

FELIPE ZIOTTI NARITA (ORCID: 0000-0002-3139-1919)
JEREMIAH MORELOCK (ORCID: 0000-0002-6506-4940)

Critical Social Analysis of Crisis

In this article, we offer a critical social analysis of crisis in light of capitalist development and, above all, in the post-2008 world. We discuss five approaches in the social sciences that deal with the problem of crisis and develop some theoretical lines for a critical approach to the theme. We argue that precarity can be an important topic for grasping the current crises via critical approaches. The text also presents the six articles that are part of the issue we edited for *Praktyka Teoretyczna* entitled “Latency of the crisis.”

Keywords: crisis, critical theory, social theory, precarity, globalization

Crisis is embedded in our social being in contemporary capitalist society. It can erupt in many forms and symptoms, like financial troubles, unemployment, collapsing health systems, urban planning problems, drug addiction, volatile housing prices, etc. It can also involve structural transformations in social relations subjected to the priorities of capital accumulation and pressures for technical modernization. Good examples are the market liberalization reforms under Margaret Thatcher in the 1980s (which first involved a deep recession and then, with the recovery, growing inequality), the privatization processes in Latin America in the 1990s (with structural unemployment rates and the construction of new relations between citizens and state) and the boom of the gig economy in the early 2010s. If “we must learn to live with crisis” (Bordoni 2016)—the very logic of financial capitalism expressed in the volatility and uncertainty of contemporary life (Feldner and Vighi 2015)—the current social grammar of resilience, adaptation and innovation interpellates us as needy subjects. The omnipresent sense of crisis then points us toward reconciliation and conformity with the current state of things.

Since the collapse of the postwar order in the late 1970s and the fall of the Bretton Woods system, financial capitalism has depended on a mix of periods of relative economic stability and long periods of economic crisis (McDonough et al. 2010). It comes as no surprise that mainstream reformist agendas, at least since the 1990s, have advocated public policy as a practical strategy to deal with abrupt economic oscillations and declining living standards. Under a functionalist perspective, the construction of welfare institutions is supposed to attenuate class conflicts, stabilize expectations, and mitigate the effects of market asymmetries (Farnsworth and Irving 2015). The problem, in this case, would be how to build the state’s capacity to correct the social distortions provoked by volatile markets and how to reconcile deregulated markets with enduring human needs (Gray 1998, 132). With public policy designed to counter social deterioration, we are confined to confronting the possibility of managing crises yet to come. Critique seems empty under the rhetoric of technical interventions that are primarily concerned with political reforms of the institutional design of society.

Our *démarche* here goes in the opposite direction. *Crisis* and *critique* are cognates, since crisis-claims occasion critique as a way to inquire into the limitations and conditions for overcoming the distress (Roitman 2014, 30). In the spirit of the transdisciplinary efforts of the early Frankfurt School, we would like to conceive crisis as a theoretical tool for a critical approach that facilitates flexible and broad-reaching conceptualization of multidimensional social problems, a critique that is not

committed to false reconciliation, but rather exposes the current precarious situation as rooted in the immanent contradictions of capitalism. Inspired by Max Horkheimer's (1968d, 156–158) famous articulation of critical theory in 1937, we are interested mainly in dialectical social critique aiming not to better the functioning of this or that social institution, but that is rather “suspicious of the very categories of better, useful, appropriate, productive and valuable”; and that does seek to transform the present distress (*Noz*), but not in a myopic spirit which kowtows to the immediate facts of the present.

In what follows, we divide this article into four sections. In the first part, we discuss some important approaches to crisis in the social sciences, organizing them according to five delineated matrixes. The second part is devoted to building a theoretical perspective on crisis that is based upon early Frankfurt School critical theory, especially in light of the writings of Max Horkheimer and Theodor Adorno. The third part offers a framework for our main axis in this issue, that is, latent crisis (and the sense of precarity) as an important topic for understanding the contemporary crises of capitalism, above all, in the wake of the post-2008 financial crisis and the COVID-19 crisis. In the fourth part, we draw some connections between our general discussion and the articles that are part of this special issue.

Five Approaches to Crisis

Modernity has been a constant state of crisis: as a latent signature of the new historical time, the notion of crisis marked an epochal change whose condition is the acceleration, the growing uncertainty of the horizon of expectations and the volatilization of traditions (Koselleck 2012, 51–52). Critical events disrupt livelihood and compel society into a chronic sense of instability (Koselleck 2012, 80–84). Normative assumptions of modern progress, such as the affirmation of productivity, accumulation and rationalization of nature, became increasingly opaque. Strategies that were considered to bring the promises of modernity to fulfilment, e.g., promises of personal autonomy to self-create and self-assert, and of society's security with improvements in the forces of production and control of nature (Bauman and Bordoni 2014, 59–64; Jonas 2017), stumble when up against climate change and other environment problems in the Anthropocene (Ehlers and Krafft 2006; Moore 2016). Even the thesis of the aseptic triumph of medicine and, due to immunological technologies, the end of the “viral age” (Han 2015), seems untenable

A critique that is not committed to false reconciliation, but rather exposes the current precarious situation as rooted in the immanent contradictions of capitalism.

with the socioeconomic and health troubles in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. Crisis is the order of the day.

In the Marxist tradition, economic crisis is inevitable under capitalism (Mészáros 2022). In his categories for the critique of political economy articulated in *Capital*, Marx highlighted many socioeconomic dimensions of crisis. He demonstrated the constant perturbations that emerge from the crises of production and exchange due to fluctuations (*Wechsel*) of value (Marx 1962, 136). It affects living labor (within the theory of *Arbeitsprozess*) via violent interruptions on productive chains of value (ibid., 221) and, with a surplus worker population (i.e., mass unemployment), the threat of poverty pressures workers into accepting worse working conditions and more exploitation. The “industrial reserve army” of unemployed workers is thus a tool toward the valorization of human material (ibid., 661–662), rooted in the precarization of wages and living standards for working classes (ibid., 697). A distinctive achievement lies in the connection between economic oscillations of capital and the subjectivity of workers: in this sense, cycles of expansion, overproduction, crises and stagnation produce insecurity and instability for the living conditions of workers in light of the need for constant productive turns of machinery (and the subjective pressure to adaptation to new conditions of production and life) and competition for economic niches in the market (ibid., 476). Crisis theory played a major role in the writings of early Marxists, such as Friedrich Engels, Karl Kautsky, Eduard Bernstein and Rosa Luxemburg (Clarke 1994).

Capitalism is only viable as a world market grounded in the asymmetrical integration of centers and peripheries (especially former colonial areas) (Pradella 2014). This trend has paved the way for a Marxist tradition that tried to grasp crises from peripheral countries, where the dominant mode of production (capitalism) coexists with other relations of production, which are repurposed by capitalist accumulation and subjected to the oscillations of financial market. In Latin America, a Marxist revision of dependency theory took place in the 1960s and 1970s. Dependency relations were seen as a form of globalization (Santos 1978). The 1980s counted on the expansion of asymmetrical structures in the world market, above all, through the deregulation of financial institutions and the corrosion of state policy in the wake of the economic crisis in Latin America (Marini 1993).

Marx Beyond Marx, published by Antonio Negri in 1979, is an influential attempt at updating the Marxist approach in light of capitalism’s post-1950s sociotechnical transformations. For Negri, Marxism is a “science of crisis and subversion,” which he uses to articulate how

the contradictions of capitalism bring deprivation and reactivate subjectivity, making the latter appear in its revolutionary potentiality at a level determined by the productive forces (Negri 1991, 11). Crisis should not be misunderstood as a malaise that can be cured to restore a functional and normal state of society, nor should subjectivity be misunderstood within a restricted framework of economic exploitation. Instead, Negri's view is dialectical—crisis is immanent to the circulation of capital. “[T]hrough the circulation process the contradictions are endlessly reproduced” (Negri 1991, 94–95). Crisis is both the positive process and the negative determination of capital. On the one hand, as a positive moment, the valorization process of capital engenders limits which capital must go through with the creation of new needs, new use values and the cultivation of the qualities of social being via socialized labor. On the other hand, necessary labor limits the exchange value of living labor capacity, that is, a contradiction between necessary labor and surplus labor, since the working class represents the subjectivity limit of this antagonist relationship that is strengthened in form of crisis (ibid., 97). The subsuming of living labor and the increasingly socialized nature of labor (with abstract, intellectual cooperation in automation systems and machines) turns the circulation of capital relations a subjective *potenza* for the consciousness of the dependence of production to the appropriation of social forces, paving the horizon for the liberation of needs created by market (ibid., 133). Crises politicize the antagonisms structured by capital (ibid., 54), since the class cleavages of capital/labor and the oscillations of social conditions prone to abrupt crises open up a multitude (different social groups) that is affected in many ways by the private appropriation of socially generated goods. The liberated negation of this plural subject is not a new synthesis, but rather, it dismantles all homogeneity in favor of a plural structure of antagonisms (ibid., 150) in which the enlargement of class composition can connect the different moments of capital production.

