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Capitalism Reorganized: Social Justice after Neo-liberalism

Albena Azmanova

Introduction: Prospects at the Latest *Fin-de-siècle*

If there were ever a time when the Enlightenment's emancipatory promise for a life of individual autonomy and experimental self-realization seemed close to fulfillment, it was the decade of the 1990s in advanced industrial democracies. This was not just the most prosperous decade in recorded history, measured in terms of economic growth.¹ The "roaring 1990s" have also been celebrated for the unprecedented breakdown of institutional and occupational hierarchies, as the new knowledge-based economy increased professional heterogeneity and unleashed a cornucopia of earning opportunities, thus allowing unprecedented flexibility of lifestyles and increased personal chances and choices over a lifetime.² The 1990s have been extolled for the proliferation of forms of ownership and tenure that led to the diffusion of class; for the rise of participatory and deliberative forms of democratic politics; for the growth of post-materialism, as political engagement with issues of identity, lifestyle and the environment came to trump the standard "bread-and-butter" economic concerns with productivity and redistribution. Being the apex of neo-liberal capitalism, the 1990s of course carried all the marks of the epoch's ambivalence – from the astounding increase of wealth to its conspicuously unequal distribution and the rising ecological costs of growth. I am, nevertheless, referring here to a strand of critique that emerged from the Left – a critique that defamed the old centralized Fabian model of welfare governance for its alienating tendencies and commended the reformed welfare state of the late twentieth century for re-empowering citizens.³ In this vein, proponents of the individualization theory of advanced modernity (such as Anthony Giddens, Zygmunt Bauman and Ulrich Beck) have praised what they saw as the rise of individual agency in the constitution of life situations. In their accounts, institutional liberalization and depoliticization of production in the framework of the reformed welfare state of the late twentieth century allowed for the expansion of human autonomy and choice.⁴ These analyses resonate with Marcuse's forecast, advanced four decades earlier, for ending alienated labor by means of rational mastery of advanced technology, thereby completely merging work and play, productive and creative work, in our daily lives.⁵ Homo Faber and Zoon Politicon appeared to be not just making a place for Homo Ludens, but even to be befriendng him.

The past *fin-de-siècle* conjuncture seemed effectively to contain a particularly strong de-commodifying potential (i.e. possibilities to exit the labor market with little or no loss of income).⁶ As the facility and speed of wealth creation that the knowledge economy enabled was combined with flexibility of employment and diversification of sources of income, an effective possibility emerged to loosen the link between the productive capacity of our societies and the dependency of needs' satisfaction on an individual's engagement with the process of material production. To the extent that the structural constraints of capitalism allowed, it seemed that, for a moment, the lifeworld was not only gaining autonomy from the systems of economic production and political administration,⁷ but was even mobilizing them

to its advantage.⁸ Thus, the peculiar context of the 1990s appeared to have combined the best features of the three consecutive models of capitalism: the entrepreneurial autonomy of 19th century liberal capitalism, the economic security of state-managed capitalism (the post-war welfare state), and the prosperity produced under the neo-liberal form that dominated the last two decades of the 20th century.

The spectacular emancipatory opening of the 1990s is speedily closing while, as I will argue in what follows, neo-liberal capitalism is transforming into a new model, marked by changes in the structures of the political economy and political competition that, combined, induce the deepened commodification of labor. While only two decades ago prognoses of the coming of the leisure society in the post-industrial West occupied the public imagination,⁹ there is overwhelming evidence that, despite the new material opportunities for voluntary exit from the labor market that the new economy contains, we are actually working more, and longer.¹⁰ (To the extent that work-related anxiety disorders are a psychological symptom of alienation, the sharp increase of work-related depression in recent years¹¹ would have fascinated Adorno and Horkheimer.) This tension between the unprecedented possibilities for exit from the labor market and rapidly increasing labor commodification constitutes one of the paradoxes in terms of which Martin Hartman and Axel Honneth have suggested, in this journal, to conceptualize contemporary capitalism.¹²

In the analysis that follows, I pay particular attention to the closure, within the span of the first decade of this century, of the de-commodification policy perspective in advanced industrial democracies. The post-war welfare state, in its national variations and cross-national modalities,¹³ has been marked by the co-existence of two normative imperatives and, related to them, policy trajectories. The first places an emphasis on labor de-commodification, defined as exit from the labor market with little or no loss of income. From the legal limitation of working hours, to various instruments for income maintenance (especially means-tested benefits not predicated on employment), state-monitored social security allowed for the (relative) decoupling of the productivist logic of markets and the valorization of human life. This trajectory in the existence of the welfare state I will call the “emancipation” perspective. On the other hand is the imperative of high labor force participation, which valorizes and pursues labor’s engagement with production. I will call this policy trajectory the “commodification” perspective. It is the success of the decommodification agenda, and the shift it enabled from issues of economic security to those of identity and lifestyle, that opened the cognitive space for the “recognition” agenda in justice debates in the 1980s, both in Europe and the U.S. The current erosion of the decommodification perspective in social provision is thus likely to have adverse effect on the recognition agenda. (To evoke Nancy Fraser, no recognition without redistribution, indeed.¹⁴)

A systematic shift from state-centered to market-centered social provision has been taking place over the past twenty years, across the various models of “welfare capitalism” – a transition from “welfare” to “workfare,” i.e. the conditioning of social provision on labor-market participation.¹⁵ Governments belonging to both main political families of the Left and the Right have undertaken such reforms.¹⁶ This revision of the welfare state (in the direction of the so called “Third Way”) has meant a shift in the balance between the emancipatory and the commodification trajectories in favor of the latter and a closure of the opportunity for de-commodification that the new economy had briefly created at the close of the last century.

I propose to explore the causes of this closure within a hypothesis about the emergence of “reorganized” capitalism as consecutively the fourth model of capitalism – after the 19th century entrepreneurial form, the post-liberal “organized” capitalism of the welfare state, and the “disorganized” neo-liberal model of the late 20th century. I attribute the waning

of the decommodification perspective in social provision to peculiarities of the new model of capitalism concerning (1) the key dynamics of social stratification, (2) the matrix of state-society relations, and (3) the structure of electoral mobilization of advanced industrial democracies. I consider the emergence of this new model of capitalism as preceding the global economic meltdown of 2008–2009 and therefore not triggered by it. First, I will argue that recent changes in the structure of the political economy of advanced industrial democracies turns the productive *capacity* of these societies into an *imperative* to work even when de-commodification options are politically available. This results from the emergence of a new structural cleavage around institutionalized exposure to the opportunities and risks of globalization. Second, this new structural cleavage brings about a new pattern of state-society relations (what I will describe as the “daddy state”), which affects the nature of political mobilization and fosters the valorization of labor commodification into a normative standard of justice, leading to the fetishization of productive capacity *per se*. Third, I will argue that changes in the structure of political competition preclude the formation of alliances of social forces supporting de-commodification policies. The new structural cleavage runs across, rather than along, the capital-labor dynamics of conflict and relates to the left–right ideological axis. This is splitting the Left and placing its typical constituencies in opposition to each other. As a result, I will argue, the alliance of social forces that had supported policies of labor decommodification throughout the 20th century is eroding, which effectively brings about the demise of the emancipatory trajectory of the 1990s, thus making way for a new form of institutionalized redistribution of resources from labor to capital typical of the new model of capitalism.

