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New Times: Stuart Hall, Culturalism, Fordism and Post-Fordism

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Description

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New Times

Stuart Hall, Culturalism, Fordism and Post-Fordism

Introduction : the Winter of Discontent and the Rise of Thatcherism.

In 1979, the year of Poulantzas's death, and in the wake of a disastrous period of Labour rule in Britain, Margaret Thatcher came to power as the first woman Prime Minister in U.K. history, and with a platform of reforms in hand that was to change the nature of British politics for decades to come. This new régime, rapidly labelled Thatcherism, sought to deal with major problems of unemployment and a long-standing economic crisis. Moving dramatically away from the post-war compromise, she shifted direction, in the light of a basic distrust of the State, towards deregulation, flexible labour markets and privatization, coupled with an attack on the trade unions.

The British Labour Party of this period was in disarray. Thatcher's Conservative ascendancy owes much to the so-called 'Winter of Discontent', a period during the winter of 1978-1979, during which strikes crippled the British economy, and especially public services. The ruling Labour Party, with its close ties to the union movement, was unable to deal with the fiscal crisis of the State, and sought to resolve the issue by breaking long-standing agreements, the so-called social contracts, with the union movement. While the strikes were largely over by February 1979, the damage to the social fabric had been substantial. The National Health Service had been reduced to a skeleton service, gravediggers had refused to bury bodies, and refuse collectors had stopped gathering in the refuse. The streets of London were lined with rotting waste, and public confidence in the State, public services and the British Labour Party was at an all-time low.

The fundamental issue at stake was wage rates. In an attempt to control rampant inflation,¹ the Labour government had set a benchmark of 5% annually for wage increases to try to tackle the problem. The Labour Party had long been trying to deal with inflation, in line with many nations affected by changes in the global economic system that brought strong inflationary pressures to bear on domestic economic systems, especially as a result of a dramatic rise in global oil prices. In Britain, an elaborate pay policy, with several phases to it, had been established during the 1970s under the Callaghan régime, and much of it centred on the rights of trade unions to engage in free wage bargaining, independent of government intervention and regulation. The strategy of government intervention was soundly beaten when, at the Labour Party Conference of 1978, the party voted against intervention in a show of force from the union movement. At the same time, the Labour Party's majority in the House of Commons had become fragile, and only a coalition with the Liberals maintained their narrow majority. As a result, the Labour government were unable to enforce their 5% limit.

The 22nd of January 1979 saw a massive day of strike action, the largest in scope and in numbers of participants since the General Strike of 1926. This day of action, which led to a further series of specific strike activities, and which continued in one form or another for some weeks, dismayed the

¹ Inflation rates had been soaring out of control for some time, and they remained high under Thatcher for several years. In 1975, the rate had been 24.2%, and had stayed above 10% for several years, dipping to 8.3% in 1978, only to return to double figures in 1979 with 13.4%. After Thatcher's rise to power, the rate was still 18% in 1980, and 11.9% in 1981.

Prime Minister, James Callaghan, who had built his reputation on his close connection with the trade unions. That alliance had now been smashed.

The crisis for Labour might have been avoided. During the summer of 1978, the polls suggested that Labour was winning by 5% over the Tories, and could have won a General Election, thus providing a working majority. Callaghan's decision not to call an election until the next year proved fatal to his government. In the interim, the strikes had a profound effect on the sentiments of the voting public, and the polls started to turn against Labour. By January 1979, the lead had switched parties to the Conservatives, who now led by 7.9%.

In contrast to Labour, Thatcher was proposing legislation that would limit the powers of trade unions. The Conservative election campaign was able to make wide use of footage covering the strikes, and could argue strongly, and not without reason, that the Labour Party could no longer control the union movement, and that the public interest was at risk. As a result, in the 1979 election, the Conservatives swept to power with a substantial majority of 44 seats, and a popular vote of 44% vs. 36%.