Marxist approaches are well grounded in the material production of life—in the broad sense of Marx and Engels' *Lebensprozess*, that is, a process of production and reproduction that is not confined to economics, but also includes subjectivity (Marx and Engels 1978, 25–26). It highlights the dialectical processes behind capitalist crises and how these processes imply class antagonisms, exploitation and deprivation of the working and lower classes. However, an overly economic approach can be reductive of the complex institutional and social dynamics in the highly differentiated societies of late capitalism. Marxism provides essential tools, and we will later suggest a dialectical approach that addresses

how the current crisis is inseparable from capitalist economics. Still, it is important to consider other social forces and avoid economic or “vulgar” reductions.

The second matrix to understanding crisis is institutional, using systems theory (Holton 1987) to grasp sociocultural and political impasses in modern societies. Reformulating Talcott Parsons’ structural-functionalism, Niklas Luhmann argues that modern societies are functionally differentiated due to the complexity of managing the many spheres of life. The social system lies in a latent state of “self-produced indetermination” (*selbsterzeugter Unbestimmtheit*) (Luhmann 1997, 745). Systemic protocols and procedures tend to handle contingencies, but the future is always unpredictable. Due to the high differentiation of social tasks, systems cannot intervene on behalf of each other nor perfectly substitute for one another’s tasks (*ibid.*, 763); crises, thus, tend to proliferate within each branch of the system. This is why, according to this systemic institutional approach, modern societies are prone to crises (*ibid.*, 770): institutional differentiation enlarges the monitoring protocols through which social system becomes more sensible to its internal disorders due to the availability of more descriptions (data) of its *modus operandi*. In other words, if functional differentiation tends to integrate institutions to manage social demands, it also delivers insecurity under the latency of crises.

The institutional approach is also relevant for Jürgen Habermas (2002, 386), who points out that the systemic disequilibria become crises when the performances of economy and state remain manifestly below an established level of aspiration and harm the symbolic reproduction of the lifeworld by calling forth conflicts and reactions of resistance there. Since state and economy are conceived as two structural axes for modern society, capitalism depends on a tense equilibrium between state intervention (with institutionalized policy to promote well-being and regulate some economic activities) and the market self-healing powers. The societal integration within lifeworld is affected by the institutional dysfunctionality, because anomic conditions reflect the lack of normative parameters to strengthen the trust in institution, uncoupling lifeworld from institutional systems and producing anomic conditions that are unable to secure the legitimation and the motivations that shelter institutional order of society. Efforts at connecting the systemic/institutional approach and critical theory have been made through the concept of “reflexivity” (Cordero et al. 2017) as a mean to account for the self-destructive tendencies of capitalist social dynamics. It points to practical-political strategy for designing responses to crises through

the amelioration of acquired institutional knowledge based on functional outputs and normative values. If a systemic institution (the congress, the parties, the economy, etc.) goes through a crisis, it implies that the institution fails to deliver those values that are central to their functional contribution. Crisis, thus, becomes a descriptive tool that monitors the functional operations and outcomes of institutions as well as the normative duties they are expected to fulfill; the critique, here, is not properly a dialectical negation of the current distress, but rather a way to denounce the malaise and propose a reformist strategy to the betterment of social system.

The third set of approaches points to a sociopsychological turn in the understanding of crises. It deals with interpersonal, individual and group adjustment to crisis situations, comprising the relational aspects of individuals, their reference groups and social networks (Eastham et al. 1970). The sociopsychological approach highlights the importance of cultural values in reaction to crisis and how people are emotionally impacted by the pressures of health concerns, income instability, mortality and the growing uncertainty/concerns about the future (Gu et al. 2020). The contradictions of globalization are considered in light of the expansion of precarious forms of life, with migration and mobility issues, as well as in light of the intersectional dimensions of crises and the need for adaptations of racialized and gendered lives (Dona and Veale 2021). With reference to current vulnerabilities, in the wake of the socioeconomic and psychological effects of the COVID-19 pandemic and the economic turmoil of the 2010s, many studies (Oliveira et al. 2020; Shavit et al. 2021) have been devoted to analyzing the cognitive and affective components of subjective well-being. Sociopsychological approaches offer important observations of the pressures of our multiple crises on a subjective level, but they do not examine the systemic socioeconomic roots of the crisis, nor do they point toward overcoming these contradictions. They illustrate crisis but do not help us get out or avoid repetition.

A fourth approach argues for a broad sociocultural dimension: the risk society. There is a cognitive trend in the pervasive sense of crisis (Beck 1986, 73), since the invisible hazards are becoming more visible with the diffusion of information and the rationalization of the risks of modern society through the structures for management of the many branches of social system (environmental issues, epidemics, urban violence, growth rates, etc.). Risk implies an ontological condition of being aware of the impending global threats: within this framework, crises no longer occur outside our personal experiences and they are always *latent*

underneath the sense of normality. The sociocultural pressures of risk society imply a growing self-confrontational dynamic between policy and the risks (environmental, financial, urban and health problems) generated inside the modernizing moves (Sznaider 2015; Levy 2016; Le Breton 2018). Due to the global chains of circulation (information, trips, commerce, etc.), crises become disruptive transnational events that affect a global public (Beck 2007). Global risk society spreads uncertainty and volatilizes the secure (*vorgegeben*) credos of modernity (economic progress, division of labor, distribution of wealth, sanitary policy, etc.) (Beck 1986, 345) at the same time as it points to a structural shift from industrial society to a reflexive modernity grounded in the management of risks (Mythen 2014), since crises become normal events in the prospects of reflexive modernity. Risk society theories correctly reveal latency as a major trend of capitalist crises but are not clear in outlining a theoretical structure, beyond descriptive *Zeitdiagnosen*, to grasp and critique the nature of capitalist crises.

The fifth matrix highlights the interconnection approach, which grasps the complex interaction of the effects of the crises on diverse social realms, from sociality to political institutions, from labor market to living conditions, etc., producing a chain of vulnerabilities in the lifeworld (Pignarre and Stengers 2007). Sylvia Walby's (2015) "cascade theory" is particularly relevant for this discussion. According to her, contemporary crises are processes that operate diffuse movements that spread from one institutional domain to another, affecting from financial system to lifeworld. Crises, thus, are fragmented urgencies that intersect with other emergencies. Walby's reference for the cascade effect is the 2008 financial crisis, that is, an economic turmoil provoked by the financial system that strongly influenced austerity policy, which echoed in the exacerbation of class inequalities, violence, unemployment and poverty. Social system, instead of a stable hierarchy of determinations (like in institutional approaches), is conceived as a multiple adaptive system that can be more tightly or loosely coupled, depending on the chain of effects that arise from the current capitalist crises.

If descriptive schemes and causal explanations have contributed to organize multiple approaches on crises in contemporary social sciences, we argue that there is still a room for a *critical* attempt at grasping crises as a theoretical tool posited at the core of a dialectical social theory. A critical theory approach to understanding contemporary capitalist crises includes the critique of historical circumstances, processes, and systemic socioeconomic contradictions that have led us to the contemporary impasses.

Global Crisis through the Structural Analysis of Critical Theory

Ever since its beginnings at the Institute for Social Research in the Weimar Republic, critical theory has been concerned with crisis. In the 1930s, Horkheimer's articles discussed how social theory could employ dialectical critique to understand and dialectically negate the general state of crisis and contribute to its overcoming. In this sense, a dialectical approach contrasts with the positivist science, as he associated the typical primacy of the latter with the impotence of undialectical critical efforts that kowtow to the empiricist status quo and limit themselves to little more than mere description of phenomena. The dominant positivist epistemology veils scientific objectivity with an ideological intonation of neutrality and technicity that is supposed to lie over political engagement and cultural values. Mirroring the division of labor in society and its economic contradictions (Horkheimer 1968a, 6), it is unable to correct human wretchedness and has no structural responses to crises, because it eschews normative principles. This narrowing of the modern scientific purview, thus, fetishizes concepts avoiding them to shed light and to engage with the dynamic movement of events and social problems, since it understands knowledge as an immediate (*unmittelbar*) relationship between unchanging individual concepts and their application in reality (Horkheimer 1968a, 4). A science that is aware of its reflexive position regarding the contemporary distress implies the ethical task of pointing to alternatives coagulated in social structures.

