POE9 – Transition extractivism and post-fossil coalitions

Scuola Normale Superiore
25-26 November 2026

Aula Magna, Palazzo Vegni, Via di S. Niccolò 93, Florence

Presentation

The idea of a transition to sustainability has so far been pursued in two main directions. The first, which dominates in academic and political circles, is that of 'Green Growth'. It is based on the assumption that technological innovation can ensure an effective transition without disrupting the dominant socio-economic order (OECD 2023). However, this assumption fails to take into account how the ecological crisis is profoundly influencing the configuration of the global economy as a system open to the circulation of innovation and goods, and how the promise of technology comes up against three limits, two of which are certain – the rebound effect (Jevons) and the accumulation effect (Fressoz 2025) – and the third of which is inferential – secular stagnation in the face of the absence of the kind of innovations that Nicolas Georgescu-Roegen termed 'Promethean', i.e. capable of making a difference in terms of energy efficiency (Bonaiuti 2018), masked by a succession of technological hypes, from GMOs to ICT (whether the trajectory of AI will be different remains to be seen: what is evident are its ecological and

L'idea di transizione alla sostenibilità è stata finora portata avanti in due direzioni principali. La prima, dominante a livello accademico e politico, è quella della 'Crescita Verde'. Si basa sull'ipotesi che l'innovazione tecnologica possa assicurare una transizione efficace e senza contraccolpi sull'ordine socio-economico dominante (OECD 2023). Questa ipotesi non tiene tuttavia conto di come la crisi ecologica stia fortemente influenzando la configurazione dell'economia globale come sistema aperto alla circolazione dell'innovazione e delle merci, e come la promessa tecnologica si scontri con tre limiti, due dei quali certi – l'effetto di rimbalzo (Jevons) e l'effetto di accumulo (Fressoz 2025) – e il terzo indiziario – la stagnazione secolare a fronte dall'assenza di quel tipo di innovazioni che Nicolas Georgescu-Roegen definiva 'prometeiche', ossia capaci di fare la differenza in termini di rendimenti energetici (Bonaiuti 2018), mascherata da una successione di hype tecnologici, dagli OGM alle ICT (che la traiettoria dell'AI sia differente resta tutto da dimostrare: ciò che è evidente sono i suoi

employment impacts, as well as its effects on financial and political power).
The second guiding principle is that of Post-Growth (Kallis et al. 2025). It is based on the assumption that only an absolute reduction in the extraction and processing of resources can hope to yield any results, and it posits that such a reduction requires a substantial rethinking of the notion of well-being and, with it, of fundamental aspects of the social order based on unlimited growth. This hypothesis has been significantly developed in recent years, but its operationalisation remains incomplete, particularly with regard to the stages involved, the social forces that should promote it, and the relationship between the market and planning (Schmelzer Hofferbert 2023). These are not details that can be resolved simply by zooming out from the micro-level of successful 'prefigurative' experiences to the macro-level of social reorganisation, all the more so in the context of a reaffirmation of the conflict between state blocs rather than between social blocs.
Furthermore, in both cases, the implications of phasing out or scaling back fossil fuels are scarcely addressed. On the one hand, there is support for a very gradual transition, mediated by the market and governed by the major players in energy, logistics and data. On the other, there is a push for an accelerated process accompanied by a reconfiguration of energy networks and applications. However, the conflicts emerging in relation to the post-fossil transition indicate that the issue of the unequal distribution of burdens and benefits remains at the forefront, albeit in

