

**ON THE IMPERIAL
DIMENSION**

**OF AUTOMOTIVE
CAPITALISM**

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on raw materials, labour and markets of automotive capitalism

The enormous rise of the Green Party in recent years is an indicator of an ideological shift in the bourgeoisie of the capitalist centres: this moral avant-garde derives its own superiority from consumption choices that hardly anyone but them can afford. The call for a ban on cheap meat and airlines with dumping prices are, class-wise, nothing more than the revolt from the KaDeWe delicatessen department against the supposed generalisation of their consumer privileges. This demand to "take a good look in the mirror" and mindful consumption is cynical towards people who can only keep their heads above water by the skin of their teeth in times of exploding rent and utility costs or food prices. And with regard to the ecological transformation of society, the Greens are in relative agreement with their coalition colleagues from the FDP. For mobility, this means one thing above all: the massive expansion of e-mobility in the automotive industry as an answer to the crisis of fossil fuels.

For one thing is clear: the logistics of the commodity labour power, i.e. of human beings, would not be able to manage in the reality of our time without automobility. German automotive capital has long since heard this call and rolled up its sleeves. Already a few years ago, the leader of the Green Party and today's Minister of Economics, Robert Habeck, met with the Volkswagen CEO to discuss the restructuring of the German car industry over a cappuccino. The topic that is usually conspicuously absent in such talks is the question of where the raw materials that are needed to build seemingly clean EVs and their batteries come from, and under what conditions they are mined. The following brochure will be about precisely that: Extractivism and raw materials, global division of labour, sales markets and the question of who has to foot the bill for the supposedly ecological turnaround of the car industry.





the new old gold rush - extractivism as the basis of capitalist economy

"We will coup whoever we want! Deal with it." - Elon Musk

When Bolivia's Christian fundamentalist Añez government unconstitutionally couped itself into power in 2019, Elon Musk sarcastically joked on Twitter that either way, world politics would dance to his tune in terms of personnel and content. The triangle Chile-Argentina-Bolivia has more than 50% of the known lithium - a core component for battery construction - and is thus of great interest for the auto-industrial shift towards electronic mobility. A cooperation between the Bolivian state and the German company ACI Systems Alemania (ACISA) promised to open up the huge Uyuni salt lake for the auto industry. The ACISA director, appropriately named Wolfgang Schmutz (german for dirt), has no experience but he "knows Bolivia" and this imperial knowledge should be enough to calm the Bolivians' worries for the time being. Altmeier, the then Federal Minister of Economics and Technology, who was present at the signing of the contract, cheered: "When contracts like this go to German companies, it's always good for environmental protection." Unsurprisingly, this "concern" for nature hides above all the fear that Chinese competitors could quickly grab the resources needed to build electric cars.

Although the project has since failed after pressure from the right-wing opposition parties on the Bolivian government, we would like to take a brief look at how well German capital interests are actually compatible with the conservation of natural resources.

To do this, it is first important to understand a few basics about lithium. Unlike many other minerals, 70-80% of the world's lithium deposits are found dissolved in saltwater lakes and the groundwater deposits associated with them. This water - the so-called salt lake brine - is pumped into large,

artificially created, shallow basins at the surface where it can evaporate. What remains is a slurry that is chemically treated with caustic soda. Local indigenous herders complain about the drop in groundwater levels caused by this process and the resulting toxic particulate matter that makes people and livestock sick.

The Bolivian government under Evo Morales and his socialist MAS party at least tried to interrupt the classic exploitation scheme of raw material exports - under the previous governments, there would probably have simply been direct control by foreign corporations. The attempt to transfer the knowledge of lithium extraction into the hands of the state and to locate the processing industry in the same country distinguishes the Morales government from countries that have given foreign corporations a freer hand.

