Politics of climate justice:
paralysis above, movement below

Our objective is to advance socio-economic and environmental justice by developing critical knowledge about, for, and in dialogue with civil society through teaching, research and publishing.

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University of California
Santa Barbara

25 February 2012
cartoons by Zapiro
Environmental crises are challenging the institutions of global governance. The neoliberal carbon trading regime is failing and the great powers are abdicating their responsibilities for addressing the huge social problems that are being caused by global warming and ecological degradation. But there is a strong and increasingly organized global social movement organized around the issue of climate justice. This paper discusses the possibilities for another world revolution that will restructure global governance.
Polanyi’s commodification and decommodification

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<td>1795</td>
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<td>1933 – Abolition of Gold Standard</td>
<td>Ecological Catastrophe</td>
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World Summit on Sustainable Development
Johannesburg, 31 August 2002: 30,000 protested
UN ‘type-two partnerships’, privatisation of
water, emissions trading, neoliberalism
A TIMETABLE TO REDUCE EMISSIONS?! 
...NOT UNTIL THERE'S MORE EVIDENCE OF GLOBAL CLIMATE CHANGE!
Major sites for neoliberal and sustainable development discourses

Johannesburg World Summit 2002

A GIFT FROM THE CORPORATE WORLD!

Sustainable Development

- Profit
- Self Regulation
- Unfair Trade
‘stealing’: exploitation of capitalist/non-capitalist relations

Rosa Luxemburg

‘Accumulation of capital periodically bursts out in crises and spurs capital on to a continual extension of the market. Capital cannot accumulate without the aid of non-capitalist organisations, nor ... can it tolerate their continued existence side by side with itself. Only the continuous and progressive disintegration of non-capitalist organisations makes accumulation of capital possible.’

The Accumulation of Capital, 1919.
‘overaccumulation’ and GDP stagnation:
world GDP growth shrinks during ‘prosperous’ globalisation

US corporate profits fall

- US corporate profits derived much less from manufacturing products;
- much greater sources of profits came from abroad;
- profits also came more from returns on financial assets.

Source: Gerard Dumenil and Dominique Levy

crisis of surplus value extraction

decompose
US corporate profits

‘temporal fix’

‘spatial fix’
limits of the ‘spatial fix’: amplified uneven development

GLOBAL CURRENT-ACCOUNT BALANCE, 1990–2008
(Per cent of GDP)

‘shifting’: volatility and uneven geographical development inexorably worsen

(source: Unctad 2009)
limits of ‘temporal fix’: uncontrolled financial markets

‘stalling’: within finance, ongoing bubbling, monetary laxity, ‘paper chasing paper’

Source: IMF, Global Financial Stability Report, April 2010
DAVID HARVEY
THE CRISIS OF CAPITALISM
26TH APRIL, 2010

IS IT TIME TO LOOK BEYOND CAPITALISM TOWARDS A NEW SOCIAL ORDER THAT WOULD ALLOW US TO LIVE WITHIN A SYSTEM THAT COULD BE RESPONSIBLE, JUST & HUMANE?
when crisis hit, three reactions:

**Reaction 1: bailout fix**

![Graph showing General Government Fiscal Balances (Percent of GDP) over time for Emerging and developing economies, world, and advanced economies.]
Reaction 2: low interest rates

Figure 4.2. Change of Central Bank Policy Rates
(In percentage points; September 1, 2007 = 0)

Average change of receiving countries' policy rates

Average change of G-4 policy rates

Sources: Bloomberg L.P.; and IMF staff estimates.
1 G-4 includes the euro area, Japan, the United Kingdom, and the United States.
2 Receiving countries are Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, India, Indonesia, Korea, Mexico, Norway, Russia, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Sweden, Switzerland, and Turkey.
Since the beginning of the financial market turmoil in August 2007, the Federal Reserve's balance sheet has grown in size and has changed in composition. Total assets of the Federal Reserve have increased significantly from $869 billion on August 8, 2007, to well over $2 trillion.

