

context of decades of neoliberal restructuring, and even when they reject neoliberal “globalism,” they have often imbibed its competitive and speculative logic.

Brown, Feher, and Balibar all zone in on these novel features of our present: for Brown, contemporary populism has absorbed the neoliberal animosity to both the social and the political and manifests as a nihilistic moral system built on “rancor, reproach, negation, and even revenge” (p. 54). For Feher, the new Right is best conceived within the speculative logic of a financialized capitalism that has turned us all into portfolio managers investing in our own material and human capital. Consistent with this logic, rather than in reaction to it, Feher depicts the new Right as motivated by the desire to “dispose of the discredited” (notably migrants) and revalorize “native” capital, thereby bringing about a mutation in standard right-wing discourses.

For Étienne Balibar, we are witnessing the rise of “absolute capitalism,” which replaces the national sovereignty and political antagonism of “historical capitalism” with the quasi-sovereignty of global financial markets and generalized extreme violence. “Neoliberalism,” Balibar suggests, is extreme capitalism’s subjective face. Subjectivity is also central to Salzinger’s contribution, which draws on ethnographic work among traders in New York and Mexico City to illuminate how the myth of an asocial, self-interested *homo economicus* is performed, albeit in a hypermasculinized guise. For Balibar, however, extreme capitalism *unmakes* subjectivities and undoes the possessive individualism of Lockean liberalism.

Extreme capitalism, Balibar insists, is an extremely unstable complex. As an imaginary restoration of classical liberalism in the wake of socialism, it is a postsocialist formation that destroys the commons even while “it must keep alive (even if starving) what it destroys continuously” (p. 287). For Newfield, too, capitalism is increasingly reliant on a mass intellectuality that neoliberal “innovation” disrupts and erodes. Here, it is socialism that appears as the zombie that stalks our neoliberal present.

For Elyacher, neoliberalism emerged in the course of the socialist calculation debate of the 1920s and 1930s, as figures like Ludwig von Mises and Hayek battled against a socialism they depicted as primitive irrationalism. For Rofel and Moodie, scholars of neoliberalism have tended to underestimate “the legacies of socialism and the Cold War,” assuming that the latter is over and the former buried. But both China and India, they argue, reveal unstable amalgams of neoliberalism and socialism, while socialism’s legacy still animates popular conceptions of a good life. The editors endorse Stuart Hall’s contention that challenging neoliberal “populism” requires a “socialism which is without guarantees” (p. 26).

Taken together, the chapters ask us to consider whether socialism can also mutate in ways that enable it to thrive

again, on the Left rather than the Right, or whether the materials of the “political rupture” with neoliberalism that the book’s subtitle heralds must come from within the beast itself, by taking up its own vocabulary and premises in altered form.

**Reclaiming Patriotism.** By Amitai Etzioni. Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2019. 232p. \$19.95 paper.  
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*Reclaiming Patriotism* is an excellent and thought-provoking book. Its author Amitai Etzioni, one of the founders of communitarian thinking, needs no introduction. His books, *The Spirit of Community: Rights Responsibilities and the Communitarian Agenda* (1993) and *The New Golden Rule: Community and Morality in a Democratic Society* (1996), are cornerstones of this movement. When other political philosophers and sociologists were tilting toward liberal individualism, Etzioni kept the communitarian spirit alive. True to his preaching, Etzioni is not only a theoretician but also a social activist. In the early 1990s he established the Communitarian Network as a vehicle to disseminate his ideas and introduce them into the public discourse, and it remains active today.

His new book follows in the same spirit and ends with a call for action. Sketching a new social contract that would allow for the revival of social and political trust, Etzioni asks us to realize that we are entering a “post affluent” era: indeed, this is one of the most important messages of the book. It looks the meager reality of the twenty-first century straight in the eye and admits that scarcity is here to stay. Dreams of economic progress and material prosperity are fading, replaced by a pursuit of nonmaterialistic sources of happiness and satisfaction. There could not be a more relevant description of a century in which most of us (the 99%) are going to have less.

The coronavirus pandemic turned this call into a necessity. The “C generation” is going to search for protection and salvation, and they will not be looking to the global arena for help. Instead, they will be turning to their own nation-state that has suddenly become more relevant to them than ever. When the pandemic erupted, borders closed one after the other, and people were forced to realize that their prospects of receiving proper medical treatment and sufficient economic support depend on their nation-state. The test of economic success is no longer the pace of growth or the percentage of national debt (by these standards we are all losers now), but the level of national investments and the ability to kickstart the market, increase buying power, and create new jobs.

