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Climate Territories: A Global Soul for the Global South?

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In this article, we depict climate as an issue which deterritorialises existing geopolitical realities in a manner which suits the discourses of both elite science and corporate globalisation. In this deterritorialisation, the politics of place, of difference, are removed; the divisions between North and South – the Minority and Majority Worlds – must melt away as all peoples become citizen-consumers in need of a morally conservative (using global archetypal myths of flood and fire) but economically neo-liberal global soul with which to confront the global nemesis of climate change. This deterritorialisation is constructed from a Northern (particularly a Western European) position. It emerges from post–material and post-industrial environmental discourses, largely ignoring the discourses and frames of post-colonial environmentalism (and environmental debt) which are far more appropriate when describing the environmental and developmental realities of the Global South. In the article, we introduce the case of India, as both its civil society and governments wrestle with the new realities of the global climate change agenda. We show how India's

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official framing of climate change discourse, overwhelmingly dictated and driven by the imperatives of economic growth, continues to oscillate between the 'scientific' underpinnings of deterritorialised-global representations of climate change and the growing trends to reterritorialise multifaceted climate space through geopolitical-geoeconomic reasonings.

INTRODUCTION

> Things fall apart; the centre cannot hold; Mere anarchy is loosed upon the world, The blood-dimmed tide is loosed, and everywhere The ceremony of innocence is drowned. . .. — W. B. Yeats, 'The Second Coming' (1920) in *The Dial*

In academic and popular discourses alike 'climate change' is often framed as a 'global challenge'; a threat beyond borders. This allegedly 'global' character of global warming (often taken as a defining feature of climate politics) portrays climate change as the paradigmatic global environmental problem. Its presumed globality links the climate issue to a broader discussion within international relations and critical geopolitics about the contemporary role of territory and political boundaries. The flows of people, capital and carbon across boundaries are perceived as indicators of a post-Westphalia world, stipulated and stereotyped as a deterritorialised and borderless political space. Climate change is thus contrasted in this discourse with a spatiality of global politics which is constructed as territorial, the parcelling up of the world into discrete political units. It is further approached and analysed by some in terms of 'trans-national security threats', based on the geopolitical premise that "predicted climate change impacts are also likely to strengthen or help revive sub-state networks that have traditionally responded to environmental change and pressure via violence, crime, smuggling, banditry, trafficking, terrorism, and other such activities".[1]

Despite the overwhelming natural-science evidence in favour of a deterritorialising nature of climate change, as graphically revealed through various assessment reports of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change,[2] emerging geopolitical as well as geo-economic discourses on climate change tend to (re)territorialise a whole gamut of issues at stake. Climate change geopolitical discourse is the discourse deployed by the 'winners' (and not losers) of corporate globalisation. It is about controlling the contestation arising out of longstanding resistance against environmental degradation in many parts of the Global South.

Of course, in the early stages of this paper, it is crucial to make clear that there are many *environmentalisms*,[3] different green discourses which shape

and configure conceptual and discursive maps. In short, there are key differences in constructions of environmentalisms in both North and South, outlining very different environmentally determined realities in the daily lives of the many, versus those of an affluent minority. Through minority world lenses of post-materialism and post-industrialism, environmentalism challenges the excesses of the industrialist project; the rights of corporations to pollute and degrade; and the dwindling of the earth's resources as they are fed into the advanced industrial machines. Advocates of these positions (first emerging in the green movements of Western Europe) argue that advanced industrialism, championed by both the market systems of latter-day capitalism and the state-centred models of socialism, has pushed the earth, its habitats, and all its species (including people) to the brink of extinction. This industrial developmental paradigm has promoted economic growth at all costs. Initially this pursuit of growth was rooted deeply in the Enlightenment project of the scientific and industrial revolutions, and the pursuit of progress. Hence the environment (and nature) was presented as an eternal cornucopia, where resources were unlimited.

In more recent times, industrialism has been globalised and homogenised. Now there is widespread and partial acceptance of natural constraints to growth – or a finite carrying capacity – but the Enlightenment project continues, as it now advocates increased growth through improvements to environmental efficiency and management, the promotion of the global 'free market', and the advocacy of homogenous 'democratic', pluralist systems. Most recently this has been pursued under the key terms *sustainable development* and *ecological modernisation*.

Importantly, within these newer, adapted environmental discourses, there is a strong emphasis on the rights of 'future generations'. Indeed these rights are one of the defining features of sustainable development as it was first enshrined in the Brundtland documentation in 1987[4] as *intergenerational equity*. This fascination in 'future generations' is rooted firmly within post-materialism: the North imagines that its global citizen-consumers have achieved their basic material needs and, in neo-Maslovian style,[5] can now pursue 'higher order' goals set for the citizens of the future.

But, in poorer and dominantly rural parts of the Global South, movements for environmental justice and security are motivated by basic issues of survival for those who are already living, which are often the result of extreme environmental degradation and hundreds of years of colonial exploitation[6]; rather than industrialisation. So as an all-encompassing theory capable of explaining a global situational phenomenon, the post-material and post-industrialist theses are found wanting.