Before addressing these three hypotheses in the second part of this paper, I will, in its first part, review relevant elements in the evolution of the structure of the political economy and the structure of political competition in advanced industrial democracies in the twentieth century in order to set up the background of the current emergence of “re-organized” capitalism as a sequentially fourth constellation of institutionalized state-society relations within the lifespan of capitalism.¹⁷

1. Political Economy and Political Mobilization in the 20th Century

a) From Liberal to Administered Capitalism

Nineteenth-century entrepreneurial capitalism had combined institutional autonomy for the individual with economic constraints to that autonomy known as labor commodification. The “administered” or “monopoly” capitalism that emerged in the 1930s and consolidated in different forms of welfare states after World War II was marked by the subordination of profitability to growth as a key economic imperative. The policy debate thus began to revolve around economic growth, market regulation, and social transfer systems. Already in their early analyses of the transition from the 19th century entrepreneurial capitalism to the “administered” societies of corporate capitalism,¹⁸ the founders of the Frankfurt School lamented the loss of individuality and autonomy that this transformation entailed. The shift from entrepreneurial capitalism to the post-liberal model meant a rationalization of capital mediated by the state, a process in which the institutional management of the economy incurred the increasing extension of collective capital over every facet of life and thus, the negation of liberalism. The politicization of economic production, together with the development of the culture industry (as it incurs the colonization of consciousness), destroyed the spaces of individual autonomy that had been available under entrepreneurial

capitalism.¹⁹ Within the lifetime of welfare capitalism, these losses to individual agency were only partially compensated for (but not offset) by the policies of de-commodification – since gains in autonomy from the market have been contingent upon the strong institutional agency of the state. Yet labor de-commodification – or the reduced dependence on the market for needs satisfaction, had been the single most formidable achievement of that period.

The rise of post-materialism is testimony to the social achievement of this period. In the analysis of Ronald Inglehart, based on the World Values Survey, socialization in the conditions of economic affluence and security in the framework of the post-war welfare state has led people to embrace post-material values linked to self-expression, freedom, and quality of life. This resulted in the shift, since the 1970s, from class-based to quality-of-life politics; from the “old politics” of bread-and-butter concerns (such as income and housing) to “new politics” centered on lifestyle, self-expression, citizen democracy, identity rights and concerns with the environment.²⁰

The map of political contestation that was established in the lifetime of entrepreneurial capitalism around a fundamental capital–labor relationship remained valid throughout the lifespan of post-liberal (welfare) capitalism, structuring ideological orientation and electoral competition around a left-right axis.²¹ Let us briefly recall this map in order to clarify the relevant, for this analysis, relationship between the structure of political competition and that of the political economy (Chart 1).

Ideological competition within the advanced capitalist democracies of the twentieth century has been broadly structured along two axes – an economic one, stretching between free market (capitalist) and regulated market (socialist) poles; and a cultural one, opposing libertarian to authoritarian values. While ideological positions are structured around (at least) two dimensions – the aggregation of citizens’ policy preferences, on the one hand, and the political competition among parties, on the other – take place along a single, usually “left–right,” dimension. On the level of “political demand” (by society), this axis aggregates the diverse positions into contrasting policy stances (i.e. in favor or against state regulation of the economy; in favor or against gender equality). On the level of “political supply” (by parties and governments), this axis serves to articulate eligible policy options. It is along this dimension that the formation of societal alliances (among socially diverse publics), and the building of political coalitions (e.g. coalitions of parties – in government as in opposition) take place.

The rise of the New Left in the 1960s altered the content, but not the structure, of political competition along a left-right axis of alignment. The productivist consensus on the welfare state (on issues of production and redistribution) was further enriched by themes of identity politics (valorization of difference) and global ecological concerns. Thus, a strong non-productivist dimension was added to the post-war social model. At the same time, a tension within the Left emerged between the “old” productivist concerns with growth, employment and social transfer systems and the “new” post-material values and ecological concerns which are anti-productivist in nature. However, the New Left only added an element to the old political spectrum (based on the distribution of a new good – identity recognition), without disturbing the left-right axis of political competition, as these formations usually aligned with the “old” Left in reference to social policies targeting de-commodification, global social solidarity, and cultural liberalism. In the context of the post-industrial societies of the 1970s and 1980s, collective preferences therefore began to be distributed diagonally, clustered in a “left libertarian” and “right authoritarian” corners, or in what I will refer to hereafter as Northwest-Southeast orientation.²² It was the overlapping consensus on de-commodification (of labor and nature) that became the common denominator uniting the old and the new Left, positioning the Left firmly in the North-West sector of the map of political competition. This

