



### [Beyond Leviathan: Critique of the State](#)

by [István Mészáros](#)

István Mészáros was one of the greatest political theorists of the twentieth century. Left unfinished at the time of his death, *Beyond Leviathan* is written on the magisterial scale of his previous book, *Beyond Capital*, and meant to complement that work. It focuses on the transcendence of the state, along with the transcendence of capital and alienated labor, while traversing the history of political theory from Plato to the present, discussing Aristotle, More, Machiavelli, and Vico in depth. Not only does *Beyond Leviathan* provide, for the first time, an all-embracing Marxian theory of the state, it gives new political meaning to the notion of “the withering away of the state.” In his definitive, final work, Mészáros seeks to illuminate the political preconditions for a society of substantive equality and substantive democracy. | [more...](#)



### [Preface to Beyond Leviathan](#)

by [István Mészáros](#)

(Feb 01, 2018)

Topics: [Marxism](#) [Movements](#) [State Repression](#) Places: [Global](#)

The state cannot be other than Leviathan in imposing its structurally entrenched power on overall societal decision-making. Yet a way must be found to extricate humanity from the ever more dangerous, arbitrary, and alienated form of the Leviathan state. Indeed, the survival of humanity depends on it. | [more...](#)

### [Review of the Month](#)



## Capital's Historic Circle Is Closing

### **The Challenge to Secure Exit**

by [István Mészáros](#)

(Dec 01, 2017)

Topics: [Capitalism](#) [History](#) [Political Economy](#) Places: [Global](#)

With the structural crisis of the capital system, the expansionary historic circle through which capital could dominate humanity for a very long time is perilously closing. That closure brings with it the danger of humanity's total destruction in the interest of capital's absurdly prolonged rule. | [more...](#)

## From Primitive to Substantive Equality—via Slavery

by [István Mészáros](#)

(Sep 01, 2016)

Topics: [History](#) [Philosophy](#) [Political Economy](#) Places: [Global](#)

Unlike *materially grounded* and strictly determined *primitive equality*, the realization of universally shared substantive equality is feasible only at a highly developed level of social/economic advancement that must be combined with the *consciously pursued non-hierarchical* (and thereby *non-antagonistic*) regulation of a *historically sustainable* social reproductive metabolism. That would be a radically different social metabolism, in contrast to *all* phases of historical development hitherto—including of course the *spontaneous primitive equality* of the distant past rooted in the grave *material constraints* of directly imposed natural necessity and struggle for survival.... “Materiality” of that kind, despite its unquestionable substantiveness, as linked to the corresponding hemmed-in “spontaneity,” is obviously not enough in order to achieve historical sustainability.... The requirement of *materiality*, in the case of the human being whose fundamental existential substratum is objectively determined *nature*, is essential. The seminal condition of materiality with regard to equality can be swept aside or wished out of existence—as a rule in a revealingly discriminatory and class-bound self-serving way—only by some *idealist* philosophical conception; one that *predicates* the commendability of some kind of equality (e.g., “in

the eyes of God” or “before the Law”) and at the same time denies the realizability of materially embodied substantive equality, in its defense of a most iniquitous social order. | [more...](#)

## [The Critique of the State](#)

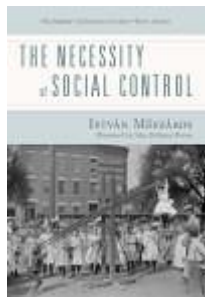
### **A Twenty-First Century Perspective**

by [István Mészáros](#)

(Sep 01, 2015)

Topics: [Movements](#) [Political Economy](#) [State Repression](#) Places: [Global](#) [Ukraine](#)

The allegedly less and less power of nation-states is a great exaggeration, voiced by governments in the interest of justifying their failure to introduce even some of their thoroughly limited and once solemnly promised social reforms.... The overwhelming historical failure of capital was—and remains—its inability to constitute the *state of the capital system as a whole*, while irresistibly asserting the imperatives of its system as the material structural determination of societal reproduction on a global scale. This is a massive contradiction. Inter-state antagonisms on a potentially all-destructive scale—as presaged last century by two world wars still without the now fully developed weapons of total self-destruction—are the necessary consequence of that contradiction. Accordingly, the state that we must conquer in the interest of humanity’s survival is the *state as we know it*, namely the *state in general* in its existing reality, as articulated in the course of history, and capable of asserting itself. | [more...](#)