Morales' dream of Bolivia as a production location for batteries and other components will, however, remain unfulfilled for the time being. This is because the extractivist logic, i.e. the compulsion to ship ever larger quantities of raw materials with considerable exploitation of people and nature for further processing in the capitalist centres, has the whole power of capital behind it. The high-tech industry that processes lithium into batteries and other consumer goods is not located in the countries that supply the raw materials.

The knowledge about their processing is kept under lock and key with patents and licences, and compliance with these is ensured by the World Trade Organisation with the threat of exclusion from the world market. To ensure that this remains the case, coups are also carried out if necessary, not always at the instigation of Western industrialised countries, but at least with their acquiescence, and usually with their political and military support.

Musk's troll comment is also to be understood against this background, the "we" does not stand for Tesla, but for the ideal total capitalist of the USA: for all capitalist states strive with all available means to create optimal conditions of exploitation for resident companies. They strive to create the best possible conditions for the capital located on their territory so that it does not move away. In doing so, a state can sometimes act against the interests of a corporation, but it always keeps an eye on the overall arrangement of

the resident capital fractions. It is the state of capital, not simply the state of the capitalists. Contrary to capitalist ideology, this does not mean creating fair conditions of competition, but paving the way for automotive capital as a whole, and if necessary, at the expense of people and nature. If possible through economic pressure, the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, if necessary through coups and death squads.

So what is presented to us in car advertising as high-tech with smooth surfaces - made by robots, supervised by Western engineers - is in reality quite a dirty business: Volkswagen's "way to zero" (emissions) is paved with extractivist practices all over the planet. This can also be seen in VW's ID.3 electric car: The group's electronic flagship in Dresden may be manufactured in a "glass factory", but the raw materials are still extracted using methods from the historical phase of so-called "primitive accumulation". For what Marx describes with the term primitive accumulation, the formation of the doubly free wage labourer (free from the means of production, free consequently to enter into a supposedly freely chosen wage labour relationship) in Europe, has never ceased to take place globally. Cobalt, lithium, gold, bauxite and the like are to a considerable extent located in regions that have not yet been completely subjected to the world market. Vast deposits of these resources lie in the increasingly constricted areas where there is still something like indigenous control over land and natural resources. In order for these to be made usable for capital, there must be a continuous separation of producers and land. And this violent separation continues unabated in the Global South.

The specific interest in a location rich in raw materials is usually less an interest in the resident wage workers than in the land on which they live. Factors such as a favourable level of production or high unemployment are, of course, from the perspective of capital, a grateful factor for the opening of extractivist locations. But once mineral resources or rare earths are found in the ground, such factors play a subordinate role. Extractivism is a necessary component of capitalist value creation; without it, the economy in its current form is not possible. Electronic mobility in particular, but also so-called renewable energies, live from this exploitation of the Global South. It is the basis for an imperial way of life to which purely technological crisis solutions contribute in a world of global injustice.

EVs are no emission-free affair and are necessarily based on the extraction of raw materials that are taken under catastrophic conditions for humans and nature. The division of the world into countries that export raw materials and those that host the industries that process and valorise them finds its analogy in the global division of labour.

it's not globalization, it's the world market, stupid! - global division of labour in capitalism

Large corporations are internationally operating and producing actors. The international division of labour also exists as a category in bourgeois economics: the complexity of modern production requires a degree of division of labour in which individual production steps are carried out where the conditions for the corresponding step are most favourable. These conditions can be natural or geographical factors, such as the presence of mineral resources, the geographical location of a production site or its access to logistical infrastructure. At the same time, conditions also include social and political factors. Work steps that require a low degree of specialisation are therefore often outsourced to countries with low wage levels and little trade union influence.

All in all, these production conditions determine how attractive a location is for a company. And the calculation is clear: the less labour protection, wages and consideration for natural resources, the more lucrative the opening of a production site is from the point of view of capital. However, the arrangement of these factors is by no means a random constellation:

Above all, the social and political conditions of production are the results of historical class struggles. They are the result of struggles over production, distribution, labour and natural resources. Struggling wage-earners had to wrest every little bit more consideration for people and nature from the profit-maximising compulsion of capital. So whether countries have favourable conditions for the utilisation of labour power from the perspective of capital is a question of past struggles and above all of who won them.

