Twitter Thread by tadzio_mueller



tadzio_mueller
@MuellerTadzio



Until 2050 we'll likely see "a #supercycle in investments in 'clean' energy infrastructure, 'clean' transportation & everything that's required for the '#green' transition."

There's so much bullshit in here, I'll unpack some of it in a

2/x

1st (cf. @MGSchmelzer): there is no reason to assume that a massive productivity- & hence production-boom will lead to reduced emissions, because it will increase production&growth, & it is those two variables that global greenhouse emissions track most closely. #Degrowth.

3/x

Every time capitalism has made massive productivity gains (e.g. w/ the #steamengine; the taylorist #assemblyline; computers), that has led to a *radicalisation* of capitalism as a mass production system (as opposed to earlier versions, where luxury goods were for elites),...

4/x

So there's no reason believe that a new round of capitalist accumulation (#accumulationbydispossession / #primitiveaccumulation) - in this case: some kind of "#greencapitalism - will in any way positively impact emissions rates, but every reason to believe the opposite...

5/x

I would like to look into this, as it speaks to an often-overlooked issue: the relationship between different phases of capitalist development, such as imperialism, fordism, & post-fordism, connected to energy regimes (coal-based, oil-based, renewables-based capitalism)?

6/x

The question is: when one new phase of capitalism starts - & (cf. abramsky, mitchell, malm) these are often connected to specific energy regimes: coal, oil, gas... renewables?) - what happens to the structures (institutional, material, etc.) that constituted the past phase?

7/x

Would a renewables-based "green capitalism" simply supersede & replace (much of) what came before? That claim is a necessary tool in the #greencapitalist (GC) box, since the only way their argument makes sense is if the expansion of GC means less fossil capitalism in turn.

8/x

Well... no. It wouldn't, & here's some empirical claims to support that statement:

a) Consider the progression of "modes of production" (MoPs), from "slavery" to "feudalism" to capitalism: there is today, in quantitative terms, more slave-labour than during the high-time of

9/x

the slave trade & the golden triangle.

There is also, today, more feudal, quasi-bonded labour in the world than during the high time of European feudalism, usually (in Eurocentric history) taken to mark the era of dominance of that MoP.

What happens here (cf. Althusser)...

10/x

is that MoPs don't replace one another; the new, dominant MoP *articulates* the old MoPs & their structures (labour organisation, etc.) *to*, & renders them productive *for* itself.

A massive expansion in GC-mining, for example, would no doubt lead to an extension of the

11/x

most gruesome, old-fashioned types of mining, including in quasi-slavery & bondage-conditions.

b) consider the progression of energy regimes (closely linked to that of different phases of cap. dev.): from renewables (pre-indust. revolution) to coal to oil (w/ some nuclear)

12/x

to gas & then, inshallah, to renewables.

Now, do you believe that the oil age meant that less coal was being burnt? That more renewables means burning less fossil fuel?

It might not surprise u that that's not what happens. Every new energy regime is a massive adrenaline-

13/x

shot in capitalism's arm, it becomes much more productive, further extends its (formal&real) subsumption of the world under its regime of constantly accelerated production. In order for this to be effective- returning to the article above - there need to be huge investments

14/x

all over the world, existing but maybe even defunct production units have to be kicked into shape again, the whole productive & therefore destructive edifice of global capitalism shudders into action once again where before, for the past 12, but more likely 25 years, there

15/x

has been a massive crisis of overaccumulation & underinvestment ("cash-glut", "Investitionsstau").

Need real examples of this? Take a look at the @EU_Commission & its fabled #GreenDeal: a "green" programme that centrally involves building new #fossilgas-infrastructures...

16/x

Read the guardian-piece: "'Things like copper, nickel & cobalt are all likely to see a boost from the extra demand to build infrastructure. Even steel & petrochemicals will be needed,' said Midgeley."

Not satisfied, want to hear the same from a forward-looking capitalist?

17/x

The head of #Mitsubishi Heavy Industries told the @FT that "hydrogen, ammonia, carbon capture & nuclear power would all be needed to meet the global goal of 0 emissions." Meaning: every available technology will be milked for all it's worth in the push to expand production.

18/x

If u believe in #greencapitalism, I must point out to you that it is *you*, not the supposed radicals, who is being the utopian airhead here. What you say has no basis in history, fact, theory, or future projections. You are lying: to yourselves, & to us. Stop it already.