BOOK PROSPECTUS

Title: *Capitalism, Democracy, Socialism: Critical Debates*
Editors: James Chamberlain and Albena Azmanova

1. **Overview of the book**

Humanity stands on the precipice of a planetary catastrophe of its own making. Global capitalism has so fundamentally transformed the planet and threatened the conditions for life that it has arguably created its own geological epoch. At the same time, it has failed to deliver its promise of prosperity for all, instead driving an ever-deeper wedge between the haves and the have-nots. The recent wave of social protest across the globe signals an urgent need to rethink the parameters of the socio-political models within which humanity manages its existence. Can democracy and capitalism thrive together? Is socialism a viable and a desirable alternative? What are the forms of emancipatory action and critical thought that can effectively chart a way forward? This book addresses these and other “critical debates” in eleven short chapters, which will be concise and accessible enough to appeal to a non-specialist audience, while remaining valuable as a reference for academics and students alike. We believe that the breadth of this undertaking combined with our collaborative international authorship makes this book unique in the market and that Haymarket would be the ideal press to publish it.

The critical debates:

1. Capitalism and Democracy: Complementarity, Complicity, Conflict, Compatibility
2. Privatization/Governance of the commons
3. Finance/ The financialization of capitalism
4. Global financial crisis and digital connectivity
5. Technology and the future of work
6. Sustainability: the pressures of the growth, jobs, and environmental protection agendas
7. Alternative economics, radical social practices, and emancipatory transformations
8. International Development, human rights and cosmopolitanism
9. Feminist Theory and the demands of social solidarity
10. Political ideologies, socialism, and leftist theory
11. ‘Ideal’ v/s ‘real’ theory: on the nature of emancipatory critique

While there are a plethora of studies examining the individual issues just identified, we believe that there is great value in a more holistic approach that brings these critical reflections into a single volume.

2. **Motivation and Goals**

This book, collectively authored by members of the Research Committee on Socialism, Capitalism and Democracy (part of the International Political Science Association) and co-edited by James Chamberlain and Albena Azmanova, critically analyzes the current historical conjuncture with an eye to its emergent alternatives. Given the coexistence of economic growth with impoverishment, we need to explore the relationship between growth, jobs, social power and political influence. While Asia has managed to reduce poverty rapidly, largely due to the contributions of China, India and Indonesia, extreme poverty is growing in 30 countries, especially in sub-Saharan Africa. The World
Bank has pledged to fight poverty by promoting economic growth “in an inclusive, labor intensive way,” yet it is questionable whether enough growth and jobs could be created to employ the billions of peasants who would be displaced by the adoption of capitalist agriculture that the WTO, the World Bank, and IMF have proposed. Indeed, according to the Director-General of the International Labour Organization, despite the stabilization of the global unemployment rate, “decent work deficits remain widespread: the global economy is still not creating enough jobs.”

Moreover, successful economic development in the BRIC countries remains largely dependent on the environmentally harmful extraction of raw materials, notwithstanding clean energy innovations. Even the advanced capitalist democracies show long-term symptoms of crisis that may also be mutually reinforcing: declining growth, increasing indebtedness, and increasing inequality.

