social, political, and economic contexts will gradually decrease the chances for real preparation of this mission. Another paradox, let’s call it the risk dynamics paradox, is that the most probable threats in the near future are, as Bostrom and Cirkovic (2008) argue, anthropogenic threats caused by civilizational and technological progress. The paradox lies in the fact that humans are not able to run from these kinds of risks that are rooted in their way of thinking, style of life, and population dynamics, risks implied by Malthus’ law. The human species can try to protect against natural disaster but not against deleterious effects of its own technological progress. In regard to possible future existential risks, I assume that their deleterious power is a little bit exaggerated, and, in any event, human space settlement is not a right way to cope with them. However, in any case, it is hard to speculate if any human space settlement must repeat the same path of human expansion as it was the case on Earth. It is unclear if human technological expansion and exploration must always lead to deleterious and self-destructive effects. In this paper, I do not discuss ethical and moral concerns which are traditionally considered when discussing the human place in space. They include such topics as the human right to explore space (it means both right to intervene in any extraterrestrial object, and human duty and rationale for space expansionism, mostly in the context of the idea of space refuge and possible catastrophic scenarios on Earth), or the value of human life and space objects.

#### It causes them.

Deudney 20 [Daniel Deudney, Associate Professor of Political Science at Johns Hopkins University, “Dark Skies: Space Expansionism, Planetary Geopolitics, and the Ends of Humanity,” 2020, Oxford University Press, pp. 356-362,

Catastrophic and Existential Risks from Solar Space Expansion

This dark scenario of solar space expansion produced by the application of geopolitical theory has profound implications for the argument that colonization of other bodies in the solar system is necessary to alleviate or escape the formidable catastrophic and existential risks facing Earth-bound humanity. Both riskologists and space expansionists strongly believe, with Hawking, that “once we establish independent colonies, our entire future will be safe.”25 If all humanity’s eggs are in one fraying and vulnerable basket, then it stands to reason that spreading viable colonies of humans to other celestial bodies will help ensure the survival of the human species. While the role of existing space capabilities in amplifying the (p.357) dangers of the great technogenic threat of nuclear war belies the astro-optimism of space advocates, what of their cherished larger vision of making humanity a multiworld species? While space advocates propose a variety of ways space expansion might alleviate or escape existing risks, they give almost no attention to whether expansion might generate new risks or help re-activate already regulated ones. The list of major threats facing humanity is dauntingly long, and the expansionist agenda for solar space has many parts, making assessment a complex undertaking. But there are six major ways in which the realization of the space expansionist agenda for solar orbital space is likely to generate or activate catastrophic and existential risks. Taken in combination these arguments provide a strong basis for putting ambitious space expansion on the list of megathreats potentially confronting humanity, and for making every effort to relinquish it. Large-scale space expansion must be viewed as something akin to a full-scale nuclear war and assiduously avoided. Unlike many of the other threats humanity faces, addressing those created by ambitious space expansion is now extremely simple: just say no.

The realization of the space expansionist program for solar orbital space enlarges the probability and scope of catastrophic and existential risks confronting humanity in six ways: malefic geopolitics, natural threat amplification, restraint reversal, hierarchy enablement, alien generation, and monster multiplication (see Table 10.3).

[Table 10.3 Omitted]

First, large-scale solar space expansion will produce a radically novel political and material landscape that is extremely inauspicious for security, freedom, and human survival, a perfect storm of unfavorable possibilities and tendencies. With a new word for a new phenomenon, borrowed from astrology for a conjunction of negatives, solar space patterns can be characterized as geopolitically malefic. Just as the space environment creates terrestrially inconceivable extremes of frigid and torrid temperatures on opposite sides of the same object, so too the prospective solar landscape combines geopolitical extremes in ways unknown to terrestrial experience. Most ominously, solar space geopolitics combines the extreme diversities and high effective distances experienced on Archipelago Earth with system-wide levels of intense violence interdependence found on Planetary Earth. Polities will be extremely different and spatiotemporally remote but will be capable of readily inflicting massive levels of destruction on one another. Add shifting distribution, wide accessibility, and low distinctiveness, and the contours of the violence-material landscape becomes even more prone to large-scale destruction. With system-wide common government and mutual restraints very difficult to create and sustain, solar space comes close to being maximally suboptimal for positive outcomes, a nightmarish worst of all possible worlds in geopolitical conjunction. Extensive mutual restraints will be vitally necessary, but they will be nearly impossible to realize. While humanity’s (p.358) eggs might be scattered among many baskets, egg-smashing with large rocks will be easy—and likely.

Facing this extensive list of major factors disposing the system toward large-scale violent conflict in solar space will require humanity’s transmutation into Tsiolkovskian angels to avoid catastrophic and existentially threatening warfare. Perhaps the only saving grace of this key conclusion of geopolitical analysis is that the demons loosened by opening the Pandora’s box of space colonization might start to wreak their damage early enough to throttle the colonial enterprise before it gets too fatally under way.

A second way in which colonizing solar space poses catastrophic and existential threats is through natural threat amplification. Because asteroids and comets collide with the Earth, and the total energy contained within the population of near-Earth objects vastly exceeds that contained in all nuclear arsenals, they pose the inevitable prospect of terrestrial calamities. The rate at which these objects strike the Earth is now solely a function of natural forces. Space expansionists advance human movement into space to avert this threat and promote their (p.359) solution to this problem as a principal space contribution to reducing catastrophic and existential threats. But because the technologies to divert away from the Earth are essentially identical to those needed to direct objects toward the Earth, the rate at which these objects strike the Earth could increase if they become instruments of interstate rivalry and become weaponized as planetoid bombs. This prospect leads Sagan to recommend delaying the full mapping of asteroid orbits and development of diversion techniques until after some form of effective world government has been established on Earth. But with the spread of colonies across the solar system, the writ of any government on Earth will be severely limited. The same anarchical political configurations that Sagan views as incompatible with security from intentional asteroid bombardment on Earth will almost certainly be reproduced on a vastly larger, and more severe, scale in the Solar Archipelago. If, as seems extremely likely, systemic anarchy returns with the diaspora of humans across the solar system, then militarized rivalries are very likely to ensue, producing asteroidal weaponization. If this happens, a natural threat will have been amplified, enlarging the potential for the occurrence of a catastrophic event.

The third way in which ambitious space expansion could increase the catastrophic and existential risks confronting humanity is through restraint reversal. Barring civilizational collapse, the cornucopia of technological innovation will continue to pour forth its prodigies. If the monstrosities and menaces of the ever-widening technological cone of possibility can be thwarted only by staying within a narrow path of human preservation and enhancement, then space expansion must be assessed for its effects on the reversals, regulations, and relinquishments constituting the barriers of restraint. The record with nuclear weapons demonstrates that institutional architectures of restraint are not easy to erect and sustain on Earth. If space expansion makes the creation and preservation of restraints even more difficult, the probability of otherwise unrelated catastrophic and existential outcomes will rise, making it a potent catalyst for multisided disaster. Instead of mitigating the effects of multiple catastrophic and existential risks, large-scale space expansion promises to multiply them.

There are many reasons to anticipate that restraints established on Earth will be reversed if space colonization occurs. Restraints are unlikely to survive transplantation into diverse and demanding off-world environments. If humans are living on multiple worlds subject to different governments, regulation and relinquishment will be more difficult to establish, there will be more places for potential breakdowns, and verification of compliance will be vastly more difficult. If, as seems extremely likely, the many different worlds in the Solar Archipelago in systemic anarchy have violently hostile relations, establishing and sustaining restraints will become nearly impossible. Surveillance in the vast reaches of solar space will be vastly difficult. And if the human species radiates into multiple (p.360) species, the barriers to regulation and relinquishment will become even more formidable.

A particularly dangerous case of restraint reversal may be technologies leading to artificial superintelligence, a particularly potent technogenic threat. Space activities are already heavily dependent on advanced computing and robotic technologies, and peoples living in space are likely to be far more cyber-dependent than those on Earth. Living in harshly inhospitable environments, spacekind will have strong incentives to push the development of cybernetic capabilities. If a robust regime for the restraint and relinquishment of ASI is not established, human extinction might occur before significant space colonization occurs. If an effective ASI-restraint regime is developed on Earth before extensive space colonization takes place, it seems unlikely that such restraints would survive the expansion of humanity across the solar system.

It might be objected that the breakout of an ASI in some remote world in solar space would not pose a general existential threat to humanity once all of humanity’s eggs are no longer in one basket. If, however, we take seriously the standard scenarios of what an ASI would do once it emerges, the dispersion of humanity across multiple worlds would afford no protection whatsoever because an uncontrolled ASI, it is widely anticipated, will in short order expand not just on the planet of its origins but across the solar system, indeed the galaxy.26 To the extent uncontrolled ASI is deemed something to avoid at all costs, large-scale space expansion must be viewed similarly.

Terrestrial arrangements to restrain nuclear, genetic, and nanotechnologies are also likely to be reversed as humanity expands to other worlds. The prospects of interworld and interspecies wars will provide large incentives for maintaining weaponized nuclear capabilities and for pursuing research into military genetic and nanotechnology applications. Any restraint regime for genetic technologies is unlikely to survive extensive human expansion into space, given the attractiveness of directed and accelerated species alteration in off-worlds. Solar space contains a vast number of islands for potential Doctors Moreau to work their alchemy, as memorably envisioned in Robinson’s 2312. If self-replicating nanomachines are possible and built on Earth, human existence will be threatened. But if a relinquishment regime is established on Earth, it is unlikely to survive in a solar diaspora. While interplanetary distances will afford a buffer from runaway replicators on other celestial bodies, this is unlikely to be permanently effective, thus delaying rather than foreclosing the gray-gooization of the Earth.

Fourth, solar expansion poses catastrophic and existential risks to humanity through hierarchy enablement. The emergence of totalitarian world government, nearly universally viewed as deeply undesirable, is reasonably judged a catastrophic threat to humanity. As we have seen, space expansion is likely to (p.361) produce hierarchies in several significant ways. Many space advocates view large-scale space expansion as freedom insurance and anticipate that various forms of freedom and plurality deemed in jeopardy on Earth can be recovered and preserved in space. But anticipations of a freedom dividend from space expansion are largely illusory because large-scale space expansion into Earth orbital space is very likely to enable the erection of a highly hierarchical world government, either from one-state military dominance of the entire planet or from the control of a major infrastructure for resources or energy. The further large-scale expansion of human activity into solar space is likely to facilitate the emergence of a highly hierarchical world government on Island Earth that could then be prone to become totalitarian.

The fifth way in which ambitious space expansion poses catastrophic and existential risks is through alien generation. The human species radiation anticipated by expansionists will generate significantly different forms of intelligent life suited to other worlds. If these anticipations are realized, there will be multiple intelligent species, all descendants from terrestrial Homo sapiens, in this solar system and eventually across the galaxy. While space expansionists celebrate this as an expansion of life, they rarely dwell on its implications for the future of human life. If ascentionist assumptions about moral improvement resulting from vertical expansion are true, humanity and its descendant species will live in harmony. But if ascentionist assumptions are unfounded, then the generation of alien intelligent species in this solar system should be viewed as a catastrophic and existential threat to humanity. As the cyber visionary Hans Moravec observes, “biological species almost never survive encounters with superior competitors.”27 While habitat space expansionists embrace the Darwinian proposition that life inevitably expands, they do not seem to have thought through the implications of the corollary proposition that life forms often lethally compete.

The mechanisms for the annihilation of humans by advanced forms of extraterrestrial life, long a staple of dystopian SF, are easy enough to imagine. While it might be possible for humanity, mobilized and directed by a centralized world government devoted to planetary and species defense, to survive for a while, eventually the sheer number and variety of alien species with advanced technology is sure to prevail. Fictional accounts of alien threats to humanity are typically about life forms originating on other planets, and their eventual defeat commonly results from improbable expedients and heroics. The more realistic threat is probably from humanity’s descendants, and this threat can simply be prevented from arising by relinquishing space colonization.

The sixth way in which ambitious space expansion is related to catastrophic and existential risk is through monster multiplication. The number of “monsters,” threats that are unknown, has, we are told by riskologists, been steadily growing (p.362) with the development of powerful new technologies. Some monsters are in principle knowable, but others may be unknowable to humans. Ambitious space expansion will clearly entail the development of powerful new technologies, and the actors developing these technologies will be spread in multiple worlds across the solar system. Therefore it stands to reason that the number of monsters posing potential terminal threats will inevitably increase as ambitious space expansionist projects are realized.

Taken together, these six ways in which the realization of the space expansionist program for solar space pose catastrophic and existential threats demolish the core proposition of space advocates that large-scale expansion is desirable. Space expansionists start with the persuasive proposition that technological capabilities for destruction are rapidly enlarging, while the Earth remains spatially finite. They then reason that expanding the spatial range of human activities through expansion into outer space will dilute dangers and bring the ratios between the powers of destruction and the spatial domain of human activity into safer proportions. But they fail to recognize or acknowledge that the potency of the destructive potentials inherent in space expansion also increases, and these capabilities can potentially be brought to bear on the finite and fragile Earth and its human populations, thus making the survival problem, at least for the Earth and humanity, much greater. If humans, or their alien progeny, occupying this vaster spatial realm behave in the same manner as they have on Earth, all that will have changed is that the magnitude of the threats will have been enlarged. For large-scale space expansion, there is no plausible human path of preservation bypassing its many very likely menaces and monstrosities. For humanity in space, there is only darkness at the end of the tunnel.

#### Independently, creates massive suffering risks.

Kovic 21 [Marko Kovic, co-founder of the Zurich Institute of Public Affairs Research, “Risks of space colonization,” 2021, *Futures*, Vol. 126, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.futures.2020.102638,

4.1. Unhappy future generations

The moral impetus of colonizing space is to increase the probability that all the potential future humans that could live do come into existence. But we do not only want future generations to exist but to live lives that are actually worth living. However, the moral landscape of the far future might turn out to be much blurrier.

Imagine, for example, a scenario in which 10 billion people live on Earth, and another 2 billion people live on a terraformed Venus. The people on Earth are living roughly as good lives as we are today, but the Venusians are all categorically suffering: Because the terraforming was not entirely successful, some of the original toxic Venusian atmosphere remained, leading to mild respiratory issues in most of the population. Is this state of affairs preferable to there not being any Venusians at all? On the face of it, yes. After all, the total wellbeing of humankind is much greater with the 2 billion Venusians than without them. Mild respiratory issues in 2 billion people are a nontrivial amount of disvalue, but their existence still seems preferable to their non-existence.

Let us imagine a second scenario. There are 10 billion people on Earth living lives that are roughly as good as the lives we are currently living, there are 2 billion people on Venus with chronic respiratory issues, and there are 500 million people on Mars. Unfortunately, given Mars’ inexistent atmosphere and magnetosphere, cosmic radiation is battering the surface, including human habitats. This has led to permanent damage in the Martians’ DNA, resulting in chronic muscular and skeletal disease. As a result, the whole Martian population is collectively suffering from a hereditary and incurable congenital disease. Is this scenario preferable to there being no Mars colony or to there being no colonization at all? On the face of it, the answer is again yes: Even though the lives of the Martians are much less pleasant than the lives of the Earthlings and the Venusians, the Martians are still living lives that are worth living to them. The total amount of wellbeing and happiness of humankind is greater than if there were no Martians at all.

In these hypothetical scenarios, we are confronted with two classic problems from population ethics: The so-called repugnant conclusion (Parfit, 2004) and the non-identity problem (Parfit, 2017). The repugnant conclusion is the observation that our intuitive judgement of moral desirability, the increase of total happiness or welfare, is flawed. In our second scenario, the Martians are living fairly terrible lives that might barely be worth living because they are full of suffering. Just because the total amount of happiness or welfare is greater with the Martians than without them does not mean that a world with the chronically suffering Martians is morally desirable. The repugnant conclusion is relevant in the context of space colonization both because of its existential scope as well as its empirical plausibility. Creating habitats that are able to permanently sustain human life is an immense technological challenge, and it is not unrealistic to expect that life beyond Earth will be miserable for quite some time.

The non-identity problem is the observation that something is wrong with another common moral intuition. Our Martians live miserable lives, but from their own subjective point of view, that reality is preferable to the alternative of not existing at all. In a sense, no matter how terrible life for the Martians is, no moral harm seems to be done because no person was actively harmed by there being Martians — the Martians are not suffering because someone actively and malevolently hurt them or made them sick; they simply come into existence in their frail, sickly state. This means that if a Martian could choose between existing the way she does and not existing at all, she would almost certainly pick the former. But something is wrong with this conclusion. The Martians are living lives full of suffering, and clearly, this state of affairs is morally undesirable.

The concrete problems within scenarios in which the repugnant conclusion and the non-identity problem apply can be described in several ways. For example, if we put moral emphasis on average wellbeing rather than just total wellbeing, we see that the growth of total wellbeing can go hand in hand with a decrease of average wellbeing. This would indicate that something has gone wrong. However, average wellbeing alone might not be a good enough indicator. For example, in an Omelas-like configuration (Le Guin, 1991), it is conceivable that average wellbeing would increase while a small subset of people endures hellish suffering. That is why another approach to understand these problems of population ethics is to not only focus on happiness and wellbeing, but also on the negative side of the utilitarian coin, suffering: If some situation or decision produces a disproportionate amount of suffering compared to wellbeing, that situation is undesirable.7

The repugnant conclusion and the non-identity problem are examples of how many billions of future humans could live considerably worse lives than we do today. That would constitute a moral failure on an existential or near-existential level — humankind would still exist, but the primary result of our expansion beyond Earth would be a gradual erosion of happiness and a gradual accumulation of suffering.