In the much acclaimed book "Open Veins of Latin America", the Uruguayan journalist Eduardo Galeano summarised the historical development of the

global division of labour: Using the example of the silver mine in Potosí, in today's Bolivia, he traces that the so-called "primitive accumulation", i.e. how the development of capitalism from the feudal social order in Europe, was accompanied by a global triangular trade. From the European centres, first in Spain and Portugal, the "expeditions" started to enslave people on the African continent and to ship them as completely disenfranchised labour to Latin America, where they worked in the mines, often at risk of their lives, to extract the mineral resources that were imported by the early European capitalists and helped them to gain power and wealth. Roughly simplified, then, the forced exchange took place in which arms and financial means were brought in from Europe, human labour from Africa and natural resources from Latin America. Even if Galeano's thesis of locally narrowing the original accumulation to the silver mine in Potosí is outdated, his analysis makes one thing very clear: the so-called global division of labour has been a history of oppression, colonisation and violence since its beginning.

Even if the explanation is very schematic and certainly has its weak points, the basic idea is an unalterably correct one: the global division of labour was never the result of voluntary or equal exchange. From the beginning, colonialism created conditions that formed the parameters of the exchange of goods on the world market, and that also means the exchange of the commodity labour power.

This historical mortgage could never be paid, and the geopolitical and economic consequences persist to this day. Among other things, this imbalance is what we mean when we speak of past struggles and why it is decisive who won them. This means that world trade is based on an equally doubly unequal exchange relationship. In capitalism, trade takes place when it captures surplus value, i.e. increases the original investment. Otherwise it would not be worthwhile from the perspective of capital. For the production of commodities, i.e. goods that are exchanged on the market, a double expenditure is necessary: that of human labour power and that of natural resources. In the labour process, a capitalist hires workers who produce goods for the capitalist and use a certain amount of natural resources in the process. The workers, who are forced to sell their labour power for the sake of their own reproduction, are not able to individually improve their social situation, since the surplus value they produce does not fall to them, but is siphoned off by the capitalist. This exploitative relationship is both the cornerstone and guarantor

of the capitalist class relationship and thus one side of the unequal exchange relationship. The much-invoked "social mobility", the American Dream from dishwasher to millionaire, is precisely because of this relationship a thing that may exist in Hollywood, but not in reality.

On the other hand, exchange on the scale of the world market is not only tied to the local, regional and national conditions of production, but also to the connections, dependencies and contracts between states. States confront each other on the world market as ideal total capitalists, so they have to find the best possible conditions for the capital based in their location. However, due to the colonial over-exploitation of the so-called capitalist periphery, i.e. the global South, the starting conditions for this are so unequal that it is not possible to speak of a voluntary exchange at eye level in this sense.

There is no other way to explain why countries with strong raw material deposits such as Congo do not lead the world market, since they formally have everything they need to build a strong export economy. Colonial over-exploitation created such strong path dependencies that the roles on the world market - with a few exceptions - have been relatively clearly distributed ever since. It is these unequal starting conditions that have historically established the supremacy of the Global North in world trade via a massive relationship of violence. This systematic inequality means that in the context of global supply chains, countries of the global South are not even able to improve wages or working conditions on their own, because otherwise it would no longer be worthwhile for global corporations to produce in these countries. Against this background, the talk of bourgeois economics about optimal production conditions at the respective locations of differentiated global production chains is nothing but inhuman cynicism.

The lousy working conditions in Chile's lithium fields, in the coltan mines in Congo or in VW's 40,000 or so supplier factories are not a side effect, but the basis of the economic success of the respective companies.

