



# NEGOTIATING CLIMATE CHANGE IN CRISIS

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Steffen Böhm and Sian Sullivan (eds), *Negotiating Climate Change in Crisis*. Cambridge, UK: Open Book Publishers, 2021, <https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0265>

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ISBN Paperback: 9781800642607

ISBN Hardback: 9781800642614

ISBN Digital (PDF): 9781800642621

ISBN Digital ebook (epub): 9781800642638

ISBN Digital ebook (mobi): 9781800642645

ISBN XML: 9781800642652

DOI: 10.11647/OBP.0265

Cover image: Photo by Thijs Stoop on Unsplash available at: [https://unsplash.com/photos/A\\_AQxGz9z5I](https://unsplash.com/photos/A_AQxGz9z5I)

Cover design by Anna Gatti

# 26. Climate Justice Advocacy: Strategic Choices for Glasgow and Beyond

Patrick Bond

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The Paris Climate Agreement and subsequent United Nations follow-up conferences have not taken seriously the ecological crisis now unfolding. Not only does prominent scientist James Hansen describe its tokenistic measures in scathing terms, but those seeking climate justice have long despaired of multilateral climate policymaking dominated by imperial and sub-imperial elite negotiators from high-emitting economies. Mid-2021 negotiations confirmed the lack of UN progress. Instead, there are two strategies worth considering: *delegitimisation* of elites, and '*Blockadia*' of high-carbon projects. Both are proceeding but both need more clarity in strategic approaches—as in the 'Glasgow Agreement' promoted by leading civil society activist groups—that apply to the 2021 climate summit and many other struggles beyond.

## Introduction

In June 2019, at the first Climate Justice Forum dedicated to scholars now embracing the field, I had the opportunity to speak following Mary Robinson's opening plenary address to the Glasgow Caledonian University Centre for Climate Justice (2019). The former Irish president and UN Human Rights Commissioner was as eloquent as ever. Her most powerful advice to the group, with regard to a strategic advocacy

agenda, was that since the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) 2015 Paris Climate Agreement was a useful start to decarbonising the world economy, the critical next step was to re-legitimise Paris by compelling national governments to shift its 'non-binding' provisions to binding.

Robinson's approach would entail returning to an essential principle of UN treaties dealing with global ecological crises: for example, the 1987 Montreal Protocol that banned CFCs to prevent catastrophic ozone hole growth, or the Kyoto Protocol's 1997 binding conditions. She proposed transcending the sleazy back-room deal permitting 'bottom-up' voluntary emissions commitments made in December 2009 by leaders of the United States, Brazil, China, India and South Africa—i.e., a "league of super-polluters and would-be super-polluters", as Bill McKibben (2009: online) of 350.org put it—at the fifteenth Copenhagen Conference of the Parties. (From then on, the nickname Conference of Polluters would often be used by critics to describe the UNFCCC's annual gathering.) Nevertheless, insisted Robinson, such a reform to ensure binding non-voluntary adherence to Paris should be the orientation we adopt as scholar-activists, so as to incrementally strengthen the case that the planet can be saved, top down.

Against this approach, I pointed out, were dilemmas associated with implementation mechanisms implied at Paris, such as ongoing emissions trading and offsets to maximise Northern emissions' efficiency (no matter the speculative bubbles forever roiling their price), or sequestering CO<sub>2</sub> through dubious "carbon neutrality" gambits (see chapters by Hannis and Dyke et al., this volume). These strategies she has supported in the past under the rubric of climate justice (CJ), even though the CJ movement universally opposed carbon markets and so-called "false solutions" (Bond 2012a). She did not acknowledge that the mere act of signing the Paris Climate Agreement meant acknowledging no accountability mechanisms or penalties (such as "border adjustment taxes" on climate scofflaws), as Donald Trump showed in June 2017 when he pulled the US out of the agreement. Robinson was not concerned that when countries signed the Paris deal that meant they legally forgave the West and BRICS for what is their historic "climate debt" (i.e., ecological reparations to the victims of the correlated "loss and damage"). She did not grapple with

the three missing sectors conveniently left out of the Paris Climate Agreement: military, shipping and air transport. Nor was the failure of Paris to include a Just Transition for workers in carbon-intensive sectors to find alternative employment in a greener economy worth mentioning. Nor did Paris mention the urgent need to force fossil fuel firms into accepting that there is vast “unburnable carbon” in their portfolios, that in a sane world would be adjusted radically downward in valuation accounts (as “stranded assets”). The divestment pressures that were building up in civil society—removing funds from firms and financiers that refuse these logical capitalist self-correction mechanisms—were not considered, nor did Paris negotiators pay due respect to activists, especially those in grassroots, indigenous, anti-extractivist struggles and especially the youth.