In the decade that followed the economic crisis of 2008-2009, the hegemony of neoliberal capitalism has experienced widespread challenges. On one front, anti-establishment protests and occupations of city squares around the globe – from Spain to the United States – burst the bubble of apparent consent to the neoliberal order that had appeared intact since the mass anti-war marches in the early 2000s. Many of these mobilizations declared themselves to defy the left-right divide and opposed political partisanship and institutionalised politics altogether. Some of these movements translated their efforts into success at the ballot box, with the emergence of Podemos in Spain and Syriza in Greece, while more radical currents found greater support within established parties like the US Democrats and the UK Labour party. Most recently, the ‘yellow vests’ movement in France has declared its ambitions to run at the next European Parliament elections. On another front, the neoliberal hegemony and its related internationalism has suffered at least a rhetorical defeat with the election of right-wing populists like Donald Trump in the United States, Viktor Orbán in Hungary, and Andrzej Duda in Poland, as well as the result of the referendum in Britain to leave the European Union, in a gesture of regaining national sovereignty. The extent to which this right-turn genuinely challenges the neoliberal status quo remains an open question. The fact that autocratic leaders have risen to power on the basis of democratic electoral politics, however, makes it imperative to revisit some of the established truths about democracy and liberalism. Finally, since the 1970s Latin America has been ground zero for neoliberal capitalism, as well as various socialist experiments opposed to it under the banner of the Pink Tide. Ambitious redistributive policies and impressive growth brought significant declines in poverty: in Uruguay, for example, poverty fell from 39.9% to 9.7% between 2004 and 2014. However, the contemporary situation in the region is complex, with high-profile corruption scandals and poorly performing economies contributing to a rightward swing in several countries.

Despite the obvious shocks to neoliberalism that we have witnessed, the political rationalities and policies of neoliberal capitalism appear to have survived relatively unscathed. At such a time of hegemonic instability, the time is ripe for an empirically and theoretically rich critique of contemporary capitalism as a social formation. This task is made all the more urgent given the pressing existential threats of climate change, poverty, as well as the range of physical, psychological and emotional harms suffered as a result of political instability and economic turmoil. Indeed, we need to elucidate the inner workings of capitalism as it exists on a global scale, paying particular attention to its entanglements with these very problems if we are to successfully address them. This in turn requires an account of the relationship between capitalism on the one hand, and democracy and human rights on the other. Finally, in approaching the question of alternatives, we need to pay attention to both actually existing alternative practices, as well as more utopian theorizing.
3. Overview of the chapters:

1. Capitalism and Democracy: Complementarity, Complicity, Conflict, Compatibility (Brian Milstein)

Classical liberals maintain that democracy cannot exist without capitalism, arguing that the freedom democracy requires is compatible only with a competitive market system. In contrast, orthodox Marxists often claimed that democracy—at least in its received liberal and parliamentary forms—functions as little more than an instrument of bourgeois political and cultural hegemony. Such views see capitalism and democracy as somehow complementary or complicitous, but others take them to be in fundamental conflict. A number of recent theorists have raised doubts that the two can coexist in the long term, viewing their relationship as unstable and prone to repeated political crises, with one able to prosper only at the expense of the other. Such claims have become especially commonplace about globalized, “neoliberal” capitalism, provoking questions about the effects of global corporations, financial markets, and international organizations on democratic self-determination and state capacity. But perhaps capitalism and democracy are neither inherently complementary nor inherently conflictual, and perhaps there are ways to make them compatible with each other. From the perspective of democratic theory, we can raise questions about the demands of a flourishing democratic society and how capitalist dynamics might promote or stifle them. What kinds of freedom and equality does democracy require, and what relations of production, allocation, and distribution are necessary to sustain them?

2. Privatization/Governance of the commons (Soledad Soza)

At least since Aristotle’s critique of Plato’s proposal for the ruling class of an ideal republic to share property in common, the debate has raged over whether goods should be held privately, publicly by the state, or in common by members of non-state communities. For some, like Thomas More’s fictional Raphael Hythloday in Utopia, private property makes justice and prosperity all but impossible; for others, like More himself, private property is needed for order, motivation and authority. Historically, the development of capitalism is inextricably linked with the enclosure of common land. This process continues to the present in the form of land grabbing in the developing world and the transformation of peasant into industrial agriculture. Broader conceptualizations of the commons that include knowledge, language, and culture, for instance, also highlight capitalism’s privatizing drive as more of these socially produced goods become commoditized. But how far can privatization go before undermining the basis of capitalism itself? If societies cannot be “commodities all the way down,” as Nancy Fraser has put it, which aspects of social life cannot or must not be privatized for capitalism to maintain itself? Is privatization positive for some goods but negative for others? This chapter takes up these questions with a particular focus on Latin America, whose reliance on the extraction of natural resources as a source of revenue clearly raises challenges for sustainability. Key questions that this chapter will address are as follows: to what extent can privatization be used as a tool to minimize environmental damage (to avoid the ‘tragedy of the commons’), or does privatization necessarily come at the cost of good governance? What explains Latin America’s history of lax environmental legislation? What constraints do contemporary international norms inscribed in free trade agreements place on the activities of transnational corporations? Why have leftist governments in Latin America failed to adopt stricter environmental standards and not
attempted to bring environmental science into the democratic process?