**Reaction 3: desperation money creation**
one result of short-term crisis management

Finance Profits Come Roaring Back

Data: Bureau of Economic Analysis
but short-term crisis management failed

Could this be the worst recovery on record?

ongoing economic crisis, worsening with Greek default
Joseph E. Stiglitz
The Perils of 2012
http://www.project-syndicate.org/commentary/stiglitz147/English

The US Economy in the Doldrums: No Evidence of Solvency or Recovery
Irrespective of the trillions of dollars thrown at the US economy since 2006 there is no evidence that long-term solvency or recovery has been achieved.

Fed Secretly Bailing Out Europe
A former Fed official says in the Wall Street Journal that the Federal Reserve is covertly bailing out Europe
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_u8tFqOlarc&feature=youtu.be

Euro-zone Credit Implosion Secret, ECB Cannot Stop Collateral Contagion Collapse!
How long can the European media keep the EU credit implosion a secret? The disgraced former IMF Director, Demonic Strauss Kahn said on Tuesday December 12th, 2011 that No 'Firewall' Exists and Europe Has 'Only Weeks'.
http://www.marketoracle.co.uk/Article32327.html

Next Financial Crisis ‘Lehman Moment’ Is Coming Fast
http://www.guardian.co.uk/business/2012/jan/17/world-bank-warns-global-recession
The Great Recession in Black Wealth
White wealth reaches historic high of twenty times black wealth.
The Great Recession produced the largest setback in racial wealth equality in the United States over the last quarter century. In 2009 the average white household's wealth was twenty times that of the average black household, nearly double that in previous years.

Downward Social Mobility is Crushing the American Dream
Forget about getting ahead. For many in the middle class these days it's more about not sliding backwards. It's called downward mobility and it's crushing the American Dream. According to a study conducted by the Pew Charitable Trusts, nearly one out of three U.S. citizens born into middle-class households in the 1960s have lost their economic status.
http://www.marketoracle.co.uk/Article32710.html

Half of America In Poverty? The Facts Say It's True
Recent reports suggest that almost 50% of Americans are in poverty or at a "low income" level. The claim is based on a new supplemental measure by the Census Bureau that includes health care, transportation, and other essential living expenses in the poverty calculation.
http://www.commondreams.org/view/2011/12/27-0

Pepe Escobar
The US-Iran economic war
Here's a crash course on how to further wreck the global economy.
http://atimes.com/atimes/Middle_East/NA07Ak01.html
**U.S. Economy Waist Deep in the Big Muddy**

With its announcement this week that it will keep interest rates near zero until at least late 2014, the Federal Reserve has put another large crack into the foundations underlying the US dollar. In a misguided attempt to provide clarity and transparency, Ben Bernanke has instead laid out a simple road map for economists and investors to follow. The signposts are easily understood: the FED will stop at nothing in pursing its goals of creating phantom GDP growth.

[http://www.marketoracle.co.uk/Article32853.html](http://www.marketoracle.co.uk/Article32853.html)

**The ECB blew away €500 billion, and the markets still fell**

I am not sure people have grasped the magnitude of what has just happened. The European Central Bank firehosed €489,190,000,000 at the eurozone banking system. Five-hundred-and-twenty-three banks snatched greedily at the cheap cash. And the markets fell.


**China and UAE ditch US Dollar, will use Yuan for oil trade**

The US dollar is fast losing out its reserve currency status with China aggressively replacing the dollar with the Yuan as a currency for bi-lateral trade. The latest is an agreement signed between the China and the United Arab Emirates (UAE), which will use the Yuan for oil trade.

debt defaults, 1820-2000: percent of national states
solutions within global governance?