4.2. Eliminating future extraterrestrial value

The discussion so far has mostly centered around the moral value of humankind. But in the context of space colonization, the moral reference group is not just humankind. Given the vastness of our galaxy alone, let alone the entire observable universe, the risks of space colonization for beings other than humankind need to be also taken into consideration. This starts with microbial life: Endangering primitive extraterrestrial life through space colonization could destroy immense future moral value.

We do not currently know whether life exists (or has ever existed) beyond Earth. But there is some plausibility to the assumption that the development of life is not a once-in-a-universe event. The conditions that presumably gave rise to life on Earth are almost certainly abundant throughout our galaxy, which means that, statistically speaking, primitive microbial life could come into existence relatively often (Chyba & Hand, 2005). If humans engage in space colonization, and if humans come into contact with extraterrestrial life, the extraterrestrial life in question will most likely be microbial in nature. What moral obligations do future human colonizers have towards microbial extraterrestrial life? To make this question more concrete, imagine a colonization scenario in the near future: Humans decide to terraform Mars in order to make it habitable for humans, but doing so would kill all existing species of Martian microbes that were discovered not long before the decision to terraform Mars. Would terraforming Mars be morally acceptable?

Microbial life on Earth is non-sentient, and the microbial life on Mars would also, in all likelihood, be non-sentient. If the Martian microbes neither feel anything like happiness nor experience anything like suffering, there are no utilitarian considerations of wellbeing or happiness to be made — humans could neither affect their level of wellbeing nor could they rob them of their capacity for happiness since microbial life forms lack both. However, there is a counterargument to this position: The Martian microbes have the potential to evolve into more complex, sentient and possibly even intelligent life forms. Eradicating them would therefore represent an existential damage, because all the potential future moral value would be lost. If this argument seems abstract, consider the scenario if the microbial life in question was Earth-based: If some extraterrestrial intelligence had eradicated our primitive microbial ancestors, humankind (as well as all other sentient Earth-based life) would never have come to be.

A second moral argument in favor of preserving the Martian microbes in our scenario is the argument of intrinsic value (Cockrell & Center for Environmental Philosophy, 2005). According to this position, the moral obligation towards extraterrestrial microbial life is not contingent on its sentience, but on its mere existence: Life in and of itself has a moral value, and by virtue of existing, our Martian microbes have a kind of right to their existence. In addition, and perhaps crucially, we have an obligation to respect that right. This deontological, Kantian view is not concerned with wellbeing and suffering, but instead with rights of and duties towards life. I find the utilitarian view of potential future moral value more useful than the intrinsic value argument, but it is worth mentioning the latter for the sake of completeness.

In any case, both moral arguments, the utilitarian view of potential future moral value as well as the deontological intrinsic value argument, suggest that endangering microbial life could be devastatingly wrong. A logical consequence of such considerations would be to adopt a strongly conservationist stance whereby humans refrain from colonizing a potentially large number of viable celestial bodies lest they threaten the microbes that have evolved there (Smith, 2016). Such an approach could limit human expansion to entirely artificial habitats and to biologically completely barren moons and planets.

4.3. Astronomical suffering

Space colonization means that humans and human actions will spread beyond Earth and possibly cover, relatively speaking, vast areas of the reachable universe. This will potentially create immense positive value, but it also makes possible a form of existential risks that are astronomical in scope and hellish in severity — that are, in other words, orders of magnitude worse than anything humankind has caused or encountered so far. This subset of extreme existential risks is referred to as suffering risks (Tomasik, 2015a).

Suffering risks are risks that are far worse than humankind going extinct or entering permanent moral stagnation because they mean that the suffering that is created through these risks is far greater than all suffering that has existed on Earth so far. There are different vectors of potential astronomical suffering. For example, it is conceivable that future human generations will spread wildlife throughout the colonized space, either inadvertently or actively. Wild animals on Earth generally lead short, miserable lives full of sometimes the most brutal suffering (Tomasik, 2015b). In in the history of Earth, wildlife suffering has not really improved at all, so astronomical wildlife suffering would likely represent a constant source of disvalue.

Another vector for suffering risks are sentient simulations. Given growing computational power, it is conceivable that we will eventually be able to simulate sentience, and as soon as simulated sentience is possible, simulated suffering will be as well. This technological path is not necessarily dependent on space colonization, but a colonizing humankind might have greater capabilities for running such simulations, for example by tapping into the power of stars in different Solar systems. Instances of simulated suffering could create more suffering than has ever occurred in the biological universe, within fractions of a second.

The risk of astronomical suffering is more uncertain than other existential risks, but it is at the same time more severe. At stake is not just humankind's total potential positive future moral value, but disvalue that is decoupled from humankind and is potentially many orders of magnitude greater than all the happiness and wellbeing that could be created by human colonization of space.

### 2NR – Cap Bad – Decoupling

#### Decoupling can only happen under socialism.

Albert 20 [Michael J. Albert, lecturer at SOAS University of London in the department of Politics and International Studies, “Capitalism and Earth System Governance: An Ecological Marxist Approach,” 2020, *Global Environmental Politics*, Vol. 20, Issue 2, pp. 37-56, https://doi.org/10.1162/glep\_a\_00546,

The capitalist law of value creates not only selection pressures to externalize costs but also a structural reliance on continuous compound growth. Under constant pressure from the discipline of market competition, firms are structurally incentivized to reinvest their profits in productivity-enhancing innovations, new products, and finding new markets, while those that subordinate profit maximization to alternative goals risk being driven out of the market (Smith 2016, 15). While many view growth as an “ideology” or “fetish” that could be done away with while keeping capitalist social relations intact (e.g., Daly 1996), most economists agree with Schumpeter’s view that “stationary capitalism is a contradiction in terms” (quoted in Tanuro 2014, 74). After all, a condition of low or no growth is a condition of “crisis” within a capitalist system, which leads to a reinforcing cycle of slowing investment, rising unemployment, weakened demand, and political instability (Smith 2016, 47). For the same reasons, capitalism cannot exist without rampant consumerism, which is not simply a bug but rather a fundamental feature that has been critical to its continuous reproduction since the ascent of advertising in the post–World War II world (Foster et al. 2011, 379–380). Humanity thus finds itself in a double bind under capitalism, as starkly articulated by Richard Smith: “insatiable growth and consumption are destroying the planet and will doom humanity in the long run—but without ceaselessly growing production and insatiably rising consumption, we would have economic collapse in the short run” (Smith 2016, 23).

To escape this predicament, mainstream environmentalists (including planetary scientists like Johan Rockström) argue that growth can be “decoupled” from ecological impact via efficiency improvements and “green” technologies (Rockström and Klum 2015, 133). However, multiple studies demonstrate that decoupling is an illusion (made clear by focusing on the global economy as a whole instead of individual nation-states) and that efficiency improvements often lead to an increase in environmental impact by lowering costs and raising demand (the “rebound effect”) (Wiedmann et al. 2015; Kallis and Hickel 2019). Some may point out that decoupling economic growth at least from CO2 emissions appears achievable, since the global economy has grown faster than CO2 emissions in recent years (Figueres 2017). However, this ignores both rising methane emissions (driven largely by the conversion from coal to natural gas plants) (Howarth 2019) and the fact that the estimated reductions likely needed to prevent 1.5°C of warming (7% annually, reaching net zero by 2050) are well beyond what current models estimate would be feasible in a context of compound growth (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change 2018, 15; Kallis and Hickel 2019). Thus even mainstream economists like Anil Markandya acknowledge that reducing emissions 50 percent by 2050, thereby stabilizing atmospheric CO2 concentrations around 550 parts per million (PPM), is likely the “lowest credible target” in a context of continuous economic growth (Markandya 2009, 1145). Even though Rockström and colleagues estimate that 450 PPM constitutes the upper end of a likely threshold of runaway climate change (Rockström et al. 2009), Markandya notes that “no one seriously believes this [450 ppm] is possible” (Markandya 2009, 1145). Similarly, David Victor claims that “even a realistic crash program to cut emissions will blow through 2 degrees; 1.5 degrees is ridiculous” (Victor 2015).

Given mounting evidence that positive feedbacks in the earth system— including arctic ice loss, Amazon and boreal forest dieback, and permafrost carbon and methane release—may be activated at 1.5°C and especially 2°C (Lenton et al. 2019), these economists appear to be accepting catastrophic climate change as the necessary cost of capitalist survival. And if we include other planetary boundaries that may have already been overshot—including biodiversity loss, land conversion, and nitrogen/phosphorous loading—the prospect of genuine solutions to the earth system crisis in a context of compound growth recedes ever further into implausibility, given that these boundaries are primarily stressed by global market pressures for agricultural intensification, commercial expansion into formerly intact ecosystems, megainfrastructural development, and resulting fragmentation of habitats (Kallis 2018, 100). It should thus be clear that any program of ESG that does not involve a system-wide assault on and eventual negation of the capitalist law of value, one that goes far beyond “mainstreaming” environmental goals into global trade, investment, and finance regimes (Biermann et al. 2012a, 1307) (which themselves rely on and exist to perpetuate continuous compound growth), would be radically insufficient.

A genuine solution, then, to the earth system crisis cannot lie within a capitalist system, no matter what global institutions are grafted onto it, but requires a transition toward “ecosocialism.” As Ian Angus explains, ecosocialism

will be based on collective ownership of the means of production, and it will work actively to eliminate exploitation, profit, and accumulation as the driving forces of our economy.… [It] will imply the limitation of growth and the transformation of needs by a profound shift away from quantitative and toward qualitative economic criteria. (Angus 2016, 202–203)

#### All evidence votes NEG.

Kallis et al. 20 [Giorgos Kallis, Susan Paulson, Giacomo D'Alisa, and Federico Demaria, \* ICREA Professor at the Institute of Environmental Science and Technology, Autonomous University of Barcelona, \*\* Professor at the Center for Latin American Studies, University of Florida, \*\*\* FCT post-doctoral fellow at the Centre for Social Studies, University of Coimbra, \*\*\*\* lecturer in ecological economics and political ecology at the University of Barcelona, “The Case for Degrowth,” 2020, Polity, pp. 110-116,

Green Growth

1) Aren’t economies damaging the environment less as they grow richer?

No, they are not. Rich economies use more resources and emit more carbon (per capita) than poor ones. The economies of wealthier countries might impact the environment less per unit of GDP; but they produce more total GDP per capita, using more resources and emitting more waste per capita. The “Environmental Kuznets hypothesis” according to which countries damage the environment more as they develop, reaching a certain point of wealth at which economic growth becomes less damaging, has been soundly discredited with statistical data.1 Some mid-income countries adopt environmental standards earlier than wealthier ones. For big problems like carbon emissions, there is no inversion of trends at higher incomes: the richer a country gets, the more CO2 it emits. Moreover, high-income countries shift their environmental costs to poorer countries by importing resources and industrial goods, and by exporting waste.

2) Can’t we produce more with less?

We can. But GDPs cannot continue growing while using fewer and fewer resources.2 From 1980 to 2002, global material flows grew 1.78 percent each year, slower than global GDP, but growing nonetheless. From 2002 to 2013 material flows grew 3.85 percent per year, faster than global GDP. Today, a 1 percent difference in GDP between economies corresponds to 0.8 percent difference in material use.3 Domestic resource use in some high-income economies, like the US, seems to have peaked and declined, but this is because inputs are outsourced through globalization. If one calculates the amount of materials used to produce the goods and services consumed in the US, including imports, then its material footprint has grown in step with GDP (same for the EU and the OECD).4 Granted, the future does not have to be like the past. But all models predict a significant increase in global material use by 2050. Even under the most stringent technology and policy assumptions, resource use will increase 17 percent.5

3) Can’t resources be used more efficiently?

They can. In growth economies, however, the more efficiently resources are used, the cheaper they become, and the more total resources get used.6 This is the essence of economic growth: labor and resource productivity free resources that are then devoted to more production and new services, extracting more value. Efficiency gains from specific appliances or conservation measures may not fully backfire. However, the more resource-efficient economies are also those with bigger material use. Don’t get us wrong, resource efficiency is important; but we call for efficiently doing less with less, rather than doing more with less, because more means more damage. A good way to move there is to combine efficiency improvements with limits: caps or mandated reductions in resources or pollutants.

The rabbit of the efficiency hat also cannot be pulled out indefinitely – there is an upper boundary of energy/resource efficiency, beyond which further growth will lead to more energy (resource) use. There are limits not only on how far, but also on how fast efficiency can improve. The energy efficiency of some goods like refrigerators or cars has been increasing at 2 percent per year over the last thirty-five years (close to the average rate of growth), but not everything can improve so quickly. Air travel efficiency hasn’t changed much, and power plants improved only 1 percent per year.7

4) Can’t clean resources substitute for polluting ones?

Yes, they can, but cleaner substitutes also pollute, and if the economy grows, so will their use and pollution. Solar and wind are cleaner than coal, but the energy they generate is stored on batteries using lithium or cobalt. Using these cleaner technologies, world demand for rare-earth elements – and Earth-destroying mining and refining – need to rise 300 to 1,000 percent by 2050 just to meet the Paris climate agreement’s goals.8 The real goal moreover is decreasing dirty alternatives (fossil fuels, gas-guzzling cars, etc.), not just adding new ones. Sales of electric vehicles are growing, but so are sales of SUVs. Solar and wind power are growing quickly, but they have not yet reduced fossil fuel use, only added more energy to the system.9 Increasing cleaner substitutes is necessary but not sufficient.

5) Isn’t it just a matter of getting the prices right?

Polluters should pay for polluting, yes. But there is no “right price” determined by the market.10 Resources and carbon should be taxed at levels sufficiently high for the reductions needed. Taxing a ton of carbonat anything from $100 to $5,000 by 2030 compared to just $8 today (the high range of a tax some scientists deem necessary for stopping climate change) would practically prohibit oil and coal. This could slow down the economy, which is fine. But this is also why the powers that be do not allow it to happen. Growth rests on cheapness. The problem is that if polluters have to pay too much, polluting industries will use their political and economic power to try to stop the charges. So the challenge is less about getting the markets or the prices right, as about leveraging the political power to do so.

6) Can’t we have growth based only on information and ideas?

In science fiction, yes, in reality no. We can imagine a movie where people sleep, plugged into a grid and fed by robots, exchanging more and more money in their dream world without using more resources (although this arrangement would not use less, either). In the real world, however, the monumental growth of information and communication technologies (ICTs) has not reduced resource use. Countries with more developed ICTs have bigger material footprints. As economies move from agriculture to industry to services, their material footprints grow rather than shrink. ICT services are resource- and energy-intensive (think of the power running servers), and those making money selling information or communication use money to buy or invest in material goods (think of the private jets of internet entrepreneurs).

#### Decoupling is impossible.

Trantas 21 [Nikos Trantas, independent scholar, political scientist and civil servant in the Presidency of the Government, Athens, Greece, “Could "degrowth" have the same fate as "sustainable development"? A discussion on passive revolution in the Anthropocene age,” 2021, *Journal of Political Ecology*, Vol. 28, Issue 1, pp. 224-245, https://doi.org/10.2458/jpe.2362, EA]

Based on the second law of thermodynamics but also the findings of authoritative scientific studies on historical trends and model-based projections for the future, the answer to the decoupling question appears to be negative. Parrique et al. (2019), having reviewed all the empirical decoupling literature, demonstrate that absolute, global, permanent, and sufficiently fast and large decoupling of environmental pressures (both resources and impacts) from economic growth is just not taking place, and is not likely to do so successfully in the future. A concise yet thorough literature review by Hickel and Kallis (2020: 1) on the two primary dimensions of decoupling – resource use and carbon emissions – concludes that:

(1) there is no empirical evidence that absolute decoupling from resource use can be achieved on a global scale against a background of continued economic growth, and (2) absolute decoupling from carbon emissions is highly unlikely to be achieved at a rate rapid enough to prevent global warming over 1.5°C or 2°C, even after optimistic policy conditions.