The “invisible hand” has vanished. We are back to the age of the active nation-state that intervenes internally and

externally to offer better jobs and life prospects for its workers. Under these conditions, nationalism can no longer be ignored. Nevertheless, Etzioni shies away from using the term “nationalism,” which, I argue, is a mistake. The book’s motto, taken from Charles de Gaulle, stresses the difference between nationalism and patriotism: “Patriotism is when the love of your country comes first; nationalism, when hate for people other than your own comes first.” In reality, the difference between these two concepts is far smaller than claimed, and Etzioni’s own book is the best evidence of this. Once he makes a claim for patriotism, Etzioni diverts to nationalism every step of the way: his major focal points are the nation-state and the national community. The title of the introduction “Good Nationalism—Saving Democracy through National Community Building” and the ending paragraph of the book speak for themselves: “The patriotic movement needs to achieve more than merely reuniting us by reinforcing the national community to contain—but not suppress—differences. It must figure out what we are all seeking to accomplish together, above and beyond our varying personal and subgroup pursuits, and what kind of future we envision for the nation” (p. 175). No nationalist could have phrased it better.

The tendency to identify good nationalism with patriotism is widespread, but its theoretical grounds are flimsy. Nationalism and patriotism are family members: both are “affinity-bound obligations”; namely, obligations based in particular relationships. Grounded in love, parenthood, friendship, and national loyalty, such obligations could be taken to the extreme. Obsessive lovers are probably as dangerous as extreme nationalists, and oppressive parents can bring great harm to their children as much as zealot nationalists can bring great harm to their nations. Yet we do not have different concepts for good and bad parents or for moderate and obsessive lovers. Why should we have one for good or bad nationalists?

Some may think this is a petty semantic debate. I beg to differ. By surrendering the notion of nationalism into the hands of extremists, we deprive ourselves of its extraordinary recruiting power. Right-wing conservative leaders like Donald Trump are quick to harness nationalism for their purposes. “A globalist,” Trump argues “is a person who wants the globe to do well, not caring about our country so much.... we’re putting America first.... I’m a nationalist, okay? I’m a nationalist.”

But what about us members of the progressive camp? I am a nationalist. I dare say Etzioni and other defenders of the American spirit, supporters of Black Lives Matters, and guardians of the Constitution are also nationalists (hidden nationalists). Attempts to override nationalism, Etzioni admits, “will continue breeding alienation and populism in the foreseeable future” (p. 142). So, rather than hiding nationalism, patriots should openly endorse the national stance and join the struggle to redefine the greatness of nations. In other words, rather than worrying why Trump

is a nationalist, we should worry why many progressives weaken themselves by claiming they are not.

Loyal oppositions are taking to the streets all over the globe. In India, Israel, Ukraine, France, and the United States, people march waving their national flags as a statement of belonging. Much in the spirit of Etzioni’s recommendations, they aspire to establish a new social contract. For Etzioni, this contract is grounded in a set of untidy compromises between rights and duties, personal freedoms and national security, as well as between consumerism and the good life.

This leads to Etzioni’s most important point: we ought to change not only our politics but also our preferences, seeking happiness and spiritual contentment rather than accumulating material commodities and wealth. People should limit their future consumption and use their free time and resources to gain contentment from other sources. Namely, contentment will be derived from sources that are neither labor nor capital intensive, but are ones that are sustainable and more amenable to distribution. These include cultivating intimate relations and engaging in public service (e.g., volunteering) and transcendental activities (p. 175).

Can we rewrite a new social contract when social schisms are deepening and social trust continues to decline? I would like to end with a word of optimism. The social, health, and economic crises characteristic of the beginning of the twenty-first century force more and more people to realize they are on the side of the vulnerable, exposed to dangers they cannot manage on their own. This kind of vulnerability brings them closer together. Today’s needy (the infected, the elderly, and the unemployed alongside low-income workers), as well as the needy of the future, are exposed to an endless list of unknown dangers (from global warming to future pandemics). Searching for a decent level of security, they seek to establish a post-affluent coalition. Its essence is simple. As Etzioni writes, it “ensures that everyone has their basic needs well met” (p. 175). Under these unusual conditions the traditional divide between right and left is dead. Leaders seek to converge on patriotism, restrained consumerism, and environmentalism to create a livable society.

Will such a convergence dominate the future politics of the United States? No responsible analyst will take the risk of predicting what will happen, but some signs of convergence are emerging. In June 2020, the *New York Times*, well entrenched in neoliberalism, deviated from its economic credo and published a series of articles under the title “The America We Need,” calling for a more humane capitalism. Businessmen and mega-companies are calling for a move from a shareholders’ to a stakeholders’ economy, advocating a certain degree of protectionism. Joe Biden’s campaign reflected these new attitudes, urging people to “Buy American,” create more jobs, and protect the environment. The coronavirus and its effects may have achieved what many good theoreticians failed to do: it has changed the nature of social, moral, economic, and political

discourse. For those who wish to step into this new era of post-affluence with an arsenal of good ideas, Etzioni's book is a great place to start.

