Envisioning Real Utopias

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Preface

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**DIAGNOSIS AND CRITIQUE**

- Social Justice
- Political Justice

**Viable Alternatives**

- Desirability
- Viability
- Achievability

**Transformation**

- A theory of social reproduction
- A theory of the limits, gaps and contradictions within the process of reproduction
- A theory of the underlying dynamics and trajectory of unintended social change
- A theory of collective actors, strategies, and struggles

**PART I. DIAGNOSIS AND CRITIQUE**

Chapter 3: What’s so Bad about Capitalism? .............................................................21

**Defining Capitalism: A brief exposition**

**Eleven Criticisms of Capitalism**

1. Capitalist class relations perpetuate eliminable forms of human suffering.
   - Exploitation
   - Technological change
   - Profit-maximizing competition

2. Capitalism blocks the universalization of conditions for expansive human flourishing.
   - Material inequality and flourishing
   - Work
   - Destructive competition

3. Capitalism perpetuates eliminable deficits in individual freedom and autonomy.


5. Capitalism is inefficient in certain crucial respects.
   - Public Goods
   - Under-pricing and over-consumption of natural resources
   - Negative externalities
   - Monitoring and enforcing market contracts and private property
   - Intellectual property rights
   - The costs of inequality

6. Capitalism has a systematic bias towards consumerism

7. Capitalism is environmentally destructive

8. Capitalist commodification threatens important values

9. Capitalism, in a world of nation states, fuels militarism and imperialism

10. Capitalism corrodes community

11. Capitalism limits democracy
PART II. ALTERNATIVES

Chapter 4: Thinking about Alternatives to Capitalism

MARX’S THEORY OF ALTERNATIVES TO CAPITALISM: THE THEORY OF HISTORICAL TRAJECTORY
Thesis 1. The long-term nonsustainability of capitalism thesis
Thesis 2. The intensification of anticapitalist class struggle thesis.
Thesis 4. The transition to socialism thesis

INADEQUACIES IN MARX’S THEORY OF CAPITALISM’S FUTURE
The theory of crisis intensification
The theory of proletarianization
The theory of ruptural transformation

TOWARDS AN ALTERNATIVE FORMULATION OF THE PROBLEM

Chapter 5: The Socialist Compass

TAKING THE “SOCIAL” IN SOCIALISM SERIOUSLY

CLARIFICATIONS OF A CONCEPTUAL VOCABULARY
Power
Ownership
Three domains of power and interaction: the state, economy, and civil society
A typology of economic structures: Capitalism, Statism, and Socialism
Hybrids

THE SOCIALIST COMPASS: PATHWAYS TO SOCIAL EMPOWERMENT
1. Statist Socialism
2. Social Democratic Statist Economic Regulation
3. Associational Democracy
4. Social Capitalism
6. Cooperative market economy
7. Participatory socialism: statist socialism with empowered participation

CONCLUSION: THREE SKEPTICAL NOTES
Civil society and social power
Institutional elaboration
Achievability

Chapter 6: Real Utopias I: Social Empowerment and the State

THREE INSTITUTIONAL FORMS OF DEMOCRACY

DIRECT DEMOCRACY: NEW FORMS OF EMPOWERED PARTICIPATORY GOVERNANCE
An Example: Municipal Participatory Budgeting
General principles of institutional design: Empowered Participatory Governance

REPRESENTATIVE DEMOCRACY: SKETCHES OF TWO PROPOSALS
Egalitarian public financing of electoral campaigns
Random Selection Citizens Assemblies

ASSOCIATIONAL DEMOCRACY

DEEPENING DEMOCRACY AND SOCIAL EMPOWERMENT
Chapter 7. Real Utopias II: Social Empowerment and the Economy

THE SOCIAL ECONOMY

Wikipedia
  Institutional Design
  Criticisms of Wikipedia

The Quebec Social Economy

Elements of institutional design for a vibrant social economy
1. State subsidies targeted to the social economy.
2. Development of social economy investment funds.
3. Governance through associational democracy.
4. Participatory Democratic forms of organization.

Potential Problems
  Exclusionary associations
  Capitalism and the social economy

UNCONDITIONAL BASIC INCOME

The basic mechanism
The rationale
Problems

SOCIAL CAPITALISM

Labor controlled solidarity funds
Share-levy wage earner funds

COOPERATIVE MARKET ECONOMY

The basic properties of worker-owned cooperatives
Mondragón

TWO MODELS OF COMPREHENSIVE SYSTEM ALTERNATIVES

Market Socialism
  The institutional design
  Rationale
  Potential problems

Parecon: a non-market participatory democratic economy
  Institutional design
  The problem of viability

CONCLUSION: AN EXPANSIVE AGENDA OF SOCIAL EMPOWERMENT

PART III. TRANSFORMATION

Chapter 8: Elements of a Theory of Transformation

SOCIAL REPRODUCTION
  Coercion
  Institutional rules
  Ideology and culture
  Material interests
  Despotic and Hegemonic Reproduction

LIMITS, GAPS, AND CONTRADICTIONS
1. Complexity and inconsistent requirement for social reproduction
2. Strategic Intentionality and its ramifications.
3. Institutional rigidities and path dependency
4. Contingency and unpredictability

THE UNDERLYING DYNAMICS AND TRAJECTORY OF UNINTENDED SOCIAL CHANGE
STRATEGIES OF TRANSFORMATION

Vision of trajectory of systemic transformation.
Pivotal collective actors for transformation.
Strategic logic with respect to the state.
Strategic logic with respect to the capitalist class.
Metaphors of success in the process of transformation.

Chapter 9: Ruptural Transformation

THE KEY QUESTION AND UNDERLYING ASSUMPTIONS
RUPTURAL TRANSFORMATION AND TRANSITION TROUGHS
REJOINERS

Chapter 10: Interstitial Transformation

WHAT IS AN INTERSTITIAL STRATEGY?
HOW INTERSTITIAL STRATEGIES CAN CONTRIBUTE TO EMANCIPATORY SOCIAL TRANSFORMATION
PAVING THE ROUTE TO RUPTURE
ERODING THE BINDING LIMITS OF CAPITALISM
INTERSTITIAL STRATEGIES AND THE STATE

Chapter 11: Symbiotic Transformation

CLASS COMPROMISE
Mechanisms underlying the reverse-J relation
The sphere of exchange
The sphere of production
The sphere of politics
Making the model more complex: extending the theoretical domain of variation
Zones of Unattainability

THE LOGIC OF SYMBIOTIC STRATEGIES
SYMBIOTIC TRANSFORMATIONS BEYOND CAPITALISM?

CONCLUSION

Chapter 12: Making Utopias Real

References