

CFP: Capitalist Transitions, Empire Building, and American History

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By James Parisot

Over the last decade there has been a resurgence of discussion about the concept of capitalism ranging from Occupy Wall Street's critiques of the uncontrolled recklessness of American finance capital to a burst of writings on the history of slavery and capitalism, and beyond. Yet there continues to be much confusion over what capitalism *is* in general, how to define it, and its role in American history. On a broader level this raises a series of questions going back to Marx and Weber, among others, over the transition to (or transitions to) capitalism and the uniqueness of capitalism as opposed to other historical social forms.

The purpose of this special issue is to explore this problematic through the lens of the history of American capitalist development and empire building. American capitalism developed in and through the history of the expansion of empire, destruction and displacement of native populations, remaking of ecological systems, construction of a social hierarchy organized along racial and gendered lines, making of class and state relations, and so on. It particular, it hopes to bring together scholars who are working on the edges of the boundaries of various popular or dominant paradigms and moving towards new ways of conceptualizing these issues and experimenting with perhaps more potentially risky but rewarding methodologies. In this context, authors are asked to address some aspects of the following questions in their papers:

- What exactly is capitalism, and what sort of methodological processes might we use to explain its concrete history? What might be problems with influential contemporary approaches to the question of capitalism's history over the last several decades?
- Did the United States go through its own historically specific 'transition' to capitalism? How did this occur? What were the forces behind it?
- Works on the history of American expansion and empire building are often separate from writings by, for example, social historians who have addressed the question of capitalism and labor. Given this, how, or how not, did processes of capitalist development, empire building, and labor formation

operate together?

- Capitalism is also a form of social order organized along racial and gendered/patriarchal lines, and the rise of capitalism entailed a new relationship between humanity and ecology. How can our conceptions of capitalism and narratives of its history include these factors not as secondary or peripheral but central to the history of capitalist transition and development?
- The history of capitalism's rise and social normalization also was a history of resistance to capitalism. Thus how did these forces play out historically, and how did capital overcome resistance to its hegemony?

In addition to full papers of 7,000-8,000 words, shorter more specific pieces or review essays may also be considered. Authors must follow the *Journal of Historical Sociology* author guidelines: [http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/journal/10.1111/\(ISSN\)1467-6443/homepage/ForAuthors.html](http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/journal/10.1111/(ISSN)1467-6443/homepage/ForAuthors.html).

For any inquiries (including discussing potential paper topics before writing a formal proposal) and to propose a paper please send an approximately 300 word abstract to special issue editor James Parisot at jpariso1@binghamton.edu. **The deadline for proposals is October 1st, 2017.** Final papers will be due in September of 2018.

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