Thatcher inherited a political crisis, and she did not succeed in solving it in the early years of her reign. Her popularity diminished during her first two years of dominion, and recession and inflation remained to haunt the newly-formed government. It was the jingoism of the Falklands War in 1982 that recovered public opinion on her behalf. The war engaged ancient feelings of Empire and global power that had long been submerged, and, on a wave of false optimism and empty rhetoric, the elderly ships of the Royal Navy tottered down to the Argentinian coast to take on a minor power in a dispute over a territory that few actually knew existed. The episode was reminiscent of the most absurd of the Ealing comedies – the sight of a dilapidated Royal Navy struggling to take an occupying force across the world to engage in a battle that would result in the re-establishment of control of several small islands, seemed to many ludicrous, irrational and laughable.² But it had the powerful effect of ensuring the popularity of the Thatcher régime, which used this moment of extreme patriotism to brand itself as the party of the national interest, as the saviour of John Bull Britishness. As a result, and with the economy recovering, Thatcher was re-elected in 1983 with an increased majority. The Conservatives won 44% of the vote and 397 seats, while Labour slumped to 28% and 209 seats. It was a landslide, and Thatcherism was entrenched in power.

Stuart Hall, New Left Review and the Rise of Culturalist Theory

It is a Friday afternoon, Friday, November 21st, 1986, and my anthropologist wife and I are attending the Giddens seminar in Cambridge. We had been reading New Left Review for some time, and I had a special interest in Hall as a theorist of Thatcherism. He was to speak to the seminar that afternoon. It had seemed to me that Hall and Thatcher were political and ideological dance partners, hopelessly unfitted one to another, yet engaged in an inevitable debate, at least on

² The Falklands War comprised a ten week engagement between Argentina and Great Britain. On April 2, 1982 Argentina had invaded these two islands and declared sovereignty. Three days later, Britain sent an invasion force to recover the islands. The battle lasted 74 days, during which time several hundred personnel, and three civilians, were killed. Argentina surrendered the islands back to Britain on 14 June, 1982.

his side. Hall found Thatcher at once entirely deplorable and simultaneously fascinating, as he showed in his famous “The Great Moving Right Show”³ article. In any event, during our sabbatical leave, we found ourselves in 1986, suffering through a Cambridge winter on one of those profoundly dark evenings, when the sun disappears at three, and the cold and the damp finish off an entirely gloomy atmosphere to perfection. We had been attending Anthony Giddens’s seminar for some weeks, and while the speakers had been of uniformly high intellectual quality, they often presented poorly. We were expecting more of the same – highly impressive writing and weak presentation. Nothing could have been further from the truth.

My memory is that the room that had been booked for the Hall presentation was inadequate to house all those who showed up, and that we then all trooped into a larger lecture hall, following Giddens and Hall through the Cambridge buildings like French schoolchildren following their teachers in a crocodile line. We arrived in a highly-tiered, wooden auditorium hopelessly formed for intimate conversation, but excellently structured to separate speaker from the audience, which was doubtless the intent of the antique architecture. When we arrived, Hall fussed with his papers, and we all dutifully trooped in, filling most of the large hall. There were several hundred people there, with many backgrounds and ethnicities represented. This was radical Cambridge.

Hall has been called ‘an intellectual giant and an inspirational figure in the field of sociology’.⁴ That afternoon, in the darkest of gloomy Fen evenings, he lit the room up, and inspired, delighted and invigorated his audience. If you had wandered in out of the cold not knowing who he was, you would likely have become an acolyte, and rushed to the bookstore to grab a Hall book to take home. His unique mixture of personal energy, political optimism and profound intellectual gifts could not help but inspire an audience of the left ready for inspiration, and we left the meeting thrilled and reinvigorated. This was in the middle of the Thatcher era, and Hall had become one of the most important political theorists of the Thatcher period.

Left political theorists in Britain had not been quiescent during the 1960s and 1970’s, especially during Labour’s regimes, and the rise of Margaret Thatcher further added fuel to the theoretical fire. Some of this debate and theorising had centred in the pages of *New Left Review* (NLR), of which Hall was a founder. And it is important to remind ourselves of the history of this debate. In the very first edition of NLR in 1960, Stuart Hall had begun his editorial with the following quotation :

“It is a new Society that we are working to realise, not a Cleaning up of our present tyrannical muddle into an improved, smoothly-working form of that same “order”, a mass of dull and useless people organised into classes, amidst which the antagonism should be moderated and veiled so that they should act as checks on each other for the insurance of the stability of the system.” William Morris, *Commonweal*, July, 1885.⁵

The journal was clearly socialist from the start, but it was socialism with a culturalist turn :

The humanist strengths of socialism - which are the foundations for a genuinely popular socialist movement - must be developed in cultural and social terms, as well as in economic and political.⁶

³ *Marxism Today*, January 1979.