Ward et al., after listing four reasons why the apparent decoupling of GDP from specific resources is an illusion (resource substitution, financialization of some components of GDP, exporting of environmental impacts, rise in GDP that is not followed by a concomitant rise in material and energy throughput due to income inequality), point out that "decoupling of GDP growth from resource use, whether relative or absolute, is at best only temporary, as permanent decoupling (absolute or relative) is impossible for essential, non-substitutable resources because the efficiency gains are ultimately governed by physical limits." (Ward et al. 2016: 10). The same study concludes that "growth in GDP ultimately cannot plausibly be decoupled from growth in material and energy use, demonstrating categorically that GDP growth cannot be sustained indefinitely. It is therefore misleading to develop growth-oriented policy around the expectation that decoupling is possible" (p. 10). 10

## Alt

### Alt – Precarity

#### The alternative is to wallow away in precarity

Azmanova, A. (2024). The Road to the European Social Green Deal: Class Struggle or Counter-Hegemony. In Marx and Europe: Beyond Stereotypes, Below Utopias (pp. 13-24). Cham: Springer Nature Switzerland. Accessed 8/4/2024 TDI

A radical alternative is, however, available. It is contained in some distinctive features of contemporary capitalism. We stand at a tipping point in history, when acute dissatisfaction with capitalism is rising, not on account of its poor economic performance or the unfair distribution of wealth, but rather its excellent economic performance, its intensity. Towards the close of the twentieth century, the policy priority of enforcing competition, which had been a trademark of the neoliberal state, was replaced with the imperative of remaining competitive in the global economy. Thus, I have argued that since the early twenty-first century we inhabit yet another modality of capitalism – what I have called ‘precarity capitalism’. One of the peculiar features of this new model of capitalism is that the state actively helps specific economic actors by enhancing the advantage they already have in the global economy, for the sake of ensuring national competitiveness. In this situation, the privileged position of select corporations which are sheltered from competition intensifies the competitive pressures on all the rest – people compete for fewer and fewer jobs, employment insecurity rises for all, funds for public services and public goods are slashed – all for the sake of remaining competitive in the global economy. The trouble is not only for the underclass of workers on insecure and poorly paid jobs – the ‘precariat’. The insecurity has become massive – it afflicts highly educated employees in the legal profession, in Information Technology, and the medical service. Insecurity is forcing the labour-market insiders to work more than they would normally like to – but under the competitive pressures of globally integrated capitalism, they remain in the race out of uncertainty. On the other hand, this precludes access to the labour market for others – generating long-term unemployment as a source of precarity. As the real income and the social clout of the working class has risen, exploitation (enabled by the private ownership and management of productive capital) is no longer the key engine of social injustice. Moreover, the proliferation of forms of property ownership and professional tenure have increased the complexity of the structural dimension of domination. Thus, the investment of pension funds in publicly traded equities means that workers, often unawares, assume the ownership, if not the control, of productive capital. At the same time, these new forms of ownership also decreases the relevance of structuring institutions in the allocation of social advantage and disadvantage: owning property no longer provides a shelter from risk. Instead, it is the competitive production of profit – the key dynamic of capitalism – that has become the decisive factor. At the root of discontent is not simply the unfair distribution of wealth, but, importantly, the very process through which wealth is generated as well as the impact this has on individuals, communities, and nature. 23 The trouble with current-day capitalism is not just material inequality, but a massive economic and social uncertainty – precarity afflicts a growing multitude of groups beyond the poor and the excluded. The intensified competitive pressures of globally integrated capitalism have harmed not only the losers of globalisation – the ‘the precariat’. Intensified global economic competition has also done tangible damage to the winners in the distribution of power – labor market insiders with good and well-paid jobs, owners and managers of capital – and is triggering their discontent. This multifaceted discontent is shaping up into a powerful political force. A variety of interests across class divides, educational levels, and cultural identities are bringing together a multitude of strange bedfellows, united by an overarching grievance against the impact the competitive production of profit is having on their lives as well as on their social and natural environment. Mobilized in a mundane and inglorious anti-capitalist revolution, these forces could perform a social transformation still more radical than any proletarian class struggle could ever achieve. This recasting of the diagnosis of the social question of our times – as a matter of precarity rather than inequality – articulates the possibility of reconciling social and environmental justice we so urgently need. If social justice is redefined away from material prosperity and in the direction of stabilising livelihoods, this solves the conflict between ecological justice and a vision of social justice predicated on a growth-and-redistribution dynamic. Only in this way is a Social and Green Europe thinkable. A policy strategy for fighting precarity should be sought not so much in terms of active job creation or universal basic income – currently the two competing economic panaceas. On the one hand, depleted public budgets, especially after the pandemic-induced economic crisis, would necessitate spending on public services (building up the commons) to take priority over supplementing individual incomes. On the other hand, intensive technological innovation has decreased the time spent in productive employment that is necessary to effectively satisfy needs. The anthropologist David Graeber has noted that currently over half of societal work is pointless, while meaningless jobs are psychologically harmful.10 An alternative to both job-creation and universal basic income is available, which I have discussed in terms of a ‘right to minimum employment’, to be obtained via job sharing in view of maximization of voluntary employment flexibility. We should all work, but all should work less, and accept lower revenues in exchange for secure income and increased leisure time. A wide-spectrum policy reform would enable such a transition towards less affluent, but more stable livelihoods: from a trans-European social security provision which is independent from the employment contract to an affordable housing provision, and building a trans-European public sector of industries and services.11 This will decrease the time we spend in gainful employment, while distributing access to jobs more fairly. Ultimately, this would amount to a revolution in the way we perceive and deliver social fairness – from the model of equality-inprosperity which has proven so deleterious to the environment to a model of solidarity-in-wellbeing. No, we do not have the right to be middle class and affluent. But we have the right to live in dignity. Marx would approve.

### Alt – Socialism Beyond the Economic

#### The alternative is to expand socialism beyond the economic. That generates credibility and unites emerging movements.

Fraser, 22—Henry A. and Louise Loeb Professor of Political and Social Science at The New School (Nancy, “Food for Thought: What Should Socialism Mean in the Twenty-First Century?,” *Cannibal Capitalism: How Our System Is Devouring Democracy, Care, and the Planet—and What We Can Do about It*, Chapter 6, pp. 141-143, dml)

In any case, "socialism," too, is back! For decades the word was considered an embarrassment--a despised failure and relic of a bygone era. No more. At least not in the United States.' Today, US politicians like Bernie Sanders and Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez wear the label proudly and win support, while organizations like the Democratic Socialists of America attract new members in droves. But what exactly do they mean by "socialism"? However welcome, enthusiasm for the word does not translate automatically into serious reflection on its content. What exactly does or should "socialism" signify in the present era?

The arguments of the preceding chapters suggest an answer. The expanded conception of capitalism outlined there implies that we need an expanded conception of socialism, too. After all, once we've abandoned the view of capitalism as an economy, we can no longer understand socialism as an alternative economic system. If capital is wired to cannibalize the "non-economic" supports of commodity production, then a desirable alternative to it must do more than socialize ownership of the means of production. Over and above that desideratum--which I wholeheartedly endorse--it must also transform production's relation to its background conditions of possibility: namely, social reproduction, public power, nonhuman nature, and forms of wealth that lie outside capital's official circuits but within its reach. In other words, as I shall explain, a socialism for our time must overcome not only capital's exploitation of wage labor, but also its free riding on unwaged carework, public powers, and wealth expropriated from racialized subjects and nonhuman nature.

This point invites a disclaimer at the outset: to expand the idea of socialism is not to add epicycles to it. Far from simply appending more features to received understandings, it will be necessary to transform the very concept. That is in effect what I sought to do for capitalism in the previous chapters--by treating as structurally integral to it matters that are usually considered secondary--above all, gender/sexuality, race/ empire, ecology, and democracy. Now, in the present chapter, I seek to do the same for socialism. I aim to reconceive it, too, as an institutionalized societal order, one that is as comprehensive as capitalism--and hence, can claim to be a credible alternative to it. In this way, I hope to cast new light as well on many classical topoi of socialist thought: on domination and emanci pation; on class and crisis; on property, markets, and planning; and on necessary labor, free time, and social surplus. Each of those matters should assume a different guise once we view socialism, too, as more than an economy. What should appear as well are the outlines of a socialism that differs sharply from Soviet-style Communism, on the one hand, and from social democracy, on the other--a socialism for the twenty-first century.

I must begin, however, by revisiting capitalism, which is the necessary starting point for discussions of socialism. Socialism, after all, should not be a "mere ought" or utopian dream. If it is worth discussing now, it is rather because it encapsulates real, historically emergent possibilities: potentials for human freedom, well-being, and happiness that capitalism has brought within reach but cannot actualize. Equally important, socialism is a response to capitalism's impasses and injustices: to logjams that the system precipitates periodically and cannot overcome definitively; and to forms of domination that are so deeply grounded in it that they cannot be eradicated within it. Socialism, in other words, claims to remedy capitalism's ills. And so, it is there that we must begin.

### Alt – Revolutionary Socialism

#### The alternative is revolutionary socialism

The Red Nation, 19 [Editorial: "Revolutionary Socialism is the Primary Political Ideology of The Red Nation," The Red Nation, https://therednation.org/2019/09/07/revolutionary-socialism-is-the-primary-political-ideology-of-the-red-nation-2/]

US settler colonialism was thoroughly a racial project of genocide and Indigenous elimination, which is an enduring structure that changes over time. After all, even the so-called Five Civilized Tribes who had adopted the plantation economy and African slave system from their European counterparts were themselves dispossessed and extirpated from their lands. And both freed Africans and Indigenous people fought as soldiers and scouts for the US settler wars of extermination against western Indigenous nations and overseas campaigns of conquest. Despite their military service in the US imperialist army, their stations within settler society have always been subordinate to white Europeans. They faced Jim Crow segregation, police violence, mass incarceration, and the continued settler occupation of Indigenous lands. We reject settler colonialism and US imperialism as the means of emancipation for the working class and for colonized people. Our communist and anti-imperialist principles to which we ascribe are as follows: 1. End the unequal relations between European and colonized nations. 2. End the violent competition between the nations of exploiters and colonizers. 3. End the plunder of the earth for profit. 2. Marxism is not European. Socialism is Indigenous. Marxism is founded on the expropriated knowledges of non-capitalist Indigenous societies. Although Marx himself was wrong about many things, Marxism, as a science, has a built-in self-correcting mechanism that has helped revolutionaries throughout the world build off the political theory Marx first formulated. If this were untrue, there would be no Russian Revolution, no African Revolution and decolonization movement, no Vietnamese liberation, no Bolivarian Revolution, no Cuban Revolution, no Chinese Revolution, etc. Each adopted Marxism and applied it to its specific and unique circumstances by building off the long struggles against exploitation and European imperialism. Even for Indigenous peoples in the Americas, the concepts and theories of decolonization explicitly derive from Marxist revolutionary movements. It’s dishonest for us to not recognize this history. It’s not because of Marx or European thinkers that these revolutions were successful. It’s because Marxism is the science of revolution for the poor masses, the colonized, and the wretched of the earth. Fundamentally, Marxism is the science of how to get free. It is the study of class struggle. If capitalism upholds the systems of racism, settler colonialism, heteropatriarchy, and imperialism, then we cannot use capitalism to undo these systems. It’s not enough to just be anti-capitalist. Like our ancestors we must be forward-thinking by drawing from and amplifying our non-capitalist social relations as Indigenous peoples, not to make Indigenous traditions relevant to Marxism or socialism but to make socialism and Marxism relevant to our struggle as Indigenous peoples. You cannot fight fire with fire. You cannot fight capitalism with Indigenous capitalism. You cannot fight nationalism with hyper-nationalism. You can only fight fire with water. And the solution to all these ills—and it is what capitalists and colonists hate the most—is socialism. If capitalism is burning the planet, then socialism is the water to douse the flame. Water is life. We all need water to live, but we don’t need capitalism. And for us to fight colonialism, we must ensure that our nations can live. But our nationalism cannot mirror the bourgeois settler nationalism of colonial states, which is premised on exclusion and white supremacy. We adopt a revolutionary Indigenous nationalism that aligns with the most oppressed and marginalized first, within and outside our own communities. And we recognize that by organizing production—for our food, medicines, resources, etc.—according to need and not profit is the only possible path forward according to our traditions. The philosophy of communism neatly lines up with the philosophy of our Indigenous ancestors. Friedrich Engels admitted as much when in the 1888 English edition of the Communist Manifesto he added a footnote to the famous line: “The history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggle.” He clarified, “That is, all written history,” making note specifically of Lewis Henry Morgan’s study of the Haudenosaunee Confederacy, which was a communistic, classless, and democratic society before European invasion. Moreover, it was the relative gender equality of Indigenous societies that inspired the suffragettes — white women seeking parity with white men. The study of Indigenous societies, the inherent equality and freedom they engendered among producers and the common ownership of property and social institutions, also inspired European workers to demand eight-hour workdays and the abolition of child labor. And, in the final analysis, despite their own limited understandings, Marx and Engels, the founders of the modern communist movement, had developed theories of emancipation largely from the expropriated knowledges of Indigenous and communal people, whose examples they relied on to prove that capitalism is neither inevitable nor natural. But, in fact, communism is both natural and inevitable. This is not to suggest Indigenous societies were utopias — no society is perfect. It is, however, important to understand that Indigenous peoples have been knocked off the path of their natural social development to live in balance and correct relations. We are not trying to recreate the past so much as steer Indigenous nations back on their communal developmental path that has been destroyed or seriously distorted by capitalist social relations. 3. The United States is not a “nation of immigrants” but a nation of colonizers. Whereas contemporary racial identity politics attempts to mask or obscure class antagonisms, a class struggle that doesn’t overturn white supremacy and settler colonialism frees no one. We are not seeking parity with colonizers or further integration into a colonial system. We’re seeking to end settler and white supremacy entirely over Black, Indigenous, and colonized people. We aim to end the colonial system entirely. Why? The United States, as a nation of European colonizers, had no feudal or communal past. Unlike other nations in history who transitioned from feudalism to capitalism, the United States was the first nation born entirely as a capitalist state. It was constructed from the ground up according to the nightmare vision of European slave owners and Indian killers — the nation’s founding bourgeois ideologies. The United States began as an oppressor nation, as a colonizer of oppressed people, and its function remains so. It not only has a capitalist ruling class, but all strata and classes of white Europeans among its ranks are encouraged to become preoccupied with the aims of the ruling class through petty racial privileges and private property ownership, the guiding stars of white settler nationalism. We reject those national and settler aspirations and ask our comrades in struggle to reject them as well. The current US colonial state is not only an instrument of racial and class rule, it is also an instrument of imperialist plunder and the oppressor of nations. It thus obscures its own internal divisions of colonizer and colonized. The United States fabricates national myths by calling itself a “nation of immigrants” to hide its unnaturalness and crimes. Immigrants come to a land to integrate within the existing legal, social, and political orders. The first European settlers came to colonize, to destroy and replace existing Indigenous legal, social, and political orders. The United States is, therefore, more accurately described as a “nation of colonizers.” Immigrants don’t come in chains; you can’t immigrate to a land you already belong to; and refugees fleeing imperialist violence are not immigrants. We recognize that the colonial state keeps in place irreconcilable class antagonisms, between rich and poor, between settler and Native. The state is first and foremost police and military violence. Its legitimacy is maintained by force. It’s primary function is enforcing capitalist social relations. The veneer of “representative democracy” is only possible because the ruling classes have crushed and will continue to crush any alternative to capitalism by mobilizing the police and military. In this sense, Indigenous people are the first “Red Scare.” Because we held land in common and represented an alternative to the settler state (whether it be by taking in escaped slaves or mounting armed resistance), we had to be annihilated. Today, because we adopt revolutionary socialism as our struggle and vision for a free society, we are the second coming of the “Red Scare.” But we are not exclusive in our struggles for freedom. We align ourselves with all colonized and oppressed people of the world. Only imperial borders and nation-states that are not of our own making divide our common humanity. Therefore, our struggle transcends the state, but we are not naive enough to turn away from the state as a site of struggle. We understand that state power is nearly impossible to achieve, since Indigenous peoples are a minority. Yet, in alliance with other colonized and oppressed peoples, we can take state power, not to become the new rulers of a capitalist society, but to use the mechanisms of the state to wage our rightful struggle against our class enemies—the rich. A socialist state uses the power and democracy of the masses to undo the privileges and wealth of the ruling classes and the colonial elite, even among our own people. A socialist state seeks to destroy itself because it is built in the shell of the old. But it has to be wielded by the oppressed in the service of the oppressed to achieve freedom and the abolition of the state itself, because, whether we like it or not, the state is the primary organizer of society. And through a decolonized socialist state, we will reorganize society to redistribute wealth and land by taking it back from those who stole it from us in the first place. We recognize the fallacy that capitalists and settlers will simply give up their wealth and privilege if we win their hearts and minds. Their wealth and privilege were earned by force and it is kept in place by violence. Any challenge to that authority, whether it’s democratic or “non-violent,” will always be met with violence. Even the fallacy of democracy is upheld by force. A capitalist government, even if it is “democratic,” will always serve the interests of the ruling classes no matter how much we reform it. As revolutionaries, our focus is not to organize and appeal to the oppressors for our rights. Our role is to organize the oppressed to build authentic democracy from the ground up. And we cannot wait for someone else to save us. Only we can save ourselves. Marxism and socialism take up the position of the poor. That is why they are derided and hounded by the rich and powerful, because they work in the interests of the colonized and oppressed. We advocate for socialist revolution as the only means of achieving decolonization. 4. Indigenous liberation is the tip of the spear. Class is fundamentally about power. The class system was imported to our lands and it upholds racism, sexism, homophobia, and settler colonialism. Indigenous nations are not immune to this system, and, in fact, have internalized it as their own. Indigenous nations face a double class oppression—first as Native people colonized by a foreign power and second as poor people. Only revolutionary socialism that seeks decolonization and the abolition of the class system can emancipate us from the ills plaguing our nations. Only through creating a revolutionary organization can we hope to facilitate decolonization on the path towards socialism. No revolution in history ever came about spontaneously. The conditions of a rebellion (war, slavery, starvation) may have been spontaneous, but the successful defeat of the oppressors always required determined and effective organization of a disciplined and highly-trained revolutionary cadre. This is the difference between rebellion and revolution. Rebellion is a temporary protest that seeks the recognition of those in power to change their minds. Revolution seeks to build power from below and doesn’t require the recognition of the rulers—but seeks to entirely replace them with people power and the organized masses. Rebellion is a nascent phase that can lead to revolution. But it is not guaranteed. Revolutionaries, however, guide rebellion to revolution. To do so requires a lifetime commitment, building the revolutionary organization which is the vehicle of democracy and struggle, and the unwavering belief that things can and will change. The Red Nation is a multinational organization, representing many different Indigenous nations. Yet we recognize a common oppression, a common experience, among Native people. We are oppressed because of our Indigenousness. Therefore, as our name suggests, we are seeking to unify as a nation in this hemisphere and beyond. But our nation is one in which many nations fit. We do not privilege one Indigenous experience over the other (for example, Lakota or Diné, urban or Rez, Anglo or Spanish, etc.). But our diversity and our plurality is our strength, not our weakness. We should actively seek to create and build alliances with non-Indigenous people and struggles but our primary struggle is dedicated to building our organization and unifying our people and nations. Only a revolutionary organization, dedicated to the principles of socialism, equality, democracy, freedom, and Indigenous liberation, is capable of doing that work. But we must submit to a collective will for liberation by abandoning bourgeois individualism and narrow nationalism.