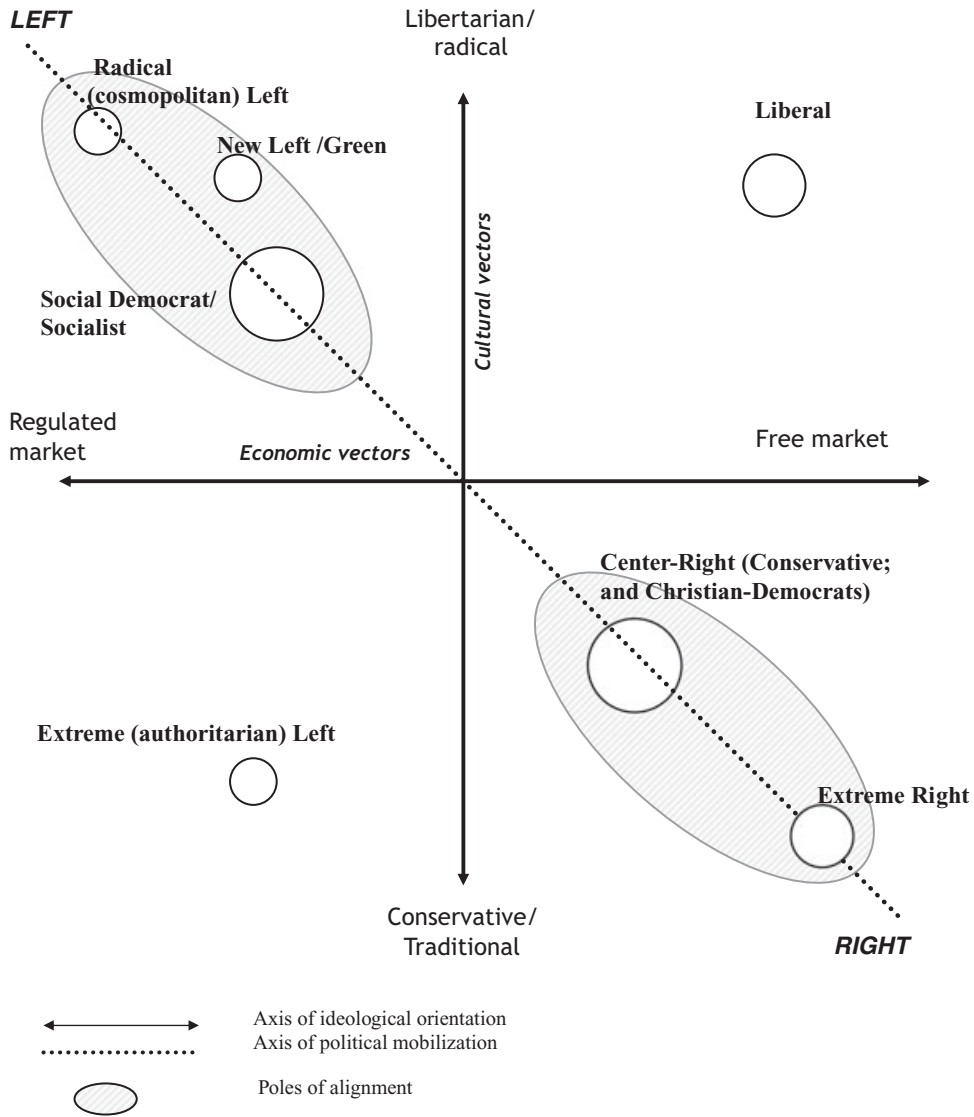


Chart 1: Political Map of the 20th Century

aggregation of societal alliances around what I named the “emancipatory” perspective in social provision (more strongly so in Europe than in the United States) secured the political mobilization for strong policies of wealth-redistribution and labor-market exit. As I will argue in the next section of this analysis, the currently emerging new structural cleavage is gradually undermining this alliance, positioning the constituencies of the “old” and the “new” Left at opposite poles in the axis of political mobilization.

b) From “Administered” to “Disorganized” Capitalism

The neo-liberal structural transformation that issued in the 1970s coincided with the growth of information technology and the transition to post-industrial societies in the late twentieth century. As is by now well-documented, the post-industrial knowledge economy of open

borders has triggered an acute transformation in work and lifestyle patterns in Western societies.²³ This constellation is marked by fragmentation at the level of political economy – both in occupational structures and institutional frameworks, inviting the label “disorganized capitalism” (Offe), in contrast to the preceding model.²⁴

Contrary to the early Frankfurt School’s skepticism about the possibility of reviving liberal capitalism, optimistic accounts emerged, especially in the 1990s, stressing the liberating potential found in what Zygmunt Bauman has called “liquid” modernity. According to such accounts, institutional liberalization and depoliticization of production in the late twentieth century have freed individual agency from both the institutional constraints of bureaucratic capitalism and the old determinations of class, creating a condition in which “individuals must produce, stage, and cobble together their biographies themselves.”²⁵ And so enters the “portfolio person” (John Gray) – a person without permanent attachment to any particular occupation or organization, able to enter and exit the labor market at will.²⁶

The fragmentation at the level of political economy (in terms of occupational structures and institutional frameworks) typical of neo-liberal, “disorganized” capitalism is paralleled by a fragmentation of the structure of political mobilization, inviting diagnoses of the end of the left-right divide. As Russell Hardin has observed, increased social mobility, occupational heterogeneity, decline of collective identities, fragmentation of group demands into particular but unrelated issues, policy convergence between parties, increased complexity and specialization of policy-making all ultimately “preclude the organization of politics along a single left-right economic dimension.”²⁷ Furthermore, Peter Mair has argued that, while the left–right continuum has effectively lost its capacity to make overall sense of mainstream politics, it is not being replaced by an alternative overarching paradigm.²⁸

Let me now turn to the exit from the third, neo-liberal, model (disorganized capitalism) and address the recent reorganization of capitalism into its fourth modality.

2. Reorganized Capitalism

We noted that the third sequential model of capitalism – i.e. the neo-liberal, “disorganized,” capitalism – had been marked by economic, institutional, and political fragmentation and pluralization. A “re-organized” model is currently emerging, as the economic and social production of risks by the knowledge economy of open borders (in shorthand – globalization) has very recently triggered a shift in the structural conditions that define postindustrial societies.

Restructuring takes place both on the level of political economy (both in terms of dynamics of social stratification and in terms of the matrix of state-society relations) and on the level of political mobilization. I will address these sets of processes in turn and examine their combined causal impact for deepening commodification.

a) Changes in the Dynamics of Stratification

While in a (idealized) market society risks and opportunities are evenly mixed for every participant, the two have become disentangled and even polarized. Indeed, in contrast to the individualization thesis discussed earlier, a plethora of recent studies have observed the emergence of “losers” (a new “*pracariat*”) and “winners” from globalization in advanced industrial democracies. What are the key dynamics of restructuring?

Increased competition in the context of global economic integration has incurred the reversal in economic priorities: profitability, rather than growth, has again become the key

economic imperative, just as had been the case in the entrepreneurial model of capitalism. To the extent that profitability is now strongly conditioned on access to the knowledge economy of open borders, this has altered the systemic dynamics of social stratification. The key dynamics of stratification now start to be linked to the social impact of the exposure to the risks and opportunities immanent in the knowledge economy of open borders. As I have established in previously published research, the polarization of life chances in the new context is no longer determined by class position (labor vs. capital), but by institutionalized access to security and opportunity.²⁹ The most powerful factor for social stratification becomes the capacity for voluntary entry into, and secure exit from, the labor market. This translates into a personalized capacity for de commodification conditioned on the type of professional skills (those securing access to the new economy) and institutionally enabled by the regulative framework of individualization that I will discuss below.

By increasing the *opportunities* for, and the *speed* of, market entry and exit, globalization indeed diminishes social closure,³⁰ diffuses class stratification, and fosters individualization. However, within this process, the very *access* to earning opportunities is stratified. Exposure to risk is stratified along globalization's two main vectors – a quantitative one linked to global economic integration in the context of open borders, and a qualitative one linked to information technology and its effects on professional occupation. Importantly, these two vectors of globalization are causing varied types of distribution of opportunities and hazards *within* capital and labor (but between economic sectors), rather than *between* social groups (such as capital and labor) within economic sectors. Note, for instance, that the biggest increase in wealth within the past decade has not been based on ownership of productive capital, but instead on the mastery of new technology in economies of scale. Opportunities have until very recently increased among those whose fortunes are tied to the “new economy” – cutting-edge, global businesses such as financial services, media and information technologies.³¹ The main factor is not ownership of productive capital, but occupational links to the new economy, which provides for both mobility and scale, thus accumulating the temporal (speed) and geographical (scope) factors in wealth-creation. The massive bail-out of financial capital over the course of 2008 is another confirmation of the uneven distribution of opportunities and risks: both opportunity and institutionalized security belong to spheres of economic activity characterized by their systemic exposure to the global economy.

It is, thus, the occupational location in the axis new-old economy that sets the logic of social stratification beyond a simple dichotomy of capital versus labor, or skilled versus unskilled labor. The distribution of opportunities and hazards is not only unequal, it does not even follow the simple logic of a growing wealth gap: over the past decade, wealth stagnation has become intertwined with insecurity for workers in the middle of the economy, while those at the top have become even richer and many poor workers have increased their wealth share.³²

b) Changes in Institutionalized State-Society Relations

What is the new matrix of state-society relations? During the third, neo-liberal stage, that matrix had been what Giandomenico Majone described as “the regulatory state” – a state that gave priority to the use of legal authority and regulation over other tools of stabilization and redistribution.³³ A peculiarity of this style of regulation is that it is individual-based. It entailed individual responsabilization, creating a framework in which individuals are not so much free, as “forced to take charge of their own life.”³⁴ Thus, the Nanny state of welfare capitalism was replaced by the Stepmother state of the neo-liberal 1980s and 1990s – a state that used legal authority to enforce individual self-reliance.