Critique does not mean the immediate condemnation of a thing, but rather an intellectual and practical effort that does not stop at accepting prevailing ideas and conditions unthinkingly and from mere habit (Horkheimer 1968b, 310). It implies the examination of the foundations and validity claims of any knowledge claim that tries to impose itself as absolute. Critical theory is neither a description of facts nor an effort at harmonizing existing conditions: it unveils social contradictions disowned in popular ideas and invisible in the surface appearances of immediate facts. It cannot promise a reconciliation. Such a promise would be false, since the critical attitude is embedded in the contradictory tensions and crises of modern society (Horkheimer 1968d, 157). Contrary to theoretical thinking that is satisfied with grasping at phenomena with denotative concepts, and applying such concepts as external polarities immune to the impurities of reality, critical theory questions narrow separations (*Trennung*) like value/research, knowledge/action, etc. (which is also present in Habermas' [1992, 234] early attempts at unifying critique with knowledge and

interest), that are supposed to shield the subject from the contradictory tensions of reality.

Dialectic plays a key role in this approach, which involves considering not only abstract concepts, but also the material background that produces contemporary misery. The theoretical and practical activity is not an autonomous (*unabhängige*) knowledge of a fixed object that stands, like a transcendental dimension, above historicity and human contingencies (Horkheimer 1968c, 48–49). Instead, it is an irreducible tension between subject and object that are engaged as products of an ever-changing reality (*verändernden Realität*) with which consciousness relates itself. The moments of this process determine each other continually and their presentation (*Darstellung*) cannot hypostasize only one element as an effective factor that does not consider the contradictory relation with the other elements and moments. Subjective and objective factors are tensioned since “knowledge itself turns out [*hervortreten*] to be a historical phenomenon” (ibid., 52). The abstract description of concepts and its reconciliatory attempt at adapting concepts to reality cannot suppress the scrutiny of the material conditions that produce life as much as the normative force of concepts. As a science of crisis, thus, critical theory and its materialist background are concerned with the analysis and the alternatives to the determined relations under which individuals experience the distress (ibid., 53). Critical theory is aware of its partiality, since through the act of knowing (Habermas 1992), it belongs to the objective context of life that it strives to grasp.

Some social theorists have argued that critical theory builds from an ideal of emancipation that was never properly explained (Kolakowski 2005, 1102). If the subject to whom the theory is addressed has become problematic—be it the proletariat or even “the tradition of the oppressed” of Walter Benjamin (1977)—the theory remains critical since it expresses a denunciation and the non-reconciliation with the developments of the socioeconomic system. In this sense, shedding light on crisis as a theoretical challenge for critical social sciences, we attempt to analyze the contemporary distresses of global capitalism through the prism of critical theory, refracting its contradictions and unrealized promises of emancipation. We argue that a theoretical scheme devoted to grasp capitalist crises must articulate dialectical critique with a constellation of socioeconomic processes (class inequalities, power asymmetries, property, income, etc.) and the false prospects of reconciliation (technological disruption, productivity, social mobility, etc.) in global capitalism.

In the late 1960s, Theodor Adorno pointed out in his final lectures that the promises of rationalization under modern capitalism are always

As a science of crisis, thus, critical theory and its materialist background are concerned with the analysis and the alternatives to the determined relations under which individuals experience the distress.

contradicted in a society prone to a permanent sense of crisis. The rationality of modern society unfolds its irrational content since it does not deliver its main *raison d'être*, which is to say, the emancipation of the individual (Adorno 2000, 132–133). Crises are latent since they threaten with insecurity and are part of the immanent conditions of reproduction of reified capitalist relations, which depend on the permanent extension and disruption of its productive forces that collapse the former ones (ibid., 40). The structural susceptibility to crises implies not only pauperization, but also a broader condition of damage over life under modernizing moves that promise abundance and deliver scarcity (Adorno 1975, 170). The critique of industrial society and its crises also emphasized the mechanisms of surplus-repression (Marcuse 1966, 155) and the need for subjective adaptation to productivity.

In the 1990s and the 2000s, within the normative principles of liberal democracy, there was a trend in critical theory to analyze deficits of multicultural democracies, including identity and the politics of difference (Young 2000; Stirk 2005), and the effects of moral recognition and injustice in social cohesion (Honneth 2000). Today the situation could be changing. In the wake of the uneven recovery and the scars of the financial crisis, *pari passu* with the emergencies regarding environmental issues and the strong sense of material inequalities and vulnerabilities, critical theory practitioners have been exploring the damaged terrain provoked by the multiple crises (Schweiger 2020). Liberal democracy, instead of a normalized horizon, became problematic with the rise of far-right populism in the late 2010s (Morelock 2018; 2021; Morelock and Narita 2021). The emphasis on a moral sense of injustice goes and in hand with the presence of social conflict to consider socio-cultural criteria of shared belonging to a polity (Barnett 2017). The very concept of reification, which played a major role in early Frankfurt School and connected critical theory to the developments of Marxism and the Weberian theory of rationalization (via Georg Lukács), has been used to grasp conformity and the primacy of instrumental colonization of social relations that are prone to crisis effects under market economies (Chari 2010; Smulewicz-Zucker 2020). It also has been grasping the social effects of the superimposed crises (2008 financial crisis and COVID-19) through the critique of austerity policy and new forms of domination (O'Kane 2021).

When we talk about crisis, we should keep in mind the often-invisible border separating crisis from decadence. If crisis erupts and devastates, decadence generates drift, political disorientation, and inaction. We are dealing with an uncanny combination of both of these social

moods. If we look for historical milestones, we can identify a turning point in the 2007–2008 near-crash of financialized capitalism in core countries/regions (the United States, Western Europe and Japan) and the expansion of the financial crisis to the peripheries from 2012 onwards. About a decade later, we have lived in suspended time of latency: the worst seemed to be over (at least in core countries), but the crisis turned late capitalism into a landscape of unrealized promises considering the growing economic inequality and precarity, and the shock-therapy of radical liberal economic reforms and privatization processes in pauperized (semi)peripheral countries (Argentina, Brazil, Turkey, Greece, etc.).

With the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, the latency burst. In other words—and this is the distinctive feature of the contemporary ambivalence—the recovery remains uneven and the scars of precarization extend from the homeless of Los Angeles and Philadelphia (Al Jazeera 2020; NPR 2021) to the poverty in the Brazilian streets (Natalino 2020). More than a crisis, would this be a slow-motion *débâcle*? There is no easy answer to this question. We understand the sense of crisis as a *Stimmung*, meaning a preponderant mood that underlies our historical period. The ambivalent contemporary situation lends itself to a perpetual state of emergency. The critical approach on crisis, thus, has to consider how precarity has been shaping social relations and dismantling the promises of capitalist modernizing moves.

Latency and Precarity

Crisis has been a pervasive slogan in the news over the last decade, a kind of signature of the post-2008 world (Skidelsky 2010; Rodrik 2011). According to Slavoj Žižek (2011, 403–404), the discourse of crisis was normalized. This normalization marked a condition defined by unrest and uncertainty regarding vulnerability—be they repressed, latent, in conformation with the order of things, or diffuse among the urgencies of “risk society” and its different institutions (ecological crisis, financial speculation, corruption in political system, etc.).