### Alt – Anti-Work

#### The alternative is anti-work

Dinerstein, A. C., & Pitts, F. H. (2018). From post-work to post-capitalism? Discussing the basic income and struggles for alternative forms of social reproduction. Journal of Labor and Society, 21(4), 471-491. Accessed 8-4-24 TDI

6 | SOCIAL REPRODUCTION STRUGGLES AS “LABOR” STRUGGLES We propose an alternative to the conceptualization of the PWP as a transitional phase on the path to postcapitalism: the politics of social reproduction, and specifically the delineation of “concrete utopias” (Dinerstein, 2016). As noted, scholars have suggested that capitalism is undergoing a severe and protracted crisis of social reproduction. Employment increasingly fails to support subsistence. This is in our view a crisis of the capitalist form of social reproduction. While PWP advocates confuse this situation with an unfolding end of work, we use the social reproduction standpoint to reframe this and engage with the search for alternative forms of social reproduction that is already actively taking place at the grassroots, but which the more “accelerationist” strands of postcapitalist thinking dismiss as “folk politics” (Srnicek & Williams, 2015). The PWP, by seeing in the crisis of social reproduction the end of work, misses the connection between production and what precedes it, logically and historically. As Nancy Fraser writes, while Marx “looked behind the sphere of exchange, into the ‘hidden abode’ of production, in order to discover capitalism's secrets,” it is also necessary to “seek production's conditions of possibility behind that sphere” (Fraser, 2014, p. 57). Namely: why do we have to work, and what keeps us working? The PWP wants to do away with work, without posing the question why it exists in the form it does. In asking this, the social reproduction perspective on the crisis of work that we advocate here takes inspiration from Marxist-feminist inquiries into the “conditions of possibility of labor-power” and the “manner in which labor power is biologically, socially and generationally reproduced” (Ferguson & McNally, 2015). Marx (1976) writes that “the worker belongs to capital before he has sold himself to the capitalist” (p. 723). This relationship begins “not with the offer of work, but with the imperative to earn a living” (Denning, 2010, p. 80). This relates to an ongoing process of primitive accumulation whereby workers are dispossessed continually of the common means of meeting their needs and new enclosures spring up daily (Dalla Costa, 1995). This is reproduced constantly to keep workers in a situation whereby they must sell their labor-power to live. More importantly, as Dalla Costa contends, “human reproduction is built on an unsustainable sacrifice by women, as part of a conception and structure of life which is nothing but labor time within an intolerable sexual hierarchy” (p. 13). The social reproduction perspective sees these conditions as key to capitalist society. Workplace exploitation, then, is not the singular moment of domination (Bhattacharya, 2015). The violent denial of the human need to subsist here precedes the compulsion to labor. There is no escaping work without addressing how to meet the former. The PWP offers no alternative infrastructure to do so independent of commodification. The UBI, a possible solution, only reinforces the rule of money with which the wage is intimately connected, simply substituting the buyer of labor power with the state. What the social reproduction approach suggests, by foregrounding the constitutive social relations that undergird work to begin with, is that struggles for social reproduction are instances of class struggle. Struggles addressed to state solutions and state recognition are themselves struggles for the means to live and subsist. As Anna Curcio points out in an interview with Kathi Weeks (Weeks & Curcio, 2015), the same struggles “brought together by the same possibility of survival,” are also struggles for the “survival and the autonomous reproduction of the human being and a struggle for the survival and the reproduction of capital” (Weeks & Curcio, 2015). In fights to protect the welfare system, for instance, this dual identity is clear. Our survival hinges on the survival—and the prosperity—of capital, for now at least. This creates tensions, struggles, and conflicts. They center on consumption, the commons, commodification: outside production, in the sphere of realization. The survival of society hinges on the ability of people to subsist and reproduce the means of both living and laboring. Covering everything that reproduces both life and capitalist society, these struggles highlight how social reproduction is inevitably crisscrossed by contradictions, wherein lies room for resistance and rupture, and for the creation of alternative forms of social reproduction, or concrete utopias (Dinerstein, 2016). Contradictorily, the reproduction of each—life and capital—is the reproduction of the other. Capitalist society depends upon the commodification of the labor-power we sell to live. Social reproduction is a sphere of conflict as long as labor power implies this twin intent. The capitalist desires its reproduction to exploit, the worker its reproduction to eat. Wage demands, strikes for pay or better hours, exercise regimes, diets. In seeking a better standard of life, all express this antagonistic settlement's contradictory contours. Any analysis of work and economic life must tune in to these contradictions and their possibilities. When we reproduce labor-power, we also reproduce life itself. The wage pays for labor-power, and it is through the wage that we live. There is no other way. As such, the “contradiction between the needs of the workers and the needs of capital that lives at the core of the problem of social reproduction cannot be more vivid. This is not a political, economic or social issue but it is about the reproduction of human life” (Dinerstein, 2002, p. 14). In fighting for the welfare system, we both ensure our reproduction as humans well as workers, and in turn the reproduction of capitalist society. The two sides, in their contradictory unity, are the same. Our survival hinges on the survival of capital, for now, from which we seek strength to fight on for an alternative to it. The social reproduction standpoint suggests that capital and state sustain us. But it endows the situation with a thoroughly contradictory status. There is a total absence of any Durkheimian functionalism. The post-work thesis, on the other hand, posits precisely such a functional vision of society. Namely, it eliminates conflict and contradiction and seeks to “solve the problem of work.” At its reactionary extension, UBI seeks the cleansing of contradictions in state projects of national-popular renewal. To intervene in the politics of work, while keeping these contradictions open, one must first intervene in the politics of the social relations that support it. Struggles over social reproduction are “labor” struggles. Concurrently, “labor” struggles are mainly struggles over social reproduction. We struggle to live, not to work. Works mediates life. Or better, the wage does. The struggle for money takes place in, against and beyond capital. The social reproduction approach has touched on an important element of present class struggles: But this struggle is not only one for “crude and material things without which no refined and spiritual things could exist” (Benjamin, 1999). In struggling to avail ourselves of what we need to eat, to drink, to share together, we gesture from this world to others. That is, we produce surplus of possibilities that, as we have shown, post-work advocates are presently missing, and social reproduction scholars have only timidly addressed. Within the contradictions set out in this section, it is therefore a political choice to identify which kind of society we want to emerge from this crisis of the capitalist form of social reproduction. And, at present, all the visions for how this pans out liquidate falsely resolve these contradictions in the UBI, depriving them of their transformative dynamism. In the following section, we suggest an alternative that liquidates neither social reproduction as class struggle, nor class struggle as social reproduction. This centers on a “concrete utopia” that keeps open the capacity of the subjects involved to struggle and contest the institutionalized forms their social relations assume. Today we witness a generalized embrace of abstract utopias like the automated worklessness of advanced robotics and the UBI. But the space to create concrete utopias is required (Dinerstein, 2016). Eric Olin Wright (2010) offers a similar term, real utopia, to describe how social movements envision new worlds and can transform capitalism. He suggests that the expression “real utopia” “is meant to be a provocation, for “utopia” and “real” do not comfortably go together.” Wright's “real” utopias are not only desirable but, according to the author, they are necessarily viable and achievable. Wright (2013, pp. 3, 8) claims that “if you worry about desirability and ignore viability or achievability, then you are just a plain utopian. Exploration of real utopias requires understanding of these other two dimensions.” The notion of “concrete utopia” is radically different and, we think, more appropriate to capture present struggle around social reproduction. Concrete utopia is not concerned with “feasibility” but with opening the possibility to enact a collective dream. Real utopia requires “objective” conditions for its realization. The notion of “concrete utopia” refers the concrete anticipation of what Ernst Bloch names the not-yet-conscious and, more generally, the not-yet (Bloch, 1959/1986; see also Bloch & Lowy, 1976; Lowy, 2015). The not yet is not probable according to objective indicators but possible, and, as Stengers suggests, “possibility cannot be calculated a priori because it implies the fact that the very description of the system itself can change. And you cannot calculate that” (Stengers & Zournazi, 2002, p. 246). A necessary first step to the delineation of such concrete utopias in the present is to address class, property, and social reproduction while still allowing struggle to thrive, harnessing the legal and political weaponry at hand to expand space for alternatives through and not in spite of the present state of things. It is imperative to locate where this potential lies. As an example, we will look at one of the sectors of the Argentinian UWOs as an illustration of how each of the impasses outlined above can be overcome and concrete utopias envisioned (Dinerstein, 2010, 2017; see also Atzeni & Ghigliani, 2007). This example is important for two reasons: the first one is that their concern with the productive sphere is overcome with reference to new forms of social reproduction (Mason-Deese, 2016). The direct dependence on the benevolence of the state is mediated through new collective institutions, and the concept of continuing class struggle and societal contradiction is kept intact. The second is that the collective actions of the UWOs are in no way “folk politics,” that is, according to Srnicek and Williams (p. 13), a tendency and political action designed to interpret the world and to react against the “historical experiences of communism.” This Eurocentric and colonial classification of grassroots struggles around social reproduction falls short in understanding that the struggle for life is now central for social movements. It also ignores that the possibility of creating an excess beyond the present lays within these organizing processes. These possibilities for an excess, as we shall see, are not exhausted as in the abstract utopia of state control, but becomes a structuring principle of concrete utopias that remedy many of the flaws of the PWP. While they are always at risk of being integrated into the modus operandi and dynamics imposed by the powers that they confront, and therefore suffer de-radicalization, the “translation” of these concrete utopias into state policy is a process of struggle that allows room for, rather than forecloses, radical changes (Dinerstein, 2015, 2017). Originating in the late 1990s, the Argentinean UWOs are well-known in Latin America and elsewhere for their struggle for autonomy and dignity against social exclusion and unemployment originating in the 1990s and 2000s. Unemployment in Argentina had risen from 6% in 1991 to 18% in 1995. Organizationally spontaneous roadblock protests called for “job creation, public workers, essential services [and] participation in the management of employment programmes” (Dinerstein, 2010, p. 358). The “Piqueteros” had a strategy of “leveraging state resources through a combination of protest and social projects in the community and not only challenged the common view of the unemployed as excluded and redundant but also influenced the institutional framework within which social demands could be made.” They did so through the creation of new UWOs which, through resistance and struggle, were successful in drawing down state benefits that would have been paid individually and paid them collectively for community projects that were decided collectively to address the needs of social reproduction. One in particular is worthy of specific scrutiny: the Union Trabajadores Desocupados (UTD), or Unemployed Workers Union, a group of autonomous Piqueteros. The UTD was formed following the privatization of the local state oil company—only 5,600 of 51,000 workers remained. In the municipality of General Mosconi, 34.6% of the population was unemployed by 2001. The UTD was led by ex-oil workers, who assessed projects for support according to “local need,” “dignity,” and “genuine work” in “solidarity.” Projects addressed “long-term sustainability” in “housing, education and environmental protection,” and also everyday issues like “recycling, refurbishing public buildings and houses, community farms, soup kitchen…retirement homes, health care visits to the ill and disabled, production of regional crafts, carpentry…maintaining and repairing hospital emergency rooms and schools.” In this way, the UTD became the “quasi-city council” of General Mosconi (Dinerstein, 2010, p. 361). They did this through state funding, but not in a direct way reliant on the benevolence of the state. Rather resources were captured in an active and open relationship of conflict and negotiation that created space for things to exceed the capacity of the state to control and govern how the money was spent. The UWOs fought for “the re-appropriation of social programmes for collective purposes,” and they did this by switching between two modes of activity: mobilization, which used the roadblocks to demand resources; and policy, which moved state resources through the neighborhood to implement the resources in social projects. It is only by means of and through the seeming contradiction between these two registers of mobilization and social policy that state resources can be leveraged at all. The UWOs worked within contradiction rather than seeking to escape in a final, closed settlement that established an abstract utopia. Their concrete utopia, insofar as it was achieved at all, was subject to and thrived from these contradictions, “using resistance as a conduit for community development and community development as a conduit for resistance” (Dinerstein, 2010, p. 361). Any PWP based on the UBI, by seeking the absolution from work by means of the state, forecloses contradiction in an abstract utopia of automated worklessness with no room for further struggle within the interstices of those contradictions. Rather than a welfare policy granted from up on high to which individual recipients must address themselves, the UWOs instituted “welfare policy from below” (Dinerstein, 2010, p. 361). Benefits of £30 per head per month were paid every 6 months from the state, and then distributed by the UTD among the “unemployed workers” who were “willing to undertake community work.” By 2005 the UTD managed as many programs as the municipality and more than the provincial governments— housing co-ops, garment factory, training centers, a university. It also served as a job agency and trade union, using its leverage to get unemployed workers jobs, backed up by “access blockades” outside and, once enough UTDs employed, “line stoppages” within (Dinerstein, 2010, pp. 360–361). As such welfare was locked into a convincing reconstitution of a community of work and workers. UTD, for example, identified “work as a true human attribute that must be used for the production of useful goods and services” (Dinerstein, 2010, p. 361). The key issue here was “dignity.” Their search for dignified work permitted neither Prometheanism nor neurosis around what is conceptualized correctly as an everyday point of meaning and antagonism. By working within the contradictions that confront the everyday practice of work and the abstract determination of labor in capitalist society, the UWOs “challenged the individualistic logic of workfare and state policy and reconceptualized ‘work’ in capitalist society” (Dinerstein, 2017). They did so in far more concrete and practical a way than the PWP seems capable of, while also embedding this in an attempt to overhaul the socially reproductive social relations of subsistence that compel us to work in the first place. For Zechner and Hansen (2015), “struggles around social reproduction allow for a renegotiation of the around what is considered work, or what is valued as such.” We can see in the Piqueteros' struggle over social reproduction a similar renegotiation, situating the separation from the means of subsistence and the compulsion to sell one's labor power in historical context. Theoretically, this destabilizes it. Practically, it allows the concrete search for contemporary on-the-ground alternatives. The UWOs are suggestive of the possibilities of “translating” radical political and social practice into institutionalized solutions struck with the state. Translation is defined as “the processes, mechanisms and dynamics through which the state incorporates the cooperation and solidarity ethos of the SSE practiced by social movements through policy” (Dinerstein, 2017). However, with this the risk is run of the “depoliticization” of these movements by the new legal structures put in place to superintend the state programs on which their claims are made. UWOs had to become NGOs, registered and assessed by the state, or else, as did the UTD, retain autonomy using the registration of a friendly NGO, so as to “access funding [whilst] continuing to design its own strategies and implement its own community ventures” (Dinerstein, 2010, p. 360). But it was working within this antagonistic and contradictory relationship with the state that allowed their social gains to be achieved. The UBI, on the other hand, concentrates power absolutely in the hands of the state as a benefactor rather than a boss, with the more subservient and compliant relationship this implies. The UWOs permit acceptance that the embeddedness of social actors “in, against and beyond” the state will always be contested. It is this from which we proceed as a starting point, rather than approaching it as a limit, so that “institutionalization” is always already “contested” all the way up and down. Social movements, in posing alternatives, “navigate the tension between resistance and integration” (Dinerstein, 2010, pp. 357–358). And it is this tension that is productive: embedding autonomy appears to be achievable by recreating social relations at community level, and by engaging with the institutions of society…Autonomous collective action by civil society actors remains alive through the steady, continuing and often painful struggles underpinned by the tension between affirmation of autonomy and recuperation of autonomy by the state. (Dinerstein, 2010, p. 364) The Piqueteros wielded power by managing and using this tension, rather than avoiding it. This is because there was an excess facilitated that such totalizing solutions as the UBI and total automation, by implying the presence of a strong and all-powerful state, do not. We can identify four dimensions or “zones” in the movement's struggle, not staggered but contained dialectically within one another. The creative zone, the conflict zone, the translation zone and the beyond zone (Dinerstein, 2017). Regardless of compromises lost in translation, in the last of these lies an untranslatable excess—“the impossibility to completely translate movement-led SSE practice into policy.” The possibility of a postcapitalist transition consists in the protection and expansion of this space of excess, absent in the PWP. The UWOs demonstrate a collective alternative against the individualized structure of the UBI. Indeed, “[t]he collective use of individual social/unemployment benefits for community development purposes, financed by state programs, but devised, implemented and supervised by NGOs, as in the UWO's case, might not be unimaginable in the UK environment” (Dinerstein, 2010, pp. 364–365). As an alternative using a social reproduction approach to recode the issues the PWP currently confronts in the public consciousness, this path may well be one policymakers should consider taking that moves within contradictions and struggles rather than shutting them down in the search for abstract utopias, which reaffirm the violence of abstraction and the power of money over humanity. This model confers further advantages over the UBI. The PWP bases its vision for the future on further technological advancement at a time where the earth's resources have already been plundered to such an extent that the only realistic option is to repurpose what we already have at our disposal. This has led some advocates to propose the plundering of resources from other planets instead (Bastani, 2017). But the vision of a smaller-scale, potentially more folk-political and decentralized alternative rests on a form of concrete activity more in keeping with environmental policies and even the “degrowth” agenda of some green movements. To pre-empt a possible objection, it is transparent that UWOs also imply a relationship with the state as it currently exists, dependent on its support and funding even where this is devolved to the most autonomous level. But they produce an excess insofar as they facilitate space for the continued development of conflict and negotiation both “in” and “against” the state. The UBI, meanwhile, suppresses class struggles and implies a state that to serve its purpose must be all-powerful and, possibly, all-knowing, and against which the recipient of the UBI stands as an individual rather than, as in the UWOs, a member of a collective that can organize and bargain for better beyond the electoral cycle. Of course, there is the potential that under the UWO system the state can act to stifle class struggles. But the antagonistic reflex to resist against such impositions is retained, whereas the UBI sublets it under the sign of a universalized national people. By producing a totalizing response to the problems of a totalizing system, even where it is posed as a transitional demand the UBI threatens an end to struggle and the finality whereby institutionalization loses the contested character that it has by default under the current configuration of capitalist social relations. It is fair to say that the character of the state and its relationship with society is somewhat different in, say, the United Kingdom, when compared to Argentina. However, some of the same principles as found in the UWOs already appear in the Business and Employment Cooperatives that have seen some uptake in continental European countries like France and Belgium and attracted the attention of the UK government via recent policy initiatives like the Taylor Review (Conaty, Bird, & Ross, 2015; Taylor, 2017). This suggests that it may be possible to harbor alternatives in concrete existing struggles sooner than the speculative programs of the PWP might consider the case.