3. Finance/ The financialization of capitalism (Steven Klein)

According to many accounts, we currently live in an era of “financialization,” in which financial instruments and institutions play an increasingly outsized role in capitalist economies. This financialization takes several forms: the increasing share of overall capitalist profits arising from banking and financial companies, the rise of systemic risks due to financial markets, and the rise of individual debt and involvement in the financial system. This chapter examines the recent empirical debates around financialization and situates them in a set of broader normative and political questions: What is finance? How should critical approaches to capitalism conceptualize money, debt, and credit? To what extent does financialization mark a break or transformation in the history of capitalism? How does the financial sector relate to other aspects of capitalism, such as the relationship between labor and capital? How are financial practices shaped by inequalities of gender and race? How are financial crises changing the nature of capitalism? To what extent are movements like Modern Monetary Theory (MMT) useful for thinking about emancipatory projects related to finance? Can finance be “regulated” and subordinated to democratic institutions? Or do we need a much more fundamental rethinking of the nature of finance so as to make it compatible with democracy and equality?

4. Global financial crisis and digital connectivity (Ebru Tekin)

Although global financial crises are the systemic outcomes of the long durée of world economies, attempts to overcome these crises vary with new emerging technologies. Emerging technologies aim to make and expand markets with low transaction costs by enabling productive interactions with low risk options. Digital connectivity through different forms of networks creates diverse socio-technical tools, such as the sharing economy and blockchain technologies. These technologies link mechanisms of global inequality with classes and nations as well as enable interacting units to access new markets (with shared network). In addition, such technologies ensure visibility (with transparency), as well as remote exchange (for those who are not part of the financial system). With open collaboration, sustainability, inclusion and accountability, these technologies might represent an emerging structure where any transactions including finance, health care, supply chain, insurance, property, smart contracts, donation and record keeping are performed within distributed platforms. Do these technologies just represent a cyclical time of ups and downs within the framework of the post-crisis period; or do they represent the emerging forms of structuring and interacting among classes and nations in the face of inequalities? To what extent do these technologies serve the emancipatory aspirations of those who are excluded from the financial system and how might they promote democracy by eliminating intermediaries or by enabling transparency?

5. Technology and the future of work (James Chamberlain)

Analyses of the effects of previous technological innovation on employment reveal a mixed picture: the introduction of new technology ‘displaced’ workers but it also led to the creation of new jobs. Avoiding a deterministic view of technology, this suggests that the future of work in the context of technological change depends (at least in part) on who controls the (development of) technology as well as broader political debates about the meaning and value of work. Key
questions and debates in this area include the following: what drives employment-related technological development and what determines whether the benefits accrue mainly to capitalists or mainly to workers? How does the adoption of technology create and maintain the contemporary class structure, and what measures would alleviate if not remove these divisions? What constraints does capitalism place on the use of technology for emancipatory goals? In what areas do humans still possess a “comparative advantage” over robots and artificial intelligence? Are there types of work that only humans can or should perform, such as certain aspects of care work, art, and intellectual pursuits? Can and should we use technology to create a post-work society? How has the development and use of technology shaped the meaning of work itself, and how might it do so in the future?

