

**The New
Way of the
World:
On
Neoliberal
Society**
**Dardot
& Laval**

**PART ONE:
THE INTELLECTUAL REFORMATION**

“The tensions between two types of liberalism – between that of social reformers, who defended an ideal to the common good, and that of supporters of individual liberty as an absolute end – never ceased” (2013: 21)

“The conception of the ‘night watchman’ state ... projected a singularly narrow view of government functions ... What represented a critique of the different possible forms of ‘despotism’ in the eighteenth century had gradually become a conservative defence of property rights” (2013: 24)

Herbert Spencer foregrounded “the immemorial precedence of contract law over any positive legislation. As a result, the state’s remit was narrowly circumscribed: it simply guarantees the execution of freely agreed contracts ... Liberalism’s function in the past was to set limits to royal power. Its function in the future would be to limit the power of parliaments subject to the impatient pressure of the uneducated masses”

“This extreme naturalism ... switched the conception of the motor of progress from specialization to selection [...] We are no longer dealing with a logic of general promotion, but a process of selective elimination” (2013: 34)

“This new liberalism sought to control economic forces in order to avoid social and political anarchy ... The state was allocated a fundamental regulatory and redistributive role in what was also presented as a ‘liberal socialism’ (2013: 39)

“[W]hile neo-liberals accept the need for state intervention and reject pure governmental passivity, they are opposed to any action that might frustrate the operation of competition between private interests [...] It does not involve limiting the market through corrective or compensatory action, but developing and purifying the competitive market through a carefully tailored legal framework”

“The important word in Lippmann’s vocabulary is *adaption*. The agenda of neo-liberalism was guided by the need for constant adaption of human beings and institutions to an inherently variable economic order, based on general, unrelenting competition” (2013: 64)

“Lippmann had examined at length the impossibility of reconciling an impartial system of rules and the active principle of popular sovereignty, according to which the masses could impose their wishes on governments” (2013: 72)

“Ordnungspolitik aims above all to determine a stable ‘framework’ for the optimal functioning of an economic ‘process’ based on free competition and the coordination of economic agents’ plans through the price mechanism” (2013: 83)

“[P]rogress is not attributable to conscious creation on the part of especially inventive legislators. The rules of private law (in particular, those of commercial law) were incorporated into tradition and custom well before being codified by judges...” (2013: 128)

“Contrary to Locke, Hayek refuses to confer on the majority of the people an absolute power to oblige all its members [...] Ultimately, it is a question of subtracting the rule of private law (that of property and market exchange) from any kind of control by a ‘collective will’” (2013: 142)

PART TWO:
THE NEW RATIONALITY

“[W]e are dealing not with a straightforward retreat of the state, but with its political re-deployment on new bases, with new methods and new objectives” (2013: 148)

“It was precisely this idea of a ‘strategy without a subject’ or ‘without a strategist’ that was developed by Foucault [...] ...there are practices, often disparate, which employ techniques of power ... and it is the multiplication and generalization of such techniques that gradually imparts the overall direction, without anyone being the instigator of this ‘push toward a strategic objective’” (2013: 149)

“What people are happy to call ‘deregulation’ ... is in fact a new ordering of economic activities ... [...] [T]o deplore the power of financial capital compared with the diminishing power of states involves a false naivety. The new capitalism is profoundly bound up with the political construction of a global finance governed by the principle of generalized competition. In this, the ‘marketization’ of finance is the daughter of neo liberal reason”

“‘Freedom to choose’ is in fact identified with the obligation to engage in maximizing conduct in a legal, institutional, regulatory, architectural, relational framework, which is to be precisely constructed so that the individual chooses ‘incomplete freedom’ what he must necessarily choose in his own interest” (2013: 169)

“[T]he political leaders who implement neo-liberal practices generally deny any ideology. When it inspires concrete policies, neo-liberalism denies it is an ideology because *it is reason itself* [...] In short, the great ideological victory of neo-liberalism has consisted in ‘de-ideologizing’ the policies pursued, to the point where they are no longer subject to any

“[W]hereas the original ordo-liberalism sought to supervise the market through laws made by states and European bodies, the new ordo-liberalism seeks to make the market itself the principle of selection of the laws made by states [...] Such a trend indicates that certain forces within European neo-liberalism intend to evacuate liberal democracy of all its substance by depriving legislative powers of

“The entrepreneurial mutation not only aims to enhance efficiency and reduce the cost of state action, but also radically subverts the modern bases of democracy – that is, recognition of the social rights attaching to the status of citizen”
(2013: 217)