### 2NR Alt Solvency

#### Only the alternatives movement against the labor-captial alliance solves

Azmanova, A. (2020). Anti-Capital for the XXIst Century (on the metacrisis of capitalism and the prospects for radical politics). Philosophy & Social Criticism, 46(5), 601-612. Accessed 8/4/24 CSUF JmB TDI

In order to alter the core dynamics of the social order – the way society produces its material conditions and values its members’ achievements, and not simply remedy the unfair distributive outcomes (inequality) and eliminate the oppressive structuring institutions (private property), a very broad-based mobilization must take place against capitalism’s constitutive dynamic – the production of profit. The class struggle as a strategy of anti-capitalist mobilization which the Left is now reviving would be unable to achieve such a broad anti-capitalist front, and even might hinder its formation. We need an alternative strategy for radical politics, which I have named subverting capitalism from within – that is, taking the existing capital–labour alliance and directing it against the competitive pressures of profit production. To accomplish such subversion, we must seek to connect the multitude of grievances that cut across the capital–labour divide (a divide shaped in relation to the ownership and management of the means of production) by means of a common denominator. This common denominator would help build a singular ‘chain of equivalences’ (Mouffe and Laclau 1985) among the various grievances. A logic of equivalence among the diverse experiences of social harm is now available in the phenomenon of generalized social precarity I discussed earlier. I have noted that conflicting experiences of injustice (e.g. the chronic unemployment or insecure employment that afflicts low-skilled workers vs. poor work-life balance for holders of good jobs) have a common root – they originate in the intensified pressures of the pursuit of profit in the framework of globally integrated markets. The dynamics of contemporary capitalism thus generate an overarching opposition to the processes through which affluence is created, irrespective of the particular distribution of that affluence or the forms of property ownership through which it is created. Contemporary capitalism generates this broad opposition through two internal contradictions (antinomies). The first, which I have named ‘surplus employability’ consists in the simultaneous increase of the decommodification potential of modern societies and the increase of commodification pressures. The second contradiction – the ‘acute job dependency’ – is generated by the tension between the decreased availability of good jobs and the increased reliance on a job as a source of livelihood. As these antinomies create a life of social precarity even for the winners in the unequal distribution of affluence, they supply the basis for a broad anti-capitalist alliance (Azmanova 2020, 147, 151). The structuring institutions of capitalism – the forms of property ownership and job tenure – function as enabling conditions for the process of subverting capitalism. On the one hand, the capital–labour alliance that currently supports the policy agenda for growth and jobs (and thus undergirds capitalism) has been reinforced through the ‘democratization’ of property ownership – as owning equity in publicly listed companies has become not only broadly accessible but, through pension funds’ investments in such holdings, it has become ubiquitous and unavoidable. On the other hand, however, this has altered the balance between opportunities and risks the ownership structures create. In the context of ‘classical’ 19th century capitalism in which Marx was writing, the private property of the means of production afforded economic advantages to capital owners while sheltering them from the social risks that participation in the pursuit of profit entails. Risks accrued to wage labour (which did not profit from the protections of property ownership). Orthodox forms of Marxism still work with this ontology of capitalism, on the basis of which they prescribe the socialization of labour (i.e. elimination of the principle of private tenure of the means of production) as the appropriate solution. In the current context, however, the predominant formula of property ownership through holding equity in publicly listed companies exposes all participants to the risks of the competitive pursuit of profit without the protections that exclusive ownership supplies. This is among the strongest sources of the phenomenon of social precarity I discussed as a key feature of contemporary capitalism – the social risks generated in the course of the pursuit of profit (from poor mental health to environmental damage) surpass the benefits of this process (increase of affluence). This means that the main structuring institution of capitalism – that of the private property of the means of production, in its current form, could serve as a lever for building a capital–labour alliance against capitalism, for subverting capitalism. Forging such an alliance of, indeed, strange bedfellows, against the very constitutive logic of capitalism – the competitive production of profit, would not necessitate a terminal crisis of capitalism. Neither would it require that participants embrace a positive utopia (e.g. socialism or communism). Such an anti-capitalist venture would proceed not through stupendous political gestures of overthrowing a regime but would rather deploy the radical subversive pragmatism12 of mundane practices and policies that go against the profit motive – from universal basic income to job sharing and public investment in scientific research. Opposing the operative dynamic of capitalism (profit production) rather than dismantling its structuring institutions (private property) is both a more radical course of action and a more realistic programme for transformative politics – one that is best suited to the exigencies of our historical moment.

# Aff Answers

### 1AR – Link Turn

#### Wage increase k2 post-capitalist transition

Lawhon and McCreary, 23—School of Geosciences, University of Edinburgh; Department of Geography, Florida State University (Mary and Tyler, “Making UBI radical: On the potential for a universal basic income to underwrite transformative and anti-kyriarchal change,” Economy and Society, 52:2, 349-372, dml)

The second key distinction we work to make here is that cash transfers, and particularly a durable, redistributive UBI, might well induce much greater political economic change. If cash transfers were merely ameliorative, reducing economic inequality, this might be reason enough to support them. The argument we make here, however, is that the impacts of cash transfers go beyond this, and that a redistributive UBI might well be used to underwrite postcapitalist economies. Greater economic security and improved relations with the state and each other might well increase many people’s willingness and ability to participate in political economic change. Further, progressive scholars and activists might well be able to shape practice, highlighting the benefits of using increased funds and time to underwrite radical political economic change. What might the securing of a state-provided universal, unconditional basic income do? In what ways might embracing modest statecraft, changing relationships between citizens and the state, rework how we see and interact with the state and each other? We point to four interrelated possibilities here: (i) freed time might be used to participate in democracy, (ii) increased incomes might be used to support diverse economies, (iii) reduced reliance on the capitalist economy might enable greater regulation as well as social and ecological re-embedding, and (iv) reconfigured state-citizenship relations might also transform how people collectively understand themselves and the possibilities for change. These impacts are not given, but might be created as part of a radical politics.

First, it is easy to imagine that a UBI might free up time and that this might well enable citizens to be more informed, active and engaged with politics (Fitzpatrick, 2004). Further, cash transfers – especially those with limited conditions – have not led to docile populations, but often to more politically engaged citizens who, at the very least, fight to keep these benefits. The position we develop here advances the idea that freeing up time is politically useful, building on this towards understanding the role of a UBI in enabling a different type of politics, and a different type of economy.

Leftist scholarship has suggested that a UBI might enable improved bargaining power for labour by providing a ‘permanent strike fund’; even the threat of striking may increase the overall gains for workers (Calnitsky, 2017; Stern, 2016). In this version, a UBI is seen as a tool for enabling iterative change towards a more empowered working class: change can be demanded through the threat of labour withdrawal. We see value in such a position, but also emphasize the potential of a basic income as a means for the actual withdrawal from capitalist relations and a resource to be used to build new political economic relations.

Above, we noted that most studies of cash transfers have deployed developmentalist lenses, yet there are some exceptions. Exploring the politics of Seminole gaming in which cash is transferred to community members, Cattelino (2008; see also Lewis, 2017) observes that money enables a degree of material autonomy. This economic independence has provided the conditions for indigenous cultural revitalization, freeing people from dependency on conditional government programmes. It also enables monetary supports for members to engage in activities, such as language instruction, that remain culturally meaningful although undervalued in the capitalist economy. More broadly, we can also reinterpret existing data through a critical lens. Studies of cash transfers have suggested that money is often spent locally and enables the creation of new businesses (Gertler et al., 2012; Ribas, 2020; Yang, 2018), and such practices might well shift funds away from corporations towards more embedded enterprises.

In short, people often use the money from cash transfers to do just the kinds of things that many advocates of diverse economies would want to see: end their reliance on capitalism for income, start small businesses, spend money locally, and devote more time to socially valuable practices. There is already a substantial community of practice in and, primarily, beyond the academy devoted to building postcapitalist community economies; a UBI might well underwrite these economies that have proven difficult to sustain and expand in the unequal world we have. It might make it easier both to spend time as scholars and activists working to build these alternative relations and garner increased public participation.

Further, separating incomes from local economies might well subtend particular political economic conflicts, enabling increasing regulation and embedding of markets. Elsewhere, we have argued that a UBI might enable a reworking of longstanding conflicts over environment and development by reducing the reliance of particular states and citizens on extractive developments (Lawhon & McCreary, 2020). Such reworked spatialities and dependencies might enable new pressures, a point that could be extended for other kinds of political economic conflict.

Finally, while a single policy may not substantively change the state, there is evidence from studies of cash transfers as well as wider social theory to suggest that cash transfers can change how citizens think about and interact with each other and the state. One shift that we find compelling is that cash transfers (sometimes implicitly, sometimes explicitly) reframe the economy as, at least in part, collective. Ferguson (2015), for example, suggests thinking of cash transfers as ‘shares’ of the economy. Others have argued for cash transfers as a recognition of common ecological inheritance (Ranalli, 2020; Standing, 2019; Van Parijs, 1992). More broadly, it has been demonstrated that recipients feel a greater sense of social trust (Kangas et al., 2019). This enriched sense of collectivism might well shape willingness to participate in social change.

### 1AR – Alt = Authoritarianism

#### The alt risks authoritarian takeover in even best-case scenarios.

Albert, 23—Lecturer in International Relations, SOAS, University of London (Michael, “Ecosocialism for Realists: Transitions, Trade-Offs, and Authoritarian Dangers,” Capitalism Nature Socialism, 34:1, 11-30, dml)

The scenario sketched above highlights that ecosocialist degrowth transitions would most likely occur in a context of deepening political-economic crisis, intensifying climate shocks, and worsening insecurity for the majority of populations. A key danger, then, is that even in the best-case scenario in which powerful red-green movements decisively shift the balance of power vis-à-vis capital and elect leftist parties following ecosocialist platforms, this could lead to “authoritarian” forms of ecosocialism, understood as ecosocialist regimes that institutionalize “state of emergency” provisions such as unchecked executive power, the suspension of democratic rights and procedures, restrictions on free speech, and military-police repression of dissent (Petras and Fitzgerald Citation1988). This has of course been one of the primary challenges confronting all socialist transitions historically, which have had to fight off external military intervention, resistance from capitalist elites, and reactionary currents from below in order to protect revolutionary gains. Things would be no different for future ecosocialisms-in-transition, particularly given the likely contradiction between the speed at which consumption cuts may need to be made in the global north and the slowness with which post-materialist cultural change would occur, yet such problems have not been systematically explored by ecosocialists and degrowth scholars. The risks are twofold: first, that authoritarian measures would be needed to enforce lifestyle changes upon recalcitrant populations and “deal with the exceptional circumstances of direct and serious threat” to the survival of ecosocialist regimes in their early phases; and second, that such measures, rather than being temporally limited and abolished once the “exceptional circumstances” are dealt with, become the new normal (94). Quincy Saul and Andreas Malm are among the few ecosocialists who don’t shy away from this problem. Saul, for one, writes that “a period of ‘emergency rule,’ when the expropriators are expropriated, must be revised for the twenty-first century, it cannot be dismissed or glossed over” (Saul Citation2011, 58–59). Similarly, Malm suggests that carrying out the transition in the needed time frame would require. warlike state management of all industries … centralized decisions on who can consume what goods in what amounts, [and] punishment of transgressors threatening the annual emissions targets … [which] can only be feasible under an exceptional regime dealing with an unheard-of emergency (Malm Citation2015, 187) The risk, in other words, is that ecosocialist regimes that are democratically elected in a context of unprecedented climate-energy-economic crises may be forced down an authoritarian path in order to enforce carbon rationing, enact rapid and far-reaching transformations in land-use, break through the gridlock of dysfunctional and polarized legislatures, and defend themselves against violence and sabotage from capitalist elites and the far-right. The danger is exacerbated by the fact that worsening climate and political-economic crises, far from neutralizing the threat of rightwing populism, will most likely intensify ethnonationalist reaction and political polarization. As Malm and the Zetkin Collective explain: “the higher the temperatures, the more acute the antagonism between a left that alone stands ready to pick up the instruments for alleviating the crisis and a right that, for that very reason, refuses to contemplate it” (Malm and Collective Citation2021, 286–287). Additionally, given that ecosocialist transitions would entail a “life-threatening situation” for most if not all sectors of the capitalist class, many of them would likely ally with the far-right in order to halt such transitions in their tracks and restore capitalist power “by any means necessary” (241). Thus even in the best-case scenario in which ecosocialists are able to assume power in core states, this would almost certainly occur in a context of rabid far-right resistance in alliance with global capital. The risks are particularly acute in, but not limited to, the US, where the spectacle of armed insurrectionists storming congress to try overthrowing the 2020 presidential election give us a taste of what ecosocialists are up against.

### 1AR – Alt Fails

#### Their alt gets crushed

Fredrik deBoer 16, Limited-Term Lecturer, Introductory Composition at Purdue Program, 3/15/16, “c’mon, guys,” http://fredrikdeboer.com/2016/03/15/cmon-guys/

I could be wrong about the short-term dangers, and the stakes are incredibly high. But in the end we’re left with the same old question: what tactics will actually work to secure a better world?

In a sharp, sober piece about the meaning of left-wing political violence in the 1970s, Tim Barker writes “If you can’t acknowledge radical violence, radicals are reduced to mere victims of repression, rather than political actors who made definite tactical choices under given political circumstances.” The problem, as Barker goes on to imply, is those tactical choices: in today’s America they will essentially never break on the side of armed opposition against the state. The government knows everything about you, I’m sorry to say, your movements and your associations and the books you read and the things you buy and what you’re saying to the people you communicate with. That’s simply on the level of information, before we even get to the state’s incredible capacity to inflict violence. Look, the world has changed. The relative military capacity of regular people compared to establishment governments has changed, especially in fully developed, technology-enabled countries like the United States. The Czar had his armies, yes, but the Czar’s armies depended on manpower above and beyond everything else. The fighting was still mostly different groups of people with rifles shooting at each other. If tomorrow you could rally as many people as the Bolsheviks had at their revolutionary peak, you’re still left in a world of F-15s, drones, and cluster bombs. And that’s to say nothing of the fact that establishment governments in the developed world can rely on the numbing agents of capitalist luxuries and the American dream to damper revolutionary enthusiasm even among the many millions who have been marginalized and impoverished. This just isn’t 1950s Cuba, guys. It’s just not. In a very real way, modern technology effectively lowers the odds of armed political revolution in a country like the United States to zero, and so much the worse for us. This isn’t fatalism. It doesn’t mean there’s no hope. It means that there is little alternative to organization, to changing minds through committed political action and using the available nonviolent means to create change: a concert of grassroots organizing, labor tactics, and partisan politics. Those things aren’t exactly likely to work, either, but they’re a hell of a lot more plausible than us dweebs taking the Pentagon. Bernie Sanders isn’t really a socialist, but he’s a social democrat that moves the conversation to the left, and if people are dedicated and committed to organizing, the local, state, and national candidates he inspires will move it further to the left still. You got any better suggestions? Listen, commie nerds. My people. I love you guys. I really do. And I want to build a better world. Not incrementally, either, but with the kind of sweeping and transformative change that is required to fix a world of such deep injustice. But seriously: none of us are ever going to take to the barricades. And it’s a good thing, too, because we’d probably find a way to shoot in the wrong direction. I can’t dribble a basketball without falling down. American socialism is largely made up of bookish dreamers. I love those people but they’re not for fighting. And even if you have a particular talent for combat, you’re looking at fighting the combined forces of Google, Goldman Sachs, and the defense industry. Violence is hard. Soldiering is hard. In an era of the NSA and military robots, it’s really, really hard. “Should we condone revolutionary violence?” is dorm room, pass-the-bong conversation fodder, of precisely the moral and intellectual weight of “should we torture a guy if we know there’s a bomb and we know he knows where it is and we know we can stop it if we do?” It’s built on absurd hypotheticals, propped up by the power of anxious machismo, and undertaken to no practical political end. It’s understandable. I get it, I really do. But it’s got nothing to do with us. The only way forward is the grubby, unsexy work of building coalitions and asking people to climb on board.

### 1AR – Transition Wars

#### The alt can’t overcome geopolitical growth imperatives or basic human interest. Causes transition wars over resources and relative positioning.

