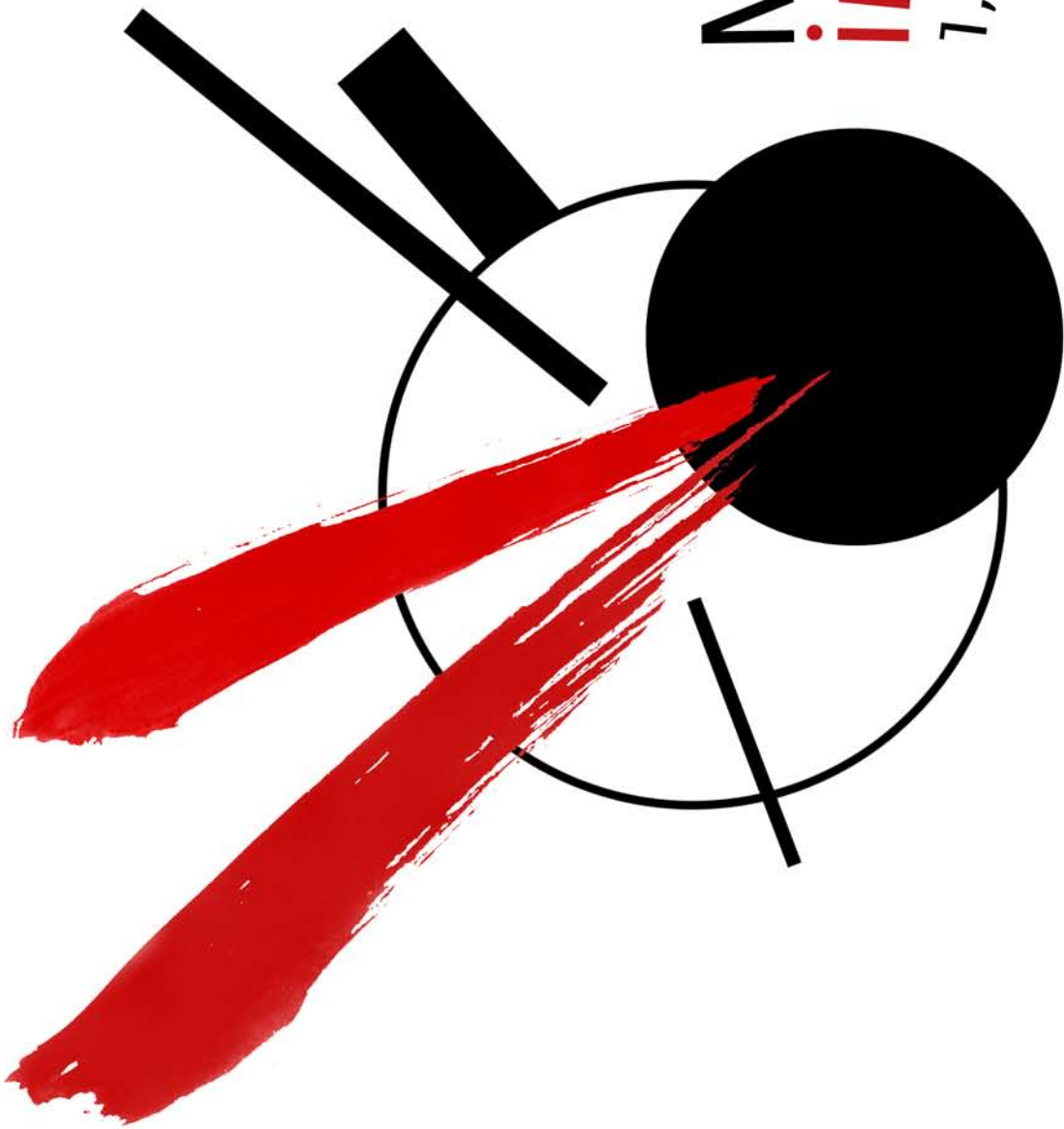


Marxist
interventions
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Submission

Articles are generally about 7,000 words long but may be significantly shorter or more extensive, depending on the nature of the material and topics.

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The case for Marxist Interventions, a new on-line journal

Australia is a class riven, unequal society. During 2008 it became apparent that the Australian economy, free from recessions since the early 1990s is not bullet proof and that capital accumulation, in all parts of the global economy, is inherently crisis-prone. For more than three decades the left and organised working class in Australia has been in uneven retreat. This has been one factor that contributed to the vigour of the economy. Nevertheless, periods of low level class conflict have been punctuated by dramatic bursts of struggle from below, most recently against the invasion of Iraq in 2002-2003 and during the early stages of the union campaign against the Howard Government's WorkChoices industrial relations laws. Campaigns in other parts of the planet, notably against neo-liberal globalisation and the attack on Iraq have promoted Australian struggles.

Yet Australian Marxist research and discussion takes place in a difficult environment. The Marxist left is small. Not only the right but also ALP governments and the academic mainstream are hostile to working class and social movement activism and Marxist perspectives. Despite the difficulties, a considerable number of Marxist writers continue to make important contributions. Much of the resulting work, however, appears fragmentarily in a variety of journals which cater to academic audiences uninformed about or unsympathetic to Marxism, or remain in the form of unpublished essays and theses. It is important to find ways to make these contributions more readily accessible to an audience which can make use of them and can appreciate their significance without being tutored about basic concepts. *Marxist interventions* has done this for some time. Until recently, *MI* was a strong on-line collection of material about Australia. We feel it is time to give it a new start.

MI will now be an Australian-based on-line journal which will publish theory and empirical research informed by Marxism. There will be a bias towards Australian subject matter but *MI* will also publish material on other countries and global issues. We seek contributions from those who work in or outside universities, based in Australia or elsewhere.

In this issue

As we publish, the Australian dimension of the global economic and financial crisis is deepening, but still in its early stages. It is likely to become far more serious in coming months, and as it does we expect a major discussion among Marxists. This issue does not pre-empt that discussion, but provides some raw materials for the debate and foreshadows some likely issues.

There is likely to be a sharp debate about the costs and benefits of emissions trading. In his article, Peter Jones argues that emissions trading is not a solution to global warming but rather represents a new vehicle for capital accumulation.

We are beginning to see arguments for economic protectionism, both from vulnerable sections of capital and from the labour movement. Bill Dunn explains how about the cases for protection and free trade are, in reality, seriously exaggerated; and that both are inherently capitalist.

The roots of capitalist crises typically lie in preceding booms. For that reason, Ben Hillier reviews the recent special issue of the *Journal of Australian political economy*. Looking at the evidence, he argues that an underlying tendency for profit rates to fall even in boom times laid the basis for today's crash.

In times of crisis, both the right and social-democrats can be expected to play the race card. In a discussion of the Howard era, Rick Kuhn considers how the Howard government used racism to manage the political situation.

The Great Depression culminated in world war, and while it would be rash to forecast this for the near future, imperialist conflict is likely to sharpen. Tom O'Lincoln challenges conventional views about the Pacific war.

To meet the political challenges of capitalism in crisis, the left needs organisation. But what kind? Louis Proyect, moderator of the Marxmail internet discussion list, debates Mick Armstrong, author of *From little things big things grow*.

In responding to crises of the present, we draw on the legacies of the past. One such legacy comes from Jeff Goldhar, revolutionary activist who died not much more than a decade ago. His bequest has enabled many socialist ventures to succeed, as Janey Stone explains.