THE JUS SEMPER
GLOBAL ALLIANCE

JUS SEMPER NEWSLETTER
In Pursuit of the People and Planet Paradigm

Our Latest Publications on Building the New Paradigm of People and Planet

HIGHLIGHTS

Transitioning to Geocratia — the People and Planet and Not the Market Paradigm — (Alvaro J. de Regil) — This essay explores the key characteristics of the disastrous trajectory that we are still following, what we need to do to radically veer towards a sustainable path, where should we set course and the first steps to materialise a planetary movement to take us there. Page 2

Labour-Value Commodity Chains — The Hidden Abode of Global Production (Intan Suwandi) This work focuses on the global exploitation (along with expropriation—or appropriation without an equivalent) of labour in capitalist production, particularly under the domination of multinational firms emanating primarily from the core of the system. Page 2

COVID-19 and Circuits of Capital (Rob Wallace et al) Yes, infectious diseases, for most of human history our greatest source of premature mortality, will remain a threat. But given the bestiary of pathogens now in circulation, can we fundamentally adjust the modes by which we appropriate nature and arrive at more of a truce with these infections? Page 3

An Eco-Revolutionary Tipping Point? (Paul Burkett) The system of capitalism is moving toward an end of history of humanity due to the increasingly barbaric socio-economic and environmental conditions the system creates. Sustainable development now depends on a definite historical break with capitalism. Page 3

To Die for Wall Street — Coronavirus, Social Classes and the Prevailing Culture (Alejandro Teitelbaum) Will there be social awareness of a radically unprecedented and innovative new paradigm? In any case, it will not happen as long as the great majority do not begin to understand that there are alternatives to capitalism. Page 4

Capitalism of Dispossession in the Palm Oil Plantations in the Countries of the Global South (Nubia Barrera Silva) P. 4
Corporations in the Crosshairs (Allen White) P. 4
Why Corporate Social Responsibility is a Hoax (Alvaro J. de Regil) P. 5
The Light Side of the Mooney — from Redistribution to Distribution (Andrea Surbone) P. 5
Why Ecosocialism (Michael Löwy) P. 6

The Expropriation of Nature (John Bellamy Foster and Brett Clark) P. 6
The Precariat: Today’s Transformative Class? (Guy Standing) P. 6
To Planetise the Movement (Valentine Moghadam) P. 7
Absolute Capitalism (John Bellamy Foster) P. 7
The New Imperialist Structure (Samir Amin) P. 7
“Representative” Democracy in a State of Advanced Decomposition (Alejandro Teitelbaum) P. 8
Freedom and Responsibility — Sustainable Prosperity Through a Capabilities Lens (Ingrid Robeyns) P. 8

Where there is no vision, the people perish: a utopian ethic for a transformed future (Anne Vigna) P. 8
Planetary Offensive Against Social Security (Alejandro Teitelbaum) P. 9
The Case for Labour-Led Development (Intan Suwandi) P. 9
A Final Thought P. 9
TRANSITIONING TO GEOCRATIA — The People and Planet and Not the Market Paradigm — (Alvaro J. de Regil)

Following up on my commentary to the March 2020 Great Transition Initiative (GTI) forum: “Planeteering the Movement”, I assess the diverse ideas discussed in the forum and concurrently elaborate with far more detail in this essay how I envisage the first steps to materialise the change of paradigm from the current unsustainable market-centred ethos to a global movement that rescues our planet and provides sustainable life systems for our future generations and all living things.

Parital from the fact that saving Planet Earth, our home, changes everything, we need to build a new ethos where the majority of humankind commits to a system whose only purpose is the pursuit of the welfare of people and Planet Earth. This requires that all Earth resources necessary for the enjoyment of life of all living things be managed so that consumption does not happen faster than the time required by the planet to replenish them. Concurrently, by building Geocratia’s ethos we achieve happiness, peace and freedom, as in Epicurus’ ataraxia, the absence of fear and freedom, as in Epicurus’ ataraxia, the absence of pain.

This paper argues that the underlying causes of the unsustainability of market societies belong solely to the intrinsic nature of capitalism, and of the unrelenting pursuit of the reproduction and accumulation of wealth, which requires the infinite consumption of resources, with no regard whatsoever for its impact on the economic, social and environmental dimensions. It also proves that this is completely incompatible—a true oxymoron—with the premis of transitioning to a truly sustainable, democratic, equitable, peaceful and ecological paradigm. Lastly, this essay explores the key characteristics of the disastrous trajectory that we are still following, what we need to do to radically veer towards a sustainable path, my vision of where we should set course and the first steps to materialise a planetary movement to take us there.