Although the university’s Centre for Climate Justice has firmly defined its field on the progressive end of the spectrum, some of the gathered intellectuals seemed quite content with Robinson’s approach. It would allow them ongoing participation within the mainstream of global climate policy, and hence sustained potentials for receipt of research and education grants, more rapid academic publications and membership in the UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. As a result, without properly interrogating the politics of Paris, some intellectuals proceeded to take debates into the standard explorations of justice applied to climate: procedural, recognition, distributive, compensatory, restitutive and corrective. To be fair, some scholars also acknowledge the dangers that “neoliberal justice” would become a potentially dangerous trajectory (see Khan et al. 2020, for a review applied to climate finance; also see Harris, this volume). But there was a solid bloc of academics who were satisfied with the prevailing wisdom that the Paris Climate Agreement is essentially sound, and if the ambition is ratcheted up in quinquennial revisions of Nationally Determined Contributions, the central goal of reducing greenhouse gas emissions and maintaining temperatures below a rise of 1.5 degrees above pre-industrial levels during this century, is achievable.

Not everyone sees the framing in this way. If the Paris parameters, instead, offer a profoundly unsound basis for making climate policy—from global to local scales—then a very different set of principles, analyses, strategies, tactics and alliances (PASTA) should present



themselves. And if the presumption that global climate policy does far more harm than good is correct, Greta Thunberg (2020) put her finger on the problem: “we are still in a state of complete denial, as we waste our time, creating new loopholes with empty words and creative accounting.” As she accused the United Nations in 2019, “[w]e are in the beginning of a mass extinction and all you can talk about is money and fairytales of eternal economic growth. How dare you.”

A change is needed. For if the flaws in global climate policy processes and content identified above (as well as others), then no matter how much debate proceeds on injecting various justice framings into the UNFCCC, it will be impossible to generate an outcome worthy of human endeavour, and planetary survival will be moot. That outcome appears, in mid-2021, far more likely than any other, so a Plan B is needed based on an entirely different strategy to Robinson’s: i.e., a strategy to delegitimise Paris and its elite negotiators, and instead turn to immediate direct actions, more flexible scales of international engagement, and more creative strategies for bottom-up activism. The challenge is simple: how to most rapidly overturn what can be considered climate-policy mal-governance. Is one of the approaches to delegitimise the UNFCCC and especially the COPs? If so, what to put in its place?

## The Case of the Glasgow Agreement

Climate Justice (CJ) is typically the alternative to “Climate Action” of the sort the UNFCCC promotes. Three of the most famous activist-based statements on CJ came from meetings of the Durban Group for Climate Justice (hosted in South Africa) in 2004, the Bali (Indonesia) COP in 2007, and the Cochabamba (Bolivia) alternative climate summit in 2010 (Bond 2012a). They were ambitious. The Cochabamba statement, for instance, made concrete demands for reparations, emissions-cutting targets and institutional mechanisms such as ecocide courts, amplifying Indigenous People’s power, and formal Rights of Mother Earth.

In subsequent years, less systematic approaches by the movement were taken at various COPs and occasional meetings in between. There was a systemic failure in the CJ movement to generate the kind of global coordination achieved by, for example, La Via Campesina

whose main force was the Brazilian Landless Workers Movement but which successfully moved the federated network's global headquarters around affiliates. However, despite CJ movement complaints that the UNFCCC should no longer be a central focus of global organising initiatives, that was the terrain of struggle from Bali in 2007 until at least Warsaw COP in 2013. Then in September 2014, a march of 400,000 climate activists in New York coincided with the UN General Assembly heads of state meeting, and while the November-December period was invariably one of global days of action and critique, September 2019 became the most active month of global climate action yet, thanks to the campaigning of Fridays for Future. Unlike other CJ local actions which failed to generate global-scale coordination, the youth were successfully catalysed by Greta Thunberg's weekly sit-in at the Swedish parliament from mid-2018.