impatti ecologici, occupazionali e sul potere finanziario e politico).
La seconda linea direttiva è quella della Post-Growth (Kallis et al. 2025). Si basa sull'ipotesi che solo una riduzione in termini assoluti dell'estrazione e trasformazione delle risorse possa sperare di produrre qualche risultato, e assume che tale riduzione richieda una sostanziale revisione della nozione di benessere e, con essa, di aspetti fondamentali dell'ordine sociale basato sulla crescita illimitata. Questa ipotesi è stata notevolmente sviluppata negli anni recenti, ma la sua operazionalizzazione è ancora lacunosa soprattutto rispetto alle tappe, alle forze sociali che dovrebbero promuoverla e al rapporto tra mercato e pianificazione (Schmelzer, Hofferbert 2023). Non si tratta di dettagli risolvibili semplicemente zoomando dal micro di esperienze 'prefigurative' riuscite al macro della riorganizzazione sociale, tanto più nel contesto di una riaffermazione del conflitto tra blocchi statali anziché tra blocchi sociali.
In entrambi i casi, inoltre, le implicazioni dell'abbandono o il ridimensionamento delle fonti fossili risultano scarsamente tematizzate. Da una parte si sostiene un passaggio molto graduale, mediato dal mercato e governato dai grandi players dell'energia, della logistica e dei dati. Dall'altra si spinge per un processo accelerato accompagnato da una riconfigurazione delle reti e delle applicazioni energetiche. I conflitti che stanno emergendo rispetto alla transizione post-fossile indicano però che la questione della distribuzione ineguale di oneri e benefici rimane alla ribalta, sia pure in forme rinnovate rispetto agli

new forms concerning the extraction and energy efficiency aspects of renewables, the environmental and employment impacts of the transition, and the growing fragmentation caused by increasingly widespread identity-based divisions.
The problem, in other words, is that the post-fossil transition is creating new fault lines which not only jeopardise its chances of success but also encourage the further consolidation of an increasingly authoritarian form of capitalism, which sees in it new opportunities to extract value and weaken opposing or, at any rate, critical forces. The question is what the response from these forces might be: what form it might take, and at what social level; what sort of coalitions should be promoted or are in fact emerging in this regard.

aspetti estrattivi e di rendimento energetico delle rinnovabili, gli impatti ambientali e occupazionali della transizione, e il crescere della frammentazione indotta da derive identitarie sempre più diffuse.
Il problema, in altri termini, è che la transizione post-fossile sta producendo nuove linee di frattura che non solo ne compromettono le possibilità di successo ma favoriscono l'ulteriore rafforzamento di un capitalismo sempre più autoritario, che trova in essa nuove opportunità di estrazione di valore e di indebolimento delle forze oppositive, o comunque critiche. Il quesito è quale possa essere la risposta da parte di tali forze: di che tipo, e a che livello sociale; quale genere di coalizioni vadano promosse o stiano di fatto emergendo al riguardo.

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Programme

25 November, 15:00-19:00

Introduction
Luigi Pellizzoni (Scuola Normale Superiore)

Keynote speeches

Chair: Emanuele Leonardi (University of Bologna)

Post-fossil extractivism and uncertain energy futures: between renewable expansion, greenlash, and recarbonization
Anne Tittor (Johannes Kepler University Linz)

Discussants
Maura Benegiamo (University of Pisa)
Alessandra Corrado (University of Calabria)

What is Radical Abundance and how do we get there?
Keir Milburn (Abundance Think Tank)

Discussants
Donatella Gasparro (Scuola Normale Superiore)
Onofrio Romano (Roma Tre University)

General discussion

Keir Milburn is the co-director of the Abundance think tank. He is also the author of Generation Left ((Polity, 2019) and Radical Abundance (Pluto, 2025), and co-hosts Novara Media's #ACFM podcast.

Anne Tittor is professor of transformative change in a social science and humanities perspective and the director of the department of environmental and transformation sociology at the Institute for Sociology at the Johannes Kepler University Linz, Austria. She works on transnational entanglements, environmental and energy policy, social inequality, extractivism, political ecology and social movements. She recently published 'Postfossil extractivism. A new lens on decarbonization's land and material intensity'. *Journal of Peasant Studies* (2026).