Although initially prompting individualization (and thus promising some degree of emancipation), this particular institutional logic of state-society relations has ultimately enhanced the structural imperative to commodification, and universalized it, due to the interplay of two factors:

First, since the turn of the century, economic insecurity, linked to globalization, has risen (from prospects for job outsourcing to the systemic financial risk endemic to complex financial engineering). Second, the class relationship may not have disappeared, but it has become diffused, thus turning the risks of globalization into nebulous threats. In contexts of high economic uncertainty, workers are equally threatened by loss of jobs as by the likelihood of the stock market funds in which their pension contributions are invested, to become insolvent. As sources of income (from wages to ownership of equity shares) have become both diversified and integrated, opportunities for wealth-creation and income insecurity have simultaneously increased. As a result, the opportunities for voluntary exit from the labor market, even when available, are not being used. The opportunity for paid employment is becoming an imperative for work. Survey data constantly indicate that those who have the flexibility to work less, do not.³⁵

With the rise of economic insecurity in the new century a counter-movement to institutional individualization has been emerging as citizens begin to address the state with demands for institutionally generated provisions of security and opportunity in terms of exposure to, and protection from, globalization. The Nanny state of organized capitalism, and the Stepmother state of neo-liberalism have thus made way for what could be called the Daddy state of reorganized capitalism. This state intervenes on two accounts:

First, rather than engaging with social transfer systems, the state enhances the provision of general public services. Public spending had not diminished in the neo-liberal phase. On the contrary, there had been a positive correlation between international trade exposure and the size of the public sector.³⁶ This tendency, already available under neo-liberal capitalism, has become a systemic feature of the re-organized model. As the state, allegedly, is unable to counter the domestic effect of global economic volatility, public demands emerge for compensation not so much through redistribution but via increased spending on public services.

Second, through redistributive and regulatory policies, the Daddy state intervenes to provide institutional support to business³⁷ rather than to labor. The unprecedented, extremely generous and speedy financial rescue of the credit market in the US and Europe in 2008 are an illustration of this shift in the nature of state intervention. In a short-term perspective, these policy measures amount to a large transfer of resources from lower to higher income earners. In the longer term, they hamper the standard redistributive functions of the state as the cost of the financial rescue is born by national budgets.

As a result of these changes in the structure of the political economy of advanced industrial democracies a new, more generalized type of labor commodification has established itself. In a context in which the proliferation of economic opportunities is accompanied by generalized income insecurity (despite economic growth) and institutionalized enforcement of economic self-reliance, the entrepreneurial opportunities turn into an obligation for economic enterprise (which is valid equally for labor and for the owners/managers of capital).

Thus, a normative adjustment is taking place as a strongly positive valorization of labor commodification emerges within the articulation of claims to social justice. As I noted, state-society relations are now structured by demands for provision of security and exposure to opportunity. However, political mobilization in the context marked by a high degree of insecurity over sources of income (rather than simply employment uncertainty) triggers

demands for labor-market participation as a matter of social justice. Employment is the common denominator where quests for opportunity and quests for security meet. The two purported goals of social democracy – decommodification and labor-market participation have always been in tension. However, under the threat of job dislocation in the context of global economic competition, labor-market participation wins the upper hand. It is even presented as a leading concern of social justice. It is significant, for instance, that one of the most celebrated de-commodification policies in recent years – the reduction of the working week to 35 hours in France, introduced in 2000 – aimed primarily at new job creation. The key justification for relaxing the law, since 2007, has been its failure to create employment. For the past decade, workers are accepting longer working hours, flexible employment options with poor social security coverage, as well as lower pay for the sake of job (income) preservation. In the new constellation, the state's redistributive policies target not income-generation, but employment-generation. Thus, the primary addressee of these policies are employers, rather than labor.

c) Changes in the Structure of Political Competition

Finally, how is the structure of political competition disabling the policy agenda of decommodification? As a result of the new systemic distribution of economic opportunity and risk, new fault-lines of political conflict and a new structures of political mobilization are emerging, thus ushering in a new era of electoral politics.³⁸ I will first review key changes in the content of the policy agenda that grounds political competition, before addressing the emerging structure of political contestation.

As a result of the above-reviewed changes in the structure of the political economy and in the nature of state-society relations, a new public agenda is emerging – one centered on material (economic and political) risk linked to insecurity of income and physical unsafety in the context of globalization. What we could refer to as the new *order-and-safety agenda* has four constitutive elements: physical security, political order, cultural estrangement, and income insecurity, as the economic component of the mix. Significantly, the recent resurgence of economic issues in political campaigning does not amount to a revival of the growth-and-employment agenda of the welfare state consensus. While the old paradigm is concerned with employment in terms of overall growth and efficiency, the new one refers to unemployment in terms of fear, loss, and marginalization. By combining economic and physical safety, this agenda integrates the classic (for the late twentieth-century paradigm) ideological oppositions between social justice (on the left) and law-and-order (on the right).

The rise of the new order-and-safety agenda presents a particular challenge for the Left, as this agenda is opting out to replace both the productivist agenda (of employment and redistribution) that had unified the traditional Left, as well as the post-materialist “new politics” that had mobilized the New Left (libertarian and ecological parties and movements). Note that in national elections, Left incumbents in Europe's established democracies have been persistently voted out of power, since the turn of the century, despite being often at the height of their economic performance.³⁹ These electoral misfortunes of social democracy could be traced to the incapacity of the Left to adjust to the new public demands. In contrast to right-wing parties, the centre-left cannot easily reconcile its heritage of cultural liberalism and transnational social solidarity to the new order-and-safety agenda. Political formations of the New Left have also been negatively affected. It is the eclipsing of the post-materialist agenda of the late twentieth century by the security-and-safety framework of the early twenty-first century that is among the main causes of the drop in electoral support for some

Green parties, as a part of the traditional social constituencies of the Greens (upper-middle class professionals) gives preference to countering economic risk over pursuing non-material goals. Symptomatic of this return to materialism at the turn of the century is the growth in mortgage (including sub-prime) lending, as well as the entering of housing issues (a typical bread-and-butter concern) at the center of political debate.

How does the structure of political contestation reflect the described shifts in the content of the public agenda? As I already noted, the new axial principle in conflict articulation is the distribution of globalization's risks as opportunities or hazards. Political mobilization is thus being shaped by conflicting demands for institutionalized provision of security and opportunity. This is altering the content of the economic and cultural *vectors of ideological orientation*, as well as the *axis of political competition*.

Within the general cognitive framework centered on economic and physical risk, changes are occurring in both the economic (horizontal) and cultural (vertical) axes of ideological orientation (see Chart 2):

i) The economic (horizontal) axis:

In the context of the second half of the twentieth century, the ideological contention between the Left and the Right was formed around the "free market versus regulated market" dilemma (and thus, the growth-redistribution poles). At the turn of the century, the focus on competitiveness places an emphasis on productivity, rather than overall growth. Further, the stress on competitiveness absorbs (mainstream) economic liberalism, taking it out of the key ideological debates. The growth – redistribution dialectics of the late twentieth century are currently being recast as labor-market flexibility and market openness (opportunity attitude to globalization) versus employment security and externally closed domestic markets (risk attitude to globalization).