## [The Necessity of Social Control](#)

by [István Mészáros](#)

Topics: [Marxism](#) [Philosophy](#) Places: [Global](#)

István Mészáros is one of the greatest philosophers that the historical materialist tradition has yet produced. His work stands practically alone today in the depth of its analysis of Marx’s theory of alienation, the structural crisis of capital, the demise of Soviet-style post-revolutionary societies, and the necessary conditions of the transition to socialism. *The Necessity of Social Control* grew out of the need for an easily accessible work that would provide a way into his thinking for the uninitiated. Mészáros took this

challenge seriously, and produced this book as an introduction to, and summation of, the central ideas governing his analysis. | [more...](#)

### **Reflections on the New International**

**Dedicated to the Memory and Legacy of President Hugo Chávez**

by [István Mészáros](#)

(Feb 01, 2014)

Topics: [Marxism](#) [Movements](#) Places: [Americas](#) [Global](#) [Venezuela](#)

The need for the establishment and successful operation of *The New International* is painfully obvious and urgent today. The enemies of a historically sustainable societal reproductive order, who occupy at the present time still the dominant position in our increasingly endangered world, do not hesitate for a moment to exploit in the interest of their destructive design, with utmost cynicism and hypocrisy, the existing decision-making and opinion-forming organs of the international community, from the Security Council of the United Nations to the great multiplicity of the national and international press and to the other mass media under their direct material stranglehold.... At the same time the adherents of the much needed socialist alternative are fragmented and divided among themselves, instead of internationally combining their strength for the cause of a successful confrontation with their adversaries. | [more...](#)

### **Structural Crisis Needs Structural Change**

by [István Mészáros](#)

(Mar 01, 2012)

Topics: [Economic Crisis](#) [Marxism](#) [Movements](#)

When stressing the need for a radical structural change it must be made clear right from the beginning that this is not a call for an unrealizable utopia. On the contrary, the primary defining characteristic of modern utopian theories was precisely the projection that their intended improvement in the conditions of the workers' life could be achieved well within the existing structural framework of the criticized societies.... As we also know, the high-sounding "utilitarian" moral principle of "the greatest good for the greatest number" came to nothing since its Benthamite advocacy. The problem for us is that without a proper assessment of the nature of the economic and social crisis of our time—which by now cannot be denied by the defenders of the capitalist order even if they reject the need for a major change—the likelihood of success in this respect is negligible. | [more...](#)

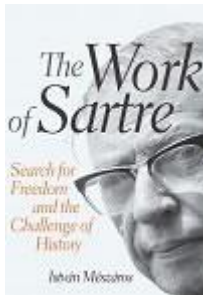
### **The Dialectic of Structure and History: An Introduction**

by [István Mészáros](#)

(May 01, 2011)

Topics: [Marxism](#) [Philosophy](#)

The investigation of the dialectical relationship between *structure and history* is essential for a proper understanding of the nature and the defining characteristics of any social formation in which sustainable solutions are being sought to the encountered problems. This is particularly important in the case of capital's social formation, with its inexorable tendency toward an all-embracing, structurally embedded determination of all aspects of societal reproduction and the—feasible for the first time ever—global domination implicit in that form of development. It is therefore by no means accidental that, in the interest of the required *structural change*, Marx had to focus critical attention on the concept of *social structure*, in the historical period of crises and revolutionary explosions of the 1840s when he articulated his own—radically new—conception of history. | [more...](#)



### [The Work of Sartre: Search for Freedom and the Challenge of History](#)

by [István Mészáros](#)

Topics: [Philosophy](#) Places: [France](#)

This landmark book, first published in 1979, met acclaim as a doubly important work of radical philosophy. Its subject, Jean-Paul Sartre, was among the twentieth century's most controversial and influential philosophers; its author, István Mészáros, was himself establishing a reputation for profound contributions to the Marxian tradition, which would continue into the next century. In this completely updated and expanded volume, Mészáros examines the manifold aspects of Sartre's legacy—as novelist, playwright, philosopher, and political actor—and in so doing casts light upon the entire oeuvre, situating it within the historical and social context of Sartre's time. | [more...](#)