Top-down failures in economics, politics, environment

Montreal Protocol banning CFCs, 1987

But since then:

- World Bank, IMF Annual Meetings: trivial reforms - China rising, Africa falling
- Post-Washington Consensus: rhetoric
- UN MDG strategies, 2000: missed targets
- WTO Doha Agenda 2001: failure (WTO dead)
- Monterrey 2002 Financing for Development and G20
- Global financial reregulation 2008-12: failure
- Renewed war in Central Asia, Middle East, 2001-?
- UN Security Council Reform failed, 2005
- G8 promises on aid, NEPAD/APRM, Gleneagles: broken
- Kyoto Protocol 1997 and aftermath – Copenhagen (2009), Cancun (2010), Durban (2011) climate disasters
Copenhagen Accord, COP 15, December 2009

- Jacob Zuma (SA)
- Lula da Silva (Brazil)
- Barack Obama (USA)
- Wen Jiabao (China)
- Manmohan Singh (India)

“they broke the UN!”
(Bill McKibbon, 350.org)

non-binding!
4 degree increase!
world’s biggest polluter
greenhouse gas emissions per person, 2000

USA
Canada
Australia
Saudi Arabia
Kazakhstan
Russia

who owes?
who’s owed? climate change ‘creditors’

main losers:
Central America,
central South America,
Central and Southeast Asia
and much of Africa
lead US climate negotiator Todd Stern, on demand for recognising climate debt

'The sense of guilt or culpability or reparations – I just categorically reject that'

Stern thus rejects core principle: ‘polluter pays’

WikiLeaks revealed (Feb ‘10) Stern/Pershing bribery and bullying: Ethiopia, Maldives
Green Climate Fund – $100bn/year by 2020 (promised), co-chaired by SA’s Trevor Manuel

- $100 billion isn’t enough!
- direct access? ... or will corrupted aid industry and dictators benefit?
- False Solutions to be funded
- Manuel wants carbon trade to provide 50% of GCF revenue
- World Bank is interim GCF trustee despite terrible record of managing climate and development funding
Should the World Bank be lead climate financier?

Robert Zoellick

- fossil fuel loans: $6.3 billion in 2009-10 year, up from $1.6 bn in 2006-07;
- commodity export dogma;
- resource curse financing;
- carbon trading promotion;
- Robert Zoellick qualifications:
  - WB prez after Wolfowitz was fired
  - Goldman Sachs int’l banker, 2006-7
  - US State Dep’t #2, 2005-6
  - US Trade Rep to WTO, 2001-5
  - Bush Jr’s Florida vote-counter, 2000
  - Enron ‘senior political advisor’, 1999
  - neocon *Project for a New American Century* founder, 1998 (‘invade Iraq’)
  - Fannie Mae #2, 1993-98
  - Presidential deputy chief of staff to George Bush Sr, 1992
  - US Treasury: Deputy Assistant Secretary during S&L crash, 1980s

breaks everything he touches

a very worried panda
Should the **IMF** be run by the likes of...

Christine Lagarde under investigation for French financial corruption
instead of paying its debt, US plays the pollution markets

DATE: December 12, 1991
TO: Distribution
FR: Lawrence H. Summers

... I think the economic logic behind dumping a load of toxic waste in the lowest wage country is impeccable and we should face up to that... I’ve always thought that under-populated countries in Africa are vastly UNDER-polluted. (World Bank chief economist Larry Summers, later US Treasury Secretary, Obama’s economic manager, WB presidential candidate – www.whirledbank.org)
Kyoto Protocol’s carbon trading: in 1997, US vice-president Al Gore (later a carbon trader) pushed for Kyoto to include emissions markets, in exchange for Washington’s promised support … promise soon broken

‘The European Union has adopted this US innovation and is making it work effectively there.’

(An Inconvenient Truth, p. 252)
impossible to finance renewable energy with such low carbon prices.

does EU carbon trading ‘work effectively’?

emissions market’s five major crashes, 2006-09, 2010 stagnation, 2011 theft-closure, 2012 denouement?
introducing: Durban Group for Climate Justice

- October 2004 initiative hosted by Khan, Timberwatch, SDCEA
- supported by Dag Hammarskjold Foundation
- driven by grassroots activists in India, Brazil, Thailand, South Africa, etc
- largest signatory: Friends of the Earth International
- key sites: The Cornerhouse, FERN, SEEN, CarbonTrade Watch, CDM Watch, Dartmouth Univ Environmental Studies, UKZN Centre for Civil Society
THE STORY OF CAP & TRADE
WHY YOU CAN'T SOLVE A PROBLEM WITH THE THINKING THAT CREATED IT
storyofcapandtrade.org

WE'RE HERE
387 ppm

ATMOSPHERIC CO₂ CONCENTRATION (PPM)

390
370
350

350 ppm
WE NEED TO BE HERE

CLIMATE JUSTICE NOW!
Durban’s COP17

‘Conference of Polluters’
COP 17
Gambling on the future of the Planet

NO RIFFRAFF!
...THE STAKES ARE TOO HIGH!