Using post-colonialism as the narrative frame, green concerns are caste in the light of the coloniser versus the colonised; the dichotomous world of affluence and poverty. There are some obvious cross-overs with the previous post-industrialist thesis, recognising structuralist lines between the haves and

the have-nots. In different parts of the world, these frames, or story lines – and combinations of them and others – are used more often to explain the causes and effects of environmental issues and problems. In the Global South, the frame of post-colonialism usually dominates.

Within the Northern, post-materialist and post-industrialist frames, it is often assumed that carbon-trading, built of models accurately depicting the *carbon-footprint* of different nations will be adequate to combat emissions. But within the post-colonial frame, carbon-footprints are largely meaningless, as they fail to adequately account for the past; they fail to adequately comprehend, and deal with, the concept of *environmental debt*, incurred through hundreds of years of Northern exploitation. Obviously there are some important exceptions to this rule: there have been some attempts to accommodate for the deeds of the past in the carbon-footprint literature of the North.[7] But on the whole, these attempts remain as subservient positions. Instead, the image of a 'divided planet' in terms of rich and poor, or 'Eurocentric planet' is a needed correction to the concept espoused by Ward and Dubos's *Only One Earth*, commissioned for the UNCED Conference in 1972.[8] Doug Torgerson goes further when he argues that the divisions of the planet bear the 'unmistakeable mark of the legacy of colonialisation'.[9]

In the next part of this paper we argue that climate change is often used by the North to territorialise the world in a manner which dissolves and absolves differences between North and South, between the affluent and less-affluent worlds. We concentrate on two main areas, both contributing to what we consider is the attempted construction of a form of *global soul*.

In the body of the paper, the current day case of India is then described, as its central government wrestles with the implications of a Northern-centred climate map being written over, palimpsest-like, its own particular stories and territories of environment and development. Within this climate change and carbon-trading rhetoric, crossing national and cultural borders at will, the Indian Government juggles its domestic development needs – written large in its post-colonial roots – with its determination to deal with a global, largely post-industrial agenda (this supposed global soul), imposed on it by the North.

GREEN DETERRITORIALISATION AS ADVANCED CAPITALISM: THE CONSTRUCTION OF A *GLOBAL SOUL*

In their intriguing study of global social movements, Chesters and Welsh write of a global mobility central to the prevailing capitalist axiomatic, which opens up physical borders through the imperative of deregulation, defining 'globally extensive sets of rule-bound domains establishing the primacy of the prevailing capitalist axiomatic over local custom, traditions and

rules'. This is the process which, in the theoretical footsteps of Deleuze and Guattari,[10] they refer to as deterritorialisation. They write:

> Ultimately, the projected potentiality of this global institutional nexus is carefully honed through external relations and marketing divisions to present a positive immanence within the public sphere. This is a process of deterritorialisation which seeks universal benefits of the prevailing axiomatic removing barriers to implementation, effectively rendering space a 'smooth' obstacle-free surface. . . The potential emphasised is the win-win face of globalisation as freedom, prosperity, choice and affluence.[11]

In a biophysical sense, climate, like the wind, crosses boundaries, moving in, through, over and under the politics of nation-states. But climate change is more than just this. Not only does it bypass borders built by nation-states, the very concept decimates and invades collective identities forged by history, class, gender, race and caste. It redraws a map of the earth, at least a rhetorical map, as a single space occupied by all inhabitants, and casts them within a shadow of a global enemy – climate – something which cannot be seen or touched by most, but something which can only be interpreted and understood by a scientific and economic elite.

The map-makers, however, are not globally representative. The climate issue, as mentioned, is largely a Western European initiative. At its moral core, it is fundamentally conservative. It constructs geopolitics in a Western, realist sense, with its inherent notions of a polity occupied by nation-states acting rationally in a global anarchic system. But its foothold in anarchy is even deeper than this, for it conceptualises *the natural order* as anarchical as well. At the core of this system is a fear of chaos which will be unleashed upon the world if a centralised, moral (carbon-neutral) authority is not maintained. In this neo-Hobbesian sense, nature is at war and, in the context of climate change, the earth's people will fall into a sea of chaos if Westphalian understandings of order are not imposed. This conservative moral core is used in a manner that seeks to discipline the unruly South for its moral recklessness in pursuing carbon-based economic solutions to poverty. As Simon Dalby[12] has pointed out so insightfully, securitising ecological issues helps provide justification for "the global managerialist ambitions of some northern planners".