26 November, 9:00-13:00

Round table

Session I: (Post-)extractivist trajectories

Chair: Riccardo Emilio Chesta (Scuola Normale Superiore)

On emergent food futurities: between soil-utionism and post-soil
Pietro Autorino (Scuola Normale Superiore)

Rhetoric of sacrifice or sacred ecology? More-than-wet ontologies, blue extractivism, and post-fossil coalitions
Emilio Cocco (University of Teramo)

The AI-energy nexus as post-fossil extractivism: hegemonic decomposition and the prospects for coalition-building
Mauro Conti (University of Calabria)

Beyond the Green Transition: reconceptualizing sustainability through indigenous knowledge and emotional landscapes
Lucia Groe (University of Calabria)

Internal extractivism: the tangible transition of critical raw materials in Europe and Italy
Ludovica Moro and Alvise Mattozzi (Turin Polytechnic University)

Session II: Extractivism, labour and class

Chair: Luigi Doria (Ca' Foscari University of Venice)

The struggle about class in the ruins of deindustrialization
Łukasz Bat (Sant'Anna School of Advanced Studies)

Reimaging labour's role in the energy transition: the possibilities for a 'productive delay' to reinvigorate climate action in South Africa
Alex Beresford and Ruth Bookbinder (University of Leeds)

Green grabs in Africa: a class-theoretical perspective
Elisa Greco (Editor, Review of African Political Economy)

Counter-hegemony taken seriously: some insights from labour struggles in the mining sector in Türkiye
Fabio Locci (Scuola Normale Superiore)

Vertical or Horizontal? Looking for post-fossil alliances in different energy transition scenarios
Matteo Lupoli (University of Bologna) and Giada Coleandro (University of Bolzano)

Abstracts

Keynote speeches

Post-fossil extractivism and uncertain energy futures: between renewable expansion, greenlash, and recarbonization
Anne Tittor (Johannes Kepler University Linz)

Over recent years, numerous scholars have examined how renewable energy systems and the resources they require are reconfiguring extractivist dynamics. This has led to rich debates on agrarian, green, and forest extractivism, as well as on large-scale renewable energy projects. At the same time, a growing body of research has highlighted the land intensity of decarbonization and climate mitigation policies. Nevertheless, parallel to these developments, fossil continuities—as well as tendencies of re-carbonization and greenlash—have emerged or gained momentum. Renewable energy expansion worldwide does not automatically amount to an energy transition in the sense of phasing out fossil fuels, but both the rebound (Jevons) and the accumulation effect (Fressoz) as well as decarbonization strategies themselves drive a higher energy demand.
This contribution adopts the lens of post-fossil extractivism to capture the contested and contradictory character of the ongoing transformation. In this context, "post" should be understood—analogous to postcolonial —not as a temporal "after," but as a condition still deeply shaped by fossilist structures, mentalities, and ways of living. It remains uncertain what future energy systems will look like, or to what extent fossil infrastructures (e.g., pipelines and power plants) and inputs (especially natural gas) will continue to play a central role.
Key actors from the fossil era—such as large oil, mining, and automotive companies—have begun investing heavily in renewables and hydrogen, thereby actively shaping the post-fossil future. In doing so, they inscribe their interests into strategic decision-making processes, while simultaneously seeking to preserve existing business models. Against this background, the proposed contribution asks how these contradictory and uneven developments in global energy policy reconfigure lived experiences of extractivism on the ground.
Empirically, the paper addresses these questions by analyzing energy policies in Germany and Argentina as well as the social forces driving them. Furthermore, the contribution compares social experiences of different forms of extractivism in Argentina, drawing on field research conducted in March 2026.

What is Radical Abundance and how do we get there?
Keir Milburn (Abundance Action-Research Think Tank)

Capitalism increasingly produces too much of what we don't need and too little of what we do. In place of a concept of abundance which implies we just need more of what exists, we need a more radical form of abundance in which we gain collective control over what gets built, produced, and resourced. If we want abundance then we need to ask, an abundance of what? Produced under which imperatives? Meaningfully addressing such questions will require the socialisation and democratisation of the investment function, but how is it possible to achieve this starting from our current conjuncture? This talk will offer a strategy for radical abundance that begins from the production of new institutional forms, such as public-common partnerships and popular asset commissions, in order to set in motion self-expanding circuits of common ownership and popular planning. While outlining this strategy for eco-socialist transition we will pay particular attention to how it departs from and intervenes into contemporary class composition. A radical abundance strategy consciously seeks to iteratively build the social forces required for each next stage of transition. We will examine the practical lessons gained in trying to put the strategy into practice, and the prospects and limitations we expect to encounter.