**Foretelling the End of Capitalism: Intellectual Misadventures since Karl Marx.** By Francesco Boldizzoni. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2020. 336p. \$35.00 cloth.  
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*Foretelling the End of Capitalism* provides a sweeping intellectual history of political economy, focusing on myriad attempts to prophesize the end of capitalism—made by supporters and detractors alike—that are as old as capitalism itself. But Francesco Boldizzoni's ambitions do not stop at documenting the twists and turns of thought trying to keep pace with social transformations, and even (in many cases) struggling to bend them toward emancipatory ends. In fact, the author wagers that the history of failed prophecies of the impending collapse of capitalism can teach us about capitalism itself, including how and why it manages to survive each successive crisis. The lessons learned from this study, Boldizzoni claims, show that any contemporary attempt to “overthrow the system” is lost from the start” and risks “delegitimizing the reformist politics that are needed” (p. 4). However, although the intellectual history is deep and engaging, the broader conclusions that Boldizzoni draws from it are questionable.

The book consists of an introduction, which lays out its central argument and provides an overview of the remainder of the book, followed by six chapters. Each of the first four chapters focuses on a broadly defined period and its key thinkers and debates: from the first use of the word “capitalism” in the middle of the nineteenth century to the early twentieth century, from the eve of World War I to the close of World War II, the postwar period up until the end of 1970s, and the 1980s to the present. The fifth chapter is more conceptual in orientation: it seeks to understand why so many prophecies of the end of capitalism have failed. Finally, chapter 6 introduces Boldizzoni's account of the persistence of capitalism, which then motivates his plea for a reformist politics that aims for the “renewal” of social democracy (p. 276).

Boldizzoni declares that the “book is aimed at a general readership,” particularly those with an interest in “social justice” (p. 6). Indeed, a clear strength of the book is its accessibly written narrative of the evolution of political economic thought from Marx to the present day. In itself, this makes for rewarding reading, as Boldizzoni skillfully weaves together the analyses of dozens of thinkers while placing them into the broader socioeconomic context of their times. It is also worth emphasizing that Boldizzoni does not focus exclusively on Marxist and other radical

thinkers but also devotes significant attention to the writings of John Stuart Mill, Max Weber, John Maynard Keynes, Joseph Schumpeter, Daniel Bell, and a cast of other lesser-known figures who each identified tendencies in capitalism that pointed to the limits of its further growth, if not its eventual demise. In this sense, the first four chapters of the book serve as an excellent primer on political economy, because Boldizzoni provides succinct summaries of the positions developed by these thinkers and the relations between them. Chapter 4 is particularly compelling in its discussion of the Third Way project, which emerged at a time when “capitalism was asserting itself as the only viable system” (p. 169) and sought to combine not socialism and capitalism but neoliberalism and social democracy.

Perhaps inevitably for a work of such vast scope, however, the book is sometimes lacking in analysis of the individual thinkers: where Boldizzoni does critique a given argument, space dictates that the engagement remains brief. To some readers, this may appear as a strength, however, because it means that the discussion of each thinker remains largely neutral and descriptive, without the author imposing his views onto theirs. Moreover, it should be recalled that what motivates Boldizzoni's discussion of so many thinkers is the attempt to discern the cause of capitalism's persistence from their failed predictions about its demise. Given this, a detailed critique of each argument would be redundant, because what really matters to Boldizzoni is that “these prophecies never came true” (p. 5).

Yet this raises the broader question of how (or when) to determine whether prophecies about the end of capitalism have (not) come true. For example, Boldizzoni notes that “Marx did not offer actual dates” for the abolition of private property, although he “did provide a precise indication of the sequence of necessary preconditions” (p. 40). At what point in time can we say that Marx's general prediction about the overcoming of capitalism has been either falsified or verified? Similarly, Boldizzoni acknowledges that Herbert Marcuse “harbored no illusions about a rapid victory” of the New Left in his *Counterrevolution and Revolt*, ending that book instead with the vague claim that “‘the final crisis of capitalism’ may take all but a century” (qtd. on p. 127). To be sure, capitalism is alive and kicking in 2020. But because Marcuse's book was published in 1972, there still remains a half-century for this prediction to be falsified.

Chapter 5 offers an “autopsy” of the various prophecies and to that end groups them into four typologies, centered on the dynamics and causal factors that they theorize: “theories of *implosion*, *exhaustion*, *convergence* and *cultural innovation*” (p. 200). Then, on the basis of this conceptualization, Boldizzoni considers a range of factors that explain the failure of forecasts, the most important of which for his purposes concerns the “underestimation of