The other huge attraction of the climate change story is its close thematic associations with other ancient, conservative and archetypal narratives of mythological proportions. Most obviously, the story of the Christian Biblical Flood rings more than a few bells here. In this vein, global climate change is a cataclysmic event waiting to happen, with humanity to go the way of the wicked, untruthful and carbon-unfriendly. In this manifestation of the flood story, climate change encapsulates the concept of melting

ice caps, rises in sea levels and the flooding of small islands and coastal areas. God, or Gaia, is punishing us all for bad behaviour. The North has the keys to the Ark; and, no doubt, are the chosen peoples to survive the first Tsunamis. But climate change is even more compelling than Noah's flood, for it also incorporates the archetypal story of the great fire. For the flood waters will finally recede after the ice caps are long gone, and the earth's temperature will continue to soar until the river systems dry up, destroying all agriculture by stripping the land of its soil, and entire cities will dry up as the heavens can no longer provide the very life source itself: water. And the wicked shall burn in hell, and the day of judgement will come.

Of course, the flood myth is far older than the Christian Bible. The Sumerian myth of 'Gilgamesh' predates it by at least a thousand years. William Burroughs[13] discusses the enduring fascination with the myth despite any lack of empirical evidence which confirms it as an event in 'real' time.

> The available climactic records do not contain evidence of some global cataclysm happening between 15 and 5 kya when most of the rise in the oceans occurred. There is nothing in the many climatic records to support various theories of sudden huge rises in global sea level associated with cosmic catastrophes or sudden shifts in the earth's axis or crust. Nonetheless, the widespread Flood Myth appears in many fables from prehistory.[14]

But to limit these stories of cataclysm, the flood, the fire, the new dawn, etc., to pre-Christianity and Christianity would be short-sighted. These are archetypal stories which cross many different cultures and societies. Obviously these stories have their equivalents in the other Abrahamic religion, Islam, perhaps also informed by 'Gilgamesh'. But they also ring with resonance in the Dharmic faiths of Hinduism and Buddhism. Anne Birrell[15] writes of the power of the flood myth within the Chinese societal context:

> The most enduring and widespread of the catastrophe myths worldwide is the flood myth. In classical China the myth is told in four stories. The myth of the rebellious worker-god Common Work (Gong Gong) relates how he stirred the waters of the whole world so that they crashed against the barrier of the sky and threatened the world with chaos. The flood myth. . .. In this version the god Common Work plays the role of the marplot, one who seeks to destroy the design of the cosmos. In this respect, it is linked to the myth which tells how Common Work challenged the supreme sky god, Fond Care (Zhuan Xu), and in his fury butted against the world mountain that held up the sky'.[16]

Now these great shared tales, which pop up again and again through the mists of human history, have resurfaced again within the religion of Western science, and its priests – the scientists – have taken the mantle of the grand narrative's most enthusiastic seannachies. It is because the flood and the fire are stories which are bound into the very marrow of human existence that the climate change story enjoys such universal appeal, quite apart from whether the scientific data is 'real' or not.

Due to its wide cultural reach and conservative core (it challenges little regarding 'the order of things') the climate story is also unusually well-placed to serve a neo-liberal economic agenda. Environmental issues which emerged within the first flush of modern environmentalism, demanded concepts such as limits-to-growth. Environmental issues were portrayed as a zero-sum game, with trade-offs demanded of business in order to achieve environmental goals. During the mid to late 1980s, sustainable development discourses began to replace the finite growth hypothesis, and we discovered that business was, in fact, good for the environment and, of course, environment was good for business. In terms of sustainable development and ecological modernisation, nation-states were still seen as responsible to provide, in classical liberal fashion, the role of responsible regulator, legislator and monitor of the anti-social practices of a minority, to protect the interests and environments of the majority. Since the mid-1990s, a new depiction of the politics of environmental concern has become dominant; one that shares much with its sustainable development cousin, but is far more extreme and brutal in its embrace of market-principles. These recent manifestations are sometimes known as 'wise use', 'sequential use', or most obviously, 'neo-liberal environmentalism'. Whereas sustainable development turned the win-loss game into a win-win game (business-as-usual), neo-liberal environmentalism takes the next step, constructing a win-win-win game. Climate change, and the cacophony of issues which gather at its site, is the purest form of this win-win-win construction of the environment.

Climate change works hand in hand with free-market economics. As the market is deemed 'natural', the ecology of the ecosphere becomes 'the market'. All inputs and outputs are given value in monetary terms and then, so it is argued, the 'natural', 'real' and 'essentialist' economy of ecology shall emerge, unfettered by the constraints of science and governmentality. It is imagined that 'the trickle-down effect' will benefit those species living on the lower rungs of the natural hierarchy, promoting widespread ecological health and doing away, forever, with any notions of science-generated ecological safety nets thrown over the most disadvantaged, those species and habitats, those resources, most at risk. Through carbon-trading, nothing is irreversible; everyone and everything will win: the chocolate ration has been increased. This line of argument, of course, also fits neatly into the parameters of neo-Spencerism, promoting the notion that those human and non-human communities most likely to survive unfettered 'natural' systems

will be all the better for doing so, having weeded out those less able to survive.