The 2010s were marked by global, multitudinous protests in the streets, and expressed the contradictions of growth-at-all-costs policy. The three films by Yannis Youlountas—*Ne vivons plus comme des esclaves* (2013), *Je lutte donc je suis* (2015) and *L'amour et la révolution* (2018)—express the sense of latent crisis with strong disaffection about established institutions and the long-lasting effects of austerity measures. On the

one hand, there were residential expulsions (due to housing prices and mortgages), high unemployment rates, lower wages, and privatization of public institutions to solve debt crises. On the other hand, resistance strategies fed molecular movements (e.g., self-management collectives, struggles for the common, etc.), which, with the eruption of latent demands and multiple crises, exhibited spontaneous street protest as a primary challenge to the surface of order and stability of liberal capitalist democracies (Narita 2019; Morelock and Narita 2021). These movements fit with Marcuse's (2015, 184–185) theory of *practical contradictions* of capitalism, since the political responses to capitalist crises are not only dependent on political parties (such as a Leninist vanguard party), but can rather include diffuse assemblages of small groups that are not properly prepared for political organization. More than established social movements grounded in organized civil society, Manuel Castells (2019) calls these movements “social explosions,” that is, eruptions of the multitude out of the surface of normality that tend to last long with violent street protests. In Santiago (Chile), when clashes erupted in October 2019 after a hike in transportation costs, it became evident that the protests were not only about transport prices nor social mobility in the city. The rate of social inequality in Chile, for example, is among the highest in Latin America (a region with chronic inequality). Privatized retirement pensions, falling wages, and inflated healthcare and education costs (which had already been present in the student's mass protests in 2011) soon became part of the leitmotiv of the street demonstrations. The violence of the military apparatus and the militarization of state institutions exposed how the transition to democracy in the 1990s left many authoritarian scars in the country. The story tells us how resentment and frustration are accumulated under the surface of normality, beneath the skin of civility and the progresses of the market economy. A single measure was enough to liberate a multitudinal movement that mobilized many chains of conflict and authoritarianism latent under the normalization mood of liberal democracy. Via Twitter circulated the perfect slogan of this situation in November 2019: “we will not return to normality, because normality was the problem.” This Chilean prelude is the best description of the roots of the crisis. It is a metaphor of the post-2008 times and the *expanded precarity*, with growing inequalities, carrying a sense of a damaged sociality that can suddenly burst like a cascading effect of multiple crises.

Precarity, as a concept and an approach in social theory, emerged in the 1960s to describe the impacts of modernization on livelihood. Pierre Bourdieu, in his research on Algeria, coined the approach in reference

to the “precarious mode of existence” of a colonial population that was subjected to inclement weather and the asymmetrical integration into the global market, forcing individuals to sell their land and emigrate to become a sub-proletarian in capitalist core economies (Bourdieu 1962, 135). He used precarity as an analytical tool to examine structural transformations and moral disorientation, for example, in family nucleus and widely extended structures of solidarity in light of the rise of individualistic imperatives of the capitalist economic system (ibid., 141). Robert Castel emphasized the impacts of modernizing moves of capitalism on the transformations of the systems of social protection and the complexification of social risks that expand the sense of vulnerability due to growing insecurity (Castel 2003, 25). Crises and the volatility of social conditions tend to “dissocialize the individual” (ibid., 47) with a lack of cohesion under the pressures of unemployment, precarity of means of assistance (distributive programs, public health system, etc.), uncertainty in relation to wages and revenues and the menace of degradation of individual social status. To sum up, precarity is a two-way street: it refers both to (1) the sense of uncertainty due to modernizing moves and destructive processes of capitalism and (2) a latent state of distress and hardship that affects care and protection to stabilize life conditions.

The condition of precarity is not properly new in capitalist history. The experience of regular, long-term employment, which markets the appeal of Fordist production and the society of consumption of the 20th century (Marcuse 1966), seems to be an exception and only the tip of an entangled iceberg built on unpaid work, invisibility (domestic work), coercive work in colonies, exploitation, etc. (Mitropoulos 2005). In the periphery of capitalism, global cities like São Paulo or Bogotá have been facing the precarization of livelihood since their urban outburst between the 1970s and the 1990s. Colombian urban realism (with writers like Andrés Caicedo and Efraim Medina Reyes) and the film *Rodrigo D: No Future* (1990), for example, emphasize the subcultures (punk rock, decadent night clubs, drug addiction, etc.) forged under social violence in chaotic Latin American urban zones. One of the effects of precarity may be that the self is no longer centered on stable values (derived from morality, religion, career, relatively stable revenues, etc.), but *fragmented* in temporary, unstable experiences in labor, affects, etc. (Wilson 1986).

The new thing is *the spread of precarization in those domains that were long considered secure* in the Fordist era. In other words, precarity is no longer confined to ghettos, low-wage jobs, big urban zones in peripheral countries or colonial areas (colonies and racialization, moreover, were

the hidden counterpart that sustained the progressive imaginary embedded in the welfare policy implemented in many central economies until the 1970s). The standards of the traditional middle classes, counting on long-term job security, correlation between educational degrees and income, decent housing and good remuneration have been drastically reshaped (Maguire 2020; Barbosa 2020). As a by-product of capitalist relations of production, the precariat (Standing 2011) has emerged as a class marked by chronic uncertainty and dependent on on-demand services (the fake self-employment and entrepreneurialism), informal market, crowd-sourcing activities, zero-hour contract and partial-time jobs. From schools and universities to big companies, middle-class positions have been structurally rearranged through the flexibilization of capital relations. In other words, a lack of security (labor rights and a minimum predictability) and the dissociation between higher educational standards and good revenues have been transforming the relationship between the individual and the state as well as turning the horizon of market economies into a terrain of broken promises and failed expectations of social mobility.

Precarity is the most visible sign of the general crisis. In the wake of the 2008 financial crisis and its global effects (the 2010 Euro crisis, the Greek crisis of 2015 and the shock of commodities prices that affected peripheral economies since 2011-2012), stagnant wages and rising costs of living have normalized hard times (Pascale 2021). Austerity policy became a mantra to impose crisis as a way to rule society with the menace of scarcity and affirm the impersonal character of the economic power of capital, paving the way to the reproduction of its rule over social needs (Mau 2021, 303). Financialization and derivatives markets organize power relations as they optimize social relations according to the tendencies of global capital (Sotiropoulos et al. 2013). It is a turning point in the liberal international order constructed in the 1980s: hyper-globalization sought to minimize barriers to global trade and investment resulted in lost jobs, declining wages and income inequality, turning the international financial system less stable and vulnerable to recurring crises (Mearsheimer 2019). This scenario was reinforced long before the COVID-19 crisis with the growing deregulation of labor market, as an economic response to the effects of financial crisis (Durand 2015), with neoliberal reforms in Spain (2012) and in Brazil (2017) (Pérez-Lanzac 2020; Xavier 2021) and the spread of temporary contracts, intermittent work and insecure positions.

In global cities like Bangkok, Hong Kong or Seoul (Rosario and Rigg 2019; Endo 2014), transnational migrants without basic protection,

Austerity policy became a mantra to impose crisis as a way to rule society with the menace of scarcity and affirm the impersonal character of the economic power of capital, paving the way to the reproduction of its rule over social needs.

factory workers employed on casual contracts and minorities dispossessed by land grabbing or resettled to make way for mega-projects point how to live with risk and ever-changing, worsening conditions of material reproduction of life. Objective and subjective factors of precarity, thus, must be paired together. Low and irregular income, employment insecurity, limited access to social security (in the wake of the crisis of the welfare state in the 1980s) and a lack of representation in collective agency (trade unions, etc.) shape living conditions with the restriction of people's ability to plan for the future and accomplish personal life plans (Gardawski et al. 2020).

Precarity is an experience of privation that corrodes the quality of social ties (Pierret 2013; Narita 2021) and comprises different forms of vulnerability that echo the qualitative effects of the breakdown of stable social relations (Butler 2006). It is not only a renaming of Marxism's stress on the steady impoverishment of the labor force, with the steady forced immiseration and proletarianization of the workforce, but also a subjective pressure marked by qualitative deterioration of the conditions of life (comprising the danification of individual autonomy, gender inequalities, racial stigma). In this sense, it involves social positionings of insecurity that are pervaded by class cleavages, neighborhood (urban violence, infrastructure, etc.), access to social security institutions, employment and mobile conditions with a lack of security (e.g. migrant workers without citizenship, but living inside national economic borders under racialized global capitalism). If precarity forces individuals to live *with* contingency, we are governable through precarization (Lorey 2015, 45); that is, we are constituted as subjects-effects of the normalizing power that naturalizes worsening conditions. The need for adaptation subjects the population to the profitability of calculated exchangeability and production: individuals are supposed to modulate themselves according to the constrictions of an ever-changing, asymmetrical condition of competition and according to subjective subservience regarding the lowered minimum of safeguarding (ibid., 70–71). Crisis is a tool for the government of the population and is used to impose measures that can restrict social protection and make precarity a way of life.