As the productivist logic of the welfare state is being replaced by the imperative of competitiveness in the global economy, the "free-market" and "regulated market" (or socialist-capitalist) vectors are transformed into "closed economy" and "open economy" vectors. Thus, although economic liberalism is absorbed (thus, the registered reduction of ideological competition on this point), the "market openness" versus "market closure" vectors form new poles of ideological competition along the economic axis.

ii) The cultural (vertical) axis:

Equally significant is the redefinition of the cultural (vertical) axis of ideological orientation. While in the old paradigm the poles were formed on a libertarian-traditionalist axis, the recent trans-ideological orientation towards (and mainstreaming of) the order and safety agenda has meant that the ideological differences of cultural nature are formed around "cosmopolitan" (open) versus "sovereignist" (closed) poles, neither of which are averse to public preferences for order and safety. As the securitization of cultural discourse has created a consensus on order-and-safety (and caused the marginalization of the libertarian alternative), the "libertarian" versus "authoritarian" vectors are thus converting into "cosmopolitan" versus "sovereignist" ones.

iii) The axis of political competition

Prompted by the new axis of social conflict (in terms of institutionalized exposure to globalization-incurred risk), an opportunity–adversity cleavage in political mobilization is emerging, shaped by attitudes to globalization.

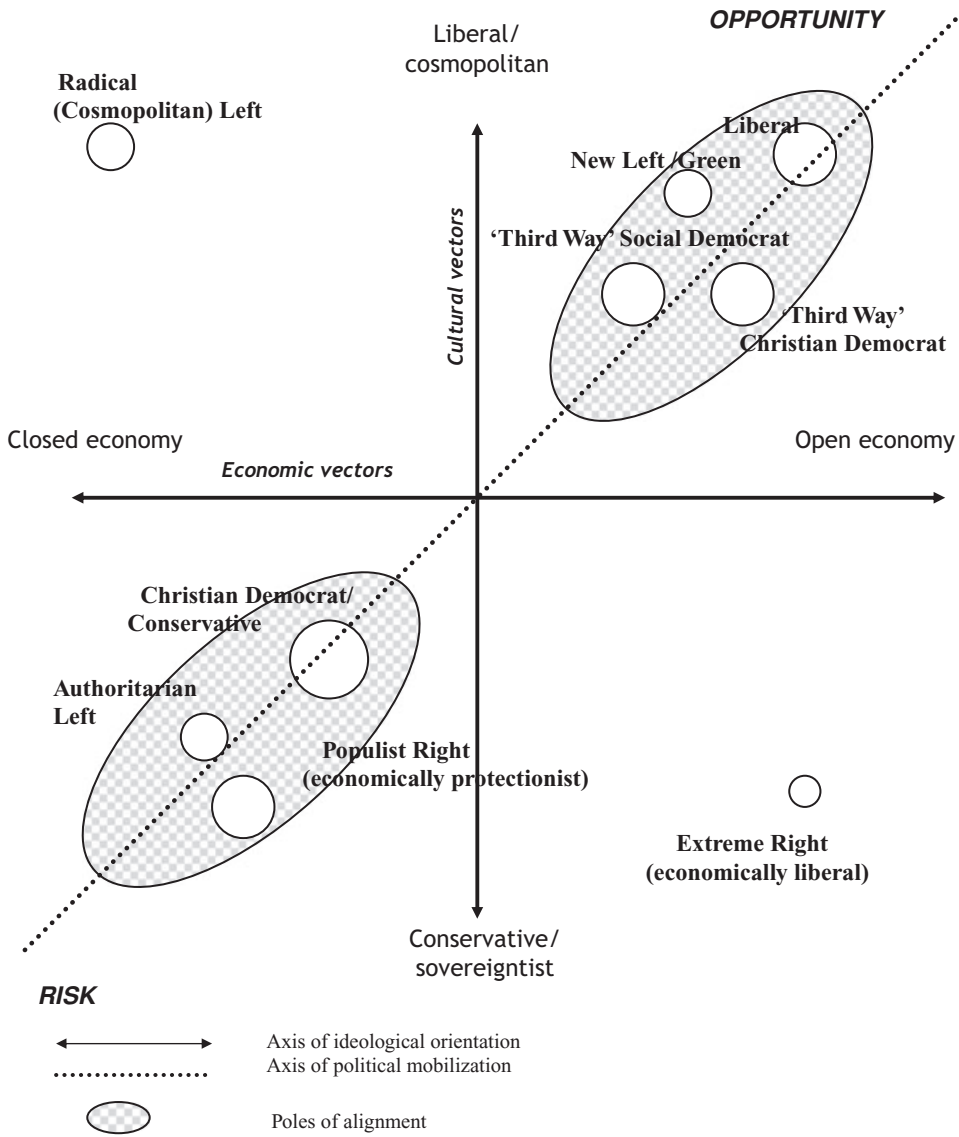


Chart 2: Political Map of the 21st Century

One of the manifestations of the changed patterning of public demands is the convergence of the ideological preferences of typical electoral constituencies of the Left and the Right. Thus, recent surveys have established that the numerically most important, and electorally most active, constituency of the Left in France is the “liberal–authoritarian” one (replacing the socialist-libertarian one) – i.e. salaried workers in the private sector who believe that their social situation is worsening and who endorse order and security as well as economic liberalism.⁴⁰

Signs of the transition from “left–right” to “opportunity–risk” cleavages abound in the campaigning of parties. Tellingly, discourses about national sovereignty, political order, the threat of cultural estrangement (typical of the ideological right), and discourses about social

justice (common in the ideological terrain of the left) have merged into a new sanctification of the social potency and cultural supremacy of the nation-state. This double (political and social) sovereigntist impulse mobilized the particular rejection of the Constitutional Treaty for Europe in France and the Netherlands in the Spring of 2005 by powerful constituencies on the Left and the Right. The old left and right ideological extremes have thus come to overlap on two policy lines: first, in their protectionist reaction to economic and social risk. The far right is beginning to abandon its economic liberalist stance and is embracing social protectionism. With this, a major policy differentiation between the radical left and the far right is lost. Secondly, the old left and right extremes have come to converge on the basis of their increasing preference for national, at the expense of international, solidarity.

Most significantly, as the opportunity–adversity cleavage I have described cuts, in a systematic way, across the capital–labor logic of conflict articulation, it is able to split the left–right poles of orientation and aggregate them into new ones. Thus, a new alliance of social forces is being formed around an “adversity” pole of mobilization, where parts of capital and labor align behind policies of economic patriotism – a combination of market liberalization and a closed (protected) economy, as well as cultural sovereigntism (anti-immigrant sentiment). At the opposite pole is a cluster of public preferences and party positions that combines a stress on safety and authority (inherited from the traditional political right) and an emphasis on economic liberalism, employment flexibility, open borders, technological innovation, cultural cosmopolitanism and transnational justice. Ultimately, the *left–right* axis of political mobilization, typical of the twentieth century, is transforming into the *opportunity–risk* axis that will structure conflicts in the twenty-first century (see Chart 2).