Importantly, carbon-trading and other neo-liberal solutions, can only succeed if the very nature of the liberal subject is challenged, and turned into a neo-liberal subject: the global citizen-consumer. The existence of one *grand narrative* of flood and fire aids this process of atomisation. With the global polity understood as a 'pluralist' one, played out on a notional level playing-field, each citizen is actually a consumer. All people are considered 'equal' under this model; they just need *listening to*, or entry into the market-place. There is no longer a clear delineation between *us* and *them*; haves and have-nots; subjects and objects of environmental degradation.

This view of the earth comprising a series of human, interchangeable, individualised parts fits in neatly with the market. All beings are seen as consumers and providers, all meaning systems of collective action which may generate opposition are done away with because: 'We are all just people, just global citizens'. Questions of gender, class, and race – it is imagined – melt away.

Concepts of *intra-generational equity* are dismissed and replaced with the post-material concept of *inter-generational equity.* The only differences deemed valid are those demarcating the living from those who *may live* sometime in the future. In this manner, humanity is made faceless, and the rights of the present are sacrificed to imagined apocalyptic futures.

In turn, it is proposed that the salvation of the earth will come from *within* individuals, not in the politics of communities. Nature is further commodified within this framework. The principles of sequential use and climate change are built on a commitment to global values change, whilst denying the existence of any power differentials between cultures and people. This is the construction of a *global soul.*

Furthermore, the unwritten text of this process is that there is something wrong with the values – the Soul of the South – of the *majority world.* Environmental problems, like climate, are seen as getting worse due to the incorrect value systems of the South, rather than from the pressures on local communities to remain competitive in the new globalised, free market-place. Of course, the dissolution of the concept of *the other* has not occurred in the South: in fact, the boundaries have often solidified with the acknowledgement that globalisation has delivered disproportionate amounts of wealth and power to Northern and Southern elites.[17] It is critical, therefore, to re-assert a clear demarcation, despite the best attempts to create this global soul, between the environmental realities of the less affluent majority, from the more affluent minority.

Larry Lohman[18] has persuasively questioned the belief that climate justice is all about "re-energizing or reforming development and investment in Global South to steer it in a low-carbon direction, harnessing the potential of carefully constructed green markets, or making capital flow from North to

South, instead of from South to North". To do so, argues Lohman, amounts to putting a gloss over the lessons gained from more than a half-century's popular and institutional experience of what development – neo-liberal or otherwise – actually does. Lohman[19] rightly asks: "What does the project of a just solution to the climate crisis become once it is associated with or incorporated into an economic development or carbon market framework?" To quote Lohman, "Carbon trading as part of the 'climate development' package that has become entrenched at national and international levels over the past ten years, is organized in ways that make it more difficult even to see what the central issues of climate justice are, much less to take action on them."

Of course, there are other responses to climate change which are not neo-liberal. But, no doubt, it is the neo-liberal market responses which are most dominant. Carbon-trading, as aforesaid, is the most obvious form of the neo-liberal response, as it promises to deliver us to a carbon-neutral future by trading between the affluent world and the less affluent world. In this vein, the Global South sells its future capacities to produce carbon (as in to industrialise) to the North which not only continues to produce emissions, but, in real terms, increases them. The North then uses these carbon offsets not for business-as-usual; but for business *better-than-usual*.

The key attribute of the climate story remains in its ability to ride over, and move through cultural and religious boundaries through its use of key archetypal mythologies built upon the solid rock of shared humanity, the base points of flood and fire which inform and cross-over the boundaries of history. By eradicating difference at this most primordial level, using morally conservative stories which challenge little, a global subject is now made available to serve as a malleable global consumer, one that is perfectly placed to play her part in the worldly game of neo-liberal capitalism.

SPATIAL FRAMINGS OF CLIMATE CHANGE: RETERRITORIALISING THE DETERRITORIAL? THE CASE OF INDIA

Of course, this building of a global soul – with its in-built denial of the existence of any legitimate opposition to its agenda – may sell the death of boundaries based on rich and poor, on gender, on race; but even its most ardent supporters must concede that it clearly does not eradicate differences between nation-states. In fact, in several ways, climate discourses re-affirm the primacy of nation-states. These discourses are significantly marked by what John Agnew[20] has described as the 'territorial trap': imagining the world as a series of rational and spatially and politically distinct states. That there is a complex geographical-spatial politics to climate change, in which both corporate and individual actions play a central role is conveniently glossed over by the state-centric spatial imaginary.[21]

As pointed out by Lovbrand and Stripple,[22] various deterritorial representations of the atmosphere and climate problem notwithstanding, international climate policy over the years has resulted in territorialisation of the carbon cycle. The discursive-geopolitical transformation of global and deterritorial carbon cycles (and its concomitant science) into territorial 'national sinks', dictated and driven by the territorial framing of terrestrial carbon uptake, argue Lovbrand and Stripple,

> can only be understood with reference to the inter-governmental negotiations on climate change. Since the parties to the climate convention decided to adopt a net-accounting of national greenhouse gases, a whole new repertoire of accounting methods and techniques have developed to standardize the national reporting of changes in carbon pools embedded in vegetation and soils.[23]

In the context of the complex and dynamic political geography of climate change, the processes of deterritorialisation and reterritorialisation, operating in conjunction, do not so much question the system of sovereign spaces as they reproduce it. Climate as a geopolitical space, therefore, is constantly moving *in* and *out* of physical-material geography. The imaginative geographies of climate change are always in the making and intermittently assume territorial or nonterritorial forms depending upon the strategic convenience of the actors and their agendas concerned.