Round table

Session I: (Post-)extractivist trajectories

On emergent food futurities: between soil-utionism and post-soil
Pietro Autorino (Scuola Normale Superiore)

Exacerbating agrarian crisis amidst escalation in global food insecurity (FAO, 2024; and WFP, 2026), continues to call into question the feasibility of sustainability transitions in agriculture. In this context, two main techno-scientific reconfigurations of food production are emerging, both promising to make future food systems more viable economically and environmentally. On the one hand, a proposal that puts soil at centre (Puig de la Bellacasa, 2019) has been elaborated under the umbrella of regenerative agriculture, gaining traction in climate policy and grassroots environmentalism (Tironi et al., 2020). On the opposite, a "post-soil" scenario is being drawn by corporate actors, guided by Silicon Valley tech industries (Guthman, 2024). The former features a renewed interests for "the solution under our feet", fostering convergence on the understanding that soil care will enhance plant health and crop productivity. Hereby, influential practitioners and experts of regenerative agriculture claim that "soil is the

farm's capital" and invite the coming generations of farmers to "be part of the soil-ution". Unlike this proposal, the latter is intensifying investments in R&D for pathways to feeding the world by establishing a new infrastructural complex, made of bioreactors for cellular meat, vertical farming, aquaponics, hydroponics, aeroponics, etc. This set of solutions proposes to dis-mediate the soil-food nexus, growing the future of farming uprooted from earth. The post-soil hypothesis has been largely criticised for fostering technology hype (Kastenhofer et al., 2023) and solutionism (Morozov, 2013) that overly reduce the complexities of sustainability transitions in global agricultures. Yet, I suggest that this critique can be extended to a consistent part of the most influential actors in regenerative agriculture, for fostering forms of "soil-utionism" that also tend to overpromise, raising high expectations that soil regenerative practices (alone) can solve the ecology and economics of small farms. In the paper, I aim to further analyse these approaches and discuss their implications for the framework on sustainability transitions proposed for the POE workshop of 2026.

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Guthman, J. 2024. *The Problem with Solutions: Why Silicon Valley can't hack the future of food*. University of California Press. Quote by key informant interviewed during field research. Resonates with other claims by several experts and practitioners in the field: e.g. "cultivate soil, not crops", or "the solution is under our feet", etc. See Elaine Ingham's trademark "Be Part of the Soil-ution", for the *Soil Food Web School.* Available online at: https://soilfoodweb.com (accessed: 19/08/2026).

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Rhetoric of sacrifice or sacred ecology? More-than-wet ontologies, blue extractivism, and post-fossil coalitions

Emilio Cocco (University of Teramo)

The current post-fossil transition is increasingly extending its reach into marine and coastal environments through what can be termed "blue extractivism". Under the banner of Green Growth, marine space is frequently framed through an "ontology of availability," reducing complex social ecologies to quantifiable resources, energy corridors, and concessions. This process relies on a "rhetoric of sacrifice," where coastal territories, ecosystems, and maritime livelihoods are expected to absorb disproportionate burdens for decarbonization goals set elsewhere. Challenging this terrestrial and extractivist logic, this proposal integrates maritime sociology with posthumanism and more-than-human approaches to address a "more-than-wet ontology" of the "relational sea". We argue that the ocean is not just an empty space awaiting appropriation, but in fact a dynamic, relational world constituted through multispecies, technological, and material interactions. Drawing on Berkes's concept of "sacred ecology," we explore how non-extractivist practices, customary taboos, and embodied ocean knowledge establish practical limits to appropriation and resist the commodification of marine environments. Empirically, my talk draws on ongoing comparative fieldwork across heterogeneous maritime contexts: surfing subcultures in Lanzarote and Ostia, small-scale fishing communities confronting ecological shifts in Abruzzo (Italy), and indigenous sea-borne Moken and Urak Lawoi communities negotiating coastal enclosures in Thailand. By analyzing how marine spaces and practices become objects of sacralization, utility, or sacrifice, this contribution addresses a core question of post-fossil governance: who decides what within maritime worlds remains available and what must remain beyond sacrifice? Ultimately, my reasoning tries to demonstrate how sacred ecology and relational sea practices provide key conceptual and socio-political foundations for building counter-hegemonic, post-growth coalitions against authoritarian blue extractivism.