The economic rationality that favors accumulation over matters of distribution distorts social cohesion. Inequality is an intersectional problem that connects many social dimensions (gender, race and class) and implies policy committed to mitigate precarity at the same time as it empowers communities. It has implied new public policy for redistribution and recognition with state action, like in South Africa (Ferguson 2015) and in Brazil (Rego and Pinzani 2014) in the 2000s and 2010s,

in which states make cash payments to their low-income citizens to reduce poverty and promote social cohesion via financial autonomy, the positive role of women in conducting their families, integration of children into the school system and health assistance. In this context, it is also important to consider care and affective background of common, embodied experiences of lives struggling with commodification through different strata of gender, class and culture (Majewska 2020; Ivancheva et al. 2020; Illouz 2007). Policy committed to redistribution can thus help overcome precarity with the need for recognition (Fraser 2003) as a combined matrix to correct the distortions of market economies and to empower social identities by providing material goods.

Public policy committed to distributive efforts point to an important outcome of the multiple crises of contemporary capitalism: the form of inequality is not confined to income or wealth; rather, it deals with the lack of security and self-confidence (Azmanova 2020). Society that forces a constant need for adaptation and flexibility makes broken subjects (*êtres brisés*) due to the constant ruptures and fragmented livelihood (Marin 2019). The rise of gig economy in the 2010s, besides being the outcome of technological disruption, was also a structural response to the 2008 financial crisis with new patterns of capital accumulation (Graham and Anwar 2019) and precarity. With the digital morphology of material labor, cities became an integrated network of services fed by real-time demands that exposed the flaccidity of post-crash recovery based on the loss of worker's rights and the myth of choice, self-employment, autonomy and flexibility of labor forced to pick among various low-paying employers (Ravenelle 2019). Gig work platforms where workers are registered as employees, with the associated benefits, are exceptions. The creation of jobs for millions was not without cost, since the accumulation is based on the transference of significant risk and responsibility onto the workers (Woodcock and Graham 2019). Platform capitalism has diffused on demand services by selling fraudulent togetherness of terms, like peer and sharing, to veil strong asymmetries of highly monopolized platforms (Scholz 2016) that deregulate labor relations and expose workers to precarious forms of material and immaterial work.

As technologies of subjectivity, the spread of gig economy has paired together policies that induce competitiveness among citizens and the subjection of population under the optimization of production (Ong 2006). With COVID-19, the crisis seems worse, because the automation and the disruption of "digital economy" (Durand 2020) go hand in hand with a crisis of social reproduction and unemployment (Long 2021).

Beyond sociotechnical disruption, deindustrialization and stagnant economies have been affecting the pace of productivity growth and the generation of employment, with governments under the stranglehold of private sector and the conversion of profits into buybacks and dividends (Benanav 2020). Technology and social relations dialectically affect one another paving the way for new dynamics of accumulation and producing modes for governing, on the one hand, the precarity of an underpaid, insecure workforce that processes data in crowdworking platforms (Jones 2021) and, on the other hand, the impeding crises via the subjection of the population.

Technological disruption also favored new structures for disciplinary control and surveillance techniques. New surveillance capabilities developed in the wake of 9/11, for example, are transforming the ability of governments to monitor and track individuals or remote systems. We normalized technologies of control to manage the circulation of commodities and people, like drones (Chamayou 2013; Peron 2019), and to monitor our lives via automated border control systems, city cameras, etc. According to research led at Carnegie Endowment for International Peace (Feldstein 2019), at least 75 out of 176 countries are actively using artificial intelligence technologies for surveillance purposes, including smart city/safe city platforms, facial recognition systems, smart policing and big data mechanisms linked to public and private companies. Democracies are not taking adequate steps to monitor the spread of sophisticated technologies, since they are linked to a range of violations—for example, the polemic with the military-grade spyware licensed by Israel to governments for tracking terrorists and criminals was used to hack cellphones of journalists and activists worldwide (Priest et al. 2021).

The impetus for critical theory does not disappear in the administered society under the imperative of individual adaptation and reconciliation with capitalism (Fong 2016). Due to the pervasive effects of the crises, a critical theory might play a major role in understanding and overcoming the reified terrain (Bloch 1962) produced by capital.

Latency of the Crisis: A Multidimensional Perspective

With different connotations and modulations between core and peripheral countries, and conceptions varying across different social strata (economic, cultural, political, etc.), crisis has become an intrinsic element of contemporary social imaginations. The issue gathers scholars from Poland, Canada, United States, Brazil and England to illuminate the

multiple angles concerning the problem of crisis in contemporary society and social theory.

In the wake of the Euro crises in the early 2010s, Dustin Byrd argues that the upsurge of right-wing nationalisms is not merely a reaction against the liberal discourse of cosmopolitanism of the early globalization, but rather an identity struggle that deals with the dialectics of history grounded on false hopes rooted in an idealized Christian identity. Byrd proposes a strong framework to grasp the rise of ethno-nationalism as a by-product of the multiple crises of post-secular societies, comprising refugee crisis, socioeconomic uncertainties and the construction of a secular polity *pari passu* the significant force of religion among citizens and democratic deliberations. In this context, identity values and cultural homogeneity are constricted by multiple pressures of liberal policies and the challenges of the multicultural, post-colonial order. The use of Christendom to restore a lost tradition of order and unity implies the politicization of religion and a “palingenetic ultra-nationalist Christianity,” which attempts at restoring the cultural purity of the *Volksgemeinschaft* and the mirages of historical continuity between the present and the invented traditions of the alleged Christian foundations of Europeanness and the nativist content of the people.

Besides ethno-nationalism and the force of religion, one of the main expressions of contemporary capitalist crises and liberal democracies instabilities is the diffusion of right-wing populist movements in the United States, Brazil, France, and Hungary. The radicalization of conservative agendas (Strobl 2021) plays a major role in the uses of traditional components (Christianity) in political rhetoric and points to the importance of the politicization of senses and emotions in public sphere. Patrycja Pichnicka-Trivedi argues that populist discourses operate according to a structural logics to shock the senses with moral and divisive connotations to mobilize popular resentment, hatred and the sense of injustice among citizens in relation to state and the elites. The comparative study between two cases (Poland and the United States) shows how populist logics constructs efficacy in different contexts, among other factors, due to the circulation of empty signifiers in the era of digital networks. In this sense, nodal categories of populist discourse (the people, the corrupted, we/them, etc.) can be used as pieces of puzzles and quite arbitrarily matched into combinations to create (empty) signifying structures. If signifiers get their political meaning through emotional investment, authoritarian populist movements may find a fertile terrain to feed disaffection towards liberal democracy.

Samir Gandesha states that the enduring crisis of capitalism and liberal democracy has become a condition of contemporary livelihood. As an effect of ontological insecurity of citizens regarding the changing socioeconomic and cultural conditions, contemporary traits of fascism can be analyzed as political expressions of the right-wing authoritarian attacks on liberal democracy, expressed in the rise of Viktor Orbán, Donald Trump, Jair Bolsonaro and Narendra Modi in the 2010s. On the one hand, economic reason based on extractivist policies and imposition of austerity measures promotes an endocolonization strategy that extends from the ecological crisis (e.g., developmental programs and fires in the Amazon) to the eviction of local communities (e.g., the Adivasi in India) and market reforms that corrode welfare. On the other hand, a “post-human fascism” becomes a way of governing by omission: during the pandemic, the superfluousness of lives becomes clear with negationist policy that put workers (above all precarious workers) at grave risk of contracting or even dying from the virus (United States, Brazil and India count on the most severe death toll and contagion).

The article of Jeremiah Morelock, Yonathan Listik and Mili Kalia discusses the COVID-19 crisis in the United Kingdom and how neo-liberal rationality and utilitarian, sympathetic logics were paired together in the management of one of the worst scenarios in Europe. The public speeches of Boris Johnson emphasize the notion of sacrifice to honor a general mass he hails, producing a political effect of responsabilization of the individual citizen for the success in the face of the crisis. In this way, the discourse of governance, with the technical management of society, tends to divert the emphasis on politics and affirm the need for saving the economy as if the common good depended on the efficiency of the market. Government no longer acts politically in the sense of having an overarching responsibility towards all citizens to generate well-being, nor is committed to politics or ideological agendas. It acts technically; that is, it lies above particular interests and, like a wishful thinking, problems are not political, but rather a matter for technical intervention guided by neutral agents. Government is supposed to neutralize ideologies and its role is merely to safeguard individuals and ensure the market can naturally resolve any crisis that might emerge.