Against this background, the automotive industry is able to present itself as one of the safest and most socially acceptable employers in Germany: The skilled workers at VW in Wolfsburg or Daimler in Stuttgart receive relatively high wages and work under relatively good working conditions. Even if the sword of Damocles of outsourcing dangles over every German factory, the conditions in German factories are not comparable to those in supplier fac-

tories in Eastern Europe or in the global South. At the same time, the trade unions in particular, which are committed to social partnership, repeatedly allow themselves to be blackmailed into deals with corporate management in the interests of securing jobs at German sites. But more on this later. The global division of labour is an expression of an imperial constellation on a labour market that can act almost as limitlessly as capital itself. This imperial constellation is so firmly economically secured that in the rarest of cases military repression is still necessary, even if it persists and must persist as a threatening gesture. A further and decisive dimension of automotive capitalism on the scale of the world market is the dimension of global sales markets.





that's my surplus value, i don't know you! - sales markets and economic surpluses

While the involvement of German corporations in Latin American countries is mainly characterised by securing raw materials for the upcoming transformation of the European automobile market towards EVs, the situation on the African continent is somewhat different. Here, corporations have been busily securing production sites and sales markets in recent years. This is due to the historical markets in Europe, Japan and North America being increasingly in crisis, so that at Daimler and VW the car parks in front of the plants are bursting at the seams with cars for which there is no demand. The climate justice movement, cartel allegations and diesalgates are increasingly putting the companies in a tight spot and a long-term sales crisis is looming. In the capitalist centres, the attempt to counteract this crisis is mainly taking the form of creating markets for electric mobility, but this is an expensive and contested undertaking. In this context, the decision to back the horse of EVs is one that subordinates other possibilities, such as the expansion of public transport, under pressure from lobbying associations. As the situation in Latin America shows, securing the raw materials needed for this is a conflictual undertaking and local protest movements hinder the dirty game of the corporations. The competition between American, European and Japanese capital for future supremacy puts a strain on the corporations and gives those who have specialised in the production of internal combustion engines reason to look for another economic mainstay. The German car industry has long understood this and has declared securing of new sales markets for combustion engines to be its goal.

What is no longer possible in Europe is now simply to be enforced on the African continent. So far, cars have only been produced there in Morocco and South Africa, and currently they produced about 1.1 million vehicles. The German car industry and its suppliers now want to change this and have

joined forces with the "African Association of Automotive Manufacturers" (AAAM). Anyone who assumes that the association is an association of African companies will be proven wrong by looking at the list of companies: BMW, VW, Bosch, Rheinmetall, BASF, DHL, KPMG, in short: the who's who of German climate killers and warmongers.

Of course, the association's plans would not be enforceable if it were openly stated that the continent is to serve as an export area for the climate sins that can no longer be made quite so easily in Europe. The whole thing therefore runs under the pretext that "value chains" are being created and the industrialisation of the continent is being driven forward. By 2035, the association wants to increase the production of passenger cars on the African continent fivefold. Accordingly, since 2015, new VW plants have been built in Algeria, Nigeria and Kenya, the production of which is to replace the second-hand cars that are common there as quickly as possible. Since the German state essentially shares the interests of its large capital groups and represents them to the outside world, the project suits it quite well and that is why, just as in Latin America, it is also trying to push its agenda in Africa. In 2020, the Federal Ministry for Cooperation specifically established contact between the German Association of the Automotive Industry (VDA) and the AAAM and funded it with money amounting to 1.5 million euros. But the influence of the German state and German industry goes even further. There are already calls for new trade agreements with African countries. On the one hand, the corporations are demanding free trade zones; on the other hand, they want the countries to limit the import of used cars from the Global North in order to increase the demand for new cars. In other words, an imperial equivalent of the German scrappage scheme. This has been common practice in Morocco, South Africa, Sudan and Egypt for some time.