BIG POLLUTER NATIONS
BIG DEVELOPING POLLUTERS
BIG OIL
BIG NUKES
BIG GAS
BIG COAL

YESSIR!

CLIMATE JUSTICE!

THE TIMES 29-11-14
ZAPIRO
AMATEUR!

APARTHEID

CLIMATE APARTHEID

IMF, WTO, WORLD BANK

SUBSIDISED OVER-CONSUMPTION
what is ‘climate justice’?

core principles from Rights of Mother Earth conference, Cochabamba, Bolivia (April 2010)

• 50 percent reduction of greenhouse gas emissions by 2017
• stabilising temperature rises to 1°C and 300 Parts Per Million

• acknowledging the climate debt owed by developed countries (6% of GDP)
  • full respect for Human Rights and the inherent rights of indigenous people
  • universal declaration of Mother Earth rights to ensure harmony with nature
  • establishment of an International Court of Climate Justice

• rejection of carbon markets, and REDD’s commodified nature and forests
  • promotion of change in consumption patterns of developed countries
  • end of intellectual property rights for climate technologies

Evo Morales
keep the oil in the soil and the coal in the hole
currents of a global eco-social movement
‘climate justice’ traditions, 1990s-2011

• 1990s environmental anti-racism;
• 1990s Accion Ecologica environmental debt demands;
• late 1990s Jubilee movement against Northern financial domination;
• 2000s global justice movement (following Seattle World Trade Organisation protest) and first ‘climate justice’ conference (Amsterdam);
• environmentalists and corporate critics who in 2004 started the Durban Group for Climate Justice;
• 2007 founding of the Climate Justice Now! (CJN) network in Bali;
• emergence of a parallel (but not programmatically opposed) political tendency in the Peoples Movement on Climate Change (2008);
• 2009 rise of the European left’s Climate Justice Alliance in advance of the Copenhagen Conference of the Parties (COP);
• renewed direct-action initiatives that potentially ties in mainstream groups like Greenpeace and 350.org;
• renewed grassroots campaigning across the world; and
• potential link to national states (via Third World Network), e.g. April 2010 Cochabamba ‘World Conference of Peoples on Climate Change and the Rights of Mother Earth’ sponsored by Bolivian government.
CJ movement: *leave the oil in the soil, the coal in the hole, the tarsand in the land (and the fracking shale-gas in our earth’s ass)*

- Ecuador’s Amazon indigenous activists + *Accion Ecologica* halt oil drilling in Yasuni National Park
- British *Climate Camp* (*Crude Awakening* block Coryton oil refinery, 2010 – MI5 spy couldn’t crack it)
- Australian *Rising Tide* regularly block Newcastle coal exports
- Norwegian environmentalists and Attac win against state oil company in *Lofoten* region, 2011
- Canada: Alberta anti-tarsands green and indigenous activists
- Stopping US King Coal: Mountain Top Removal nearly halted in Appalachia; Navajo Nation forced cancellation of Black Meza (Arizona) mine permit against world’s largest coal company, Peabody; Powder River Basin (MN, WY) farmers and ranchers fight coal expansion
- Derailing US coal energy: nearly all 151 proposed new coal power plants in Bush Energy Plan cancelled, abandoned or stalled since 2007; key community forces: Indigenous Environmental Network, Energy Justice Network and Western Mining Action Network, plus Sierra legal team
- Preventing incinerators: since 2000, no new waste incinerators (more carbon-intensive than coal and leading source of cancer-causing dioxins)
  - Global Alliance for Incinerator Alternatives, Detroit victory, world wastepickers movement
- Defeating Chevron expansion in Richmond, CA
- Undamming Mega Hydro at Klamath River: indigenous communities defeat Pacificorp Power
- Building resilient communities through local action: frontline communities winning campaigns linking climate justice to basic survival – e.g., Oakland Climate Action Coalition Just Transition
- Movement to halt fracking of shale gas: France, Quebec, Pittsburgh, Nigeria, South Africa’s Karoo
Down with coal! The grassroots anti-coal movement goes global