In late 2020, as COVID-19 continued to disrupt the potential for wide-scale, coordinated and increasingly radical climate activism, a "Glasgow Agreement" was offered by leading forces driven especially from within southern Europe's CJ movement. It caught on internationally, with participation and Agreement sign-on from 170 mainly grassroots environmental movements across the world. Several of the agreement's features help to define what we can consider—following the French sociologist Andre Gorz (1967)—the distinct terrains of "reformist" and "non-reformist" reforms:

*The People's Climate Commitment: The Glasgow Agreement (main excerpts)*

The purpose of the Glasgow Agreement is to reclaim the initiative from governments and international institutions and create an alternative tool for action and collaboration, for the climate justice movement...

The institutional framework used by governments, international organisations and the whole economic system to address the climate crisis is failing in keeping global warming below 1.5 or 2°C by 2100. From its onset, developed countries and polluting corporations like the fossil fuel industry have orchestrated the repeated failure of this institutional framework.

Instead, an illusion of climate action was created while decisive steps were delayed and greenhouse gas emissions were allowed to continue rising. As a result of decades of interference by these actors, weak commitments have been continually dishonoured, and thus the main institutional arrangements on climate change, namely the Kyoto Protocol and the Paris Agreement, have not produced the reduction in global

greenhouse gas emissions required to halt the worst impacts of climate change.

The Paris Agreement is only a procedure, and will not be able to achieve its stated goal of preventing the worst consequences of climate change.

Hundreds of governments, municipalities and organisations have declared a climate emergency. Massive protests in streets all around the world have repeatedly called for decisive action for climate justice inside the deadline of 2030, with scientific consensus on the need for a minimum cut by 50% of global greenhouse gas emissions within this period. To achieve any measure of these objectives, no new fossil fuel (coal, oil and gas) projects or infrastructure can be developed. A powerful climate justice movement needs new and enhanced tools to address these fundamental contradictions and to reverse the global narrative from institutional impotence into social power that brings about lasting change.

As such, the undersigned organisations and social movements assume:

1. The political framework for the required cuts and climate action will be that of climate justice, which is defined as a social and political demand that advocates for the redistribution of power, knowledge and wellbeing. It proposes a new notion of prosperity within natural limits and just resource distribution, advocating for a true connection between traditional and westernised knowledge systems. It calls for a public and participatory science to address the needs of humanity and of the earth, principally to stop the climate crisis.

In this respect:

- It recognises the interdependence between all species and affirms the need to reduce, with an aim to eliminate, the production of greenhouse gases and associated local pollutants;
- It acknowledges and integrates the care economy into daily life, with the shared responsibility of persons, regardless of their gender identity, for care and maintenance activities, both inside homes and within society—climate justice puts life at the centre;
- It supports the structural changes in society to redress centuries of systemic racism, colonialism and imperialism—climate justice is racial justice;
- It perceives the economy to be under the rules of the environment, and not the other way around, defending democratic planning based on real needs, replacing



oppression, imposition and appropriation for cooperation, solidarity and mutual aid;

- It defends a just transition for workers currently employed in the sectors that need to be dismantled, reconfigured or downsized, providing support to these workers in different economies and societies, introducing energy sovereignty and energy sufficiency. This transition must be just and equitable, redressing past harms and securing the future livelihoods of workers and communities, approaching the necessary shift from an extractive economy into a climate-safe society, to build economic and political power for a regenerative economy;
- It means to recover knowledge from indigenous communities, promoting the pragmatic human activity that has beneficial effects on life cycles and ecosystems;
- It defends the introduction of reparation for communities and peoples at the frontlines of colonialism, globalisation and exploitation, acknowledging that there is a historical and ecological debt that must be paid to the Global South, and that the origins of said debts need to be stopped;
- It recognises that the effects of climate breakdown are here and now. The poorest communities in the world are experiencing loss of their homes and livelihoods, damage to their lands and culture, and are in urgent need of funding. Global solidarity and pressure is needed, to shine a light on the corporations and governments responsible for loss and damage, and to uplift the voices of the people and places most affected;
- It defends the full protection, freedom of movement, and civil, political, and economic rights of migrants;
- It defends food sovereignty as the peoples' right to define their agricultural and food policies, without any dumping vis-à-vis third countries;
- It opposes exponential and unbound economic growth—contemporarily reflected in the sovereignty of capital—understanding capitalism as incompatible with the principles of life systems;
- It refuses green capitalism and its proposed “solutions” (whether “nature based,” geo-engineering, carbon trading, carbon markets or others), as well as extractivism.

