

Preface: Marxism in the Age of Trump

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The present crisis of neoliberalism is a crisis of its politics. In this way it mirrors the birth of political neoliberalism, in the Reagan-Thatcher Revolution of the late 1970s through early 1980s. The economic crisis of 2007–2008 took eight years to manifest as a political crisis. That political crisis was expressed by SYRIZA's election in Greece, Jeremy Corbyn's rise to leadership of the Labour Party, the Brexit referendum, and Bernie Sanders's, as well as Donald Trump's, campaign for President of the U.S. Now Trump's election is the most dramatic expression of this political crisis of neoliberalism.

The heritage of 20th century "Marxism"—that of both the Old Left of the 1930s and the New Left of the 1960s—does not facilitate a good approach to the present crisis and possibilities for change. Worse still is the legacy of the 1980s post-New Left of the era of neoliberalism, which has scrambled to chase after events ever since Thatcher and Reagan's election. A repetition and compounding of this failure is manifesting around Trump's election now.

"Marxists and the "Left" more generally have been very weak in the face of such phenomena, ever since Reagan and up through Bill Clinton's Presidency. Neoliberalism was not well processed in terms of actual political possibilities. Now, it is too late: whatever opportunity neoliberalism presented is past:

Trump's victory is the beginning not the end of a process of transforming the Republican Party as well as mainstream politics more generally[;] that is his avowed goal. So the question is the transformation of democracy—of how liberal democratic politics is conducted. This was bound to change, with or without Trump. Now, with Trump, the issue is posed point-black. There's no avoiding the crisis of neoliberalism.

This volume collects articles originally published in the *Platypus Review* between 2015 and 2017, by Chris Cutrone, Leonie Ettinger, Boris Kagarlitsky, Catherine Liu, Daniel Lommes, Gregory Lucero, Nikos Malliaris, John Milios and Emmanuel Tomaselli, addressing questions and problems raised for the left by the election of Trump.