Download the full document "Transitioning to Geocratia..." here!

MARXISM AND ECOLOGY: COMMON FONTS OF A GREAT TRANSITION — (John Bellamy Foster)

Jus This essay unearths the deep ecological roots of Marx’s thought, showing how he brought an environmental perspective to bear on the overarching question of social transformation. From there, it traces the evolution of Marxist ecology, illuminating its profound, formative link to modern ecological economics and systems ecology. It concludes by discussing the wider project of building a social movement broad and deep enough to halt and reverse ecological and social destruction.

For the first time in human history, our species faces a dire existential choice. We can continue on the path of business as usual and risk catastrophic Earth-system change—what Frederick Engels metaphorically referred to as “the revenge of nature”—or we can take the transformative route of social-system change aimed at egalitarian human development in coevolution with the vital parameters of the earth. This constitutes the epochal challenge of our time: to advance radical 3 reform measures that oppose the logic of capital in the historical and evolutionary dynamics that oppose the logic of capital in the historical and evolutionary dynamics.

As in V. I. Lenin’s conceptualisation, imperialism can be broadly defined as the complex intermingling of economic and political interests, related to the efforts of large capital to control economic territory.

Imperialism has several interrelated aspects:

1. Economic domination of one country by another.
2. The exploitation of the underdeveloped countries by the developed ones.
3. The transfer of capital from one country to another.
4. The establishment of political and economic control over the underdeveloped countries.
5. The enforcement of cultural and political influence over the underdeveloped countries.

Download the full document “Marxism and Ecology...” here!

LABOUR-VALUE COMMODITY CHAINS — The Hidden Abode of Global Production (Intan Suwandi)

Just this essay explores the key characteristics of the disastrous trajectory that we are still following, what we need to do to radically veer towards a sustainable path, my vision of where we should set course and the first steps to materialise a planetary movement to take us there.

Download the full document "Labour-Value Commodity Chains..." here!

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2 of 10

29/08/20
COVID-19 and Circuits of Capital

New York to China and Back (Rob Wallace, Alex Liebman, Luis Fernando Chaves and Rodrick Wallace)

In COVID-19, the illness caused by coronavirus SARS-CoV-2, the second severe acute respiratory syndrome virus since 2002, is now officially a pandemic. As of late March, whole cities are sheltered in place and, one by one, hospitals are lighting up in medical gridlock brought about by surges in patients.

A successful intervention keeping any one of the many pathogens queuing up across the agroeconomic circuit from killing a billion people must walk through the door of a global clash with capital and its local representatives, however much any individual foot soldier of the bourgeoisie, Glen among them, attempts to mitigate the damage. As our group describes in some of our latest work, agribusiness is at war with public health. And public health is losing. Should, however, greater humanity win such a generational conflict, we can replug ourselves back into a planetary metabolism that, however differently expressed place to place, re-connects our ecologies and our economies. Such ideals are more than matters of the utopian. In doing so, we converge on immediate solutions. We protect the forest complexity that keeps deadly pathogens from ramping up in virulence and geographic extent. We allow our food animals to reproduce onsite, restarting the natural selection that allows immune evolution at scales that keep pathogens from ramping up in virulence and geographic extent. We allow our food animals to reproduce onsite, restarting the natural selection that allows immune evolution to track pathogens in real time. Big picture, we stop treating nature and community, so full of all we need to survive, as just another competitor to be run off by the market. The way out is nothing short of birthing a world competitor to be run off by the market. It will also help solve—sleeves rolled up—many of our most pressing problems. None of us stuck in our living rooms from New York to Beijing, or, worse, mourning our dead, want to go through such an outbreak again. Yes, infectious diseases, for most of human history our greatest source of premature mortality, will continue to prevail, precisely the class struggles without in any way denying the significance of the other two. At issue is the extraction (or drain) of surplus from the poor countries by the rich countries and/or their corporations. I argue that one way to understand the persistent imperialist characteristics of the world economy is through examining the exploitation that occurs in what Karl Marx calls the hidden abode of production—which, in the era of global commodity chains, is located in the global South. Although production has shifted to the South, imperialist relations of exchange continue to prevail, precisely the class struggles central to it without focusing on the due to the fact that the difference in wages between issue of exploitation, analysed through the labour theory the North and South is greater than the difference in value. This remains equally true when examining the productivity. As Tony Norfield argues in The City, economy on a global level.imperialism in the present stage of capitalist development has its primary basis in the inescapable reality that a few major corporations from a small number of countries dominate the world market, world finance, and the global structure of production.
needed to limit warming to 2 degrees, according to the UNEP report.