In a society in which inequalities are deepening, the normalization of political economic crises defines the contours of many branches of social life. In higher education, the apex of modern educational systems and the “general intellect” (Marx) of society (our shared, collective set of knowledge, innovation, capabilities, etc.), the signs of crisis go hand in hand with the structural contradictions of global capitalism. Krystian

Szadkowski and Richard Hall present a strong analysis of how the university can be a potential site for social imagination to contradict the dominant neoliberal grammar that favors the entrepreneurial subjective engagement based on human capital, productivity, value-for-money, flexibility (a cool concept that generally means precarization), etc. The pressures for production and competition, moved by accumulation and the abstraction of intellectual work through rankings and metrics, is part of an anti-human project grounded in the commodification of the general intellect and its common, shared potentialities. The architecture of knowledge production as a mode of commodification might be ruptured through both the critique of Western hegemony (opening up the theoretical and political imagination to post-colonial scenarios) and new political prospects that posit the university as a privileged site for the production of the common.

The commonwealth cannot deny the access to what is socially produced. This axis is dismantled in class societies, in which economic inequalities turn into social asymmetries, that is, class cleavages affect the distribution of power and subjective well-being: especially in crises conjunctures, this fracture in social cohesion often implies the burst of poverty. Hélio Alexandre Silva sheds light on a critical theory of poverty—a theme that is often implicit in many critical theorists (Walter Benjamin, Max Horkheimer, Giorgio Agamben, etc.) and needs deep analysis for the critique of contemporary society. Silva argues that poverty and its chains of lack and privation imply an assimilation between poverty and the minimum by offering only subsistence to deal with the problem—a false reconciliation that, instead of overcoming the distress, tends to naturalize inequalities.

The critical exposition points to an interesting limitation of contemporary social policy that tries to combat poverty by reproducing market structures. The consumerist hypothesis, based on the expansion of accumulation and private property of goods, is not enough as private property does not mean the expansion of social and individual capabilities. Prompt responses of institutional policies committed to empowering groups, and redistributive policies that soften the abrupt oscillations of market economies and their effects on social cohesion, can play an important role in designing universal basic income projects. But the critique of the precarization of livelihood needs a political grammar that challenges the structures that beget these problems. Capitalism is crisis-prone—if not crisis-destined—due to its immanent social and economic contradictions. Whether latent or manifest in any given instance, crisis is intrinsic to capitalism, and in an interconnected, globalized society, the gravitation

is toward global crisis. Social and economic contradictions are integral to the logic of the system, and inhabit the very foundation of socialization. The society of alienated commodity producers that is dependent on the perpetual and anarchic expansion of capital generates systemic economic volatility and social inequalities, a precarious socioeconomic structure in which strong class inequalities overlaps racial, gender and national divisions. Like a downhill stream, capitalism's law of motion directs it toward total crisis. Shoring up the flow at one junction or another will only change the temporary appearance of the downhill trajectory, but the destination remains the same. A more fundamental shift is necessary to change directions. Instead of the logic of possession, which reiterates the same class structure that generates social asymmetries, a *common* access to what is socially produced is crucial to generate commonwealth.

Critique, as a dialectical movement of understanding and negation, looks towards the liberation of real possibilities that remain coagulated under the current conditions. If the worsening of the living standards affects multiple dimensions of livelihood with precarization (income, comforts, security and services available), it also generates an expanded sense of inequality (Stiglitz 2006) that goes beyond the gap between rich and poor and entails structural asymmetries of power grounded in propertied and non-propertied segments of populations. The common, as a way to transform the capitalist socialization among owners, might rethink political economy (Papadimitropoulos 2020) with a critical thrust committed to institute new ethics and social relations. Experiences with the common can be tracked from digital goods to education, governance of urban space and community projects dealing with shared, non-profitable access to what is socially produced or inherited (Foster and Iaione 2016; Narita 2020). This collective governance of the common is based on mutuality and co-operation (beyond market imperatives), and introduces ways of managing goods and services (education, health, food, habitation, information) that can counter the unequal patterns of wealth (Rendueles and Subirats 2016) grounded in class cleavages and the damage to collective well-being and subjective security. The shift of the COVID-19 crisis is a challenge to raise a kind of critique that does not kowtow to a false reconciliation with the return to the "old normal". The "old normal" is not only the society that brought us to this impasse, but also the society that was unable to deliver its own promises of development and normalized a permanent, latent state of crisis in the face of a lack of alternatives to solve its inner contradictions.

Instead of the logic of possession, which reiterates the same class structure that generates social asymmetries, a common access to what is socially produced is crucial to generate commonwealth.

Acknowledgments: This issue was made possible due to a transnational network that was established between August 2019 and October 2021. Some themes and ideas were discussed in research and teaching activities at the São Paulo State University (UNESP) and Federal University of São Carlos (UFSCar) in Brazil. The call for papers and the main guidelines of this volume were published before the pandemics, but the writing of the articles and the whole editorial process occurred during the pandemic crisis. We are grateful to *Praktyka Teoretyczna* and the Research Network on Dialectics & Society, which provided a strong infrastructure and an intense intellectual engagement for us to deal with the *bouvelerements* of our times. We would like to express our thanks to Marta Wicha, Wiktor Marzec, Krystian Szadkowski and Mikołaj Ratajczak for their patience, editorial expertise and support with the Polish translation of the articles. Thanks are also due to Joanna Bednarek, Łukasz Moll, Zahoor Ahmad Wani, Bartosz Wójcik, Tiago Santos Salgado, Raia Apostolova, John Hutnyk, Jakub Krzeski, Bruno Botelho Costa, Panayota Gounari, Maria Cristina Dancham Simões, Eliaz Robakiewicz, Dallel Sarnou, Bruno Cursini, Dilyana Kiryakova-Ryan, Charles Reitz, Silvio Carneiro, Hille Haker and Robert Antonio.

References

- Adorno, Theodor. 1975. „Spätkapitalismus oder Industriegesellschaft?” In *Gesellschaftstheorie und Kulturkritik*. Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp.
- . 2000. *Introduction to Sociology*. Translated by Edmund Jephcott. Palo Alto: Stanford University Press.
- Al Jazeera. 2020. „Cars Become Home for Spain’s Pandemic Casualties.” *Al Jazeera*, March 24.
- Azmanova, Albena. 2020. *Capitalism on Edge: How Fighting Precarity Can Achieve Radical Change Without Crisis or Utopia*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Barbosa, Nelson. 2020. “Espremendo a classe média no Brasil e nos EUA.” *Getulio Vargas Foundation News*, January 8.
- Barnett, Clive. 2017. *The Priority of Injustice: Locating Democracy in Critical Theory*. Athens: University of Georgia Press.
- Bauman, Zygmunt, and Carlo Bordoni. 2014. *State of Crisis*. London: Polity.
- Beck, Ulrich. 1986. *Risikogesellschaft: auf dem Weg in eine andere Moderne*.

- Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp.
- . 2007. *Was ist Globalisierung?* Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp.
- Benanav, Aaron. 2020. *Automation and the Future of Work*. New York: Verso.
- Benjamin, Walter. 1977. „Über den Begriff der Geschichte.” In *Illuminationen*. Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp.
- Bloch, Ernst. 1962. *Verfremdungen*, vol. 1. Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp.
- Bordoni, Carlo. 2016. *Interregnum: Beyond Liquid Modernity*. Berlin: Transcript.
- Bourdieu, Pierre. 1962. *The Algerians*. Translated by Alan M. Ross. Boston: Beacon.
- Butler, Judith. 2006. *Precarious Life: The Powers of Mourning and Violence*. London: Verso.
- Castel, Robert. 2003. *L'insecurité sociale*. Paris: Seuil.
- Castells, Manuel. 2019. “Explosiones sociales.” *La Vanguardia*, October 25.
- Chamayou, Grégoire. 2013. *Théorie du drone*. Paris: La Fabrique.
- Chari, Anita. 2010. “Toward a Political Critique of Reification: Lukács, Honneth and the Aims of Critical Theory.” *Philosophy & Social Criticism* 36(5): 587–606. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0191453710363582>.
- Clarke, Simon. 1994. *Marx's Theory of Crisis*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Cordero, Rodrigo, Aldo Mascareño, and Daniel Chernilo. 2017. “On the Reflexivity of Crises: Lessons from Critical Theory and Systems Theory.” *European Journal of Social Theory* 20(4): 102–134.
- Dona, Giorgia, and Angela Veale. 2021. “Crisis, (Im)mobilities and Young Life Trajectories.” *Social Sciences* 10(7).
- Durand, Cédric. 2015. *Le Capital Fictive. Comment la Finance s'Approprié de Notre Avenir*. Paris: Les Prairies ordinaires.
- Durand, Cédric. 2020. *Techno-Féodalisme. Critique de l'Économie Numérique*. Paris: La Découverte.
- Eastham, Katherine, Donald Coates, and Federico Allodi. 1970. “The Concept of Crisis.” *Canadian Psychiatric Association Journal* 15(5): 463–472.
- Ehlers, Eckart, and Thomas Krafft. 2006. *Earth System Science in the Anthropocene: Emerging Issues and Problems*. London: Springer.
- Endo, Tamaki. 2014. *Living with Risk: Precarity and Bangkok's Urban Poor*. Kyoto: Kyoto University Press.
- Farnsworth, Kevin, and Zoë Irving. 2015. *Social Policy in Times of Austerity: Global Economic Crisis and the New Politics of Welfare*. Bristol:

- Bristol University Press.
- Feldner, Heiko, and Fabio Vighi. 2015. *Critical Theory and the Crisis of Contemporary Capitalism*. London: Bloomsbury Academic.
- Ferguson, James. 2015. *Give a Man a Fish: Reflecting on the New Politics of Distribution*. Durham: Duke University Press.
- Feldstein, Steven. 2019. *The Global Expansion of AI Surveillance*. New York: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace.
- Fong, Benjamin. 2016. *Death and Mastery: Psychoanalytic Drive Theory and the Subject of Late Capitalism*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Foster, Sheila, and Christian Iaione. 2016. "The City as a Commons." *Yale Law & Policy Review* 34(2): 230–262.
- Fraser, Nancy. 2003. "Social Justice in the Age of Identity Politics: Redistribution, Recognition and Participation." In *Redistribution or Recognition?*, edited by Axel Honneth and Nancy Fraser. New York: Verso.
- Gardawski, Juliusz, Adam Mrozowicki, and Vera Trappmann. 2020. *Young Precarious Workers in Poland and Germany. Insights into life strategies, political consciousness and activism*. Warsaw: National Science Centre Poland.
- Graham, Mark, and Mohammad Anwar. 2019. "The Global Gig Economy: Towards a Planetary Labour Market?" *First Monday* 24(4).
- Gray, John. 1998. *False Dawn: The Delusions of Global Capitalism*. New York: W.W. Norton.
- Gu, Yuanyuan, Simeng Gu, and Hong Li. 2020. "From Uncertainty to Anxiety: How Uncertainty Fuels Anxiety in a Process Mediated by Intolerance of Uncertainty." *Neural Plasticity* 20(1).
- Habermas, Jürgen. 1992. *Erkenntnis und Interesse*. Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp.
- . 2002. "The Tasks of a Critical Theory of Society." In *Contemporary Sociological Theory*, edited by Craig Calhoun and Joseph Geertz. London: Blackwell.
- Han, Byung-Chul. 2015. *The Burnout Society*. Translated by Erik Butler. Palo Alto: Stanford University Press.
- Holton, R.J. 1987. "The Idea of Crisis in Modern Society." *The British Journal of Sociology* 38(4): 502–520.
- Honneth, Axel. 2000. *Das Andere der Gerechtigkeit*. Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp.
- Horkheimer, Max. 1968a. „Bemerkungen über Wissenschaft und Krise.“ In *Kritische Theorie: eine Dokumentation I*, edited by Alfred Schmidt. Frankfurt am Main: Fischer.
- . 1968b. „Die gesellschaftliche Funktion der Philosophie.“ In

- Kritische Theorie: eine Dokumentation II*, edited by Alfred Schmidt. Frankfurt am Main: Fischer.
- . 1968c. „Materialismus und Metaphysik.“ In *Kritische Theorie: eine Dokumentation I*, edited by Alfred Schmidt. Frankfurt am Main: Fischer.
- . 1968d. „Traditionelle und kritische Theorie.“ In *Kritische Theorie: eine Dokumentation II*, edited by Alfred Schmidt. Frankfurt am Main: Fischer.
- Illouz, Eve. 2007. *Cold Intimacies: Emotions and Late Capitalism*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Ivancheva, Maria, Felipe Ziotti Narita, and Natalia-Rozalia Avlona. 2020. “Experiências populares radicais, precariedade, gênero e covid-19 no ensino superior.” *Cadernos CIMEAC* 10(3): 13–28.
- Jonas, Hans. 2017. *Une Éthique pour la Nature*. Translated by Sylvie Courtine-Denamy. Paris: Flammarion.
- Jones, Phil. 2021. *Work Without the Worker: Labour in the Age of Platform Capitalism*. New York: Verso.
- Kołakowski, Leszek. 2005. *Main Currents of Marxism*. New York: Norton.
- Koselleck, Reinhart. 2012. *Crisi. Per un lessico della modernità*. Translated by Genaro Imbriano and Silvia Rodeschini. Verona: Ombre Corte.
- Le Breton, D. 2018. “Ambivalence in the World Risk Society.” *Theory, Culture & Society* 35(8): 141–156.
- Levy, Daniel. 2016. “Cosmopolitanizing Catastrophism: Remembering the Future.” *Theory, Culture & Society* 33(8): 291–299.
- Long, Heather. 2021. “Millions of Jobs Probably Aren’t Coming Back, Even after the Pandemic Ends.” *Washington Post*, February 17.
- Lorey, Isabell. 2015. *State of Insecurity: Government of the Precarious*. New York: Verso.
- Luhmann, Niklas. 1997. *Die Gesellschaft der Gesellschaft II*. Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp.
- Maguire, Alex. 2020. “A Dying Class: The Traditional Middle-Class in Britain 2020.” *Historical Materialism*, December 11.
- Majewska, Ewa. 2020. “Precarity and Gender: What’s Love Got to Do With It.” *Praktyka Teoretyczna* 38(4): 19–48. <https://doi.org/10.14746/prt2020.4.2>.
- Marcuse, Herbert. 1966. *Eros and Civilization*. Boston: Beacon.
- . 2015. “The Historical Fate of Bourgeois Democracy.” In *Towards a Critical Theory of Society*. London: Routledge.
- Marini, Ruy Mauro. 1993. “La crisis teórica.” In *América Latina: Inte-*

- gración y Democracia*. Caracas: Nueva Sociedad.
- Marin, Claire. 2019. *Rupture(s)*. Paris: Éditions de l'Observatoire.
- Marx, Karl. 1962. *Das Kapital: Kritik der politischen Ökonomie I*. Berlin: Dietz.
- Marx, Karl, and Friedrich Engels. 1978. *Die deutsche Ideologie*. Berlin: Dietz.
- Mau, Soren. 2021. *Stummer Zwang. Eine marxistische Analyse der ökonomischen Macht im Kapitalismus*. Berlin: Dietz.
- McDonough, Terrence, Michael Reich, and David Kotz. 2010. "Social Structure of Accumulation Theory for the 21st Century." In *Contemporary Capitalism and Its Crises: Social Structure of Accumulation Theory for the 21st Century*, edited by Terrence McDonough, Michael Reich and David Kotz. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Mearsheimer, John. 2019. "Bound to Fail: the Rise and Fall of the Liberal International Order." *International Security* 43(4): 7–50.
- Mészáros, István. 2022. *Beyond Leviathan: Critique of the State*. New York: Monthly Review Press.
- Mitropoulos, Angela. 2005. "Precari-Us?" *Transversal Texts* 3(2).
- Moore, Jason. 2016. *Anthropocene or Capitalocene? Nature, History, and the Crisis of Capitalism*. Oakland: PM Press.
- Morelock, Jeremiah. 2018. *Critical Theory and Authoritarian Populism*. London: University of Westminster Press.
- . 2021. *How to Critique Authoritarian Populism: Methodologies of the Frankfurt School*. Leiden: Brill.
- Morelock, Jeremiah, and Felipe Ziotti Narita. 2021. *The Society of the Selfie: Social Media and the Crisis of Liberal Democracy*. London: University of Westminster Press.
- Mythen, Gabe. 2014. *Understanding Risk Society*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Narita, Felipe Ziotti. 2019. "Espectros da multidão." *Revista USP* 122(3): 89–98.
- . 2020. "Between a Double Crisis: Precarization, Extractivism and the Futures of the Communist Politics." *Praktyka Teoretyczna* 38(4): 124–133. <https://doi.org/10.14746/prt2020.4.6>.
- . 2021. "No terreno normativo da modernidade." *Transições* 2(1): 189–230.
- Natalino, Marco. 2020. *Estimativa da População em Situação de Rua no Brasil*. Rio de Janeiro: IPEA.
- Negri, Antonio. 1991. *Marx Beyond Marx: Lessons on the Grundrisse*. Translated by Harry Cleaver, Michael Ryan, Jim Fleming and Maurizio Viano. London: Pluto.