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The AI-energy nexus as post-fossil extractivism: hegemonic decomposition and the prospects for coalition-building

Mauro Conti (University of Calabria)

Both directions structuring the sustainability debate fail to account for the trajectory the post-fossil transition is actually taking. Green Growth's premise — that innovation can decarbonise without disrupting the socio-economic order — is contradicted by the case that most resembles a "Promethean" breakthrough today: AI. Far from decoupling growth from extraction, AI-driven demand is *re-fossilising* the transition, reviving shale drilling incentives and civilian nuclear build-out to meet data-centre load, while its promised productivity gains remain unproven — exactly the pattern of prior hypes the call identifies, but now with a far larger and more rigid energy footprint. Post-Growth, meanwhile, correctly diagnoses that reduction requires social forces and planning capable of steering it, but its operationalisation gap is being filled by geopolitical coercion, not negotiated downscaling. Using Arrighi's cycles of accumulation and Moore's world-ecology, the paper shows how the state becomes the planning agent Post-Growth calls for — but deployed to *secure* cheap energy for AI capital (sanctions-driven control of Venezuelan and Iranian oil, an asymmetric EU–US LNG deal) rather than to reduce extraction. China's divergent choice — channelling AI into manufacturing capacity rather than financial rent — confirms this is an accumulation strategy, not a technological necessity. The paper argues that this AI-energy bet reproduces, in a new domain, the same rentier logic transnational agrarian movements (TAMs) already learned to recognise and contest in agriculture: new breeding techniques and digital sequence information were likewise promoted as productivity and climate solutions, while functioning as devices of appropriation — patenting native traits, dematerialising biodiversity into tradeable information — without delivering the genuine yield "leap" once promised, echoing the earlier GMO hype. Just as TAMs built a non-territorial "institutional guerrilla" strategy, exploiting incoherence between IP/trade regimes and rights-based regimes (CBD, ITPGRFA) to defend collective access against enclosure, post-fossil coalitions may need to target the AI-energy complex not as a technology to accept or refuse, but as an equivalent enclosure of energy and computational commons behind a productivity narrative it has yet to substantiate.

Beyond the Green Transition: reconceptualizing sustainability through indigenous knowledge and emotional landscapes

Lucia Groe (University of Calabria)

The contemporary debate on sustainability transitions is polarized between the tech-optimism of Green Growth and the operational gaps of Post-Growth frameworks. Both approaches often neglect the micro-political and cultural dimensions of change, leading to social resistance and new forms of "transition extractivism." This paper proposes a radical reconceptualization of the post-fossil transition by weaving together two overlooked dimensions: the relational ontologies of Indigenous knowledge and the emotional drivers of social acceptance toward renewable energy technologies. First, we explore how traditional ecological knowledge challenges the Western, technocratic concept of sustainability. Specifically, I introduce the concept of *Mitakuyeability* (Groe, 2021; 2026), coined from the Lakota paradigm of Mitakuye Oyasin ("we are all related"), and articulate it within the broader critique of growth alternatives to shift the focus from resource extraction to systemic reciprocity. This framework enriches the notion of sustainability by recentering the conversation on the deep connection with oneself, others, and the natural world, redefining prosperity not as material accumulation but as the active maintenance of vital cosmic, social, and terrestrial relationships. Second, the paper addresses the operational deadlock of the post-fossil transition by looking at the emotional landscapes of local communities facing renewable energy projects. Rather than treating local resistance (NIMBYism) as mere irrationality or cognitive deficit, we draw on emotional energy geographies (Batel 2020; Devine-Wright 2013) to argue that emotions (such as grief for landscape loss, place-anxiety, or collective hope) are deeply political. They represent the somatic friction against top-down, authoritarian green schemes. By bridging Indigenous relational ethics with the affective dimension of energy geographies, this contribution outlines how new "post-fossil coalitions" can be built. These coalitions do not rely on market-driven incentives or abstract state planning, but on emotional alignment, historical repair, and a shared, affectively grounded commitment to defending life-systems.