3. Social Justice After the End of the Left–Right Continuum

What are the implications for the social justice agenda in the early 21st century? As I noted, the axis of political competition is the one along which societal and political alliances are formed. Every idea is only as strong as the social forces behind it: the idea of decommmodification is losing the alliance of social forces on the left that had previously stood behind it.

On the one hand, the rise of competition as a pivotal theme in the new political agenda has fostered a stronger alliance between labor and capital – on the basis of a common interest in increased commodification as a compromise between the imperatives of profitability and job security. This new alliance between capital and labor has provided the societal support for the switch (across Europe, and irrespective of governments’ ideological tint) from welfare to “workfare” (conditioning of welfare benefits on active participation in the labor market), and has enabled the withdrawal of some of the landmark decommmodification policies of the welfare state (limitation of the working week, generous unemployment and pension provisions, etc).

On the other hand, the alliance between the social constituencies and political formations of the “old” and the “new” Left is falling apart. In the context of the late twentieth century, the political alliance between the “old” and “new” Left was based on two elements – international social solidarity and shared interest in (anti-productivist) policies of decommmodification. Under the impact of globalization, the traditional constituency of the Left (working classes) is giving priority to economic (national) protectionism over international social solidarity. At the same time, it is embracing re-commmodification policies that save jobs. Thus, the old affinities of interests that placed the two large, sociologically very different, constituencies of the Left in the same sector of political alignment no longer hold. In terms of attitudes to

globalization, they find themselves on opposite sides of the axis of political mobilization. This will mean that neither of the new poles of political competition is able to elect governments enjoying sufficient societal support for a revival of a progressive social agenda marked by strong labor de-commodification policies. The capital–labor coalition in support of commodification around the “risk” pole (hazards of globalization) is likely to oppose both the global environmental agenda and the anti-productivist policies that the constituency of the New Left tends to embrace. Further, the positioning of the constituencies of the New Left and Green parties around an “opportunity” pole (due to the valorization of clean technology and global social solidarity) aligns these groups with big capital to which globalization gives a competitive advantage in wealth-creation.⁴¹ While governing coalitions around this pole might have the leverage to advance the global ecological and development agendas, such coalitions would not produce sufficient patronage (because of the presence here of big business) for the re-enforcement of a social agenda around a strong set of policies of labor-force de-commodification.

Conclusion: Farewell to Homo Ludens

As we have often been reminded since Marx rebuffed utopian socialism, the history of the Left is a history of the loss and redemption of utopia. In the course of the twentieth century, the loss of utopia took place by way of reconciliation between socialism and capitalism: on socio-democratic terms after 1945, and on the terms of neo-liberalism in the late 1980s.⁴² Nevertheless, the Enlightenment’s promise of a life of individual autonomy and experimental self-realization, available equally for all, survived as the Left’s political telos and ethical standard for a just society. The ideal of a life at least relatively free from the productivist demands of market society (i.e. de-commodification) persisted as utopia’s last abode, actuated in the quest for non-material goods linked to identity and lifestyle that came to dominate the Left’s agenda in the late twentieth century.

The conjunction of changes in the structure of the political economy, and shifts in the structure of political competition of advanced industrial democracies, that I reviewed in this analysis, entail the transformation of neo-liberal capitalism and herald, yet again, the further loss of utopia. As we enter into the model of “reorganized capitalism” the promise of emancipation, which the turn of the century briefly contained, is dissipating. There is no room for utopia within the emerging opportunity–risk axis of ideological orientation that is now challenging the traditional left–right divide. The main ideological lines are now charted by attitudes, deeply pragmatic in nature, towards the anticipated social impact of the new economy of open borders and technological innovation – the material gains or threats of globalization (growth, development, opportunities for employment, and income or their loss).

While the social question returns in the twenty-first century, it is for the first time that national social justice agendas are so sharply opposed to international social solidarity: globalization has placed the two in a zero-sum game. The main constituencies of the Left thus tend to find themselves on opposite sides of the new redistributive contest: cosmopolitan concerns with human development versus the justice of national job protection. It had been the coalition between the old and the new Left that mobilized societal support for strong redistributive policies – policies allowing exit from the labor market and thus reducing labor commodification. The splitting of this coalition along the new opportunity–risk political cleavage bodes badly for any prospects of reviving a progressive social policy agenda centered on labor de-commodification.

The emerging fourth model of capitalism that I described here as “re-organized capitalism” is constitutively conditioned on engagement in economic production, even when viable options for labor market exit are available. Thus, this model is characterized by a generalized commodification of creative human activity, as work is being fetishized as a perceived necessity and valorized as a criterion for personal accomplishment and social justice. Hannah Arendt refers to humanity in this mode as *animal laborans*. Because the activity of labor is commanded by perceived necessity, labor, she alleged, is the state of unfreedom. Humanity as Animal Laborans is now eliminating Homo Faber, Zoon Politicon, and equally regrettably, it seems to me, Homo Ludens.

NOTES

1. Joseph Stiglitz, *The Roaring Nineties: A New History of the World's Most Prosperous Decade* (New York: W. W. Norton & Co., 2003).

2. World Values surveys carried out in 52 countries from 1981 to 2007 indicate a progressive increase in happiness as a result of increased freedom of choice. See R. Inglehart, R. Foa, Ch. Peterson and Ch. Welzel, “Development, Freedom, and Rising Happiness: A Global Perspective (1981–2007),” *Perspectives on Psychological Science* 3, no 4 (2008): 264–285.

3. The British Labour party adhered to the paternalistic (“tax-and-spend”) Fabian model of governance from 1945 until the rise of New Labour in the 1990s. This centralised, bureaucratic welfare state (the “nanny state”) was the dominant model in post-WWII Europe. While it has been criticized by the Right for its economic inefficiency, critiques from the Left focus on the alienating and stigmatizing impact state-administered welfare had on citizens, as it allegedly cultivated passive rather than active citizenship, thus undermining individual rights and autonomy.

4. For different versions of this argument see: Ulrich Beck and E. Beck-Gernsheim, *Individualization: Institutionalized Individualism and its Social and Political Consequences* (London: Sage, 2002); Ulrich Beck, Anthony Giddens, and S. Lash, *Reflexive Modernization. Politics, Tradition and Aesthetics in the Modern Social Order* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1994); Zygmunt Bauman, *Liquid Modernity*. (Cambridge, UK: Polity Press, 2000); Bauman, *The Individualized Society* (Cambridge, UK: Polity Press, 2001).

5. Herbert Marcuse first outlined this project in his *Eros and Civilization* (New York, Vintage: 1955), where he describes the overcoming of alienated labor as “erotization of labor” (196–202). Later, in *Essay on Liberation* (Boston, Beacon: 1969) he calls for the complete blurring of the distinction between work and play through the rational mastery of technology in advanced industrial societies.

6. Like Esping Andersen, I use the term “decommodification” in reference to the growing autonomy from the process of material production and the ensuing liberation of man from market forces. (See Gøsta Esping-Andersen, *The Three Worlds of Welfare Capitalism* (Princeton University Press, 1990)). Marx uses this concept in a more narrow sense to describe the emergence of wage labor through the separation of the producers from ownership of the means of production, thus turning *independent producers* into *wage-workers*. I here speak of commodification in a larger sense, as a process of monetary valuation and normative valorization of human creative activity through the market mechanisms governing production and exchange. Labor decommodification, therefore, is the capacity for exit from the labor market with little or no loss of income or status. As such, de-commodification of labor is a precondition for a life of self-improvement and critical social transformation.