BY TED NACE
27 MAY 2011 3:34 PM

The article was coauthored by Bob Burton (CoalSwarm, Australia), Christine Shearer (CoalSwarm, U.S.), Cynthia Ong (LEAP, Malaysia), Jamie Henn (350.org, U.S.), John Hepburn (Greenpeace, Australia), Joshua Frank (CoalSwarm, U.S.), Justin Guay (Sierra Club, U.S.), Kate Hoshour (International Accountability Project, U.S.), and Mark Wakeham (Environment Victoria, Australia).

In the United States and Europe, the triple whammy of recession, cheap alternatives, and aggressive anti-coal campaigning has helped halt the expansion of coal use. Since 2004, plans to build more than 150 coal plants in the U.S. have been abandoned. In fact, the U.S. Energy Information Administration (EIA), a government agency that analyzes energy-related statistics, predicts continued stagnation or decline in coal-fired electricity generation in the U.S. and the European Union over the coming decades.

In Thailand, 10,000 people call on their government to quit coal.
contradictions within climate movement? uncomfortable ‘climate justice’ contestations

• emphasis on South-North justice primarily within interstate diplomatic negotiations over climate, advanced especially by South Centre and Third World Network – but with debates surrounding defense of the Kyoto Protocol, compromises on demands;

• semi-periphery’s right/need to industrialise (what kind?), via UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs;

• ‘Greenhouse Development Rights’ technical calculation of per capita GHG emissions (by NGO Ecoequity,) aiming to distribute ‘right to pollute’ (and let underpolluters sell surpluses via carbon trading);

• use of CJ rhetoric to promote carbon trading (!) by former UN Human Rights Commission director and Irish president Mary Robinson, whose Dublin foundation influences international NGOs;

• attempts to incorporate (within CJ politics) a commitment to indigenous rights/finance through the Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Degradation (REDD) and CDM projects
No DIRTY loan to Eskom
CANCEL SPECIAL CORPORATE DEALS
Eskom "Fat Cats" u messed up why must we pay!!!
World Bank: Fossil Fool of the Year 2010!

Eskom, you betray... poor South Africans!

No World Bank Loan = No Problems

No to Bank Loan
ESKOM + LDU industry = fewer jobs + climate chaos
actinactmove.org
vital need for SA’s ‘Million Climate Jobs’ campaign, so that affected workers have a Just Transition: guaranteed, well-paid jobs that help society and save the planet!
Climate Justice Now! SA opposes emissions, privatised electricity, Eskom coal and nuclear, carbon trading: demands *conservation/renewables* and *electricity-as-a-right* to avoid this danger:
what about economic resistance from below?
2011-12: Arab Spring, ‘Indignados’ of Spain, Greeks and Italians, Occupy in the US and Europe, Nigeria Occupy, Senegal, etc

Memo to 1%:
• 99% are waking up.
• Be nervous.
• Be very nervous.
  (Marie Antoinette wasn’t.)

This is SO not over!
I am the 1%. Smithers, release the hounds.
WALL STREET DEMONSTRATORS JAILED FOR PROTESTING:

WALL STREET BANKERS JAILED FOR DESTROYING THE WORLD ECONOMY:
I sympathise with those who would minimise, rather than with those who would maximise, economic entanglement among nations. Ideas, knowledge, science, hospitality, travel – these are the things which should of their nature be international. But let goods be homespun whenever it is reasonably and conveniently possible and, above all, let finance be primarily national.

—John Maynard Keynes (1933), ‘National Self-Sufficiency,’ Yale Review