2. Taking into their own hands the need to collectively cut greenhouse gas emissions and keep fossil fuels in the ground. While participating in the Glasgow Agreement, organisations will maintain their main focus away from institutional struggle—namely from negotiations with governments and the United Nations;

3. The production of an inventory of the main sectors, infrastructures and future projects responsible for the emissions of greenhouse gases in each territory, that will be nationally and internationally publicised. There will be a technical working group to support and follow-up the creation of this inventory;

4. The production of a territorial climate agenda based on the inventory. The climate agenda is an action plan, designed by communities, movements, and organisations working on the ground, that is informed by the inventory of the biggest greenhouse gas emissions sources (existing and planned) in its area of concern. It aims to set us on track for staying below 1.5°C global warming by 2100 inside a clear framework of climate justice;

5. That political and economic noncooperation, as well as nonviolent intervention, in particular civil disobedience, are the main tools for the fulfilment of the Glasgow Agreement. At the same time, we recognise that for oppressed groups and those living in more oppressive societies, it is much more difficult to partake directly in civil disobedience. The tactic of civil disobedience is only one of the tactics through which the Glasgow Agreement's objectives can be fulfilled. Additionally, we acknowledge that the strategy of civil disobedience has long been used, under various names, by many before us, particularly in marginalised communities and in the Global South, and we would not be able to join this struggle without these historical and contemporary sacrifices, and continuous action against climate change through struggles to keep fossil fuels underground and resistance to other industrial causes of global warming;

6. Support each other and coordinate to define their own local and national strategies and tactics on how to enact the climate agenda, and to call for the support of other member organisations of the Glasgow Agreement (nationally and internationally). The organisations from the Global North underline their commitment to support those in the Global South, through solidarity with existing struggles and by directly addressing projects led by governments, corporations, banks and financial institutions based in the Global North...

## Glasgow Agreement Gaps

The Glasgow Agreement is a profound, eloquent input into global climate politics, one that various strains of progressives and radicals right through to eco-socialists could warm to. However, the emphasis on leaving fossil fuels underground—absolutely essential as a first priority—means that, like the Paris Climate Agreement, some critical areas (e.g. cutting emissions that emanate from militaries, air and maritime transport) are left out. For example, there is no gender analysis, which is a huge flaw.

Below, however, let me address four other central points that are vital for future drafters: the balance of forces represented by Washington's return to COP leadership; intergenerational equity; tactics; and the need for alignment with growing anti-extractivist movements. In taking up the latter four shortcomings, a broader concern arises, associated with a warning from the militant eco-feminist group Accion Ecologica from Quito, Ecuador. Its founder expressed frustration at the agreement's prioritisation of an 'emissions inventory' that distracted from root capitalist causes of the climate crisis (Yanez 2021).

First, the agreement could better alert readers to the current *balance of forces*—and how to change that array of power. After all, there is a dangerous new factor that became apparent in January 2021: the US corporate-neoliberal re-entry to the UNFCCC, led by Joe Biden and his climate envoy John Kerry (former Secretary of State in 2015 at Paris) (Bond 2021a). One result of the shift from Trump climate denialism to this new regime is renewed emphasis on market strategies and 'net zero' accounting gimmickry. Such "green capitalism" and associated false solutions are noted in the agreement's final statement of principles—and flagged in much more detail by, among others, Corporate Accountability, Global Forest Coalition and Friends of the Earth International (2021).