Terzi, 22—Economist at the European Commission’s Directorate-General for Economic and Financial Affairs, Adjunct Professor at Sciences Po and at HEC Paris (Alessio, “The Global Fight for Planet Earth,” *Growth for Good: Reshaping Capitalism to Save Humanity from Climate Catastrophe*, Chapter 7, pp. 168-172, dml)

As climate activist Greta Thunberg likes to remind her audiences, when the house is on fire, you stop whatever you are doing and focus on extinguishing. The message is that in our climate emergency all other, petty concerns must be set aside. Applied to international relations, this aspirational thinking has some believing that climate change will imply the end of conflictual geopolitics.44 There are practical reasons why this type of thinking might have gathered momentum. After all, much of the world’s recent conflict history, including war after war in the Middle East in the 1990s and early 2000s, was driven in large part by issues related to petroleum. It might seem logical that once economies, as part of their climate mitigation efforts, switch to renewables like solar and wind, conflictual international relations will become a thing of the past. Unfortunately, that change is very unlikely to represent the end of geopolitics.45

First, the overall premise is wrong, as oil and gas will not disappear any time soon. Rather, we will observe a gradual shift in the energy mix from traditional energy sources toward renewables.46 An effort to fast-track the demise of highly polluting coal, while renewable capacity is still building up, might initially lead to a counterintuitive increase in the use of methane— which is, at least for Europe, another source of conflictual geopolitical relations, in its case with Russia.

Second, as discussed in The New Map by energy expert and Pulitzer Prize winner Daniel Yergin, we are by no means close to seeing the end of geopolitics and power politics in the world. Specifically in the realm of energy, new materials such as rare-earth metals will become focal points of contention. Because these minerals are key inputs to the construction of wind turbines and electric cars, and will become fundamental to our technology, varying levels of access to them will reshape the world order and create new imperatives to ensure the safety of supplies.47 Military strategies and foreign policy priorities will be reoriented toward that goal, just as attention has been focused over the past decades on securing oil supply bottlenecks like the Strait of Hormuz and the Strait of Malacca.48 Indeed, we can already get a sense of this, as the European Union has published, and regularly updates, a list of what it calls “critical raw materials,” necessary to ensure a strong industrial base to the European economy. The US administration did the same, identifying thirty-five critical minerals. For example, cobalt is featured on both lists, as a fundamental mineral in low-carbon technologies like electric vehicles and batteries, including those used every day in smartphones and laptops. Responsible for almost 60 percent of the world’s known reserves and 97 percent of global exports of cobalt is the Democratic Republic of the Congo, suggesting that this country will increasingly enter the spotlight of global power politics.49

Any predictions about geoeconomics must also acknowledge that climate change is not the only megatrend at play; it overlaps with others, including digitalization, automation, quantum computing, artificial intelligence, and big data, all of which exhibit important winner-take-all effects, and in all of which countries will compete. A hugely important megatrend is the rise of China and the re-dimensioning of the United States after roughly a century of global economic and political dominance.50 To the relative “optimists,” like political economist Dani Rodrik, the relationship between China and the United States could evolve into a milder, second Cold War or mutual recognition of existence and differences—an us and them dynamic within a framework of continued reciprocal trade and investment. To the less optimistic, as the global center of economic gravity shifts eastward, the risk of escalation to more open confrontation between superpowers is high.

In his 2017 book Destined for War, historian Graham Allison turned his attention to what he called the Thucydides trap.51 Analyzing the Peloponnesian War that devastated ancient Greece, the Athenian historian Thucydides concluded that “it was the rise of Athens and the fear that this instilled in Sparta that made war inevitable.” How will the rise of a new superpower play out in the twenty-first century? Allison reviews sixteen instances of swaps in economic supremacy between countries over the past five hundred years and paints a grim picture: war broke out in twelve of them. This does not imply that war is inevitable, but suggests the SinoAmerican relationship will shape geopolitics in decades to come. Climate mitigation and international cooperation will play out against a backdrop of rising geopolitical tension between at least two superpowers, which will inevitably push other countries to pick sides.

The politics of degrowth

The degrowth international vision to tackle climate change centers on the proposition that wealthy countries, who have more than enough, will shrink their economies. By doing so, they will bring down greenhouse gas emissions, reducing the risk of catastrophic climate change. And they will do so to such an extent that space will be opened up for poorer countries to develop, while the overall world economy and global emissions remain within safe limits.

From a strictly moral standpoint, this might sound reasonable and desirable. In light of what we have seen up to now, however, we can state categorically that there is no scenario under which a small set of countries willingly makes such an act of self-sacrifice for the global common good.52 While people are primed for altruism and self-sacrifices, these are directed first toward their in-group, and only later toward others, following geographical discounting. Democratic governments are bound by their citizens’ preferences, and therefore these basic human tendencies define the set of policies that can be considered feasible. Naturally, citizens of a country constitute only one type of in-group. Groups can also arise based on shared culture, kinship, language, religion, geography, and other affinities, as emphasized by Amartya Sen in Identity and Violence.53 Humanity as a whole, however, cannot act as an in-group in the absence of an outgroup, and this will not change in the face of climate change.

The fond hope that some countries will actively shrink their economies ignores the reality that these rich countries themselves will remain in conditions of relative scarcity, which will only be felt more acutely as climate change unleashes its negative effects. This implies that the in-group will be in constant need of extra resources, to tackle the needs of the moment, which can be addressing incipient desertification, building infrastructure to prevent flooding, and the like.

In addition, countries themselves, as we have seen, experience relative income theory, and will constantly compare themselves to the past and to other countries. While China’s economy expands at a high clip, you cannot expect the United States to look on with indifference. This is not only based on vague predicaments like “perceptions,” or sinful feelings like envy, but also on hard realities, like the fact that economic might goes hand in hand with military spending and therefore international political influence. This, as we have seen before, generates a sort of geopolitical growth imperative. Reduced resources imply less capacity to protect (or project) a value system, paving the way to reduced self-determination as a people.54

The idea, moreover, that if rich countries shrink poor countries can expand is based on an incomplete understanding of the economics of development. In 2008, a group of nineteen leading policymakers, mostly from developing economies, headed by two economics Nobel laureates, put together The Growth Report, analyzing the experience of thirteen countries that had managed to sustain high GDP growth since the 1950s.55 Drawing on the input of over three hundred distinguished academics, on top of the personal hands-on experiences of the policymakers, the report sifted out common traits among successful cases. These thirteen cases of “miracle” development, all of which featured sharp reductions in extreme poverty, included China, postwar Japan, South Korea, Indonesia, Malaysia, Brazil, and Taiwan—and a critical feature of literally all of them was fast expansion of exports.56 Note, however, that most exports go to foreign lands that feature consumption aplenty—that is, the rich, growing, industrialized countries.

To recognize this is to see the flaw in the logic of rich countries having to shrink to open up space for poor countries to grow. The whole idea is based on a misreading of the global economy as a zero-sum game. Pursuing a degrowth agenda in the developed world would bring about a collapse of global trade, closing the door to any hope of fast growth in poor countries, turning economic miracles into mirages, and forcing millions to remain in extreme poverty.57

### 1AR – Sustainable

#### Growth is becoming sustainable – is decoupled now, resource use declining, and degrowth causes bounce back emissions.

Kounis et al. ’23 — Nick Kounis, Head of Financial Markets & Sustainability Research, ABN AMRO Bank, M.Sc., Economics & Finance, Durham University; Casper Burgering, Senior Economist, ABN AMRO, B.A., Economics, Vrije University, Amsterdam; Sonia Renoult, Rates Strategist, ABN AMRO; February 26, 2023; “The Decoupling of Emissions From Economic Growth”; ABN AMRO Economics Growth, SustainaWeekly; https://www.abnamro.com/research/en/our-research/sustainaweekly-the-decoupling-of-emissions-and-economic-growth

The difference in the degree of decoupling and the stage of economic development also emerges from our analysis. For example, a clear difference can be seen between different regions, such as Asia, South America (emerging economies) on the one hand, and North America and the eurozone (developed economies) on the other. China has indicated that peak CO2 emissions will be reached in 2030. India's peak emissions are also around that year. Both countries are still developing and have high economic growth numbers, which is associated with high and increasing greenhouse gas emissions. However, the figures also show that Asia is often also in the phase of weak decoupling. In this case, both GDP and CO2 emissions are growing, but the GDP growth rate is at least 20% higher than the growth rate of CO2 emissions.

Most countries in South America are also emerging economically and, as a result, an expansion of negative decoupling is still frequent. However, according to a November 2022 OECD report, South America is in a ‘good position to begin an effective green transition and make faster progress toward its economic, social and environmental goals’. The region ranks relatively well on many sustainability indicators. For example, per capita emissions are lower than other regions with similar levels of development, and its energy mix is already greener today. Renewable energy sources represent 33% of its total energy supply, compared to 13% worldwide, according to the OECD.

Many countries in Europe have already decoupled CO2 emissions from GDP growth. The United Kingdom, France, Germany, the Netherlands, Sweden, Finland, Denmark, Italy, the Czech Republic and Romania are some examples where this process is observable. Outside Europe, the US is the largest country that has experienced several consecutive years in which economic growth has been largely decoupled from CO2 emissions growth.



The table above shows that ‘strong negative decoupling’ (the darkest red areas) is more something of the past and, for now, only occurs during major economic shocks. In any case, this extreme situation has not been observed at the regional level since 2016. Of course, this situation can occur at the country level. In any case, it is clearly visible from the table that during economic shocks or other external dismay (like a pandemic), the trend in the linkage between CO2 emissions and GDP is disturbed considerably. Around economic shocks the negative decoupling often increases, varying between strong, weak and expanding. We see this occurring during the 1997 Asian Financial Crisis, the 2000 Dotcom Crisis, the 2008-2009 Financial Crisis, and the milder crises in 2012 and 2016. In the Covid year 2020, it was especially recessive decoupling across all regions. Then both GDP and CO2 emissions declined firmly, but CO2 emissions declined much more sharply. The world was in lockdown, and this resulted in a strong decline in the movement of people and goods, causing CO2 emissions to fall more quickly.

Decoupling in the Netherlands

The decoupling of GDP growth and CO2 emissions growth is partly seen in the Netherlands as well, although here the variation in outcomes are sometimes much larger. In the left graph below, the dots are scattered across almost all areas of the matrix, except in the 'strong negative decoupling' area. The outliers in the Netherlands in the relationship between growth in CO2 emissions and GDP growth are particularly noticeable in the 1970s, but partly also in the 1980s.

<<FIGURES OMITTED>>

The general trend seen for the Netherlands run from weak decoupling to strong decoupling. However, in terms of emission reduction since 1990, the Netherlands compares worse than other EU countries. Compared to 1990, total greenhouse gas emissions in the Netherlands have fallen less than the EU average and almost all major economies in the eurozone. This underperformance has been linked to relatively slow progress towards renewables, and to some extent also because of large reliance on gas in the Netherlands. But over the past decade, the Netherlands has stepped up and performed better than the EU average.

In many sectors, CO2 emissions have declined since 1995, while their value added has grown. These are all dark green dots in the right-hand figure above. Almost two-thirds of the sectors are plotted there, with mostly industrial sectors, but also energy supply, retail and ICT-services sector. About eight sectors show a weak decoupling over time, with GDP growth exceeding growth in CO2 emissions. Finally, two sectors show both a decline in value added and emissions, where the decline in CO2 emissions has been sharper.

Maintaining economic growth is important for further sustainability

This analysis shows that reducing carbon emissions need not necessarily be accompanied by a decrease in economic growth. Decarbonization of an economy can be well achieved by improving energy efficiency and reducing carbon intensity. To this end, companies in sectors have various measures and techniques available to decarbonise, with many low-hanging fruit (see here). However, there is no one standard success formula, no common climate policy or other typical solution that leads to stronger decoupling. Some countries have an ambitious and strict climate policies, which accelerates decoupling, while other countries have managed to increase both private and public investment sharply in renewable energy.

In any case, our analysis shows that limiting CO2 emissions can go well hand-in-hand with maintaining economic growth. The data show that many countries have achieved a strong decoupling, with CO2 emissions decreasing and the economy growing. The results thus offer a strong argument that economic growth is an important and perhaps crucial condition for further sustainable development. However, it does not take away from the fact that a strong rationalization of our consumption behaviour for further sustainable development is eminently a good way to contribute to our goal of a stronger reduction of CO2 emissions towards 2030 and 2050.

#### Decoupling – best statistics

Hausfather 21 - (Zeke Hausfather, Director of Climate and Energy at Breakthrough, PhD in climate science from the University of California, Berkeley, masters degrees in environmental science from Yale University and Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam; 4-6-2021, Breakthrough Institute, "Absolute Decoupling of Economic Growth and Emissions in 32 Countries," doa: 11-10-2021) url: https://thebreakthrough.org/issues/energy/absolute-decoupling-of-economic-growth-and-emissions-in-32-countries

The past 30 years have seen immense progress in improving the quality of life for much of humanity. Extreme poverty — the number of people living on less than $1.90 per day — has fallen by nearly two-thirds, from 1.9 billion to around 650 million. Life expectancy has risen in most of the world, along with literacy and access to education, while infant mortality has fallen. Despite perceptions to the contrary, the average person born today is likely to have access to more opportunities and have a better quality of life than at any other point in human history. Much of this increase in human wellbeing has been propelled by rapid economic growth driven largely by state-led industrial policy, particularly in poor-to-middle income countries.

However, this growth has come at a cost: between 1990 and 2019, global emissions of CO2 increased by 56%. Historically, economic growth has been closely linked to increased energy consumption — and increased CO2 emissions in particular — leading some to argue that a more prosperous world is one that necessarily has more impacts on our natural environment and climate. There is a lively academic debate about our ability to “absolutely decouple” emissions and growth — that is, the extent to which the adoption of clean energy technology can allow emissions to decline while economic growth continues.

Over the past 15 years, however, something has begun to change. Rather than a 21st century dominated by coal that energy modelers foresaw, global coal use peaked in 2013 and is now in structural decline. We have succeeded in making clean energy cheap, with solar power and battery storage costs falling 10-fold since 2009. The world produced more electricity from clean energy — solar, wind, hydro, and nuclear — than from coal over the past two years. And, according to some major oil companies, peak oil is upon us — not because we have run out of cheap oil to produce, but because demand is falling and companies expect further decline as consumers increasingly shift to electric vehicles.

The world has long been experiencing a relative decoupling between economic growth and CO2 emissions, with the emissions per unit of GDP falling for the past 60 years. This is the case even in countries like India and China that have been undergoing rapid economic growth. But relative decoupling alone is inadequate in a world where global CO2 emissions need to peak and decline in the next decade to give us any chance at limiting warming to well below 2℃, in line with Paris Agreement targets.

Thankfully, there is increasing evidence that the world is on track to absolutely decouple CO2 emissions and economic growth — with global CO2 emissions potentially having peaked in 2019 and unlikely to increase substantially in the coming decade. While an emissions peak is just the first and easiest step towards eventually reaching the net-zero emissions required to stop the world from continuing to warm, it demonstrates that linkages between emissions and economic activity are not an immutable law, but rather simply a result of our current means of energy production.

In recent years we have seen more and more examples of absolute decoupling — economic growth accompanied by falling CO2 emissions. Since 2005, 32 countries with a population of at least one million people have absolutely decoupled emissions from economic growth, both for terrestrial emissions (those within national borders) and consumption emissions (emissions embodied in the goods consumed in a country). This includes the United States, Japan, Mexico, Germany, United Kingdom, France, Spain, Poland, Romania, Netherlands, Belgium, Portugal, Sweden, Hungary, Belarus, Austria, Bulgaria, El Salvador, Singapore, Denmark, Finland, Slovakia, Norway, Ireland, New Zealand, Croatia, Jamaica, Lithuania, Slovenia, Latvia, Estonia, and Cyprus. Figure 1, below, shows the declines in territorial emissions (blue) and increases in GDP (red).



Figure 1: Countries that have absolutely decoupled emissions from GDP between 2005 and 2019, sorted by reduction in territorial emissions. Changes relative to 2005 are shown based on a linear regression of data between 2005 and 2019. Note that only countries with a population exceeding one million are included in the analysis. Territorial and consumption emissions from the Global Carbon Project; GDP data from the World Bank World Development Indicators database.

To qualify as having experienced absolute decoupling, we require countries included in this analysis to pass four separate filters: a population of at least one million (to focus the analysis on more representative cases), declining territorial emissions over the 2005-2019 period (based on a linear regression), declining consumption emissions, and increasing real GDP (on a purchasing power parity basis, using constant 2017 international $USD). We chose not to include 2020 in this analysis because it is not particularly representative of longer-term trends, and consumption and territorial emissions estimates are not yet available for many countries.

There is a wide range of rates of economic growth between 2005-2019 among countries experiencing absolute decoupling. Somewhat counterintuitively, there is no significant relationship between the rate of economic growth and the magnitude of emissions reductions within the group. While it is unlikely that there is not at least some linkage between the two factors, there are plenty of examples of countries (e.g., Singapore, Romania, and Ireland) experiencing both extremely rapid economic growth and large reductions in CO2 emissions.

One of the primary criticisms of some prior analyses of absolute decoupling is that they ignore leakage. Specifically, the offshoring of manufacturing from high-income countries over the past three decades to countries like China has led to “illusory” drops in emissions, where the emissions associated with high-income country consumption are simply shipped overseas and no longer show up in territorial emissions accounting. There is some truth in this critique, as there was a large increase in emissions embodied in imports from developing countries between 1990 and 2005. After 2005, however, structural changes in China and a growing domestic market led to a reversal of these trends; the amount of emissions “exported” from developed countries to developing countries has actually declined over the past 15 years.

