CONFERENCE
EMANCIPATORY VISIONS & BUILDING COUNTER POWER

CAPE TOWN
11 APRIL 2019

Taking power seriously
Amandla!
There is an urgent need to rethink strategies for building counter-power in a context where humanity faces a deepening multi-dimensional civilizational crisis. At the heart of the global crisis in which we find ourselves are colliding economic and ecological crises which mutually reinforce each other.

Underpinning the intensifying ecological crisis is the great depression which characterises the current state of the global economy which shows no signs of abating. Compound growth under the conditions of intense competition has pushed capitalism to breach key planetary boundaries destroying vital eco-systems and placing life under threat. With the growth of the system, capitalism’s limitless expansion led to the expropriation of nature as a mere adjunct to capital, giving rise to enormous unforeseen consequences, and on an increasingly global scale.

At the centre of the current economic crisis is a build-up of unprecedented and unsustainable levels of indebtedness at state, corporate and household levels. This levels of indebtedness has empowered a few transnational banks and financial institutions which have become the new rulers of the world, whilst simultaneously creating great turmoil and volatility leading several commentators to predict a new financial crisis.

At the same time there is resistance and struggle everywhere. Every act of resistance contains the seeds of a potential counterpower which can be the basis of an emancipatory alternative. Resistances alone are insufficient, however, resistance enveloped in solidarity and alternative perspectives and strategies provides the fertile soil for building counter-power and the development of a new emancipatory alternatives.

This one day conference provides an opportunity to engage in critical debates on strategies for a new left politics. We will explore perspectives on eco-socialism, ecofeminism, heterodox economic alternatives and strategies for rebuilding mass democratic movements.
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<td>Welcome, Introductions &amp; Context</td>
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<td>10:00 - 11:10</td>
<td>Session 1</td>
<td>The Ecological Crisis &amp; Ecosocialism</td>
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<td>Session 2</td>
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<td>Session 3</td>
<td>Building counter power (the Role of Labour &amp; social movements)</td>
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<td>Intersectionality and decolonisation (race, class &amp; gender)</td>
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Michael Lowy
Lowy is a revolutionary marxist & activist of the Fourth International. He is an ecosocialist, sociologist and philosopher. He was also one of the organisers of the First Ecosocialist International Meeting in Paris (2007).

Eleni Varikas
Varikas is professor emerita of political theory and gender studies at the Université Paris and researcher at the Centre de Recherches Sociologiques et Politiques de Paris Cresppa (CNRS). She has lectured in several universities in Europe, the US and Brazil. Her articles and books on intellectual history, feminist theory, and the figure of the pariah have been published in several languages.

Sushovan Dhar
Dhar is a political activist and trade unionist based in Kolkata, India. A member of the International Council member of Committee for the Abolition of Third World Debt (CADTM) he is involved in campaigns against debt and International Financial Institutions. He is involved with various social movements in India and is also a Core Committee member of South Asia Alliance for Poverty Eradication (SAAPE).

Zackie Achmat
Political activist and socialist since 1976.

Noor Nieftagodien
Professor Nieftagodien is the South African Research Chair in Local Histories, Present Realities and is the Head of the History Workshop at the University of Witwatersrand, where he also lectures in the Department of History. As the head of the History Workshop, Nieftagodien has led research teams across the country in collaboration with communities, civil society and local governments.

Eric Toussaint
Toussaint is a historian and political scientist with a PhD from the universities of Paris VIII and Liège. He is spokesperson for the CADTM (Committee for the abolition of illegitimate debt) international network & is the author of a dozen of books.; The Debt System. A History of Sovereign Debts and their Repudiation (Haymarket, Chicago, 2019); Bankocracy (Resistance books, London, 2015). Several of his books have been published in a dozen languages and have become reference works: Debt, the IMF, and the World Bank: Sixty Questions, Sixty Answers (Monthly Review, New York, 2010) and The World Bank: A Critical Primer (Pluto, London, 2008). He has taken part in producing two manuals for conducting citizens’ audits. For people who want to know more about me in English https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki%C3%A9ric_Toussaint

Mercia Andrews
Andrews is a political activist and heads up the Trust for Community Outreach and Education (TCOE).
Emancipatory Visions & Building Counter Power [Conference]
Organised by the Alternative Information & Development Centre (AIDC)

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