Internal extractivism: the tangible transition of critical raw materials in Europe and Italy

Ludovica Moro and Alvise Mattozzi (Turin Polytechnic University)

The debate surrounding the ecological and climate crisis and its management has brought to the fore some contradictions regarding the model of energy production and resource extraction. Energy transition has been designed by governments and international institutions as a market driven process. Therefore, green and "new energy transition" has become a new ground for profit accumulation (Leonardi 2017). The imperative of decarbonization has driven the development of novel green technologies,

fostering a new market that has catalyzed a "new gold rush" centered on specific raw materials, which became “critical” (European Commission 2024). An energy accumulation more than an energy transition has begun (Fressoz 2024). The presentation will address the issue of extractivism has long been associated with North-South and center-periphery dynamics, which is precisely why it was primarily adopted to describe expropriation and land-grabbing processes in the Global South. Today, driven by the advent of new green and digital technologies as well as global rearmament, the debate surrounding extractivism has evolved to introduce more specific terminology. The concept of post-extractivism, as proposed by Tittor (Tittor 2026), effectively highlights how extractive dynamics linked to green technologies cannot be decoupled from the continuous and incremental grabbing of fossil fuel sources; nevertheless, it still tends to focus on the Global South. By introducing the term internal extractivism (Moro e Mattozzi 2025), this presentation aims to emphasize a specific phenomenon unfolding across Europe, which has sparked widespread controversies not only in nations with a traditional mining heritage—often viewed as Europe’s peripheries, such as Portugal, Sweden, and Spain—but also in countries like France and Italy. The return of mining to Europe marks a shift in the global division of labor and ushers in a new era of extraction, which was previously externalized to the Global South. Analyzing the underlying dynamics of this phenomenon is crucial today for understanding emerging conflicts—including within Italian territory—concerning a productive sector that has profoundly shaped the history of the peninsula.

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Session II: Extractivism, labour and class

The struggle about class in the ruins of deindustrialization

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The contemporary dynamics of the ecological transition require a fundamental redefinition of the political subject capable of carrying it out. In the face of K-shaped

decarbonization, where capital shifts environmental costs onto poorer social strata, the main research problem of this presentation becomes the question: how can we overcome the ideological lag of climate movements to build a coalition between the new, post-industrial working class and communities under the pressure of green extractivism in pursuit of socialized resource sovereignty? The starting point for this analysis is the tension between the dynamic process of class formation and an obsolete ideological armature. As Michael Denning observes (2007), left-wing class images are usually a generation behind the realities of capitalism. Gabriel Winant's findings demonstrate that post-1970s deindustrialization did not eliminate the working class, but rather shifted it into the racialized and feminized sectors of care and social reproduction. Extrapolating Adam Przeworski's conclusions (1977), climate politics today must first constitute a struggle *about* class – to break through anachronistic symbols and recognize care and logistics workers as the primary force that daily manages the devastation left by fossil capital. The key arena of this emerging conflict remains the politics of production within the new extractive sector. Leaving decarbonization under the control of private capital inevitably leads to the externalization of ecological costs – the degradation of local ecosystems and communities driven by the demand for critical raw materials. The reflex of the post-growth movement in the face of this threat is the escapist demand to halt extraction and retreat into a subsistence economy. This presentation proposes rejecting this market asceticism in favor of drawing on the legacy of anti-colonial movements in the Global South, whose goal was not to shut down production, but to win resource sovereignty. Focusing on an empirically updated image of the working class establishes a horizon in which the transition away from fossil fuels ceases to be a managerial problem of emissions reduction and becomes a conscious, class-based act of democratic macro-planning.