This means that, for many countries, both territorial emissions and consumption emissions (which include any emissions “exported” to other countries) have jointly declined. In fact, on average, consumption emissions have been declining slightly faster than territorial emissions since 2005 in the 32 countries we identify as experiencing absolute decoupling. Figure 2, below, shows the change in consumption emissions (teal) and GDP (red) between 2005 and 2019.



Figure 2: Consumption emissions and GDP changes between 2005 and 2019 for countries experiencing absolute decoupling.

There is a pretty wide variation in the extent to which these countries have reduced their territorial and consumption emissions since 2005. Some countries — such as the UK, Denmark, Finland, and Singapore – have seen territorial emissions fall faster than consumption emissions, while the US, Japan, Germany, and Spain (among others) have seen consumption emissions fall faster. Figure 3 shows reductions in consumption and territorial emissions for each country, with the size of the dot representing the size of the population in 2019.

[Figure 3 Omitted]

Absolute decoupling is possible. There is no physical law requiring economic growth — and broader increases in human wellbeing — to necessarily be linked to CO2 emissions. All of the services that we rely on today that emit fossil fuels — electricity, transportation, heating, food — can in principle be replaced by near-zero carbon alternatives, though these are more mature in some sectors (electricity, transportation, buildings) than in others (industrial processes, agriculture).

This is not to say that infinite economic growth is desirable (or even possible), particularly given that the global population is expected to start to shrink by the end of the 21st century (and well before that in most currently wealthy countries). There will be some tradeoffs between economic growth and climate mitigation — particularly if the world is to meet ambitious mitigation targets. But it is possible to envision a world that is prosperous, equal, and at net-zero emissions; indeed, all of the future emissions scenarios used by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) do just that.

#### Its key towards stopping right-wing extremism

Markus Brückner and Hans Grüner 19. Ph.D. Economics, Professor of Economics @ Australian National University, & external consultant to IMF and World Bank; Ph.D. Economics, Professor of Economics @ University of Mannheim, & external consultant to European Central Bank. 10-31-2019. “Economic growth and political extremism.” *Public Choice*. Issue 185/1-2. pp 131-159. Springer. pacc

Abstract We argue that the growth rate, but not the level of aggregate income, affects the support for extreme political parties. In our model, extreme parties offer short-run benefits to part of the population at the expense of a minority. Growth effects on the support for such parties arise when uncertainty exists over whether the same subset of individuals will receive the same benefits in the future. More people are willing to take political risks if economic growth is slow. Based on a panel of 16 European countries, our empirical analysis shows that slower growth rates are associated with a significant increase in right-wing extremism. We find no significant effect of economic growth on the support for extreme left-wing parties. 1 Introduction Distributional consequences are associated with political extremism, both in the short run and in the long run. Extreme political parties often propose to redistribute resources away from specific subgroups of society, such as the rich, ethnic minorities, or citizens living in specific regions. This paper analyzes the impact of economic growth on the support for extreme political parties in western democracies. We argue that the growth rate, but not the level of aggregate income, affects the support for extremism. In the first part of our paper, we discuss three alternative explanations for why an increase in the economic growth rate reduces the support for extreme political parties. Two well-known explanations are related to retrospective voting and behavioral effects, the latter meaning that voters may react more strongly to changes in than to levels of economic well-being. The third, novel explanation is that parties with extreme political platforms are perceived to create considerable uncertainty about the future distribution of income. We develop a simple game-theoretic model that analyzes that uncertainty effect. In our model, extreme political parties offer short-run gains from redistribution to a group of individuals. However, the same individuals also face long-run losses owing to the higher income risk that is associated with an extreme regime.1 The model permits a comparative static analysis with respect to several key variables of interest. The growth rate is associated with larger future income risk. Such risk reduces the number of voters favoring extreme parties. The level of aggregate income has no effect on the support for extremism. Income inequality raises support for redistribution and affects the impact that a change in the growth rate has on the support for extremism. An important feature of our model is that the effect of economic growth on the support for extremism depends on uncertainty of future income redistribution. If redistributive policies are perceived as predictable—in the sense that the same group will have income taken away from it in the future—then the political support for an extremist party is unaffected by growth. In the empirical part of our paper, we estimate the relationship between economic growth and the support for extreme political parties using a panel dataset comprising 16 European countries. Our dependent variable is a survey-based measure, compiled by Euro-barometer, of respondents' support for extreme right-wing parties and extreme left-wing parties. We use that data, which spans more than three decades and contains entries on a semi-annual frequency, to estimate the effects of economic growth on the support for extremism. Our empirical analysis shows a significant negative effect of real per capita GDP growth on the support for extreme right-wing parties: controlling for country and time fixed effects, a one percentage point decline in real per capita GDP growth increases the vote share of extreme right-wing parties by up to one percentage point. We document that the negative effect of economic growth on the support for right-wing extremism is robust across estimation techniques and model specifications. We do not find a systematic effect of growth on the support for left-wing extremism. A possible explanation for the differential effects between left-wing and right-wing extremism that relates closely to our theoretical model is that right-wing extremism might be associated with more uncertainty over what groups will be subject to income expropriation in the future. Left-wing extremism is associated with income redistribution, but little uncertainty exists over its target. Communist doctrine (see, for example, the Communist Manifesto by Marx and Engels 1848), envisions a classless society; i.e., a society wherein incomes are distributed equally. Over the past century, extreme left-wing parties have followed closely that doctrine by proposing to redistribute incomes from rich to poor; as opposition parties they have voted against laissez faire policies and, when in power, they have implemented programs that reduced the wealth and income prospects of the rich (see, e.g., Brown 2010). Right-wing extremism, in contrast to left-wing extremism, does not advocate a classless society. Instead, it often is associated with discrimination against specific groups of society for racial, religios, political or other reasons.2 An extreme case of a murderous and discriminatory regime was the German fascist rule during the first half of the 20th century. One can see it as a direct consequence of the Nazi party's "Fuhrerprinzip"—"the principle of unconditional authority of the leader" (Bernholz 2017, p.9)—which created considerable uncertainty over who might be stigmatized, imprisoned or killed in the future.3 Indeed, from the Nazi period we know that various groups were stigmatized for different reasons4 and that stigmatization also was particularly erratic.5,6 The empirical analysis of our paper is related to Stevenson (2001), who examines the determinants of aggregate policy preferences in a panel of 14 European countries. One of Stevenson's main findings is that declines in economic growth cause policy preferences to shift to the right, while increases in economic growth cause policy preferences to shift to the left.7 Our paper differs from Stevenson in at least three important aspects. First, in contrast to Stevenson, we show that our empirical results are robust to controlling for country fixed effects, meaning that our results also hold at the within-country level, and not just in cross-section. Relatedly, Acemoglu et al. (2008, 2009) showed that the cross-country relation between income and democracy turns insignificant when country fixed effects are entered into the econometric model. Second, we provide evidence that our empirical findings reflect a causal effect of economic growth on political extremism. We show that our main findings are robust to estimating dynamic models that enable to test for Granger causality; and we also show that the main findings hold with an instrumental variables approach. Third, we distinguish in our empirical analysis between extreme right-wing and extreme left-wing parties. That distinction matters: a robust negative effect of economic growth is found on the support for extreme right-wing parties, whereas no systematic effect exists for the support of extreme left-wing parties. Our finding of a significant negative effect of economic growth on the support for right-wing extremism is in line with the finding of Bromhead et al. (2012), who show that the vote share of right-wing extremists during the Great Depression was significantly larger in those countries that experienced a more severe economic crisis. Using subnational data for 218 European regions during 1990-2016, Rao et al. (2018) find a significant negative effect of regional output on the vote share of extreme right-wing parties, but no signicant effect on extreme left-wing parties.

### 1AR – Cap Solves Climate

#### Cap solves climate—markets and growth’s necessary for greenhouse gas reduction.

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The question of how growth happens is important to HASS scholars because where a HASS scholar lands in that debate will inform what types of economic stimulus are seen as legitimate. Yet there are still deeper and more critical questions about economic growth that need to be asked: Why is growth necessary in capitalism? Is growth necessary for human wellbeing? Is growth necessary for negative emission technologies? To summarize “why” growth instead of “how” growth, we return to Harvey's (2014) Marxian analysis. Harvey explores how capital will only be invested if “it” (capitalists) believes there will be more money available at the end of an investment cycle than at the beginning. If there was no such belief investment of new capital in new rounds of production would cease, again causing crises, and a search for a “fix,” such as a return to aggregate growth (Jackson, 2009). For this belief to exist, somewhere around a 3% compound growth rate is commonly regarded as “healthy” (Harvey, 2017). This means that new productive investments must be found for an exponentially-increasing volume of capital. In our current climate science it is unthinkable that a period of no growth or “de” -growth can exist under capitalism. Even in the “transformation of the global economy” envisioned by Rogelj et al. (2018) an average GDP growth of 231% is envisaged across the global economy between 2020 and 2050 within pathways “consistent” with meeting the 1.5° target (IIASA, 2020). IPCC growth scenarios notwithstanding, there remain serious questions over the assumed ability truly to decouple GDP and GHG emissions (Hickel and Kallis, 2020; Wiedenhofer et al., 2020). There is now a substantial scholarship questioning whether “more growth is good” and whether a growing economy is healthy (Jackson, 2009, 2021; Raworth, 2017). This debate explores what structural changes are needed to bring a “post-growth” economy about (Hardt et al., 2021) and how different economies or alternative economic models might leave growth behind (O'Neill et al., 2018; Hickel and Kallis, 2020). This attachment to growth is critical because it frames how climate change mitigation and negative emissions technologies are legitimized and communicated at the IPCC level. Within the IAM models there is a percentage of future GDP that must be allocated to each technology, the smaller the percentage the easier the political narrative (Livingston and Rummukainen, 2020). At the same time, however, that growth demands that we mine, extract, create, or consume our way to an economy 231% bigger than it is today, and during a moment when growth is extremely sluggish in OECD nations and previous drivers of growth—such as financial engineering, money creation, incorporation of women into the workforce and the privatization and marketization of previously public and common goods—is fast running low on new options (Hardt and Negri, 2009; Harvey, 2014). Humanities and social sciences scholarship on GGR will have to contend with the notion that GGR options in capitalism are primarily evaluated relative to their deployment cost as a proportion of GDP. While GDP is a poor measure of human well-being, it is quite a good measure of how well-capitalism is doing because rising GDP means that, when one sector is exhausted, finance capital can switch capital into another sector. This is what Castree and Christophers (2015) have in mind when they explore options for liquid financial capital to find new, ecologically-positive spatial fixes, including possibly negative emissions. The challenge for different GGR technologies may be less the actual ability to sequester carbon in a sustainable form, and more to be compatible with a monitoring, reporting, and evaluating function that is easily marketized, financed, and traded as a commodity. The sections above have summarized a set of substantial debates that deserve greater attention by HASS scholars in the GGR debates. The tendencies of capitalism to crises, marketization, and the attendant necessity of long run GDP growth, all mean that HASS scholars of GGR deployment within capitalism have a challenging research agenda ahead, but one in which principle 1 has provided a useful starting point. Principle 1: Greenhouse Gas Removal technologies are likely to emerge within capitalism, which is crisis prone, growth dependent, market expanding.

### 1AR – Cap Sustainable

#### It’s sustainable.

Shi-Ling **Hsu 21**, D'Alemberte Professor of Law at the Florida State University College of Law, “2 How Capitalism Saves the Environment,” Capitalism and the Environment, Cambridge University Press, 10/31/2021, pp. 28–55

2.8 CHOOSING CAPITALISM TO SAVE THE ENVIRONMENT: LARGE-SCALE DEPLOYMENT

Finally, a third reason that **cap**italism is **suited to** the job of **environmental restoration** and **protection** is its ability to **undertake** and complete **projects at very large scales**. In keeping with a major thesis of this book, construction at very large scales should give us a little pause, because of the propensity of capital to metastasize into a source of political resistance to change. But some global problems, especially climate change, may require very large-scale enterprises.

For example, because **greenhouse gas emissions** may **already** have **passed a threshold** for **catastrophic climate change**, **tech**nology is almost certainly **needed** to chemically **capture carbon dioxide** from ambient air. But carbon dioxide is only about 0.15% of ambient air by molecular weight, and a tremendous amount of ambient air must be processed just to capture a small amount of carbon dioxide. This technology has often been referred to as "**direct air capture**," or "carbon removal." Given that inherent limitation, direct air capture technology must be deployed **at vast scales** in order to make any appreciable difference in greenhouse gas concentrations. There is certainly no guarantee that direct air capture will be a silver bullet. But if it is to be an effectual item on a menu of survival techniques, it will more **assured**ly be accomplished under the incentives of a **cap**italist **economy**.

Capitalism might also help with the looming crisis of climate change by helping to **ensure the supply of** vital life staples such as **food, water**, and other basic needs in future **shortages** caused by climate-change. In a climate-changed future, there is the distinct possibility that supplies of vital life staples may run short, possibly for long periods of time. **Droughts** are projected to last longer, with water supplies and growing conditions increasingly precarious. Capitalist enterprise could, first of all, provide the **impetus to** finally **reform** a dizzying multitude of **price distortions** that plague **water** supply and **ag**riculture worldwide. Second, **capitalist enterprise** can **undertake scale production** of some emergent technologies that might alleviate shortages. **Desal**ination technology can convert salty seawater into drinkable freshwater.54 A number of environmental and economic issues need to be solved to deploy these technologies at large scales, but in a crisis, **solutions will** be more **likely to present themselves**.

A technology that is already being adopted to produce food is the modernized version of old-fashioned greenhouses. The tiny country of the Netherlands, with its 17 million people crowded onto 13,000 square miles, is the second largest food exporter in the world,55 exporting fully three-quarters that of the United States in 2017.56 The secret to Dutch agriculture is its climate-controlled, low-energy green-houses that project solar panel-powered artificial sunlight around the clock. Dutch greenhouses produce lettuce at ten times the yield57 and tomatoes at fifteen times the yield outdoors in the United States58 while using less than one-thirteenth the amount of water,59 very little in the way of synthetic pesticides and, of course, very little fertilizer given its advanced composting techniques. Sustained shortages in a climate-changed future might require that a **capitalist** take hold of **greenhouse growing and expand production** **to feed the masses** that might otherwise revolt.

2.9 **CHOOSE CAPITALISM**

Clearly, the job in front of humankind is enormous, complex, and many-faceted. The best hope is to be able to identify certain human impacts that are clearly harmful to the global environment, and to disincentivize them. Getting back to notions of institutions in capitalism, what is crucial is aligning the right incentives with profit-making activity. What capitalism does **so well** — beyond human comprehension — **is coordinate activity** and **send broad signals about scarcity**. Information about a wide variety of environmental phenomena is extremely difficult to collect and process. If a set of environmental taxes can help establish a network of environ-mental prices, then an unfathomably large and complex machinery will have been set in motion in the right direction.

Also, because of the need for new scientific solutions to this daunting list of problems, **new science and tech**nology is desperately **needed**. **Cap**italism **is tried and true** in terms of **producing innovation**. Again drawing upon the study of institutions, it is not so much that individuals need a profit-motive in order to tinker, but the prospect of **profit**-making **has to be present** in order for institutions, including corporations, to devote resources, attention, and energy towards the development of solutions to environmental problems. Corporations can and should demonstrate social responsibility by attempting to mitigate their impacts on the global environment, but a much more conscious push for new knowledge, new techniques, and new solutions are needed.

Finally, **the scale of needed change is profound**. Huge networks of infrastructure centered upon a fossil fuel-centered economy must somehow be replaced or adapted to new ways of generating, transmitting, consuming, and storing energy. A global system of feeding seven billion humans (and counting), unsustainable on its face, must be morphed into something else that can fill that huge role. About a billion and a half cars and trucks in the world must, over time, be swapped out for vehicles that must be dramatically different.

This is a daunting to-do list, **but look** a bit more **carefully** among the gloomy news. Elon Musk, a freewheeling, pot-smoking entrepreneur shows signs of breaking into not one, but two industries dominated by behemoths with political power. Thanks to California emissions standards, **auto**mobile manufacturers have developed cars that emit a **fraction** of what they did less than a generation ago. Hybrid **e**lectric **v**ehicle**s** have thoroughly penetrated an American market that powerful American politicians had tried to cordon off for American manufacturers only. At least two companies have developed **meat substitutes** that are now widely judged to be indistinguishable from meat, and have established product outposts in the ancient power centers of fast food, McDonald's and Burger King. The tiny country of the **Netherlands**, about half the size of West Virginia, exports almost **as much food** as the **U**nited **S**tates, able to ship fresh produce all the way to Africa. At bottom, **all of these accomplishments** and thousands more **are** and were **capitalist in nature.** While they collectively repre-sent a trifle of what still needs to be accomplished, they were also undertaken without the correct incentives in place, and thus also represent the tremendous **promise of capitalism**.