7. In my use of the “system–lifeworld” dichotomy (introduced by Habermas in *Theory of Communicative Action*) I preserve its close parallel to the dichotomy between “work” and “interaction” that Habermas uses in his earlier work *Theory and Practice*. (Jürgen Habermas, *Theory and Practice* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1973); Habermas, *The Theory of Communicative Action, Vol 1: Reason and the Rationalisation of Society* (Boston: Beacon press, 1984); Vol. 2: *Lifeworld and System: A Critique of Functionalist Reason* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1987).) “Lifeworld” refers to the background knowledge generated in the private and public spheres as spheres in which meaning-making takes place; the system comprises the economy and state administration as constructed to serve our technical interests, and are driven by functional imperatives (*Theory of Communicative Action* v1: 82, 335–337; *Theory of Communicative Action* v2: 350; 363). As Habermas notes, his lifeworld–system dichotomy aligns with the distinction Marx drew between a “realm of necessity” and “realm of freedom” (*Theory of Communicative Action* v2: 340).

8. An example at hand is the improved status of single mothers who have been traditionally among the weakest sections of the population. The knowledge economy has allowed them the flexibility they need to combine child rearing with a professional career. More generally, David Richards and Ronald Gelleny have established that the new economy is associated with improved women's status in advanced industrial democracies. (David L. Richards, and Ronald Gelleny, "Women's Status and Economic Globalization," *International Studies Quarterly* 51 (2007): 855–876.)

9. Already as early as 1930, Keynes described the 21st century as "the age of leisure and of abundance" (John M. Keynes, "Economic Possibilities for our Grandchildren" (1930), *Essays in Persuasion* (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 1963): 358–373). The critical turning point appeared between 1975 and 1985, when the length of free time increased over that of working time, thus leisure becoming the dominant social time (quoted in Paul Yonnet, *Travail, Loisir, Temps Libre et Lien Social* (Paris: Gallimard, 1999)). It is symptomatic that the academic journal *Loisir et Société: Society and Leisure* (Presses de l'Université du Québec) was established in 1978.

10. A survey of over 50 countries by the International Labour Organisation attests to a global trend in extending hours spent in paid employment (Sangheon Lee, Deirdre McCann and Jon C. Messenger, "Working Time Around the World: Trends in working hours, laws, and policies in a global comparative perspective," ILO: Geneva, 2007). An EU Labour Force Survey for 2007 establishes that employees work well in excess of 40 hours a week, even in countries like France where hours are strictly regulated (<http://www.fedee.com/workinghours.shtml>, accessed on 15 Sept 2008). This trend is institutionalised in the 2000 amendment of the European Working Time Directive of 1993 to allow longer working hours.

11. Work-related stress affects 22% of workers from the 27 EU member-states and represents one of the biggest health and safety challenges, according to a study of the European Risk Observatory ("Work-related stress: new challenges in a changing workplace," European Agency for Safety and Health at Work (OSHA), Brussels, January, 31 2008; <http://www.apha.org/a/2899>, accessed on 15 September 2008). The sharp increase in depression related to flexible employment in Europe is addressed by Véronique De Keyser in her *Petits Crimes Sans Importance* (Bruxelles, Editions Lic Pire, 2008).

12. Martin Hartman and Axel Honneth, "Paradoxes of Capitalism," *Constellations* 13, no.1 (2006): 42–58.

13. According to the taxonomy introduced by Esping-Andersen in his *The Three Worlds of Welfare Capitalism*, there are three ideal types of welfare states: "liberal" (e.g. Anglo-American countries), "conservative-corporatist" (e.g. Austria, Belgium, Germany, Japan, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, and Switzerland) and Social-democratic (e.g. Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden).

14. For Nancy Fraser's argument about the correlation between symbolic (or cultural) and socio-economic (or redistributive) aspects of justice, see for instance, her collection of essays in *Justice Interruptus: Critical Reflections on the 'Postsocialist' Condition* (Oxford: Routledge: 1997). Here I refer to features of the political economy (such as strong decommodification-based labor-market policy) that allow a cognitive shift from economic to cultural concerns. This cognitive shift enabled both the political mobilization and the theorizing of justice around issues of identity, rather than on such classical issues of the "welfare state" as growth and redistribution that dominated the political agenda until the 1980s.

15. An example of the convergence of the mainstream Left and Right along a commodification trajectory is the support that formations across the ideological spectrum in France gave to the plan for the so called "revenu de solidarité active," to enter into force in June 2009, replacing the exiting welfare benefit regime. As a new form of income support for the poor, it is intended to encourage the unemployed to take up lower-paid jobs. This is a classical example of the commodification trajectory in the European Social Model. Significantly, the idea was originally put forward by the socialist government of Lionel Jospin, but Mr. Sarkozy has made it his own and appointed a junior minister from a left-wing party to implement it.

16. Let us recall, for example, that it was the Swedish Social Democrats, under the leadership of Göran Persson, who undertook the drastic liberalization of the pension system in Sweden, after the crisis of the Swedish model in the 1990s.

17. I refer here to the diachronic existence of *models*, or forms of capitalism (such as the 19th century entrepreneurial one, followed by the corporate/state-managed and later by the neo-liberal/disorganized ones), in contrast to the synchronic co-existence of various *modalities* of capitalism and of welfare-state regimes within one historic constellation. See Peter Hall and David Soskice, eds., *Varieties of Capitalism: The Institutional Foundations of Comparative Advantage* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001); as well as Esping-Andersen's *The Three Worlds of Welfare Capitalism*.

18. The New Deal in the US and the welfare state in Europe were seen to be a particular, "democratic" form of state capitalism, whose key features were: state regulation of the economy, nationalization of some key economic sectors; subordination of profitability to growth as the key economic criterion; aiding

the survival of private capital through government orders and direct subsidies, as well as through fiscal policy. See, for instance, Friedrich Pollock, "State Capitalism: its Possibilities and Limitations" (1941), *The Essential Frankfurt School Reader*, eds. Andrew Arato and E. Gebhardt (New York and London: Continuum, 1982): 71–95.

19. These themes are particularly present in the writings of Horkheimer, Pollock, Kirchheimer and Marcuse. With the exception of Walter Benjamin, the members of the Frankfurt School shared nostalgia for the earlier, liberal phase of capitalist development. At the same time, they were split in their judgment on the type of capitalism represented by the New Deal. Horkheimer, Adorno, Kirchheimer, and later Marcuse conceived it as "manipulated capitalism," while Pollock and Neumann saw it as "democratic" capitalism and an achievement of democratic forces. On this see Arato, "Political Sociology and the Critique of Politics," *The Essential Frankfurt School Reader*, 3–25.

20. The earliest analysis of this phenomenon can be found in Ronald Inglehart, *The Silent Revolution: Changing Values and Political Styles Among Western Publics* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1977). Along similar lines, Pierre Bourdieu has observed the emergence of a "new petite bourgeoisie" whose lifestyle is centered on issues of identity and self-expression (Pierre Bourdieu, *Distinction: a Social Critique of the Judgment of Taste*, trans. Richard Nice (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1984): 354–71). The impact of post-materialism on political mobilization is addressed in Ronald Inglehart and J. R. Rabier, "Political Realignment in Advanced Industrial Society: From Class-based Politics to Quality of Life Politics," *Government and Opposition*, 21 (1986): 456–79. See also the contributions to T. N. Clark and V. Hoffmann-Martinot, eds., *The New Political Culture* (Westview Press: 1998).