India's official framing of climate change issues continues to oscillate between the 'scientific' imperatives of deterritorialised-global understandings of climate change and reterritorialisation of climate space through geopolitical-geoeconomic reasonings. The tone and tenor of India's climate change geopolitical discourse, against the backdrop of what we would like to describe as the 'revolution of rising socio-economic expectations', is quite visible in the 2006 National Environmental Policy,[24] which lists the following elements as central to India's response to global warming: adherence to the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities; prioritisation of the right to development; belief in equal per capita entitlements to all countries to global environmental resources; reliance on multilateral approaches; and participation in voluntary partnerships consistent with the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (FCCC).

India has argued in international fora that responses to and action on climate change must be based on science and not treated as a "post-modernist religion". However, the Indian prime minister, Manmohan Singh, was quick to point out in his 2007 address to the Indian Science Congress that "the science of climate change is still nascent and somewhat uncertain" and called upon the Indian scientists to further "engage in exploring the links between the greenhouse emissions and climate change".[25]

In response to anxieties expressed by some that India will become the third largest emitter by 2015 (together with the US, EU, China and Russia accounting for two-thirds of global greenhouse gases), and hence should commit to certain emission reduction targets, the Indian official discourse runs as follows: India, given its limited role in contributing to the problem thus far, coupled with its compelling developmental needs and the historical responsibility of the developed countries, cannot be expected to take on mitigation targets. Further cited in favour of this reasoning are the findings of modelling based on the Integrated Energy Policy, which "demonstrates that in the worst case full-coal scenario by 2031-32, India's per capita emissions will be 3.75 metric tons per capita, and in the best case scenario with full use of renewable, maximum use of nuclear, hydro, and natural gas, significant increases in coal efficiency, and a 50 per cent rise in fuel efficiency of motorized vehicles, per capita emissions will be 2.66 metric tons per capita".[26] Given these premises, the argument then concludes: Given the substantial cost that such a reduction will give rise to, it is not worth the benefits even to the international climate effort. Instead, India would advocate equitable emissions entitlements to the atmosphere. The former Indian minister for environment, Saifuddin Soz, is reported to have said at Kyoto, "Per capita basis is the most important criteria for deciding the rights to environmental space. This is a direct measure of human welfare. Since the atmosphere is the common heritage of humankind, equity has to be the fundamental basis for its management".[27]

The following excerpt taken from the text of the address delivered by the Indian prime minister, Mr. Manmohan Singh, on the release of India's Action Plan on Climate Change (NAPCC) on 30 June 2008,[28] graphically shows the tension between the global/deterritorial and national/territorial logics deployed in response to the dilemma faced by a 'Rising' India with 300 million plus middle class; a class that symbolises India's status as a rising Asian power on the one hand, and, at the same time, can be held as most responsible/accountable in terms of per capita emissions to the 'global' atmosphere.

> *Climate Change is a global challenge*. It can only be successfully overcome through a global, collaborative and cooperative effort. India is prepared to play its role as a responsible member of the international community and make its own contribution. We are already doing so in the multilateral negotiations taking place under the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change. The outcome that we are looking for must be effective. It must be fair and equitable. *Every citizen of this planet must have an equal share of the planetary atmospheric space*. Long term convergence of per capita emissions is, therefore, the only equitable basis for a global compact on climate change. In the meantime, I have

> already declared, as India's Prime Minister, that despite our developmental imperatives, our per capita GHG emissions will not exceed the per capita GHG emissions of the developed industrialized countries. This should be testimony enough, if one was needed, of the sincerity of purpose and sense of responsibility we bring to the global task on hand. (emphasis added)

The position taken by India at the G-8 Summit held in L'Aquila, Italy, in July 2009, has generated a controversy over India signing the declaration of the Major Economic Forum (MEF) on energy and climate that was held alongside the summit. The critics point out that by endorsing the following declaration India has admitted a cap on its emissions, which would undermine both development efforts and the stand taken by India all along that it will not accept any legally binding limit on its emissions:

> We recognize the scientific view that the increase in global average temperature above pre-industrial levels ought not exceed 2 degrees C. In this regard – we will work between now and (the 15th Conference of the Parties (COP-15) to the UN Framework on Climate Change in December 2009) Copenhagen... to identify a global goal for substantially reducing emissions by 2050.[29]

Whereas those who believe that India's stand remains uncompromised would insist that the MEF declaration should be read in conjunction with the following statement issued by G-8, which India refrained from signing.