⁴ Marcus Willaimson, ‘Professor Stuart Hall’ (Obituary, Monday 10 February, 2014), page 1.

⁵ This comes from the first edition of *New Left Review*, January-February 1960, page 1.

⁶ *Ibid.*

The attempt to meet people ‘where they are’ was made obvious, not to follow some ‘modish’ style of keeping up with the cultural Jones’s, but to make an attempt to involve socialism with the everyday life of ordinary people. At the same time, the larger issues of politics, power and social class were also to be engaged, and, of course, the two elements of the argument were closely interwoven. At issue were some concerns of immediate impact on people in 1960’s Britain – a recent disastrous election, a lack of direction about what the state should do, a need to form a dialogue between workers and intellectuals. Hall argued that social ownership of the means of production was not enough ; it did not involve the workers in any meaningful way in ownership. But he sees the role of NLR as working in the realm of ideas. In his usual imaginative way, he put the case succinctly :

The (socialist) movement has never before been so short on ideas, so long on pious waffle. Not until we attain this clarity, through a decisive shift in political consciousness throughout the movement, will we be able to work with a revolutionary perspective in view. We shall continue to bounce from one side to another, fighting a perpetual rear-guard action, a “holding operation”, while the champions of “me-too” advance into the calm waters of an “American” future. Our hope is that people in the New Left will feel, with a special urgency, the poverty of ideas in the Labour Movement. The strength of the New Left will be tested by the strength of its ideas: we shall have to hold fast to that, as the pressure builds up to “cease talking and begin doing”.⁷

Hall’s impulse was towards some form of democratic socialism, and he finishes his brief editorial by adding to the Morris quote used at the outset :

“The real business of Socialists is to impress on the workers the fact that they are a class, whereas they ought to be Society . . . The work that lies before us at present is to make Socialists, to cover the country with a network of associations composed of men who feel their antagonism to the dominant classes, and have no temptation to waste their time in the thousand follies of party politics.”⁸

In New Left Review, much of the early tone of the arguments about the State focused on Labour’s inability to support the Welfare State. Dorothy Thompson’s article from the first year of publication bemoans the achievement of many of the Labour Party’s goals without the need for an elaborated welfare state. She comments :

In the Labour Movement itself there is a feeling that we are coming to the end of the demands which we can make of public funds - perhaps some slight improvements, say ten bob on the Old Age Pension, a tightening of controls on privately rented property, would be acceptable. But the overall policy of the Labour Party on social questions has not advanced since 1945 - in fact, it has in many ways receded.⁹

It appears, at first glance, as if the major problems facing the Labour movement after WW2 had gone away, with the establishment of the National Health System, increasing economic prosperity and improvements in the general welfare. But to Thompson, and to Richard Tittmus,¹⁰ whose work she reviews, growing inequality puts this myth to bed. Failures to implement all of the findings of the Beveridge Report are cited, and the argument is made that many gaps still exist in the social safety net. Widespread poverty still remained, and the arguments that had been proposed that

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Cited in Hall’s editorial on page three.

⁹ Dorothy Thompson, ‘Farewell to the Welfare State’ published in *New Left Review*, Issue 4, July-August 1960, page 39.

¹⁰ Thompson is citing Tittmus’s *Essays on the Welfare State* (London, Allen and Unwin, 1958) and his *The Irresponsible Society* (London, The Fabian Society, 1960), as well as Audrey Harvey’s *Casualties of the Welfare State*. (London, Babian Society, 1960). These works are cited on page 39 of the article.

Britain was slowly slipping towards socialism were strongly challenged.¹¹ Many practical suggestions are made as to how overcome poverty and inequality, and they are made largely in very concrete terms of pensions and allowances – none of your high-flown French theoretical phrasing here. In completely stereotypical terms, this is Anglo Saxon practicality to be placed directly in contrast to the theoretical ramblings of the Parisian Nicos Poulantzas.¹² Concrete measures to help working people are the order of the day. There seems to be a disinterest in the Welfare State, and an exhaustion with the old remedies. Thompson ends by arguing that private individuals are making fortunes, and it is entirely proper that working people claim a right to a decent standard of living.