- NPR. 2021. "Growth of Homelessness During 2020 Was Devastating, Even Before the Pandemic." *NPR*, March 18.
- O'Kane, Chris. 2021. "Reification and the Critical Theory of Contemporary Society." *Critical Historical Studies* 8(1): 110–132.
- Oliveira, Walter Lisboa, Zenith Delabrida, André Faro, and Elder Cerqueira Santos. 2020. "Intolerance of Uncertainty and Mental Health in Brazil During the COVID-19 Pandemic." *Suma Psicológica* 27(1): 32–49.
- Ong, Aihwa. 2006. *Neoliberalism as Exception: Mutations in Citizenship and Sovereignty*. Durham: Duke University Press.
- Papadimitropoulos, Vangelis. 2020. *The Commons: Economic Alternatives in the Digital Age*. London: University of Westminster Press.
- Pascale, Celine-Marie. 2021. *Living on the Edge: When Hard Times Become a Way of Life*. London: Polity.
- Pérez-Lanzac, Carmen. 2020. "La generación arrollada por dos crisis." *El País*, April 25.
- Peron, Alcides. 2019. *American Way of War: Guerra Cirúrgica e o Emprego de Drones Armados em Conflitos Internacionais*. Curitiba: Appris.
- Pierret, Régis. 2013. "Qu'est-ce que la précarité?" *Socio* 2(2): 307–330.
- Pignarre, Philippe, and Isabelle Stengers. 2007. *La Sorcellerie Capitaliste. Pratiques de Désenvoûtement*. Paris: La Découverte.
- Pradella, Lucia. 2014. *Globalization and the Critique of Political Economy*. London: Routledge.
- Priest, Dana, Craig Timberg, and Souad Makhennet. 2021. "Private Israeli Spyware Used to Hack Cellphones of Journalists, Activists Worldwide." *Washington Post*, July 18.
- Ravenelle, Alexandra. 2019. *Hustle and Gig: Struggling and Surviving in the Sharing Economy*. Palo Alto: University of California Press.
- Rego, Walquiria Leão, and Alessandro Pinzani. 2014. *Vozes do Bolsa Família*. São Paulo: UNESP Press.
- Rendueles, César, and Joan Subirats. 2016. *Los bienes comunes*. Madrid: Icaria.
- Rodrik, Dani. 2011. *The Globalization Paradox*. New York: W.W. Norton.
- Roitman, Janet. 2014. *Anti-Crisis*. New York: Duke University Press.
- Rosario, Teresita Cruz, and Jonathan Rigg. 2019. "Living in an Age of Precarity in 21st Century Asia." *Journal of Contemporary Asia* 49(4): 517–527.
- Santos, Theotonio. 1978. *Imperialismo y Dependencia*. Mexico: Editorial Era.
- Scholz, Trebor. 2016. *Uberworked and Underpaid*. London: Polity.

- Schweiger, Gottfried. 2020. *Poverty, Inequality and the Critical Theory of Recognition*. London: Springer.
- Shavit, Tal, Arie Sherman, and Daniela Aisenberg. 2021. "The Effects of the COVID-19 Crisis on the Subjective Well-Being of the Israeli Population." *Current Psychology* 29(3): 211–235.
- Skidelsky, Robert. 2010. *Keynes: The Return of the Master*. New York: Public Affairs.
- Smulewicz-Zucker, Gregory. 2020. *Confronting Reification*. Leiden: Brill.
- Sotiropoulos, Dimitris, John Milios, and Spyros Lapatsioras. 2013. *A Political Economy of Contemporary Capitalism and its Crisis*. London: Routledge.
- Standing, Guy. 2011. *The Precariat*. London: Bloomsbury.
- Stiglitz, Joseph. 2006. *The Price of Inequality*. New York: W.W. Norton.
- Stirk, Peter. 2005. *Critical Theory, Politics and Society*. London: Continuum.
- Strobl, Natascha. 2021. *Radikalisierte Konservatismus*. Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp.
- Sznaider, Natan. 2015. "Ulrich Beck and Classical Sociological Theory." *Journal of Classical Sociology* 15(2): 220–225.
- Walby, Sylvia. 2015. *Crisis*. London: Polity.
- Xavier, Getulio. 2021. "Reforma trabalhista completa 4 anos sem cumprir suas promesas." *Carta Capital*, July 13.
- Wilson, Elizabeth. 1989. *Hallucinations: Life in a Post-Modern City*. London: Hutchinson Radius.
- Woodcock, Jamie, and Mark Graham. 2019. *The Gig Economy: A Critical Introduction*. London: Polity.
- Young, Iris Marion. 2000. *Inclusion and Democracy*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Žižek, Slavoj. 2011. *Living in the End Times*. New York: Verso.

FELIPE ZIOTTI NARITA, Ph.D. – received his postdoctoral training at the University of São Paulo (USP) and Federal University of São Carlos (UFSCar) and all four of his degrees from the São Paulo State University (UNESP). He is a lecturer in public policy at UNESP and director of research at Baron of Mauá University, Brazil. He was an invited researcher at the Forschungskreis Gregor Girard at the Universität Freiburg (Switzerland) and is a member of the Research Network on Dialectics & Society, Research Nucleus on Ethics, Philosophy and Social Theory of UNESP, Historiar (National Council for Scientific and Technological Development of Brazil) and the Laboratory for the Study and Research on Education of USP. With Jeremiah Morelock, he is the author of *The Society of the Selfie: Social Media and the Crisis of Liberal Democracy* (University of Westminster Press, 2021) and *O Problema do Populismo: Teoria, Política e Mobilização* (UNESP and Paco Press, 2019).

Address:

São Paulo State University (UNESP)
School of Humanities and Social Sciences
Postgraduate Program in Planning and Analysis of Public Policy
900 Eufrásia Monteiro Petraglia Avenue
Franca, SP, 14409-160, Brazil
+55 (16) 3706-8700
email: felipe.narita@unesp.br

JEREMIAH MORELOCK, Ph.D. – is an instructor of sociology at Boston College's Woods College of Advancing Studies, the program coordinator of the Taking Care of Us initiative as well as a postdoctoral researcher at the William F. Connell School of Nursing at Boston College, and the founder and director of the Research Network on Dialectics & Society. He is the author of *Pandemics, Authoritarian Populism, and Science Fiction: Medicine, Militarism, and Morality in American Film* (Routledge, 2021), and the editor of *Critical Theory and Authoritarian Populism* (University of Westminster Press, 2018) and *How to Critique Authoritarian Populism: Methodologies of the Frankfurt School* (Brill, 2021).

Address:

Boston College
Department of Sociology
426 McGuinn Hall
140 Commonwealth Ave

Chestnut Hill, MA 02467, USA

(617) 552-4130

email: morelocj@bc.edu

Citation:

Narita, Felipe Ziotti, and Jeremiah Morelock. 2021. "Critical Social Analysis of Crisis." *Praktyka Teoretyczna* 4(42): 7–37.

DOI: 10.14746/prt2021.4.1

Autor: Felipe Ziotti Narita and Jeremiah Morelock

Tytuł: Krytyczna analiza społeczna kryzysu

Abstrakt: W tym artykule proponujemy krytyczną analizę społeczną kryzysu w świetle szerszych procesów rozwoju kapitalizmu, i przed wszystkim przemian po 2008 roku. Omawiamy pięć podejść rozwijanych w naukach społecznych, które mierzą się z problemem kryzysu i rozwijają teoretyczną refleksję nad problemem. Wskazujemy na wagę prekarności dla uchwycenia bieżącego kryzysu w krytycznym świetle. Tekst przybliży także sześć kolejnych artykułów z tego numeru *Praktyki Teoretycznej*.

Słowa kluczowe: kryzys, teoria krytyczna, teoria społeczna, niepewność, globalizacja