### [The Communal System and the Principle of Self-Critique](#)

by [István Mészáros](#)

(Mar 01, 2008)

Topics: [Marxism](#)

*The collapse by century's end of most of the post-revolutionary social experiments of the twentieth century put socialists nearly everywhere on the defensive. Today's call for a "socialism for the twenty-first century" is an attempt to transcend this defensive posture and to engage fully with the most urgent problem of our time: the creation of a sustainable socialist order. In this respect, "István Mészáros," in the words of President Hugo Chávez of Venezuela, "is someone who lights up the road. He points to the core of the argument we must make in order to go beyond the defensive attitude in which the world's peoples and revolutionary movements find themselves, and to take the offensive, throughout the world, in moving toward socialism" (quoted from back cover of Mészáros, O desafio e o fardo do tempo histórico [São Paulo: Boitempo Editorial, 2007]; English edition, The Challenge and Burden of Historical Time [forthcoming from Monthly Review Press, 2008]). | [more...](#)*

### **Bolívar and Chávez: The Spirit of Radical Determination**

by [István Mészáros](#)

(Jul 01, 2007)

Topics: [Movements](#) Places: [Latin America](#)

In the summer of 2005 Venezuela commemorated the bicentenary of Simón Bolívar's oath, made in the presence of his great teacher, Simón Rodríguez—a man who later in Paris, well before Marx, frequented socialist secret societies and returned to South America only in 1823. Bolívar's oath took place on August 15, 1805, on the outskirts of Rome. Already the place itself—the hill of Monte Sacro—which they had chosen together for this solemn occasion, was indicative of the nature of the young Bolívar's historical pledge. For precisely on the hill of Monte Sacro, twenty-three centuries earlier, the rebellious protest of the plebeians against the patricians in Ancient Rome, under the leadership of Sicinio, was supposed to have taken place. At that time the rebellion of the Roman populace is said to have been brought to an end by the rhetoric of that notorious pillar of the established order, Senator Menenius Agrippa, who was preaching the forever familiar wisdom of the ruling classes according to which the people "not destined to rule" should willingly accept "their place in the natural order of society." | [more...](#)

### **The Only Viable Economy**

by [István Mészáros](#)

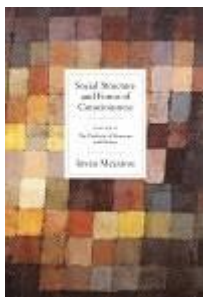
(Apr 01, 2007)

Topics: [Economic Theory](#) [Political Economy](#)

Once upon a time the capitalist mode of production represented a great advance over all of the preceding ones, however problematical and indeed destructive this historical advance in the end turned out-and had to turn out-to be. By breaking the long prevailing

but constraining direct link between human use and production, and replacing it with the commodity relation, capital opened up the dynamically unfolding possibilities of apparently irresistible expansion to which — from the standpoint of the capital system and of its willing personifications — there could be no conceivable limits. For the paradoxical and ultimately quite untenable inner determination of capital's productive system is that its commodified products "are non-use-values for their owners and use-values for their non-owners. Consequently they must all change hands. . . . Hence commodities must be realised as values before they can be realised as use-values." | [more...](#)

1 [2](#) [Next](#) → Página 2



## [Social Structure and Forms of Consciousness, Vol. II: The Dialectic of Structure and History](#)

by [István Mészáros](#)

Topics: [Marxism](#) [Socialism](#) Places: [Global](#)

In *The Dialectic of Structure and History*, Volume Two of *Social Structure and Forms of Consciousness*, István Mészáros brings the comprehension of our condition and the possibility of emancipatory social action beyond the highest point reached to date. Building on the indicatory flashes of conceptual lightning in the *Grundrisse* and other works of Karl Marx, Mészáros sets out the relations of structure and agency, individual and society, base and superstructure, nature and history, in a dialectical totality open to the future. | [more...](#)

## [The Necessity of Planning: In Honor of Harry Magdoff](#)

by [István Mészáros](#)

(Oct 01, 2006)