The historical irony in this situation is hard to miss. Just a couple decades ago, we were told that neoliberal capitalism marked the “end of history.” Now it appears that the system’s ideologues may have been right, but not in the way they envisioned. The system of fossil-fuelled neoliberal capitalism is indeed moving toward an end of history, but only in the sense of the end of any historical advance of humanity as a productive, political, and cultural species due to the increasingly barbaric socio-economic and environmental conditions the system creates. There is now no alternative to the end of history as we know it. The sustainable development of human society co-evolving with nature including other species now depends on a definite historical break with capitalism (wage-labor, market competition, production for profit) as the dominant mode of production.

Will this brutal manifestation of the ravages that capitalism causes serve for a massive process of awareness and will provoke a profound change in the system, as some think? We do not know. In any case, it will not happen if the cultural ideological hegemony does not change the playing field and in this way the great majority begin to understand that there are alternatives to capitalism and intend to actively participate in the construction and implementation of a project—utterly unprecedented and innovative—truly socialist and authentically democratic.

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The commodification of land has deepened the ecological, social and economic crises. The unprecedented global pandemic of the covid-19 virus comes from the destruction of the habitats of species of wild animals and plants and the subsequent migration to humans. The neoliberal model is unsustainable in the sustainable conservation of nature and the planet’s economy. A change in the capitalist economy is urgently needed.

Corporations have become the real powers of the world in the twenty-first century, controlling governments and multilateral organizations and the laws of societies across the world. Today they wield more political and economic power than many states and have a direct influence on the political ethos of the metropolises of the world’s capitalist system. They have captured the nation-states that emerged in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The “representative democracy” of the transnational corporations of oil palm monoculture, critical moments due to insurmountable ecological fractures with global impact, occurring in fragile ecosystems of humid tropical forests in Asia, Africa and the Americas. In historical evolution, between different ecological fractures, two major climatic milestones have emerged: (i) The transatlantic invasion in the Americas and Africa (16th century), gave rise to the “Cold Ice Age” with the death of 60 million of the native population. It is the beginning of the Anthropocene. In the ecosystems of humid tropical forests, agriculture has been intensified in extraproductive lands without the consent of medium and small landowners organised in associations of land recovery, the defence of the common goods and of human rights with tens of thousands of people murdered in the three continents.
Corporations in the Crosshairs: From Reform to Redesign — Opening Reflections on a GTI Forum

**Allen White**

Corporations are an engine of global capitalism, harnessing human ingenuity to make wealth at the sacrifice of our health, our future, and ultimately our planet. This business model is incompatible with a livable future, especially given the impact of climate change on our health and our planet. To address this crisis, corporations must be required to transform their business model.

The Great Transition Initiative (GTI) organized a forum on the future of corporations as part of its mission to understand the contemporary world and shape its future by envisioning a truly sustainable planet.

Jus Semper has chosen the initial brief prepared by White, where he proposes a radical redesign of the purpose of corporations to change their nature and raison d'être.

Download "Corporations in the Crosshairs" here.

**Why “Corporate Social Responsibility” Is a Hoax? — (Álvaro J. de Regil)**

We cannot pretend to fix the problems inherent to capitalism without replacing capitalism. If we aspire to build a completely new paradigm, then we must realize that many elements of our value system will cease to have meaning. The concept of a “living wage,” for example, would be treated as a relic of the marketocratic system, as the wage system and capital-labor divide are antithetical to true democracy. We must instead transcend the market in order to redefine how work will be remunerated in new socially and environmentally sustainable enterprises. In the same way, CSR and corporate redesign also become moot points because the nature of business will be completely replaced by new concepts.

To advance this shift, we need to first establish a truly democratic ethos. We, the Demos, must organize across the world to liberate our national and multilateral institutions from their abdication by dominant classes. To establish a truly democratic ethos, where the people are directly involved in protecting our common and individual rights, we need to build a new institutional edifice designed to provide conditions of life worthy of human dignity and to sustain the planet and all its inhabitants. Rather than corporate redesign, we need a social contract redesign.

