

New Spirits of Capitalism?: Crises, Justifications, and Dynamics



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After many years in which it appeared to be losing the pre-eminent position it had occupied in the lexicon of the social and human sciences, the term 'capitalism' has once again become a matter of critical concern, both theoretically and substantively, in a range of disciplinary fields. The global financial and environmental crises, and the shifting of economic power associated with the rise of the BRICs and the sovereign debt contagion in the Eurozone, for example, have all put the norms, practices, and devices of capitalist conduct back under the spotlight.

Luc Boltanski and Eve Chiapello's *The New Spirit of Capitalism* has become a seminal text since its publication, sparking debate about the meaning, significance, and effects of contemporary changes in economic and organizational life, and becoming a reference point in political discussions about the welfare state, collective action in a 'networked' world, and reconciliation of the interests of social justice with the 'laws of the markets'.

This edited book offers the first comprehensive attempt to examine the power and reach of Boltanski and Chiapello's argument, the text's theoretical and methodological perspectives, tools, and techniques, and to do so in relation to the development of neo-liberal capitalism in the period since its original publication and in particular the culmination of these developments in the ongoing crisis since the financial collapse of 2007-8. The volume provides both a balanced critique and overview of *New Spirit*, but also shows how it can be used in a variety of empirical studies to develop new insights into the functioning and regulation of capitalism in the contemporary era. The volume brings together leading scholars from a range of disciplinary fields such as Sociology, Management and Organization Studies, and Geography. Luc Boltanksi and Eve Chiapello also offer their thoughts on the continuing relevance of *New Spirit* over a decade after its publication, and in the context of contemporary global economic and political developments.

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