Second, the Agreement does not address *rights of future generations*, notwithstanding rising youth rage. This is an absolutely critical new factor in climate politics, so it represents a surprising gap given Fridays for Future's potential and the clarity with which Thunberg and her allies continue to express exceptionally tough critique. Thunberg's successful approach, based on speaking truth to power at elite events that gain her unprecedented publicity for the climate cause, has thus far

focused on delegitimising the corporate and multilateral establishment. To illustrate, when in mid-2021 Kerry was quoted endorsing mythical technofix strategies—"I am told by scientists, not by anybody in politics, but by scientists, that 50% of the reductions we have to make are going to come from technology that we don't yet have"—she tweeted, "Great news! I spoke to Harry Potter and he said he will team up with Gandalf, Sherlock Holmes & The Avengers and get started right away!" The anger and sense of urgency that leading youth activists can generate stunned the world since her Stockholm sit-ins began mid-2018, especially in September 2019 when seven million protesters coordinated international events over the course of a week. No one can doubt how desperately we need a post-COVID revival of that spirit, especially given internal divisions in the US Sunrise Movement on the one hand, but on the other, a rising network of Global South youth preparing to take greater leadership once COVID-19 threats to unified international actions recede.

Third, in relation to *tactics*, the agreement's framing is unsatisfyingly narrow. The authors do not acknowledge that, unfortunately, there's a long-standing style of *tokenistic* climate-related civil disobedience (CD): set-piece, pre-negotiated arrests that are mainly publicity enhancing. Such predictable, non-disruptive CD characterises leading currents within climate-action politics and also some strains within Climate Justice. It needs rethinking since the approach is so readily assimilated, with accompanying platitudes, by those wielding power (also see chapters by Gardham and Paterson, this volume). Indeed, CD as practiced in this way provides diminishing public-educational opportunity, much less the capability to actively threaten *status quo* polluting activities (Malm 2021).

So, on the one hand, the agreement certainly recognises that many activists in vulnerable situations cannot take steps toward CD for fear of extreme repression. But, on the other, the agreement is not quite brave enough to openly address a different, more militant approach: *blocking and even sabotaging extraction, transport, refining, combustion and financing of fossil fuels and other sources of greenhouse gas emissions*.

This is not terribly unusual activism against fossil fuel corporations, as in the Global South such uncivil disobedience was pioneered against oil extraction during the early 1990s by Ken Saro-Wiwa's Movement for

the Emancipation of the Ogoni People in the Niger Delta (before his execution in 1995). Disruptive CD is increasingly being practiced by many others, for example XR in countless sites of corporate power, the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe against the Dakota Access Pipeline, or Ende Gelände in Germany's coal fields. For Naomi Klein (2014), this spirit deserves the term "blockadia," and the Environmental Justice Atlas at <http://ejatlas.org> documents hundreds of such cases.

When it comes to this contradiction, there is a need to rebalance the always-uncomfortable division of labour between rigorous *tree-shakers*—hard-core activists who are ready to disrupt power and face jail time in the process—and *jam-makers* on the inside of the COPs, doing more polite advocacy. Of the many civil society COP attendees, several prominent Glasgow Agreement signatories are typically leaders. Yet notwithstanding all their passion and strategic insight, they rarely attempt to actively empower the tree-shakers by paying tribute to *their most radical actions*.

The COP17 People's Space in Durban was a good case site to understand these flaws. Our comrades and I (as a university-based host of the People's Space) (Bond 2012b) failed miserably along these lines. Although our South African and African CJ forces possessed powerful principles and sound analyses, the team was distracted when it came to establishing effective strategies, tactics and alliances. Counter-summitry and protests were impotent, in part because distinctions between tree-shakers in the People's Space, and jam-makers inside the Durban International Convention Centre, were never clearly established by the C17 network, one that sought unity over clarity. Most subsequent COP outside-protest and inside-advocacy scenes reflected the same failure, leading in Paris to confusing stances within the "climate movement," reflecting uncivil society militantly promoting CJ on the one hand, and on the other, civilised society groups begging for mere climate action (Bond 2018). The problem has persisted to this day, in Africa generally and South Africa specifically (Mwenda and Bond 2020).

Fourth, there is a profound challenge from Accion Ecologica, a signatory whose April 2021 letter from the eco-feminist organisation's co-founder Ivonne Yanez (2021) warns that by lacking clarity on broader ideology, the agreement risks "colliding with the anti-extractivist movements in the world." These include many struggles

Yanez herself supports across the Andes, especially Ecuador. The specific contradictions relate to how “minimally-necessary mining” might be defined, and whether some of the ingredients necessary for a decarbonised economy—lithium for batteries, titanium dioxide for highly-reflective white paint, palladium and rhodium for so-called “green hydrogen” fuel cells, and other rare-earth minerals—themselves are being contested in sites like the Andes and several South Africa anti-mining conflicts (also see Dunlap, this volume). For Yanez (2021), “asking anti-extractivist social movements—mainly in the South—to ‘make inventories of emissions’ is like asking us to take inventories of future forms of dispossession and exploitation.”