> We recognize the broad scientific view that the increase in global average temperature above pre-industrial levels ought not to exceed 2 deg. C. *Because this global challenge can only be met by a global response, we reiterate our willingness to share with all countries the goal of achieving at least a 50 per cent reduction of global emissions by 2050, recognizing that [it] implies that global emissions need to peak as soon as possible and decline thereafter*. As part of this, we also support a goal of developed countries reducing emissions of GHGs in aggregate by 80 per cent or more compared to 1990, or more recent years. Consistent with this ambitious long-term objective, *we will undertake robust aggregate and individual mid-term reductions, taking into account that baselines may vary*.... Similarly major economies need to undertake quantifiable actions to collectively reduce emissions significantly below business-as-usual (BAU) by a specified year.[30][emphasis added]

In the light of the above statement the proverbial billion dollar question for many analysts is this: Given that only a global 85 percent reduction (from 2000 levels) will, as pointed out by the IPCC 4th Assessment Report,[31] have a high chance of preventing a 2-degree increase, will the Annex-1 countries

(given the arithmetic based on world per capita emissions) be willing to cut their emissions by nearly 93.3 percent by 2050? If not (which is more likely), then will China and India (the first and the fourth ranked 'emitters' at present) be prepared to embrace severe limits on their emissions?

The Indian Prime Minister's Special Envoy on Climate Change, Shyam Saran, has emphatically said that "there was nothing in the (G8) declaration to suggest that India has accepted emission caps. According to him, "There can be no contradiction between poverty alleviation, economic and social development and climate change".[32] While flagging India's commitment to ecologically sustainable growth, he has argued that India's economy was growing at 8 to 9 percent annually, whereas the energy consumption was less than 4 percent. What is particularly interesting is the reassurance given by him that under the NAPCC (released before the G-8 Summit in Tokyo in July 2008) there would also be a massive increase in the forest cover from 22 percent now to 33 percent. An additional 6 million hectare of degraded forest would be revived and this would act as a *carbon sink*.

The low per capita emissions argument advanced by India, from which it seems to derive the high moral ground while defending the norm of 'common but differentiated responsibility' in international climate diplomacy, somewhat loses its shine against the backdrop of a multitude of inequities that persist across the country. A recent Greenpeace-India study found that the carbon footprints of those in the top income bracket in India are 4.5 times that of the lowest.[33] According to Praful Bidwai,

> India's stress on per capita emissions as the sole metric or criteria of equity and the only limit it will accept is problematic. In an extremely unequal and hierarchical society like ours, per capita emissions mean little. They can be a cynical way of hiding behind the poor, whose contribution to emissions is low and hardly rising. It is India's rich and middle classes – which are pampered by the state's elitist policies, and which are consuming as if there were no tomorrow – that account for the bulk of our [India's] emissions increase. There is probably an order-of-magnitude difference in carbon footprints between India's rich and poor.

India has made repeated references to poverty as the key reason for its refusal to take GHG mitigation targets in the ongoing diplomatic negotiations. At the General Assembly in February 2008, the Indian representative said, "In terms of climate change. . . blessed are the poor for they have saved the earth".[34]

Critics of NAPCC suggest that whereas there are some bold new ideas on paper, such as increasing the contribution of solar energy, conspicuous by their absence are the details of how this would be achieved. As far as the

proposed efforts in the direction of a renewed thrust on energy efficiency, an effort to promote integrated water resource management, and a focus on restoring degraded forest land are concerned, once again the devil lies in the detail. According to some critics, "Much of the plan is simply old wine in new bottles, such as use of joint forest management committees to 'green India'. Some of these proposals are wine that has long since gone sour, such as reform of electricity and fertiliser subsidies for farmers. The greater shortcoming is the failure of the NAPCC to articulate a vision, nationally or globally. While espousing a qualitative shift towards ecologically sustainable growth, the plan fails to develop, or even explore, a compelling vision of future development".[35]

What remains at the core of such contestations are the imaginative geographies of atmospheric space. According to some of the critical perspectives emanating from Global South, the already affluent have already filled up the available atmospheric space with pollution and now not much room is left for the rest of the world to grow. Many scientists would point out that the carbon dioxide concentration in the atmosphere has increased from a pre-industrial value of 280 parts per million (PPM) to 379 ppm in 2005. We are further told that remaining budget is 450 ppm (to keep risks as low as possible) and 550 ppm to be adventurous. The only way the poorer world can take up this remaining carbon budget is if the entire emissions of the industrialised world were to stop now. Will it?

Well within a decade after the signing of the Kyoto Protocol, the emerging political consensus seems to be that the most effective and efficient way to protect the global climate system is to assign property rights for greenhouse emissions and to trade these rights on international markets. India is a key player in the carbon market today and "represents a very attractive country"[36] for hosting clean development mechanism (CDM) activities under the UN Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). It is significant to note, especially in light of the above statement made by the Indian Prime Minister, that India's dominance in carbon trading under the CDM is beginning to influence business dynamics in the country. In the month of October 2006, for example, India cornered more than half of the global total in tradable certified emission reduction (CERs).