In 2018, Angela Merkel travelled to Ghana on a state visit, with Thomas Schäfer, President of the AAAM and Managing Director of the VW Group in the sub-Saharan region. The two met there with officials of the conservative Ghanaian New Patriotic Party, who promptly announced that the newly established production plants of VW and Nissan would be able to produce tax-free for 10 years. Import restrictions on used cars have also now come into force there. Similar meetings during state visits were also held in Nigeria, Kenya and Angola in 2018. The aim of the engagement of European capital and their states in Africa is the "creation of value chains", which of course

does not result in the improvement of living conditions on the African continent, but is intended to remedy the sales crisis on the European market.

The claim of the lobby groups to be part of a catching-up development on the African continent is as old and imperial as it is factually wrong. A whole generation of Marxist economists in the 1970s and 1980s have proven this narrative, which is still used today to justify German imperialism, to be a lie. The relationship between centre and periphery is not, as capital and the state claim, determined by assistance and cooperation, but by unequal exchange and the transfer of value from the periphery to the centre.

The economic surplus created by the engagement of capital from the Global North in the African countries is transferred to the Global North, with the exception of the amount of value that is absolutely necessary for the smooth running of the production process.

The value produced in the periphery, the use of which the workers of the African countries could decide over - if the political conditions existed - is thus already claimed in advance by the capital of the centre. The prospect of this is the precondition for their engagement. The opening up of new markets and production sites is done in the name of the European profiteers of the car industry who, in the form of dividends, managerial bonuses or party sponsoring, secure the pieces of the cake that do not flow into the crisis management of the industry. There is no other explanation for the tax advantages that VW and Nissan have been granted by Nigeria. As much capital as possible should flow back into the Global North and as little as possible should be involved in creating the conditions for production.