### 1AR – Cap Inevitable

#### Transition impossible — requires reversing centuries of notions of everyday life

**Timms 20** [Aaron; 1/27/20; writer for the New Republic, articles have appeared in The Guardian, The Outline, The Daily Beast, and The Los Angeles Review of Books; "Beyond the Growth Gospel," https://newrepublic.com/article/156024/degrowth-movement-cerbere-can-decreix-commune]/

We all know that our time to **stabilize the climate** is short. But in the supposed battle between the Green New Deal left and degrowthers, there’s only one side that seeks, in any meaningful sense, to stabilize the climate with anything like the required urgency. In its critique of economism and rejection of technocratic business as usual, in the exhortation of its proponents to think critically about what we as a species really want, degrowth contains much that I find **theoretically compelling**. But the movement has surprisingly **little to say** on **renewable energy**, the result of a latent hostility to techno-**scientific innovation**, and the idea that **billions**, within the next decade, will **voluntarily embrace degrowth** at a sufficient scale to arrest global heating is **unrealistic**. Even its most ardent defenders concede that genuine degrowth—which means real, Can Decreix-grade upheaval to daily life, not just fewer steaks or car trips every year—will **not materialize** under present economic and social conditions. Latouche is typically forthright on this question: “Degrowth society cannot emerge from the iron corset of scarcity, needs, economic calculation, and homo æconomicus.” His meaning is what the experience of Can Decreix makes plain: that a life of pure degrowth is **logically impossible** in this world, indeed that the **preconditions for degrowth society do not yet exist**. Any attempts to institute degrowth from above will be seen as an **intolerable offense** to **human dignity** and **well-being**, so long as the rest of civilization is hitched to the train of economic expansion—whether capitalist, socialist, or otherwise.

Not even François can avoid compromising himself through contact with the world as it is. The degrowth he practices at Can Decreix is necessarily a diluted form of the ideal, dependent as it is on the structures and economies of the very system degrowth hopes to supersede. There’s an additional irony here, which is that virtually no degrowther wants to put down roots in the home of degrowth, though François’s partner, Alexandra Guerri, lives with him in the austere precincts of Can Decreix. Other degrowth sympathizers have joined François at the encampment in the eight years since its foundation, but they have not stayed; today he continues alone. De Decker returns to Barcelona shortly after his business at the Belvédère is concluded; other summer school speakers appear in Can Decreix for a day or two and then scuttle back to the city. If the defining property of utopia is that it’s nowhere (the word’s meaning in Greek), it’s perhaps appropriate that this utopia has attracted no one. “I feel isolated with this practice here,” François tells me on my first night at Can Decreix. “It’s a struggle to convince people about this way of life. The idea was to do something collective, but now it’s just me. Few people are **willing to try** something else with flowing and a new way of living.” This is **no surprise**. Even a hair shirt worn voluntarily is uncomfortable. Le Guin once described the anarchist lunar colony she puts at the center of The Dispossessed, the fiction that everyone here is reading, as an “**ambiguous utopia**.” A similar description seems apt for the home of degrowth.

A group of rowdy Irish cycling tourists stops by the Dorade, cleats clacking, and they ask for douze bières merci while the owner replies in English. I finish my coffee, then continue on my path back to Can Decreix. In the town square, I pass some of the summer school attendees. It’s been only two hours since breakfast up on the deck at Can Decreix—porridge, plums, nuts—but one of them is seated at a bench, noise-canceling headphones on, bopping to the beat, and oblivious to the world as he tears into a whole wheel of Camembert with rye crisps and a family-size packet of Bolognese sauce-flavored chips by his side. The man is salt-deprived and hungry. I feel a great surge of sympathy.

Since degrowth can’t form the basis of a realistic **electoral politics**, its proponents are left clinging to the **lifeboat** of “institutional and cultural change” as they attempt to plot a course to our **collective degrowing**, or they retreat into didacticism. (The working class “must master” its wants, Kallis has written, “not insist that they should be satisfied.”) What the degrowthers seek, in their **priestliest utterings**, is not only a new society but also a **complete reset** of the **psychological habitus** of everyday life. For degrowth to “work,” its ideal-type citizen must be **radically different from you or me**, or almost anyone else living under industrial modernity today. This homo post-æconomicus will operate according to as yet **undiscovered automatisms**, **affects**, and **instincts**, conjuring in the process a more sustainable model of human endeavor onto the stage of our desperately overheated globe.

This could indeed be a great thing. After all, a society built on reciprocity, sharing, self-limitation, and care sounds far preferable to the plutocratic catastrophe of present-day financialized capitalism. But such a society cannot arise if **we continue to view material limitations as privations**. It will only work if the longing for less comes **naturally**, is **authentically aspirational**—if we want to live the life unseasoned. This is the journey from the Belvédère to Can Decreix: a journey from We Want Everything to Actually, We Want Very Little. Climate stabilization needs to happen now. **Degrowth cannot happen now**. This is why **degrowth is not a plan** for combating **climate change**, not in any **immediate** or **direct** sense at least. Instead, it is something much more ambitious, with a much hazier time horizon: a project to build a new person.

My contributions to the many energy-sapping tasks required to keep Can Decreix in order throughout the summer school—lugging wood, creating shade for discussion groups using bamboo mats and wooden rods, repairing stone walls, building rocket stoves, coming to grips with human compost—have been every bit as half-assed as you’d expect from a weak, unresourceful knowledge worker in the dog days of capitalism with panna cotta-soft hands and no interest in camping. I am, on anyone’s reading, a hopeless volunteer, the least useful of the useful muzhiks. The one activity at which I’ve shown any kind of skill is the chabrot, a postprandial ritual François has adapted from regional custom. There are two types of wine made in-house at Can Decreix: a sweet grenache and rancio, a dry oxidized wine similar to sherry. To perform the chabrot, each diner pools wine into their plate at the end of the meal, agitates the wine with a fork to degrease the plate, then drinks the wine. (Blessedly the house prohibition on addictive substances does not extend to alcohol.) The point of this ritual is to “go easy on the pipes” when washing the dishes, François tells us. I’ve developed a technique of mopping food scraps off the wine-flooded plate with my fingers, drinking the wine, licking my fingers, then licking the plate clean, such that it does not need to be washed at all and is immediately ready for reuse. For days, I survive off a single, self-cleaned plate, earning François’s trust as the summer school’s “official zealot of the chabrot.” The revulsion others feel at this practice is obvious; despite eager propagandizing on my part, no one performs the chabrot with anything like my level of ideological rigor.

There was once a time in the West when licking your fingers at the table, along with a host of other behaviors now considered **beyond the pale of respectable** society, such as blowing your nose into your hand, were deemed acceptable. The “civilizing process,” as Norbert Elias called it—the **gradual recalibration** of daily social mores by which Europeans cast off these habits—took **centuries**, and required the **mass internalization** of a completely **new model of individuality**. This was not planned, but was rather the result of myriad colliding stochastic evolutions: state formation and the state’s monopoly over violence, urbanization, the growing differentiation of occupations in increasingly complex economies. A **similar process** on a **similar time line** seems **necessary** for degrowth. Society’s collective degrowing will only make sense once individuals want in a way we don’t want, feel as we don’t feel. Whether a future this different can be **engineered** is **debatable**. But that does not mean there remains, in the interim, no virtue to thinking carefully about our course, or even slowing down. On the train of progress, sometimes it’s wise to pull the emergency brake.

### 1AR – Cap k2 Space

#### Privatization is necessary for space colonization – disruptions kill that potential

**Thiessen ‘20** – writes a twice-weekly column for The Post on foreign and domestic policy. He is a fellow at the American Enterprise Institute, and the former chief speechwriter for President George W. Bush. (Marc A., "SpaceX’s success is one small step for man, one giant leap for capitalism," Washington Post, 6-1-2020, https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/2020/06/01/spacexs-success-is-one-small-step-man-one-giant-leap-capitalism/, Accessed 1-6-2021, )

It was one small step for man, one giant leap for capitalism. Only three countries have ever launched human beings into orbit. This past weekend, **SpaceX became the first private company ever to do so**, when it sent its Crew Dragon capsule into space aboard its Falcon 9 rocket and docked with the International Space Station. This was accomplished by a company Elon Musk started in 2002 in a California strip mall warehouse with just a dozen employees and a mariachi band. At a time when our nation is debating the merits of socialism, **SpaceX has given us an incredible testament to the power of American free enterprise.** While the left is advocating unprecedented government intervention in almost every sector of the U.S. economy, from health care to energy, today Americans are celebrating the successful privatization of space travel. If you want to see the difference between what government and private enterprise can do, consider: **It took a private company to give us the first space vehicle with touch-screen controls instead of antiquated knobs and buttons. It took a private company to give us a capsule that can fly entirely autonomously from launch to landing — including docking — without any participation by its human crew. It also took a private company to invent a reusable rocket that can not only take off but land as well.** When the Apollo 11 crew reached the moon on July 20, 1969, Neil Armstrong declared “the Eagle has landed.” On Saturday, SpaceX was able to declare that the Falcon had landed when its rocket settled down on a barge in the Atlantic Ocean — ready to be used again. That last development will save the taxpayers incredible amounts of money. The cost to NASA for launching a man into space on the space shuttle orbiter was $170 million per seat, compared with just $60 million to $67 million on the Dragon capsule. The cost for the space shuttle to send a kilogram of cargo into to space was $54,500; with the Falcon rocket, the cost is just $2,720 — a decrease of 95 percent. And while the space shuttle cost $27.4 billion to develop, the Crew Dragon was designed and built for just $1.7 billion — making it the lowest-cost spacecraft developed in six decades. SpaceX did it in six years — far faster than the time it took to develop the space shuttle. The private sector does it better, cheaper, faster and more efficiently than government. Why? **Competition.** Today, SpaceX has to compete with a constellation of private companies — including legacy aerospace firms such as Orbital ATK and United Launch Alliance and innovative start-ups such as Blue Origin (which is designing a Mars lander and whose owner, Jeff Bezos, also owns The Post) and Virgin Orbit (which is developing rockets than can launch satellites into space from the underside of a 747, avoiding the kinds of weather that delayed the Dragon launch). In the race to put the first privately launched man into orbit, upstart SpaceX had to beat aerospace behemoth Boeing and its Starliner capsule to the punch. It did so — for more than $1 billion less than its competitor. **That spirit of competition and innovation will revolutionize space travel in the years ahead**. Indeed, Musk has his sights set far beyond Earth orbit. Already, SpaceX is working on a much larger version of the Falcon 9 reusable rocket called Super Heavy that will carry a deep-space capsule named Starship capable of carrying up to 100 people to the moon and eventually to Mars. Musk’s goal — the reason he founded SpaceX — is to **colonize Mars and make humanity a multiplanetary species**. He has set a goal of founding a million-person city on Mars by 2050 complete with iron foundries and pizza joints. Can it be done? Who knows. But this much is certain: **Private-sector innovation is opening the door to a new era of space exploration.** Wouldn’t it be ironic if, just as capitalism is allowing us to explore the farthest reaches of our solar system, Americans decided to embrace socialism back here on Earth?

#### Happens by 2050s---solves every impact BUT degrowth disrupts progress

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In perhaps the most eagerly anticipated aerospace announcement of the year, SpaceX founder Elon Musk has revealed his grand plan for **establishing a human settlement on Mars.** In short, Musk thinks it’s possible to begin shuttling thousands of people between Earth and our smaller, redder neighbor sometime within the next decade or so. And not too long after that—perhaps **40** or a hundred **years later**, Mars could be home to a self-sustaining colony of **a million people.** “This is not about everyone moving to Mars, **this is about becoming multiplanetary**,” he said on September 27 at the International Astronautical Congress in Guadalajara, Mexico. “This is really about minimizing existential risk and having a tremendous sense of adventure.” Musk’s timeline sounds ambitious, and that's something he readily acknowledges. “I think **the technical outline of the plan is about right**. He also didn’t pretend that it was going to be easy and that they were going to do it in ten years,” says Bobby Braun, **NASA’s former chief technologist** who’s now at Georgia Tech University. “I mean, who’s to say what’s possible in a hundred years?” And for those wondering whether we should go at all, the reason for Musk making Mars an imperative is simple. “The future of humanity is fundamentally going to bifurcate along one of two directions: Either we’re going to become **a multiplanet** species and a spacefaring civilization, or we’re going be stuck on one planet **until some eventual extinction event**,” Musk told Ron Howard during an interview for National Geographic Channel’s MARS, a global event series that premieres worldwide on November 14. “For me to be excited and inspired about the future, **it’s got to be the first option**. It’s got to be: We’re going to be a spacefaring civilization.” Mars Fleet Though he admitted his exact timeline is fuzzy, Musk thinks it’s possible **humans could begin flying to Mars by the mid-2020**s. And he thinks the plan for getting there will go something like this: It starts with a really big rocket, something at least 200 feet tall when fully assembled. In a simulation of what SpaceX calls its **Interplanetary Transport System**, a spacecraft loaded with astronauts will launch on top of a 39-foot-wide booster that produces a whopping 28 million pounds of thrust. Using 42 Raptor engines, the booster will accelerate the assemblage to 5**,374 miles an hour.** Overall, the whole thing is **3.5 times more powerful** than NASA’s Saturn V, the biggest rocket built to date, which carried the Apollo missions to the moon. Perhaps not coincidentally, the SpaceX rocket would launch from the same pad, 39A, at Kennedy Space Center in Cape Canaveral, Florida. The rocket would deliver the crew capsule to orbit around Earth, then the booster would steer itself toward a soft landing back at the launch pad, a feat that SpaceX rocket boosters have been doing for almost a year now. Next, the booster would pick up a fuel tanker and carry that into orbit, where it would fuel the spaceship for its journey to Mars. Once en route, that **spaceship would deploy solar panels to harvest energy from the sun** and conserve valuable propellant for what promises to be an exciting landing on the Red Planet. As Musk envisions it, fleets of these crew-carrying capsules will remain in Earth orbit until a favorable planetary alignment brings the two planets close together—something that happens every 26 months. “We’d ultimately have upward of a thousand or more spaceships waiting in orbit. And so the Mars colonial fleet would depart en masse,” Musk says. **The key to his plan is reusing the various spaceships as much as possible**. “I just don’t think there’s any way to have a self-sustaining Mars base without reusability. I think this is really fundamental,” Musk says. “If wooden sailing ships in the old days were not reusable, I don’t think the United States would exist.” Musk anticipates being able to **use each rocket booster a thousand times**, each tanker a hundred times, and each spaceship 12 times. At the beginning, he imagines that maybe **a hundred humans would be hitching a ride on each ship**, with that number gradually increasing to more than 200. By his calculations, then, putting a million people on Mars could take anywhere from 40 to a hundred years after the first ship launches. And, no, **it would not necessarily be a one-way trip**: “I think it’s very important to give people the option of returning,” Musk says. **Colonizing Mars** After landing a few cargo-carrying spacecraft without people on Mars, starting with the Red Dragon capsule in 2018, Musk says the human phase of colonization could begin. For sure, landing a heavy craft on a planet with a thin atmosphere will be difficult. It was tough enough to gently lower NASA’s Curiosity rover to the surface, and at 2,000 pounds, that payload weighed just a fraction of Musk’s proposed vessels. For now, Musk plans to continue developing supersonic retrorockets that can gradually and gently lower a much heavier spacecraft to the Martian surface, using his reusable Falcon 9 boosters as a model. And that’s not all these spacecraft will need: Hurtling through the Martian atmosphere at supersonic speeds will test even the most heat-tolerant materials on Earth, so it’s no small task to **design a spacecraft that can withstand a heated entry and propulsive landing**—and then be refueled and sent back to Earth so it can start over again. The first journeys would primarily serve the purpose of delivering supplies and establishing a propellant depot on the Martian surface, a fuel reservoir that could be tapped into for return trips to Earth. After that depot is set up and cargo delivered to the surface, the fun can (sort of) begin. **Early human settlers will need to be good at digging beneath the surface and dredging up buried ice, which will supply precious water and be used to make the cryo-methane propellant that will power the whole enterprise.** As such, the earliest interplanetary spaceships would probably stay on Mars, and they would be carrying mostly cargo, fuel, and a small crew: “builders and fixers” who are “the hearty explorer type,” Musk said to Howard. “Are you prepared to die? If that’s OK, then you’re a candidate for going.” While there will undoubtedly be **intense competition and lots of fanfare over the first few seats** on a Mars-bound mission, Musk worries that too much emphasis will be placed on those early bootprints. “In the sort of grander historical context, **what really matters is being able to send a large number of people, like tens of thousands if not hundreds of thousands of people, and ultimately millions of tons of cargo**,” he says.

#### Extinction

**Britt, 1** -- Senior Science Writer (Robert Roy, Space.com, “The Top 3 Reasons to Colonize Space” http://www.space.com/missionlaunches/colonize\_why\_011008-4.html) // DCM

It's no secret. Sooner or later, Earth's bell will be rung. **A giant asteroid** or comet will slam into the planet, as has happened many times before, and a **deadly dark cloud** will envelop the globe, killing much of whatever might have survived the initial impact. "We live on a small planet covered with the bones of extinct species, proving that such catastrophes do occur routinely," says J. Richard Gott, III, a professor of astrophysics at Princeton and author of "Time Travel in Einstein's Universe." Gott cites the presumably hardy Tyrannosaurus rex, which lasted a mere 2.5 million years and was the victim of an asteroid attack, as an example of what can happen if you don't plan ahead. But space rocks may not be the only threat. **Epidemics**, climatological or **ecological catastrophes** or even man-made disasters could do our species in, Gott says. And so, he argues, we need a life insurance policy to guarantee the survival of the human race. "Spreading out into space gives us more chances," he says. And the time is now: History instructs that technological hay should be made while the economic sun shines. "There is a danger we will end the human space program at some point, leaving us stranded on the Earth," Gott warns. "History shows that expensive technological projects are often abandoned after awhile. For example, the Ancient Egyptians quit building pyramids. So **we should be colonizing space now** while we have the chance.">