Download "Why Corporate Social..." here.
WHY ECOSOCIALISM: FOR A RED-GREEN FUTURE — (Michael Löwy)

The capitalist system, driven at its core by the maximisation of profit, regardless of social and ecological costs, is incompatible with a just and sustainable future. Ecosocialism offers a radical alternative that puts social and ecological well-being first. Ecosocialism stands against both reformist “market ecology” and “productivist socialism.” By embracing a new model of robustly democratic planning, society can take control of the means of production and its own destiny. Shorter work hours and a focus on authentic needs over consumerism can facilitate the elevation of “being” over “having,” and the achievement of a deeper sense of freedom for all.

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THE EXPROPRIATION OF NATURE — (John Bellamy Foster and Brett Clark)

Twentieth-century monopoly-capitalism constitutes what Karl Marx once called an “age of dissolution.” All that is solid in the current mode of production is melting into air. Hence, it is no longer realistic to treat—even by way of abstraction—the crucial political-economic struggles of our day as if they were confined primarily to the exploitation of labour within production. Instead, social conflicts are increasingly being fought over capitalism’s expropriation and spoliation of its wider social and natural environment. This historical shift and the deepening fissures that it has produced can be seen in the growth of what David Harvey has termed “anti-value politics,” directed at the boundaries of the system and visible in such forms as the ecological movement, growing conflicts over social reproduction in the household/family and gender/sexuality, and global resistance to the expansion of imperialism/racism. To understand these changing conditions, it is necessary to dig much deeper than before into capital’s external logic of expropriation, as it was first delineated in Marx’s writings during the Industrial Revolution. Most important, because at the root of the problem, is the extreme expropriation of the earth itself and the consequent transformation in social relations.

THE PRECATRIAT TODAY’S TRANSFORMATIVE CLASS? — (Guy Standing)

Since 1980, the global economy has undergone a dramatic transformation, with the globalisation of the labour force, the rise of automation, and—above all—the growth of Big Finance, Big Pharma, and Big Tech. The social democratic consensus of the immediate postwar years has given way to a new phase of capitalism that is leaving workers further behind and reshaping the class structure. The precariat, a mass class defined by unstable labor arrangements, lack of identity, and erosion of rights, is emerging as today’s “dangerous class.” As its demands cannot be met within the current system, the precariat carries transformative potential. To realise that potential, however, the precariat must awaken to its status as a class and fight for a radically changed income distribution that reclaims the commons and guarantees a liveable income for all. Without transformative action, a dark political era looms.

Download "The Expropriation of Nature..." here!

Download "Why Ecosocialism..." here.

Download "The Precariat" here!
In January 2020, as I was writing this essay, Americans celebrated the life and legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., whose message of social equality, economic justice, and peace is as relevant today as ever—arguably more so. That month, the US and Iran (the country of my birth) seemed to be on the brink of war. Australia was experiencing climate-change-related disaster, the opioid crisis continued to devastate communities and families across the US, and refugees and migrants still faced exclusion and disdain. Income inequality in the US and in many other countries grew ever wider, and the power of capital over labor remained strong. Across the globe, the sharpened reach of populist politics continued apace.

This is only a small list of the world's problems, some of which are common to humanity and some specific to nation-states and communities. To echo Lenin, what is to be done? For an answer, we can echo Dr. King: “planetize our movement.”

### Absolute Capitalism

#### (John Bellamy Foster)

The French poet Charles Baudelaire wrote in 1864 that “the cleverest ruse of the Devil is to persuade you he does not exist!” I will argue here that this is directly applicable to today’s neoliberalists, whose devil’s ruse is to pretend they do not exist. Although neoliberalism is widely recognised as the central political-ideological project of twenty-first-century capitalism, it is a term that is seldom uttered by those in power. The New York Times went so far as to make neoliberalism’s nonexistence official by running an article entitled “Neoliberalism? It Doesn’t Exist.”

Behind this particular devil’s ruse lies a deeply disturbing, even hellish, reality. Neoliberalism can be defined as a political-ideological project that has as its principal strategic aim the total and totalising economic domination of the state. The state’s traditional role in safeguarding social reproduction—its role in providing education, health care, social security, and a range of other goods and services—is now reduced solely to one of promoting capitalist reproduction. The goal is nothing less than the creation of an absolute monopoly capitalism. All of this serves to heighten the extreme human and ecological destructiveness that characterises our time.

### The New Imperialist Structure

#### (Samir Amin)

Contemporary capitalism is a capitalism of generalised monopolies. What I mean by that is that monopolies don’t exist in isolation but in a connected system of capital that controls the entire world economy. Globalisation is the label they themselves have given to the imperatives through which they exercise their control over the productive systems of world capitalism’s peripheries (the entire world beyond the partners of the triad). This is nothing other than a new stage of imperialism.