Under the Kyoto Protocol, and on the basis of the 'common but differentiated responsibility' principle, India is not obliged to cut emissions as its energy consumption is low. While this may change within a decade or so, companies are jumping on the CER bandwagon. Enterprises are adopting cleaner, sustainable technologies.[37] India Inc. is said to have made Rs 1,500 crore last year just by selling carbon credits to developed-country clients. This is a fraction of the Rs 18,000 crore experts estimate will be India's share in global carbon trading by 2012. In the pipeline are projects that would create up to 306 million tradable CERs. According to some estimates, if more

companies absorb clean technologies, total CERs with India could touch 500 million.[38]

From the standpoint of 'equity' and climate justice it is highly doubtful whether carbon trading will be able to contribute much to the protection of the earth's 'climate' as a global space. To quote Rajni Bakshi,[39]

> Can the sky be owned ? And if yes, then by whom? Where should commons end and markets begin? Can value be liberated from the dominance of the price mechanism? How do we decide the value of 700 year-old tree? We need only to ask how much it would cost to make a new one. Or a new river, or even a new atmosphere. The intrinsic value of the natural world, its right to exist irrespective of usefulness to humans, is fundamentally an ethical matter that can not be resolved by markets.... Is earth our home or is it one large market place?

According to the Durban Declaration on Carbon Trading, issued on 10 October 2004 and signed by the Indigenous Environment Network,[40] carbon trading is a false solution which entrenches and magnifies social inequalities. The carbon market creates transferable rights to dump carbons in the air, oceans, soil and vegetation far in excess of the capacity of these systems to hold it. Billions of dollars worth of these rights are to be awarded free of charge to the biggest corporate emitters of greenhouse gases in the electric power, iron and steel, cement, pulp and paper, and other sectors in the industrialised nations who have caused the climate crisis and already exploit these systems the most. Costs of future reductions in fossil fuel are likely to fall disproportionately on the public sector, communities, indigenous peoples and individual tax payers;

The debates on neoliberalism, climate governance and the politics of scale are likely to continue. Ian Bailey[41] would argue that "state acceptance of the principal of collective climate governance, whether by neoliberal or other means, provides few guarantees that commitments will be honoured if these are seen to threaten states' territorially-defined interests." Whereas according to Jon Barnett,[42]

> It is the most wealthy people in the most wealthy countries that have the most power to change the political and economic systems that sustain the problem of climate change. This more subaltern and class-view of climate geopolitics is hidden by the popular imagery of climate change as a 'global' and environmental problem to be addressed by the community states. The task for a more empowering and critical geopolitics of climate change is therefore to reveal the ways in which climate change is a local and social problem that cannot be solved without the conscious exercise of political and economic choices of people in developed countries.

CONCLUSIONS

Climate change, as a site, as a discourse, as a form of territory – call it what you will – is a product of the North, most particularly Western Europe. It is a story embedded within post-industrialism; it is a story well-suited to theoretical developments in post-modern theory; it is a story well-suited to a moral conservatism, whilst simultaneously advocating and lionising a neo-liberal global subject. In this globalised nothingness, this imagined transnational *non-territory*, it is dreamt that climate change is an opportunity for co-operation. As Chesters and Welsh[43] write, boundaries fall away, as the potential coalitions of interests multiply as the once firm boundaries constituting social groups and actors are subject to increasing rapid perturbation as 'All that is solid melts into air'.[44]

But, of course, this makes little sense in the context of the suffering – the realm of the Global South. There are many parts of the planet where corporate-led globalisation has not won yet. As one of us has written elsewhere:

> It is useful to draw a distinction between the 'objects' and the 'subjects' of the emerging world order. Geo-politically speaking, the world order is not as 'global' in nature, scope and functioning as many of us believe it to be or would like it to be. In other words, emerging order is not as *placeless* as those who are fascinated by the time-place compression of globalization would like to imagine. . . place still matters for production, reproduction and consumption.[45]

Of course, the separation between North and South is a useful category marking out the affluent lives of the minority from those of the less-affluent majority. But, like any border, ultimately it is drawn subjectively and imperfectly to demarcate territories (in this instance by us). As illustrated by the Indian case, the line between Northern support and Southern rejection of the climate agenda is not, in real terms, so absolute. Although in the first years of climate's appearance on the global green agenda, many Southern environmentalists rejected it as a form of green imperialism. But now, climate's staggering breadth of ideological reach has re-mutated into versions of the climate discourse which include environmental justice arguments. In this light, climate justice does attempt to grabble with notions of environmental debt caused by centuries of ongoing colonialism.