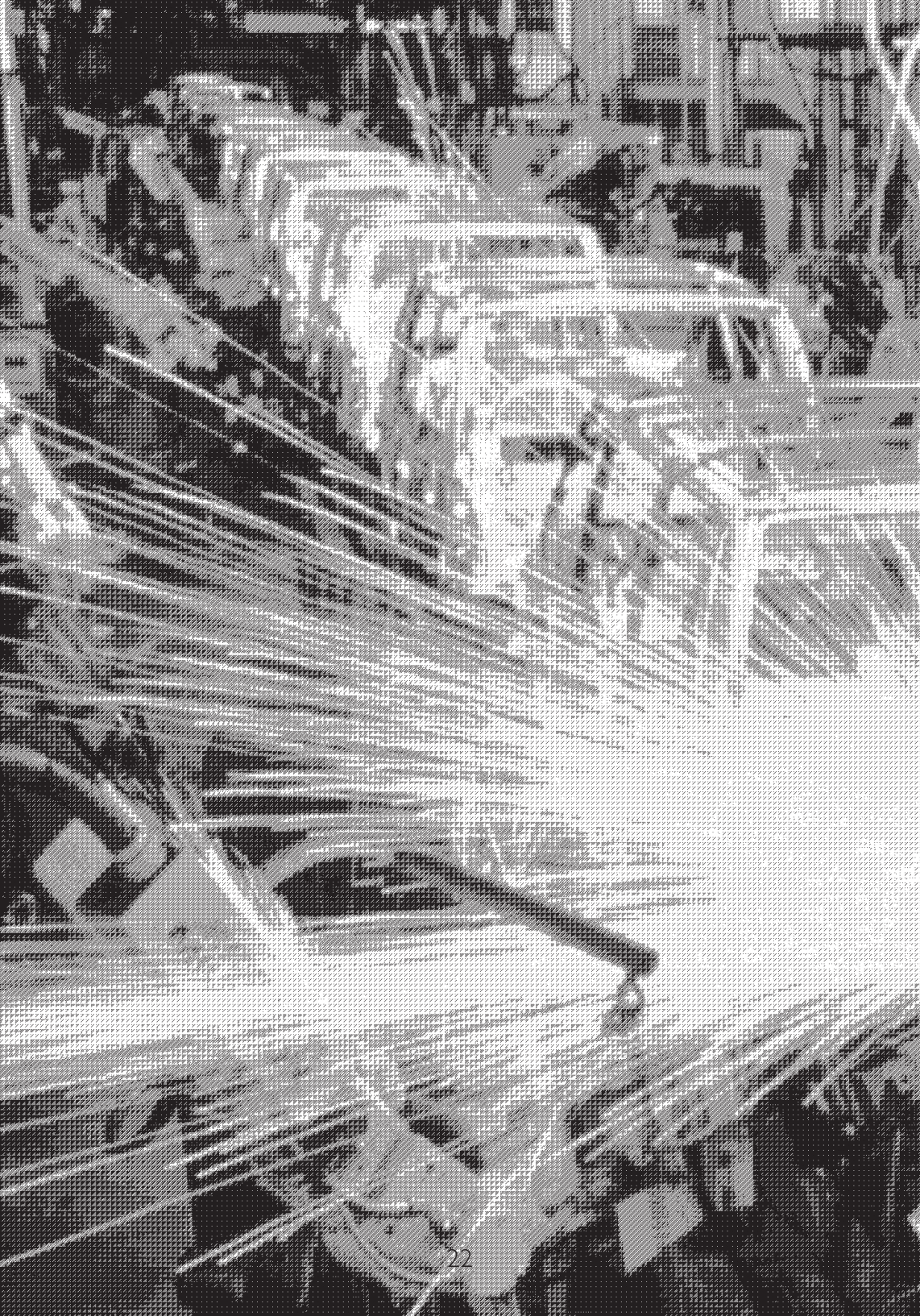
To this end, path dependencies are created in the capitalist periphery in the field of mobility and transport systems, which are delineated by the requirements of capitalist profit logic under the leadership of capital in the Global North. The centres in a capitalist system always produce a quantity of value that they cannot realise by themselves. Such overproduction poses a threat because if the commodities produced are not sold, the quantity of value they contain is effectively lost to capital. The reproduction cycle of capitalism is interrupted and because capital can no longer be sure of a return on its investment, production comes to a standstill. When this phenomenon spreads from one corporation to an industry and from one industry to the whole system, a crisis occurs. In order to prevent this, capital searches permanently for a way to invest the potential surplus amount of value in such a way that

a crisis does not occur. The markets of the periphery represent such a possibility and so the capital of the centre is not only dependent on the labour, resources and production facilities of the periphery, but also on its markets. However, the markets of the periphery should not necessarily absorb the surplus goods from the Global North. It is rightly absurd to imagine VW sending masses of combustion engines from Wolfsburg to Accra. The industry's commitment in Africa shows: The values are exported in the form of capital - above all money and means of production.

When - as in this case - the competitive pressure and social conditions are such that it is uncertain whether capital can be invested profitably in the home countries of the corporations, it looks for opportunities elsewhere where these conditions are more attractive. Against this background, it is obvious that the German automotive industry is suddenly interested in the industrialization of the African continent in the midst of its own crisis, in restructuring and under the competitive pressure that goes hand in hand with EVs and so on. Especially in times of impending crises in the centers, the function of the periphery as an economic shunting mass gains in importance. This insight can help to understand what the German automotive industry and the German state are doing on the African continent. It is precisely this automotive industry that, with its current projects on the African continent, is very much in the colonial and imperial tradition of German history. Under well-known pretexts, it now wants to push through the dirty tricks there that the climate movement has made impossible for it in Europe in recent years.

All this is no coincidence, but a necessary consequence of the green-washed competition for survival in the transformation of the European markets. The struggle for Latin America's raw materials and Africa's sales markets are two sides of the same imperial coin. So anyone who cares about saving the climate and wants to lead the fight for a sustainable transport system in Europe must not regard the German automotive industry and the German state as allies.