As a system, generalised and globalised monopoly capitalism ensures that these monopolies derive a monopoly rent on the mass of surplus value transformed into profit that the monopolies extract from the exploitation of labor. To the extent that these monopolies operate in the peripheries of the globalised system, this monopoly rent becomes an imperialist rent, levied on the mass of surplus value transformed into profit that the monopolies extract from the exploitation of labor. This rent varies from one monopoly to another, and it varies according to the degree of control the monopolies have over the productive system of the periphery.

### Planetise the Movement

#### (Valentine Moghadam)

The Historical Conjecture

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Download "Planetise the Movement..." here.

### The New Imperialist Structure

#### (Samir Amin)

Contemporary Capitalism is a capitalism of generalised monopolies. What I mean by that is that monopolies no longer form islands (important as they may be) in an ocean of corporations that are not monopolies—and consequently are relatively autonomous—but are integrated into a single system with a single set of strategies. This is nothing other than a new stage of imperialism.

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successive historical forms—is consequently governed by the maximisation of monopolistic/imperialist rent.

Download the "The New Imperialist..." here.

"REPRESENTATIVE" DEMOCRACY IN A STATE OF ADVANCED DECOMPOSITION 
— (Alejandro Teitelbaum)

It is increasingly evident that the myth of "representative" or delegating democracy as some call it is in a state of advanced decomposition, that democracy, where the citizens are periodically called upon to choose between different leaders. But no one in the leaders and those who believe in the efficacy of representative democracy, believe that the citizens will make their decisions according to what they believe to be in their best interest. It is increasingly evident that the myth of "representative" or delegating democracy is in a state of advanced decomposition, that democracy, where the citizens are periodically called upon to choose between different leaders. But no one in the leaders and those who believe in the efficacy of representative democracy, believe that the citizens will make their decisions according to what they believe to be in their best interest.

Download "Representative Democracy..." here.

FREEDOM AND RESPONSIBILITY — Sustainable Prosperity Through a Capabilities Lens (Ingrid Robeyns)

Are we at liberty to live our lives completely as we wish? Or are there constraints we have to be aware of as we want to avoid harming others and respect ecological justice? And are lifestyles that embrace basic principles of ecological justice always dull and simple lives, where many enjoyable things are beyond reach, and which therefore entail a regres in our quality of life? Or is there a possibility to live lives that are at the same time sustainable and just, and also allow us to be happy and flourishing?

This set of questions is one of the most central in the task of thinking about sustainable prosperity. To most people's shock there are, in principle, many ways to live economically sustainable and also have a happy life with higher levels of well-being. But not all of us are there yet; there is still a lot of work to be done. This set of questions is one of the most central in the task of thinking about sustainable prosperity. To most people's shock there are, in principle, many ways to live economically sustainable and also have a happy life with higher levels of well-being. But not all of us are there yet; there is still a lot of work to be done.

Download "Freedom and Responsibility" here.

WHERE THERE IS NO VISION, THE PEOPLE PERISH — a utopian ethic for a transformed future (Ruth Levitas)

This paper argues that thinking about our ethical responsibilities in the present and for the future is helped by looking through the lens of Utopia. I have addressed the plethora of uses of the term Utopia elsewhere, in The Concept of Utopia, and more recently the merits of Utopia as a sociological method in Utopia as Method: The Imaginary Reconstitution of Society; this paper draws substantially on these books. The imagination of a potential, alternative future to the present can be a powerful tool for change, and a stimulus to action in the present.

Download "Where there is no vision..." here.
According to the times, cultures, civilisations and the social-economic situation, the “problem” that old people entail is “solved” in different ways. Some nomadic people left the old people at the edge of the road and certain sedentary people took them away from the village and abandoned them with some food and water. But also in all ages, different peoples, recognising the virtues of old age, such as experience and wisdom, have cared for and respected the old.

Modern societies invented retirement, with diverse systems that range from providing a few crumbs of bread to the old when they can no longer work and are at the cemetery doors (if they did not die before in their jobs) to providing them with a relatively comfortable remuneration so they can still enjoy life, resting and / or taking care of the things that interest them.

But for a few years there has been a widespread offensive against social security. The explanation is that as a result of the concentration and accumulation of capital, large oligopolies and monopolies were formed whose financial base was consolidated from the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century with the merger of industrial capital and financial capital.

Download "Planetary Offensive..." here.