21. As Seymour Martin Lipset and Stein Rokkan observed forty years ago, the party systems in Western democracies "froze" in the 1920s and consequently the party systems of the 1960s reflect the cleavage structures of the 1920s. See Seymour M. Lipset and Stein Rokkan, "Cleavage Structures, Party Systems, and Voter Alignments: An Introduction," *Party Systems and Voter Alignments: Cross-National Perspectives*, eds. Seymour M. Lipset and Stein Rokkan, (New York: Free Press, 1967): 1–64. Lipset recently reiterated his "freezing hypothesis": "Class has been the most salient source of political conflict, of party support and voting. . . The contemporary party divisions still resemble those of pre-World War I Europe." See Lipset, "Cleavages, Parties and Democracy," *Party Systems and Voter Alignments Revisited*, eds. Lauri Karvonen and Stein Kuhnle (Routledge, 2000): 3–10, 6.

22. Herbert Kitschelt, *The Radical Right in Western Europe: A Comparative Analysis* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1995). More recently, Kitschelt has noted that at the turn of the century the main distribution of preferences has pivoted still further, now aligning almost completely with the vertical axis opposing "libertarian" and "authoritarian" socio-cultural positions, that is, in a North-South orientation. See Kitschelt, *Diversification and Reconfiguration of Party Systems in Postindustrial Democracies* (Bonn: Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, 2004).

23. It is beyond the scope of this analysis to review the rich scholarship treating the organization of social power and political authority in this period. Claus Offe's work supplies the earliest comprehensive analysis of these issues. See the compilation of his essays in his *Disorganized Capitalism*, as well as the analysis of transformative tendencies in his "Some Contradictions of the Modern Welfare State," *Praxis International* 1, no.3 (October 1981): 219–29. For a more recent recasting of the debate on the structural transformation of capitalism, see Kitschelt, Lange, Marks, G. Stephens, J., eds., *Continuity and Change in Contemporary Capitalism* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1999).

24. John Urry, Scott Lash, and Claus Offe have used the term "disorganized capitalism" to describe the fragmentation on the level of the political economy and on the level of political mobilization in advanced industrial societies in the late 20th century. See S. Lash and J. Urry, *End Of Organized Capitalism* (University of Wisconsin Press, 1987); and Claus Offe, *Disorganized Capitalism* (Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 1985). Offe does not perceive "disorganized capitalism" as a coherent counter-model against that of the "organized capitalism" of the welfare state. He uses the term only to indicate failures in the institutional mechanisms of mediation between social power and political authority (*Disorganized Capitalism*, p. 6) of that model.

25. Beck, *The Reinvention of Politics: Rethinking Modernity in the Global Social Order* (Cambridge, UK: Polity Press, 1997), 128.

26. John Gray, *False Dawn: the Delusions of Global Capitalism* (London: Granta, 1998).

27. Russel Hardin "The Public Trust," *Disaffected Democracies: What's Troubling the Trilateral Democracies*, eds., Susan J. Pharr & Robert D. Putnam (Princeton University Press, 2000): 31–51, 42.

28. Peter Mair, "Left-Right Orientations," *The Oxford Handbook of Political Behaviour*, eds. R.J. Dalton & H. D. Klingemann (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007): 206–222. See also, Peter Mair, "The Challenge to Party Government," EUI Working Papers, SPS No. 2007/09. A similar argument is made by Esping-Andersen in his "Politics Without Class: Postindustrial Cleavages in Europe and America," *Continuity and Change in Contemporary Capitalism*, 293–316. And of course, Anthony Giddens's programmatic

argument is well known (Anthony Giddens, *Beyond Left and Right* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1994)).

29. Albenaz Azmanova, "The Mobilization of the European Left in the Early 21st Century," *European Journal of Sociology* 45, no. 2 (2004): 273–306.

30. As Esping-Andersen, invoking Schumpeter, remarks, inequalities do not spawn classes unless they entail some permanency and social closure, as classes have no meaning if they are "always full, but always of different people." (Gosta Esping-Andersen, "Politics Without Class: Postindustrial Cleavages in Europe and America," *Continuity and Change in Contemporary Capitalism*, 294.

31. Richard Sennett, *The Culture of the New Capitalism* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2006).

32. Ibid. This peculiarity in income distribution within the past decade, for the case of Britain, is confirmed by analyses of the Institute for Fiscal Studies (M. Brewer, A. Goodman, J. Shaw, and A. Shephard, "Living Standards, Inequality and Poverty," Election Briefing Note No. 9, London: Institute for Fiscal Studies, 2005).

33. Giandomenico Majone, *Deregulation or Re-regulation? Regulatory Reform in Europe and the United States* (London: Francis Pinter, 1990).

34. Ulrich Beck and E. Beck-Gernsheim, *Individualization: Institutionalized Individualism and its Social and Political Consequences* (London: Sage, 2002), 32.

35. Peter Kuhn & Fernando Lozano, "The Expanding Workweek? Understanding Trends in Long Work Hours Among U.S. Men, 1979–2004," NBER Working Papers 11895, National Bureau of Economic Research, Inc., 2005.

36. This correlation was noticed as early as the 1970s (see D. Cameron, "The Expansion of the Public Economy: A Comparative Analysis," *The American Political Science Review*, 72, no.4, (1978): 1243–1261).

37. Note, for instance, the shift from wage-based to tax-based subsidies to the social insurance funds in Germany. This shift alleviates the burden on employers and is motivated by worries that wage-based contributions would reduce the international competitiveness of German exports, rather than by any concerns about redistribution.

38. I examine the effect of the anti-communist revolutions of 1989 on the structure of political competition in Europe, as well as on the social justice agenda in Europe in "1989 and the European Social Model: Transition without Emancipation?" *Philosophy and Social Criticism*, 35, no. 9 (2009): 1019–1037. The current analysis incorporates parts of this article, with the publisher's agreement.

39. Eleven of the 15 EU member states had socialist governments by the late 1990s. By the late 2008, the remaining left-wing governments in Europe present an exception, rather than a rule. A similar shift to the right occurred at the 1999 and 2004 European elections.

40. Sondage LH2-Libération (reported in Libération, 12 Sept. 2007, p. 8).

41. Note, for instance, the formation of the unusual 'black-green' coalition between the Greens and the Christian Democrats in some municipal governments in Germany, and more recently at state-level in Hamburg. At the same time, note the equally unprecedented break, on the occasion of the elections in Hesse in early 2008, of the Social Democrats' long-standing refusal to form coalitions with the Left party in western German states.

42. Donald Sassoon, *One Hundred Years of Socialism: The West European Left in the Twentieth Century* (London: I.B.Taurus & Co Ltd., 1996): 733.

Albenaz Azmanova teaches political theory at the University of Kent's Brussels School of International Studies. Her recent publications deal with the transformation of modern political ideologies. Her book *The Scandal of Reason: A Theory of Critical Political Judgment* is forthcoming with Columbia University Press.