Like many who soon tired of COP-oriented advocacy work, Yanez (2021) instead adopts—and amplifies—the tradition of delegitimisation:

As for the Paris Agreement, and its predecessors, they were designed precisely to confuse. And they succeeded. They were conceived so that organisations, instead of talking about how to confront extractivism, how to end injustices and inequalities, would be busy talking about degrees of temperature, and calculating tons of CO<sub>2</sub>. The Paris Agreement and the absurd and malevolent proposals it entails divert attention from what is important: confronting patriarchal, neo-colonial and racist capitalism. They have succeeded for almost 25 years in distracting attention. And so, we end up thinking that first come the IPCC numbers with an army of experts counting molecules and in second place come the anti-capitalist extractivist resistances.

To confront climate change we have to confront the capitalist system that is institutionalised (for example, through the Paris Agreement) and global. But who are the anti-capitalist movements? The main ones in the world today are anti-extractivist movements, anti-capitalist labour movements, territorial and community-based feminist movements, anti-white supremacist movements, anti-colonial movements, movements fighting for water, anti-debt movements, anti-agribusiness movements... *A movement to reduce emissions* falls short among this tide of struggles, and I doubt it will make much difference in the struggle against capitalism. And while the Glasgow Agreement takes up many ideas, the anti-capitalist, concrete and territorial struggles that are also global are more important. Learning and listening from these frontline climate movements is a task.

As a final point, although Accion Ecologica does not advocate overly-technicist work such as the agreement’s proposed census of emissions, there are nevertheless two rationales for doing so *if conjoined with*



*anti-extractivist struggles*. The first is to identify whether a given country's activists have been maximising their potential to link up and challenge their economy's most egregious polluters, in the form of an accompanying inventory of anti-emissions campaigning. This is something that autonomist-style blockadia strategies require better networking to achieve: linkage of their local organic (and sometimes atomised) struggles for maximum impact, including tackling various national state subsidies, regulatory fora, legislation, and more generally, politicians' (and often police or even army) support for extractive industries.

The second rationale is one that appeals to eco-socialists, namely *the planned reduction of emissions*—a process which would otherwise be accomplished erratically and unreliably through either protest (rarely) or market forces. The danger of relying on the latter was evident in April 2020 when there was great cheering by climate activists at the collapse in fossil fuel prices, but disillusionment when they very quickly recovered.

## Conclusion: A Routing from Climate Injustice to Eco-Socialism

The UNFCCC continued to disappoint reformers into mid-2021 as COVID-19 dragged on. After eighteen months of no negotiations, the Bonn intersessional was conducted via Microsoft Teams. "Progress is pretty slow if not non-existent at this session, but I wouldn't just blame it on the virtual format," one analyst told *Climate Brief* (2021). (But the distanced format, worsened by time zone difficulties, did reduce the impact of some crucial Global South negotiators who suffered communication interruptions). As the US West witnessed record heat-waves and another terrible fire season loomed, the leaders remained hesitant to tackle critical problems of adaption and finance, leaving "nothing substantive" to agree on in the Glasgow COP26, according to Bangladeshi negotiator Mizan Khan. The "vast majority" of poor countries voiced objections to Western sabotage of the talks, given that the latest climate loss and damage accounts (from 2019) showed that when the Global North suffered, 60% of the damage was commercially insured, in contrast to 4% in the Global South. And as Carbon Brief (2021) reported, "it is universally assumed that climate finance is

currently falling short of the \$100 billion goal” for annual disbursements especially if grant (not loan) finance is considered independently of prevailing aid. In sum, the insider strategy had met its limits.

A revealing French working-class strategic choice in earlier (mid-1960s) battles—as articulated by Gorz (1967)—was whether activists could identify opportunities for *non-reformist, transformative reforms*, or instead settle for ‘reformist reforms’ that in turn strengthen the assimilationist power of the *status quo*. Most climate activists working at global scale have only achieved reformist reforms to date, and the cost—legitimising the counterproductive Paris Climate Agreement—is enormous. But when it comes to the UNFCCC, or even micro-campaigning against specific emitters, ‘fix it or nix it’ choices, and resulting openings for more radical reforms, i.e. to break not polish the chains of oppression, sometimes arise when least expected.