In the same year, Phil Abrams comments :

A great deal is said about the need to “develop” the Welfare State these days. Indeed, on the right of the Labour Party this process of development tends to become synonymous with socialism itself. But when we look at what is in fact envisaged here, it turns out to be a matter of providing merely a little more of the same—a cheaper health service, more realistic pensions, a fairer balance in the distribution of educational opportunities - maintenance work rather than development - in fact, the perfecting of existing central machinery.¹³

In 1964, Richard Tittmus was writing about the limits of the Welfare State.¹⁴

Whether they know it or not and whether they like it or not, Democrats and Republicans, Conservatives, Socialists and Liberals in North America and Europe have become ‘welfare-statists’. The Germans and the Swedes may have more ‘advanced’ pension systems, the British a more comprehensive health service, the French more extensive family allowances, and the Americans may spend more on public education but, when all these national differences are acknowledged, the generalized welfare commitment is nevertheless viewed as the dominant political fact of modern Western societies. Governments of the liberal right and the liberal left may come and go; the commitment to welfare, economic growth and full employment will remain with minor rather than major changes in scope and objectives.

In the Tittmus view, welfarism, both as an ideology and as a system of state practices, had become a universal social phenomenon in advanced western societies, even though specific conditions and particular social settings varied across the globe. The class compromise that Poulantzas was writing about had, in Tittmus’s writing, a range of empirical referents. Perhaps Anglo-Saxon empiricism and the rich theoretical tradition of France had found each other. But this hardly meant that poverty and inequality had been abolished. Yet it seemed to be the case to Tittmus and many other intellectuals¹⁵ that the ideological gap between left and right had diminished. Capital was making money, the poor were less poor and more content. The great social compromise of what was later to be called Fordism had been reached.¹⁶ Indeed, it seemed that Lipset could have been a spokesman for Fordism. Tittmus quotes him at length :

¹¹ Examples from the field of social work, and especially the case examined in Audrey Harvey’s article, are referenced in detailed.

¹² This contrast was famously made in E.P. Thompson’s *The Poverty of Theory* in relation to Althusser, recovered from the web at <https://www.marxists.org/archive/thompson-ep/1978/pot/intro.htm>. This version is provided with an excellent introduction by Dorothy Thompson. Recovered on January 15th, 2017.

¹³ *New Left Review*, 6, November-December, 1960, Review of Gunnar Myrdal’s *Beyond the Welfare State*, Duckworth, London, 1950, pages 69-70. This text is from page 69.

¹⁴ Richard Tittmus, ‘The Limits of the Welfare State’, *New Left Review*, volume 27, September-October, 1964.

¹⁵ Tittmus cited Seymour Martin Lipset’s *Political Man*, 1960, Doubleday, New York.

¹⁶ The term had, of course, been used by Gramsci, though not by Ford himself, but it was not to gain wider use in leftist circles until the 1980s.

. . . the fundamental political problems of the industrial revolution have been solved: the workers have achieved industrial and political citizenship, the conservatives have accepted the welfare state, and the democratic left has recognized that an increase in overall state power carries with it more dangers to freedom than solutions for economic problems. This very triumph of the democratic social revolution in the West ends domestic politics for those intellectuals who must have ideologies or utopias to motivate them to political action.¹⁷

Tittmus is commenting on one of the iconic moments in the theory of political history – the ‘end of ideology thesis’. While some considered it as adequate as an analysis for the 1950s, from the position of the 1960s, it looks surprisingly shaky. It is a common-sense understanding, and it is a view that was held by many people. Tittmus argues against it for three reasons ; for its lack of historical perspective ; for its failure to understand the weakness of the claims to ‘industrial citizenship’ for workers ; and for its failure to understand how little equality had been reached. In fact, the levels of inequality reached were without historical precedent. It is Tittmus’s view that the great landholdings of the past and the private caches of wealth are still safe from the predations of taxation and the welfare state. Not only this, but welfarism, according to his thesis, may not be as humanitarian as might first be suggested. Welfarism can be used as an instrument of economic growth or of dictatorship. It can narrow allegiances, and support a new kind of feudal dependency, this time in the hands of large companies.