For this struggle, starting points are needed that position themselves antagonistically to the scumbags of AAAM and the German state.





fight the system from below – about struggles and possible victories against imperial automotive capitalism

If we want to stop the most devastating consequences of man-made climate change, we have to get at the imperialist system of the automobile industry and the state. But this is easier said than done. So what constitutes a successful struggle against the imperialist ambitions of the German auto industry and what contradictions it faces, both within the movement and from outside, is a question worth discussing.

Examples of pitfalls, contradictions, dangers, and lost struggles are not in short supply. The German climate justice movement has also been undergoing a transformation since its peak in 2018 and 2019. Partial successes, integration into the institutions of the German state, and general signs of fatigue have ensured that the movement's established methods no longer achieve the desired outcomes.

This desperation has produced forms of praxis that primarily attracts attention. A systemic critique of the existing political and economic structures eludes activists of the Last Generation or Extinction Rebellion. As important as their actions are for anchoring the climate crisis permanently in the media, they lack a strategy that goes beyond the struggle for discourse sovereignty. Despite their considerable tenacity and radicalism in form, they boil down to the persuasive power of the better argument. Both the profiteers of the climate catastrophe and their political staff and those who dare to continue buying cheap meat simply have not understood how serious the situation is. But it is not a matter of mere persuasion. If Olaf Scholz and the CEO of Volkswagen have one thing in common apart from their top incomes, it is that they know exactly what they are doing. This seems to have caught on

with the Last Generation in particular, whose forms of action are fortunately becoming more radicalised and increasingly directed against crisis profiteers.

What we know: promising answers can only be found away from this idealistic dead end. A struggle against the imperialist ambitions of the German car industry and for a future worth living on this planet cannot be successful against the workers of the industry and the companies involved, but only achieved with them. And such struggles have existed for a long time: the unions in the car industry organise 75% of the workers and so a successful strike means that up to 400,000 workers lay down their work. But the unions' struggles are not without contradictions. Their main goal is to keep the jobs in Germany, which is why they let themselves be blackmailed again and again by the car capital with the threat of relocation. In particular, the trade union bosses are always at odds with discussions on production transformation and the linking of class and climate struggles, while a part of the workforce welcomes a real just transition with their participation. Ultimately, the leadership is concerned with defending the locational advantage of the German car industry together with capital against the constant threat of declassification in the course of the global division of labour. This means, on the one hand, real wage cuts, stifled industrial action and exclusion of left trade unionists in the Global North and, on the other hand, intensified exploitation of resources and labour in the Global South. In order to lead successful struggles, the climate justice movement must seek solidarity with those in the trade unions who want to escalate the labour struggles. Instead of engaging in consumer critique and sitting down at the table with politics and capital, talks at the picket line and joint struggle on the streets are the methods we need to practice ourselves in.

Struggles are successful in the sense of the climate and workers' movement when they are international, antagonistic and anti-capitalist. There are historical reference points for this. Much too little known is the trade union opposition group (in German: Gewerkschaftliche Oppositions-Gruppe, in later years Gegenwehr ohne Grenzen, GoG for short) from the Opel plant in Bochum. Until the 1990s, the group led the left trade union opposition in the struggles over reduced working hours and unemployment, but it succeeded above all in networking the labour struggles at the various sites of the international parent company. Where trade union officials and capital played the

workforces of the sites off against each other in the course of the relocation of production sites, the GoG established connections. The group repeatedly succeeded in waging irreconcilable, anti-"social partnership" labour struggles, thus making a decisive contribution to the workers at the Opel site in Bochum being perceived as a militant workforce.