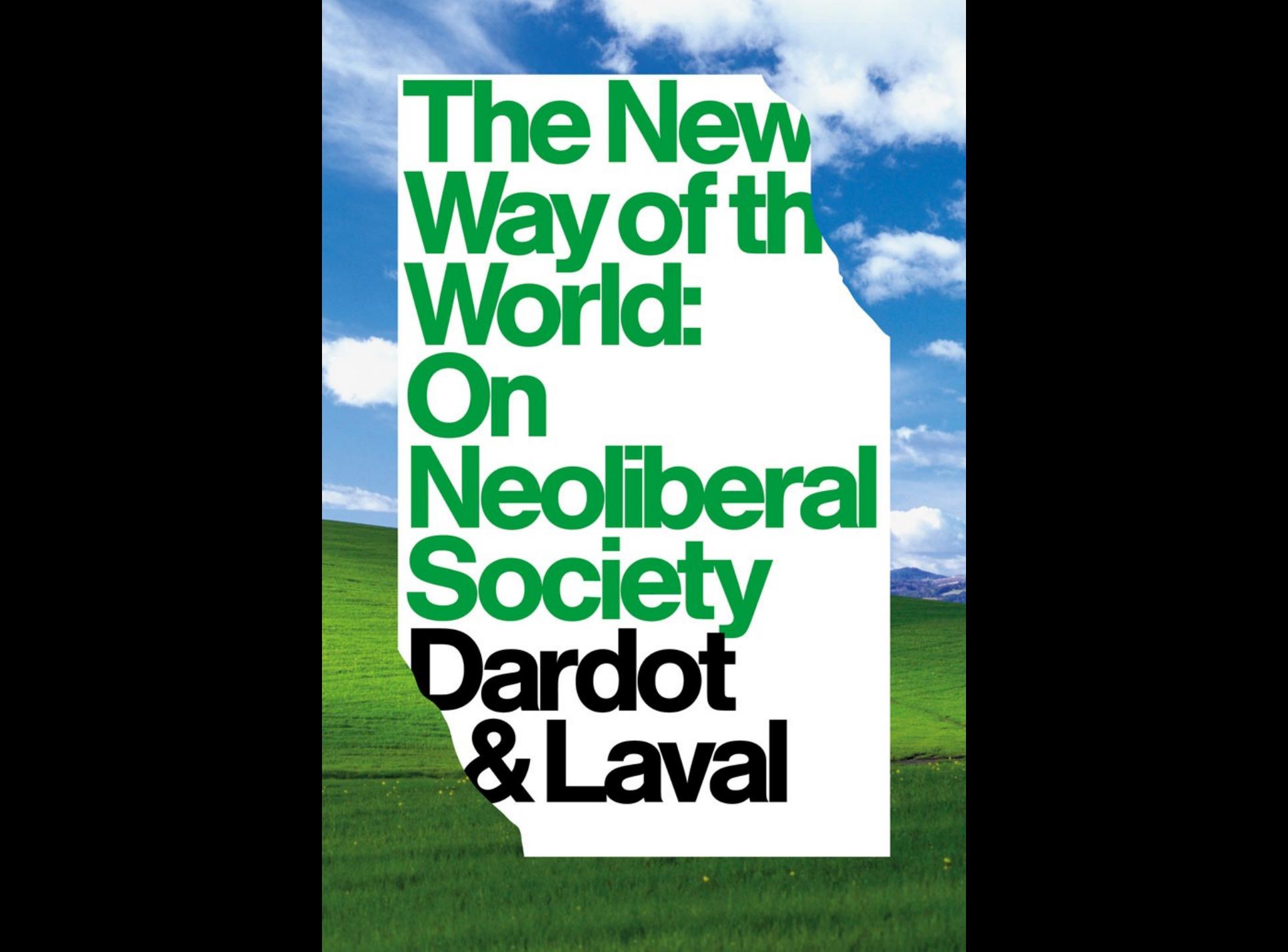
“Reform of public administration is part of the globalization of forms of the art of governing. The same methods are advocated everywhere, whatever the local situation, a standard lexicon is employed (competition, process engineering, benchmarking, best practice, performance indicators) [...] This ‘generic’ reform of the state in conformity with private sector principles is presented as

“[T]he paradox is that the new public management alone escapes the evaluation of these effects. Who in effect evaluates the evaluation?”
(2013: 251)

“The plural character of the subject and the separation of practical spheres are precisely what are in question today” [...] [T]he neoliberal moment is characterized by a homogenization of the discourse of man around the figure of the enterprise. The new figure of the subject effects an unprecedented unification of the plural forms of subjectivity that liberal democracy allowed to survive...” (213: 259)

“The unitary subject is thus the subject of total self-involvement. The target of the new power is the desire to realize oneself ... [...] For the aim of the new practices for manufacturing and managing the new subject is that individuals should work for enterprises as if they were working for themselves, thereby abolishing any sense of alienation and even any distance between individuals and the enterprises

COUNTER CONDUCT:
REASON OF THE COMMONS



**The New
Way of the
World:
On
Neoliberal
Society**
**Dardot
& Laval**