Typically there are two contrary directions for framing campaigns. First, reformist reforms

- strengthen the internal logic of the system, by smoothing rough edges,
- allow the system to relegitimise,
- give confidence to status quo ideas and forces,
- leave activists disempowered or coopted, and
- confirm society’s fear of power, apathy and cynicism about activism.

But second, in contrast, non-reformist reforms (or ‘transformative reforms’)

- counteract the internal logic of the system, by confronting core dynamics,
- continue to delegitimise the system of oppression,
- give confidence to critical ideas and social forces,
- leave activists empowered with momentum for the next struggle, and
- replace social apathy with confidence in activist integrity and leadership.

We have seen this in South Africa on occasion, such as in the defeat of apartheid. In 1983, as economic crisis began to worry the country's white leaders, several wide-ranging reformist reforms were offered by the apartheid regime to black voters: assimilationist seats offered in second-tier sites of representation (segregated parliamentary bodies, satellite municipalities and Bantustan pseudo-countries). Black liberation activists rejected these, for as Archbishop Desmond Tutu put it, these reforms represented "polishing the chains of apartheid," when the chains needed to be *broken*. Principled activists campaigned for a non-reformist principle: one person, one vote in a unitary state. In 1994, with Nelson Mandela by then free from his 1963–1990 jail term and leading the broad-based anti-apartheid movement, they changed the balance of forces sufficiently to win democracy. Since the early 2000s there have been similar battles and victories. When South African activists waged struggles against state and capital to gain free anti-retroviral AIDS medicines in the early 2000s or free tertiary education for the working class in 2015–2017, these entailed successful national coordinations of localised grievances (Ngwane and Bond 2020).

With this in mind, my own sense is that the Glasgow Agreement *principles* are very appealing. Yet there is a vagueness when it comes to *analysis, strategies, tactics and alliances*, beginning with the very obvious question of whether the COP26 and future UNFCCC events will be sites of clarity—or instead confusion—over legitimisation or delegitimation. This difficult choice is shared by virtually all the climate movements I have seen working towards some form of influence over the Glasgow COP26 in 2020–21. The groups involved in the agreement are generally the most admirable from the perspective of CJ, but all remain unclear on whether and how to pursue the delegitimation strategy Thunberg has embodied so eloquently.

The alignments of this PASTA framework are vital in the cases I have seen in South Africa—against both apartheid and post-apartheid socio-economic oppression—and are parallel to what is now needed for global and local CJ movements, given the UNFCCC's failures. No matter how much 2021 propaganda is offered about bandaging the Paris deal at Glasgow COP26 or subsequent COPS, the power relations remain terribly adverse. In this context, the PASTA framing for climate justice takes two forms, one based on past activist practice, including

limitations; and the other based on the contradictions between CJ and “ecological modernisation” strategies, in which a dialectical resolution in eco-socialism can be theorised (Bond 2021b).

Without the space here to address how difficult a process that is (e.g. in technological choices or use of ecological valuation techniques), it should nevertheless be obvious that a major problem confronts CJ and efforts like the Glasgow Agreement. The arguments above presume increasing clarity over the major differences between what CJ advocates historically insisted upon, by way of non-reformist reforms that can end the climate crisis in a manner that is just both globally and locally, and the UNFCCC COP26 agenda of reformist reforms based on market and technological strategies. But the latter, even when articulated by the most enlightened elites (like Mary Robinson), are “designed precisely to confuse,” to recall Yanez.

So to arrive at such far-reaching reforms—parallel to South Africans ending apartheid and then decommodifying essential state services using an anti-neoliberal, proto-socialist “commons” approach—the activists must first confront and defeat the reformist reforms put in their way. Delegitimation of the elites, as Thunberg and Glasgow Agreement authors agree, should both embrace and transcend personal insults, and from there, rapidly address the full set of divergent principles, analyses, strategies, tactics and alliances that distinguish CJ from the elites’ self-proclaimed climate action, which in reality is so passive that the future of humanity and all other species is, increasingly, in question.

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