Topics: [Marxism](#) [Socialism](#)

I wrote some time ago that “Harry Magdoff is a great teacher and an indomitable combatant. His contributions to socialist theory-on imperialism and monopolistic developments, as well as on the vital role of planning for any viable society of the future—are of a truly lasting importance.” | [more...](#)

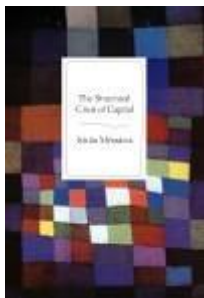
### [The Structural Crisis of Politics](#)

by [István Mészáros](#)

(Sep 01, 2006)

Topics: [Imperialism](#)

would like to begin with a brief survey of the very disquieting—indeed, I should say, of worldwide threatening—developments in the field of politics and the law. In this respect I wish to underline that it was no less than twenty-three years ago that I became personally acquainted in Paraiba, Brazil with the painful circumstances of explosive food riots. Twenty years later, at the time of President Lula’s electoral campaign, I read that he had announced that the most important part of his future strategy was his determination to put an end in the country to the grave social evil of famine. The two intervening decades from the time of those dramatic food riots in Paraiba were obviously not sufficient to solve this chronic problem. And even today, I am told, the improvements are still very modest in Brazil. Moreover, the somber statistics of the United Nations constantly underline that the same problem persists, with devastating consequences, in many parts of the world. This is so despite the fact that the productive powers at the disposal of humankind today could relegate forever to the past the now totally unforgivable social failure of famine and malnutrition | [more...](#)



### [The Structural Crisis of Capital](#)

by [István Mészáros](#)

Topics: [Marxism](#) [Philosophy](#) [Socialism](#) Places: [Global](#)

In this collection of trenchant essays and interviews, István Mészáros, the world’s preeminent Marxist philosopher and winner of the Libertador Award for Critical Thought (the Bolivar Prize) for 2008, lays bare the exploitative structure of modern capitalism. He argues with great power that the world’s economies are on a social and ecological precipice, and unless decisive radical action is taken soon to totally transform our



economic system—from one based upon the blind pursuit of profit to one controlled by the workers themselves to not just satisfy our basic needs but to help each of us to develop our full potential as human beings—we will find ourselves thrust headfirst into barbarism and environmental catastrophe. | [more...](#)



### [Social Structure and Forms of Consciousness, Vol. I: The Social Determination of Method](#)

by [István Mészáros](#)

Topics: [Marxism](#) [Philosophy](#) [Socialism](#) Places: [Global](#)

This new work by the leading Marxian philosopher of our day is a milestone in human self-understanding. It focuses on the location where action emerges from freedom and necessity, the foundation of all social science....Today, as never before, the investigation of the close relationship between social structure — defined by Marx as “arising from the life-process of definite individuals” — and the various forms of consciousness is particularly important. We can only perceive what is possible by first identifying the historical process that constrains consciousness itself, and therefore social action. | [more...](#)



### [The Challenge and Burden of Historical Time: Socialism in the Twenty First Century](#)

by [István Mészáros](#)

Topics: [History](#) [Marxism](#) [Philosophy](#) [Socialism](#) Places: [Global](#)

A breakthrough in the development of socialist thought, *The Challenge and Burden of Historical Time* is both a companion volume to Mészáros’s seminal *Beyond Capital* and a major theoretical contribution in its own right. Mészáros, one of the foremost Marxist thinkers of our age, focuses on the tyranny of capital’s time imperative and the necessity

of a new socialist time accountancy, and provides a strong refutation of the popular view that there is no alternative to the current neoliberal order. | [more...](#)

## [Review of the Month](#)

### [Cuba: The Next Forty-Five Years?](#)

by [István Mészáros](#)

(Jan 01, 2004)

*Topics:* [Economic Theory](#) [Political Economy](#) *Places:* [Latin America](#)