Another example is the struggle to prevent the closure of a plant, for example at Bosch in Trudering or at GKN in Milan, where workers directly occupied the plant themselves. Workers and the climate justice movement came together in these cases to demand the conversion of production to more useful components instead of the closure of a plant. For example, Bosch was to produce parts for heat pumps, while GKN was to produce components for buses. The struggle for the Bosch plant was lost, the plant had to close and is now being relocated abroad, nevertheless these are important experiences of struggle that we will need for linking climate and class struggles in the future. The GKN factory is still occupied, also because the workers managed to mobilise the whole "social factory", i.e. their neighbourhood, families, sports clubs and also the climate justice movement.

The climate justice movement can also look back on successful struggles in these disputes: In Serbia, the Rio Tinto corporation had its eye on the region's lithium deposits in 2021 and wanted to open a €2.4 billion mine that could have had a massive impact on groundwater quality, ecosystems and thus the livelihood of the local population, especially local farmers. As European companies compete with Chinese companies worldwide for the lithium deposits needed for the transformation to e-mobility, the EU took a central role in pushing the project. The alliance of the climate movement and farmers succeeded in stopping the project for the time being at the beginning of 2022. Organised blockades repeatedly disrupted the preparations for the project and radicalised the protests. Communist groups were instrumental in organising the mass protests and anti-capitalist slogans like "Stop the investors, save the climate" characterised the media image of demonstrations with thousands of participants. These examples show that there are starting points for the struggle against the imperialist plans of the German car industry. When leftists do not engage in consumer criticism or reconciliation with the ruling conditions, but practice international solidarity and come together, an end to automotive capitalism will come a little closer.

It should be noted that a materialist analysis of the global division of labour and inequality must think of it historically: as the product of an imperial policy that arose from capital's inherent drive for expansion and was racialised first by a biologisation, later by a culturalisation of global differences. Extractivism, the global division of labour and the struggle for markets are all analogous expressions of the same historically developed system. We can and must learn from past and present struggles against this system. We must vehemently oppose a consumption-critical reduction that tries to hand over the future of coexistence on this planet to the shopping, mobility and holiday preferences of individuals.

It is impossible to imagine capitalist mobility without the principle of the car; the expansion of public transport is far too weak, the demand for spatial flexibility in just-in-time capitalism far too strong. Incidentally, this circumstance is also an expression of struggles that car capital wages consciously and openly and usually wins.

The imperial dimension of automotive capitalism also presents us with a frontier for left politics and ideas of social liberation: luxury communism and fully automated allocation of goods are not the perspectives on offer. Rather, an insight into the necessity that, in the interest of people and nature, opportunities for productivity must remain unused should be the content of leftist social models. For even in a liberated society, artificial intelligence only works with raw materials that runs on the overexploitation of resources. Emancipation from the alienation of capitalist realism can only be achieved through a radical critique and regulation of needs, not through their ahistorical perpetuation. What we can win is not the productivity of the capitalist madness that surrounds us, but no more and no less than the power of disposal over our own lifetime.

Those who are serious about saving the natural foundations of life on this planet will have to fight and choose their allies carefully. This fight cannot be won in alliances with the Greens and social democrats, nor with the corporations that claim sustainability as their banner. Our slogan must remain: Fight the system from below! Automobile capitalism is an international system that cannot be understood without imperialism and class rule. And as we

confront it, we must also think of a possible mobility turn: consistently antagonistic, irreconcilable and without borders!

further reading

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We - Antifa AK Cologne - are a communist group that has been active in various political struggles for over 15 years. We have made it our goal to bring together radical social criticism with social struggles and to make them capable of acting on a supra-regional level. For this purpose, we are organised in the nationwide ...ums Ganze! alliance and part of the Europe-wide platform Beyond Europe.

We take the current struggles of the climate justice movement as an opportunity to deal with the question of how the car industry is integrated into a system of imperial constellations. The aim of the analysis is to attack e-mobility as a supposed green solution to the climate crisis and to make visible that there can only be a real way out of the crisis beyond the existing. We are always concerned with real struggles and social change and not with criticism from the sidelines.

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