6. Sustainability: the pressures of the growth, jobs, and environmental protection agendas (Ebru Tekin)

The political economy of sustainability focuses on several key areas: environment (e.g., transportation, land management, waste management), management (e.g., with corporate social responsibility strategies), social justice (e.g. countering inequality and exclusion), economic efficiency (e.g. optimal use of resources in the pursuit of prosperity) and technology (e.g. by creating platform technologies). Academic and policy debates on sustainability encompass two sets of issues: (1) How to ensure the system’s continuity and maintenance; and (2) Whether there is a viable alternative to the existing system. Key questions that this chapter considers include: How does the sustainability agenda generate new tools of market making? Who gets what within these emerging areas of collaboration and divergence? How do these new intervention areas affect mobility? How do they contribute to job creation, social inclusion and civic engagement?

7. Alternative economics, radical social practices, and emancipatory transformations (Tukumbi Lumumba-Kasongo)

The failure of neoliberal globalization to produce wealth for all is accelerating the demands for different systems of economic development. Alternative economics involves innovation and transformations in production and consumption, policy, social practices, and world politics. This chapter examines the agencies, institutions, forums, schools of thought, and social and economic forces that have been defining these alternatives the world over. The focus is on new ways of thinking and analyzing, which can help guide new policy formulation aiming at emancipatory societal transformations. Important questions include: Why does the world need new alternative economics? What theories should be used to explain these alternatives? How are these alternatives reflected in real objective conditions at the class, ethnic, national, regional and international economic development levels? Who should control these alternatives? What kinds of international relations and power system can be projected as a result of these transformations?

8. International Development, human rights and cosmopolitanism (James Chamberlain)

Since the Millennium Development Goal of halving extreme poverty was met in 2010 (five years early), proponents of market liberalization have praised globally integrated capitalism for lifting nearly a billion people out of destitution. On the other hand, critics point to increasing inequality
and the fact that global capitalism has decimated opportunities for living without money by replacing subsistence with market economies. In the area of human rights, economic growth might provide increased revenue with which countries can improve their human rights records, but the human rights movement itself has been largely ineffective at reducing inequality, while the actions of multinational corporations, often in collusion with governments, have resulted in countless human rights violations. Finally, neoliberal capitalism has been associated with cosmopolitanism and open borders, yet some critics of capitalism also espouse these positions. This chapter disentangles these knots by addressing the following questions. First, what are the particular forms that development, human rights, and cosmopolitanism take under the auspices of contemporary global capitalism? Can development and human rights both benefit from and “tame” capitalism? Or do the constraints that capitalism places on states make development and human rights little more than legitimating ideology? What are viable alternative visions of development, human rights, and cosmopolitanism in the contemporary conjuncture?

9. Feminist Theory and the demands of social solidarity (Rochelle DuFord)

The popularity of social democratic reforms has sharply risen with the unexpected success of Jeremy Corbyn’s Labor Party and the quickly expanding membership in organizations such as Democratic Socialists of America. This has triggered a shift in the agenda of progressive politics from the focus on civil rights and identity recognition typical of the New Left to the classical considerations of economic and social justice. This has raised concerns about the compatibility of feminist thought and socialist solidarity. While these considerations once were configured as debates between culture and economics, or redistribution and recognition, they now appear as debates between two political goals: so-called identity politics, with the goal of representation, and universalizing materialist politics, with the goal of redistribution of wealth. Key questions and debates in this area include: What is social solidarity, and is it inherently democratic? Is feminist solidarity fundamentally different from social solidarity? How can considerations of recognition be synthesized with the need for wealth redistribution? Can feminist solidarity alone oppose structures of domination imposed by late-stage capitalism? Are universal programs a method of building social solidarity at the expense of representational concerns? What impact do relations of power have on social solidarity and what ought we to do about them? How can feminist theory help us identify domination within the sphere of social solidarity? Are certain forms of solidarity better suited to international and transnational people’s movements? Can building feminist solidarity influence general social solidarity?