This year Cuba will be celebrating the forty-fifth anniversary of its victorious revolution: a great historic achievement. And when we bear in mind that the Cuban revolution—the long sustained action of a nation of just eleven million people—survived for forty-five years against all odds, successfully confronting the declared enmity, the U.S.-dictated international political encirclement and economic blockade, as well as the ever renewed attempts to subvert and overthrow the post-revolutionary order by the world’s most preponderant economic and military power, even this simple fact puts forcefully into relief the magnitude and the lasting significance of the ongoing Cuban intervention in the historical process of our time. We are all contemporaries to an achievement whose reverberations reach well beyond the confines of the tendentiously propagandized “American Hemisphere,” offering its hopeful message to the rest of the world | [more...](#)



### [Militarism and the Coming Wars](#)

by [István Mészáros](#)

(Jun 01, 2003)

*Topics:* [Imperialism](#) *Places:* [Global](#)

The dangers and immense suffering caused by all attempts at solving deep-seated social problems by militaristic interventions, on any scale, are obvious enough. If, however, we look more closely at the historical trend of militaristic adventures, it becomes frighteningly clear that they show an ever greater intensification and an ever-increasing scale, from local confrontations to two horrendous world wars in the twentieth century, and to the potential annihilation of humankind when we reach our own time. | [more...](#)

## [The Challenge of Sustainable Development and the Culture of Substantive Equality](#)

by [István Mészáros](#)

(Dec 01, 2001)

Topics: [Ecology](#)

Two closely connected propositions are at the center of this intervention: If development in the future is not *sustainable* development, there will be no significant development at all, no matter how badly needed; only frustrated attempts to square the circle, as in the last few decades, marked by ever more elusive “modernizing” theories and practices, condescendingly prescribed for the so-called Third World by the spokesmen of former colonial powers. The corollary to this is that the pursuit of sustainable development is inseparable from the progressive realization of *substantive equality*. It must also be stressed in this context that the obstacles to be overcome could hardly be greater. For up to our own days the culture of *substantive inequality* remains dominant, despite the usually half-hearted efforts to counter the damaging impact of social inequality by instituting some mechanism of *strictly formal* equality in the political sphere | [more...](#)



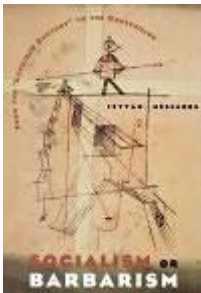
## [The Uncontrollability of Globalizing Capital](#)

by [István Mészáros](#)

(Feb 01, 1998)

Topics: [Capitalism](#) [History](#) [Marxism](#) [Philosophy](#) [Political Economy](#) Places: [Global](#)

We live in an age of unprecedented historical crisis. Its severity can be gauged by the fact that we are not facing a more or less extensive cyclic crisis of capitalism as experienced in the past, but the deepening structural crisis of the capital system itself. | [more...](#)

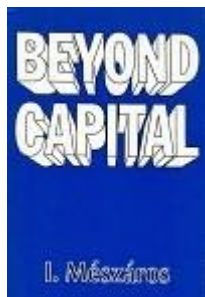


## Socialism or Barbarism: From the “American Century” to the Crossroads

by [István Mészáros](#)

Topics: [Marxism](#) [Philosophy](#) [Socialism](#) Places: [Global](#)

István Mészáros's bold new study analyzes the historical choices facing us at the outset of the new millennium. Drawing on the theoretical arguments of his monumental and widely-acclaimed *Beyond Capital*, Mészáros shows that the economic boom of the 1990s was built not only on the foundation of new, digital technologies but also on a new social and ethical basis. In the global quest for profit, capitalism has abandoned its claims to serve a larger historical cause. Even in the wealthiest capitalist economies, unemployment has become structural and conditions of life have become more onerous for most of the population. | [more...](#)



## Beyond Capital: Toward a Theory of Transition

by [István Mészáros](#)

Topics: [Marxism](#) [Philosophy](#) [Socialism](#) Places: [Europe](#)

In *Beyond Capital*, the internationally esteemed Marxist philosopher István Mészáros provides a major contribution to the task of reassessing the socialist alternative and the conditions for its realization in the light of twentieth-century developments and disappointments. Mészáros brings original Marxist thinking to bear on the most fundamental issue facing the left: how to move theoretically *Beyond Capital*—beyond the project that Marx began and which he articulated under a specific form of commodity capitalism, as well as beyond the power of capital itself. | [more...](#)

[← Previous](#) **1** **2**