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Reimaging labour's role in the energy transition: the possibilities for a 'productive delay' to reinvigorate climate action in South Africa
Alex Beresford and Ruth Bookbinder (University of Leeds)

South Africa became a key global test case for financing energy decarbonisation in the Global south when it entered into the Just Energy Transition Partnership with a consortium of Western financiers. The transition promises the most significant socioeconomic upheaval in recent history, threatening vested elite interests but also the very survival of workers and communities in the Mpumalanga coal belt. This paper draws on collaborative fieldwork with the Sam Tambani Research Institute of the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM). We conducted 37 interviews with policy makers, climate-NGOs, and leaders from all levels of the NUM. We also held day-long workshops with over 130 coal-energy workers in Mpumalanga which included 20 focus groups aimed at: 1) understanding what impacts the transition is having on working class communities; 2) creating space for workers to reimagine the priorities and future direction of transition. Workers repeatedly argued that the energy transition is being rushed, without adequate attention to their interests. This fuels a perception that the transition is driven by the agendas of a nefarious coalition of international green capital, western financiers, and a comprador national political elite. Predatory right wing populist politicians are weaponizing these anxieties, calling for the transition to be abandoned and stoking inter-ethnic divides. However, in their calls to slow down and redirect the transition, workers themselves do not reject any-and-all climate action. Instead, they demand that their voices be heard, and that their calls for international and intersectional justice-in-transition are heeded. We conclude that at a time where the very concept and sustainable operationalisation of 'just transition' faces existential political scrutiny, a *productive delay* could reinvigorate climate action by re-grounding the transition and invigorating working-class environmentalism.

Green grabs in Africa: a class-theoretical perspective
Elisa Greco (Editor, Review of African Political Economy)

This research foregrounds the importance of reinserting class into the analytical framework on green grabs – a term referring to the increase of land enclosure in the

Global South which has been driven by environmental policies. While urgent throughout the Global South and particularly in Africa, this issue is often neglected in North-based environmental debates. The most recent literature highlights activists' claims that green grabs in Africa are a product of ecological imperialism and neocolonialism, which is a primary contradiction in global environmental policies. Within this debate, the proposal is that the politics needed to overcome this contradiction must foreground international solidarity struggles, and that in order to achieve that the analytical category of class must be put centre-stage. This theoretical development – bridging critical agrarian studies and environmental social sciences - proposes class as a theoretical perspective, reinterpreting Marx's class analysis towards a relational understanding that foregrounds class as the political potential of unity of the majority. Critically engaging with identity politics and degrowth thinking, Issa Shivji's concept of the working people is put to the test of global realities of uneven and combined development, by looking at increasing social inequality and the related class politics that are apparent through the North-South divide. This focus on the potential of internationalist class-based solidarity bridges the neocolonial divide of ecological imperialism and responds to the division and fragmentation of current environmental and agrarian movements with an invitation to overcome identity politics and middle-class oriented visions of North-centered degrowth.