10. Political ideologies, socialism, and leftist theory (María G. Navarro)

At present, capitalism has given rise to new forms of social antagonism that are crucial to understanding the development of leftist theory. The use of machines and of Artificial Intelligence in the field of industrial robotics contributes to a dramatic decrease in the number of employed human workers. At the time of the so-called fourth industrial revolution, one of the principal challenges faced by socialism and leftist theory is how to employ capital in a useful way in a society of work that abolishes work. Key questions and debates in this area include the following: What kind of socio-political and economic proposals are put forward by socialism in
the 21st century? What is the relationship between leftist theory and the cooperative incentives that might induce individuals to work for the collective interest? In which ways could the traditional concept of class struggle be useful for political approaches to the phenomenon of precarity? Could and should information and communication technologies have an influence over socialist models for job balance and incentives? What kind of communitarian ideals does socialism sustain against social Darwinism? How have theories on social capital, socialism and leftist theory evolved?

11. ‘Ideal’ v/s ‘real’ theory: on the nature of emancipatory critique (Albena Azmanova)

If social criticism and political mobilisation are to be grounded in intellectual critique, what type of conceptualization is to guide emancipatory action? How would we select the norms of justice and standards of evaluation and how would we explicate and justify the logic of that selection? Moreover, any critique that strives to be both politically salient and morally rigorous faces a challenge: The more we relax the normative criteria of justice for the sake of enhancing the theory’s political relevance, the weaker becomes its critical potential. Reversely, the more it increases its normative stringency for the sake of critical vigor, the less politically useful a theory becomes. In both cases, the objective of assisting social criticism and emancipatory political action is imperiled. This chapter will review how the main critiques of capitalism and visions of alternative social formations have responded to this challenge.

4. Background of the Editors

James Chamberlain
Dr. James Chamberlain is an Assistant Professor of Political Science at Mississippi State University, where he specializes in political theory. He holds a PhD in political science from the University of Washington. Throughout his research, James engages with both ‘continental’ and ‘analytic’ traditions of political philosophy, as well as relevant work in the social sciences and humanities. Building on his 2018 book, Undoing Work, Rethinking Community (Cornell University Press), James’s current and recent research focuses on migration, borders, and cosmopolitanism with articles in those areas area published in Philosophy and Social Criticism, Constellations and Theory and Event.

Albena Azmanova
Dr. Albena Azmanova is Associate Professor of Political and Social Thought at the University of Kent’s Brussels School of International Studies, where she directs the postgraduate program in International Political Economy. She holds a PhD degree from the New School for Social Research in New York. Her writing has aimed to bring the critique of political economy (back) into critical social theory; her research focuses on the dynamics of contemporary capitalism, spanning issues of political economy and ideological orientations. Her book-length publications include Capitalism on Edge: radical change without Crisis, Revolution or Utopia, Columbia University Press, 2019, forthcoming; with Mihaela Mihai (eds.) Reclaiming Democracy: Judgment, Responsibility and the Right to Politics, Routledge, 2015; The Scandal of Reason: A Critical Theory of Political Judgment, New York: Columbia University Press, 2012; with Marc Pallemaerts (eds.) The EU and Sustainable Development: Internal and External Dimensions. Brussels: Politea and VUB University Press, 2006.
5. Background of the Authors
As noted, this book is a collaborative project of an international group of political scientists working on debates pertaining to socialism, capitalism, and democracy. Each chapter will be co-authored by several members of the Research Committee but coordinated by one or two lead members, as follows.

Rochelle DuFord
Rochelle DuFord is currently an Assistant Professor of Philosophy at University of North Carolina, Wilmington. She completed her Ph.D. at Binghamton University in the program for Social, Political, Ethical, and Legal (SPEL) Philosophy. She is particularly interested in normative and conceptual problems that arise from the states system, global/transnational democracy, and international law. Her work is driven by a critical concern with the development of political, ethical, and social life under contemporary conditions of globalization, late capitalism, and liberalism. She is currently completing her first book project, which concerns the application of feminist and democratic theories of solidarity in contemporary political and economic conditions. Her work can be found in *Journal of the American Philosophical Association*, *Hypatia*, and *Ethics & Global Politics*.