In recent times, this greater prominence of climate discourses amongst majority world environmentalists has occurred due the fact that some of the world's biggest polluters and/or reliers on fossil fuels have still not signed the climate change protocols in Kyoto, Johannesburg, Bali, and others. At the end of October 2002, for example, five thousand people from communities in India including international NGOs, gathered in a Rally for Climate Justice

in New Delhi. This rally was organised to coincide with the United Nations meeting on climate change (Conference of Parties 8 - COP8), and was organised by the India Climate Justice Forum, including the National Alliance of People's Movements, the National Fishworkers Forum, Third World Network, and CorpWatch. In a press release, as early as 2002, Friends of the Earth International (FoEI) expressed frustration with climate change negotiations:

> But climate negotiations show no progress and communities are calling for urgent action to address climate change and to protect their livelihoods in a manner that is consistent with human rights, worker's rights, and environmental justice.... Given the entrenched opposition to action from the fossil fuel industry and governments like the US and Saudi Arabia, environmental organisations joined forces with social movements in order to progress this most urgent agenda. The window of opportunity to prevent dangerous climate change is closing fast and, for many communities, the impacts are already alarmingly present.[46]

Also, further tensions have emerged due to the fact that climate rhetoricists argue that it is poor island states, as well as poorer dwellers and coastal fishworkers on coastlines of the Global South who will be the principal victims in global climate change. In this manner, climate change has metamorphosed from a purely elite, scientific, neo-liberal Northern issue into one which can usefully fit into the environmental justice agenda of the South, but not without evoking in the first place serious dilemmas both before the governments and the civil society.

But of course, the poor and marginalised are always on the periphery. They are there today, suffering most as part of a global food crisis; they are there today, experiencing the worst of a Northern-induced global financial crisis. Of course, they are always most vulnerable, whatever the geopolitical context, or the issues which define it. It is rather trite, therefore, to point out their vulnerability in some future crisis which might happen. Rather, it is more likely a strategic means utilised by the neo-liberal North, a way of garnering support from those on the 'Global Left' who are similarly bewitched by the glorious power of the climate symbol. As pointed out by O'Brien and Leichenko,[47] despite widespread recognition that there will be 'winners' and 'losers' with both climate change and globalisation, the two 'global' issues are rarely examined together. They introduce the concept of 'double exposure' as a framework for examining the simultaneous impacts of climate change and corporate globalisation. The term refers to how certain regions, sectors, ecosystems and social groups will be confronted both by the impacts of climate change, and by the consequences of globalisation; resulting in new sets of winners and losers.

The key questions, then, are as follows: Can the climate discourse be re-configured, re-*re* territorialised to provide a place where issues of

environmental justice and sovereignty are paramount, rather than neo-liberal responses to climate? Can climate change give a voice to the global periphery? Can it be used as a vehicle for emancipation?

In final conclusion, by now reterritorialising all major environmental issues into one climate category, climate security is a flawed position on two counts: First, environmental catastrophe for the many in the Global South is a daily reality, not a calamity-in-waiting. Second, the ultimate day-of-judgement, a future day when the earth's climate change will lead to another great flood, imagines an environmental punishment being dished out, ultimately by forces of nature. By projecting a force-of-nature as the ultimate source of retribution conveniently provides cover for the key perpetrators, mouthing climate change platitudes from their homes and universities in the affluent-world. What is glossed over by these imaginative geographies of climate change, 'global' as well as 'national', is the long-standing history of a multitude of socio-ecological injustices in Global South. As Amartya Sen has persuasively argued in his recent book entitled *The Idea of Justice*,[48]

> Indeed, the theory of justice, as formulated under the currently dominant transcendental institutionalism, reduces many of the most relevant issues of justice into empty – even if acknowledged to be 'well-meaning'– rhetoric. When people across the world agitate to get *more* global justice. . . they are not clamouring for some kind of 'minimal humanitarianism'. Nor are they agitating for a 'perfectly just' world society, but merely for the elimination of some outrageously unjust arrangements to enhance global justice. . . and on which agreements can be generated through public discussion, despite a continuing divergence of views on other matters.

The insights offered by Amartya Sen are equally relevant with regard to the notion of 'climate (in)justice'. A critical view of increasingly dominant geopolitical-geoeconomic discourses on climate change is that it takes much of the politics – the conflict – out of environmental-resource issues, providing a polite filter between human action and human consequence; taking the direct and instrumental power relationships out of the equation. It is no longer people against people: the exploiters versus the exploited. Rather, although people are still the initiators, they are cast in a far more oblique light, often unwittingly setting off a calamitous, climactic punishment for all.

Furthermore, advocates of dominant, Northern climate change discourses (in their selling of a global soul to the Global South) dismiss concepts of *intra-generational equity* (the rights of the legitimate other) and seek to replace them with the post-material concept of *inter-generational equity*. A force of nature is, in the end, the nemesis, whereas the initiators, the environmental degraders, are in relative safety, at a convenient one-step removed from the atrocities inflicted upon the many. Also, by constructing

the concept of an environmental 'day of judgment' for all, all humans (all creation) are cast as victims, not differentiating between the perpetrators and fatalities.

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