Counter-hegemony taken seriously: some insights from labour struggles in the mining sector in Türkiye

Fabio Locci (Scuola Normale Superiore)

if you don't write it
if I don't write it
fate won't change all by itself
only dead fish run down the stream
Yalnız Ölü Balıklar Akıntıyı Takip Eder, Lalalar

The ultimate question posed by the tragedy of Soma is, therefore, how to cultivate the emancipatory potential of radical forces who will need to organize–intellectually, programmatically as well as physically –to break out of the vice-like grip of authoritarian populism towards a counter-hegemonic project
Adaman *et al.*, 2021

In the political form of Authoritarian Neoliberalism (Bruff, 2014) – Neoliberalism being here defined as a regime of capital accumulation (Tansel in Tansel, 2017), composed of a drive towards depoliticization of the social and political realm through its economization (Madra & Adaman, 2014) trade and financial liberalization, fiscal discipline (to be achieved through expenditure cuts rather than tax increases), and disinflation, to ensure that governments are willing to give up full employment (Baccaro

& Howell, 2011) – the materiality of the State and its relations with transnational capital are inclined to shrink the democratic spaces through which subaltern classes can prompt their claim and interests – with particular attention to the Turkish context (Bozkurt-Güngen, 2018) – in order to defend the imperatives of accumulation (Cox, 1992, Ercan 2006), particularly in its more extractive forms (Harvey, 2003). By examining recent workers' struggles in the mining sector in Turkey against the ecocidal and extractivist practices of companies operating in the sector – in particular the use of cyanide in mining refinement procedures (Bozkurt, 2025) -, we can see that the actors' objectives and the final outcomes have varied considerably. Although it can be argued that almost every struggle has contributed to consolidating an awareness from which other workers' struggles in the sector can build (Özen & Özen, 2018; Adaman *et al.*, 2021), it remains to be established whether they have been able to materialise a coherently counter-hegemonic perspective, that is, a perspective which shows the ability to generalize its claims and to interest classes (or classes' fractions - which are different from the ones which made the original claim (Carroll, 2006). In the paper we will examine, according to a qualitative comparative approach based on secondary literature and primary documents, if the movements built a counter-hegemonic discourse according to the dimension of the struggle, which class fractions it has been able to engage both in the protest and in the overall discourse.

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Vertical or horizontal? Looking for post-fossil alliances in different energy transition scenarios

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In recent years, the Italian government and energy companies, responding to international guidelines on ecological transition (from COP agreements to the European Green Deal), have mainly designed and implemented interventions within a paradigm of green modernisation based on top-down technical fixes. One of the most significant case is the Carbon Capture and Storage project launched by Eni and Snam, which describe it as the "catalyst for the energy transition." This technology, involving the capture, transport and storage of CO2 in depleted offshore reservoirs, allows existing technical expertise and infrastructure to be repositioned as decarbonisation assets rather than liabilities to be phased out. It thus finds in trade unions pragmatic allies, which accept its gradualist logic as a safeguard against job losses, replicating a dynamic already observed in the fossil regions of the North Sea (Normann, Tellmann, 2021; Jordhus-Lier et al., 2024). This strategy offers an immediate response to demands for employment security, but risks prolonging carbon lock-in (Seto et al., 2016) and amounting to a form of climate delay (Lamb et al., 2020; Harry, Maltby, Szulecki, 2024) that does not actually challenge the centrality of the fossil industry.

Against this model, energy communities have been advanced as a more radical alternative, often associated with post-growth perspectives, particularly through their emphasis on the democratic governance of energy production (Petrovics & Savini, 2025). Rather than merely decentralising generation, they seek to redistribute control over energy infrastructures and resources from incumbent actors towards citizens and territories. Yet this transformative potential may remain constrained by an additive understanding of the energy transition, in which decarbonisation is conceived primarily as the addition of new renewable capacity alongside existing energy sources, without pursuing a deeper reorganisation of energy production and consumption, including the forms of employment tied to it. Such a logic risks treating labour as a residual concern, rather than as a constitutive dimension of the reorganisation of energy production, thereby limiting the capacity of energy communities to build broader alliances between ecological and labour demands (Paul and Cumbers, 2025). A further limit concerns economic accessibility, since participation typically requires upfront capital or property ownership that most working-class households lack, which risks turning a model conceived as redistributive into one that reproduces existing socioeconomic hierarchies.

Through a critical reading of these two approaches, the contribution discusses and examines what kind of coalition may emerge between labour, ecological interests and local communities in the attempt to maintain or reorganize the energy system.

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