Steven Klein
Steven Klein is a political theorist with research interests in democratic theory, critical social theory, theories of political economy, and the history of European social and political thought (especially of 19th and 20th Germany). He is Assistant Professor of Political Science and University Term Professor at the University of Florida. Thematically, his work addresses concerns such as the nature of social domination in contemporary societies and the relationship between democratic action and the institutional structure of the welfare state and capitalism. His articles have appeared or are forthcoming in *Sociological Theory*, the *American Political Science Review*, the *American Journal of Political Science*, and the *Journal of Politics*. He has held fellowships from the European University Institute, the Mellon Foundation, and the “Transformations of the State” Research Cluster at the Universität Bremen. He received his PhD from the University of Chicago.

Tukumbi Lumumba-Kasongo
Tukumbi Lumumba-Kasongo is Professor of Political Science at Wells College in Aurora, New York where he is also Chair of Department of International Studies. He has taught political science at various universities and colleges in the USA and Africa, which includes: Cornell University; Vassar College; Bard College; University of Massachusetts at Boston; Wellesley College; Suffolk University; University of Liberia in Monrovia where he was Chair of Department of Political Science; He has also been Visiting Research Fellow, Center for the Study of International Cooperation in Education (CICE), Hiroshima University, Higashi-Hiroshima, Japan. In 2018, he was a fellow at Stellenbosch Institute of Advanced Study at Stellenbosch University in South Africa.

Brian Milstein
Brian Milstein is a research associate and lecturer in international political theory at Goethe-Universität Frankfurt, where he works on questions related to crisis theory and the concept of crisis in social and political thought. He received his Ph.D. from the New School for Social Research and received the Hannah Arendt Award in Politics for his dissertation work on Kant, Habermas, and the pathologies of the modern international state system. Milstein has held postdoctoral fellowships at

**María G. Navarro**

María G. Navarro works at the Department of Legal History and Philosophy of Law, Moral and Politics (University of Salamanca, Spain). Her research interests include Deliberative Democracy, Social Capital, New Institutionalism, Argumentation theories, and Hermeneutics.

**Soledad Soza**

Soledad Soza is Professor of International Relations, Universidad Catolica de Temuco; Professor of Public Policy, Universidad de los Lagos; Global Affairs Analyst, Country Risk Chile. Research interests include "institutional change, institutions, and democracy, all of these in my research publication with a case study on Chile's political cycle 1989-2018, (a comparative study on democracy consolidation). Just recently such an area has moved to include weak environmental governance and the negative externalities of the globalized market of aquaculture or salmon-farm in the south of Chile (antibiotics, escapes, biodiversity). This year I was accepted as a plenary member of the Chilean Association of Political Science."

**Ebru Tekin**

Ebru Tekin Bilbil received her Ph.D. in Political Science and International Relations in 2012 from the University of Boğaziçi, Turkey. In 2009, she visited the Dublin City University as a researcher. Her Ph.D. dissertation was entitled "The Politics of Uncertainty in a Global Market: The Hazelnut Exchange and Its Production". Her research is on the intersection of sociology, political science, and economics. She teaches on sociology and research methods. Theoretically, her research looks at market studies, networks, uncertainty, technology and governance. She is member of several national and international professional associations and specialist groups on political science.

6. **Market and Competing Titles**

We believe that the book will be of interest to academics and students, as well as non-academic readers, hence our interest in publishing with Haymarket. The relatively short entries/chapters are intended to provide an overview of the main concepts and debates in each area. As such, they will be concise and accessible to a non-specialist audience, while remaining valuable as a reference for academics looking for a panoramic view of the conjuncture. We believe that the breadth of this undertaking combined with the collaborative authorship makes this book unique in the market.

7. **Writing Timetable**

June-September: each group drafts their individual chapters
September-October: individual chapters circulated among co-editors for editing
October-November: final round of edits
December: Manuscript complete and ready for copyediting

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