Fear of revolution is one factor at the heart of the rise of welfarism, but it also arose from below, from the needs of working people. Great networks of mutual aid societies evolved in the 19th. Century - friendly societies, medical clubs, cooperative food movements, mutual insurance schemes – these were all precursors to the emergence of the modern welfare state. In the future, Tittmus argues, the challenges will involve changes in technology that are altering the workplace in dramatic ways, and in the distribution of consumer goods that were beginning to flood the market, and to shift the way households were resourced.

What, then, is to be done with the wealth of the nation? In some senses, traditional work has been taken over by technology, and because the nature of work has changed, this suggests a major change in values is required. We shall need different rules to live by, as Keynes had predicted.¹⁸ Ancient rules by which wealth was distributed will now be discarded. Society cannot avoid such a change if mass poverty and misery is to be avoided. Ethics and politics must be brought together again. And it is the social services and the welfare state who will bring them together.

In this view Tittmus was expressing the attitudes of many of the progressive left in the early 1960s in Britain. There were those to the left of Tittmus who thought any tinkering with the Welfare State was merely reformism, of course, but the sizeable nationalization programs after the war had suggested more than tinkering was possible within the ambit of the welfare state. And considerable gains had been made, even in periods of economic scarcity. But while Tittmus again provided some of the empirical instances of Poulantzas’s more abstract theory of the State as the ‘condensation of

¹⁷ Lipset, pages 404-406, cited in Tittmus, pages 30-31. Seymour Martin Lipset was nominally on my doctoral committee at Stanford several years later, though we never discussed the doctorate, and I met him only once at his house when he hosted the first year doctoral students for an evening. He was interesting, though to a leftist student hopelessly out of date and out of touch, a former Trotskyite organizer who had become complacent and reactionary, spending his later years in the lush halls of Stanford.

¹⁸ Tittmus mentions Keynes on page 36 of his article.

classes' and as the agent of cohesion in a class-divided society, there was little theoretical ambition in Tittmus's work, but rather a concern for the immediate welfare of the community.

During the 1960s, *New Left Review* did examine theoretical matters. And indeed it would be a crude caricature to suggest, as one might be tempted to do, that the *New Left Review* of the 1960s provided a fortress behind whose ramparts were secured the empiricist ramblings of simple-minded Anglo-Saxons, to be infected later by the invasion of clever left theoreticism from the Continent. Indeed, such a view is mistaken for at least two reasons. To read the pages of *NLR* in those years is to be impressed, indeed staggered, by the profligacy and variety offered in those pages. This was not a journal struggling to find contributors. Instead, it seemed full of new ideas over a wide range of topics, and it included profoundly theoretical and philosophical topics, as well as a wide range of strategic and political writings. Rough-edged English empiricism there was indeed, but there was also a great deal of hand-wringing about the direction of the Labour Party, and in which direction it should go, as well as serious theoretical work not a million miles from the texts of Nicos Poulantzas. There were also poetry reviews, discussions of plays and literature, reports from New Left Clubs and important historical accounts.¹⁹

Stuart Hall himself was politically active at this time in the struggles going on around London, and especially in Notting Hill, scene of many difficult ethnic struggles in the late 1950's, and he wrote about them. In *ULR Club at Notting Hill*, he recounts the struggles with fascists that were occurring in immigrant communities at that time.²⁰ In 1961, he engages with the issue of education.²¹ He takes up the issue of the class-divided nature of the educational system. He speaks of the way in which the Grammar School system has managed to secure places in the upper reaches of society, but that the Secondary Modern school system, while housed in glossy new buildings, sends the children of the poor into the lower reaches of the social hierarchy. In this system of streaming, he sees an inevitable double standard in which we naturalise the qualities of working class and elite children as somehow genetically endowed with distinct and separate qualities. The struggle around these ideas, he concludes, is a struggle at the heart of the socialist agenda, and the question remains – what happens next?

At the same time, Hall is writing about direct action in an interview with Alan Lovell.²² The discussion here centres on the nature of protest, and particularly the way in which the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (CND) is managing its protests. It also touches on the Labour Party and its association with the movement. At the end of this interview, Hall introduces an issue that takes his work in another direction – towards the relation between art, culture and politics.²³ And this is a theme that he takes up again in a 1961 review of student politics, where the question of culture and politics is raised again.²⁴ But some of his most interesting work on politics and the State starts with his introduction to a series of articles that he promises, as *NLR* editor, will review the connection between theoretical arguments and debates in the Labour Party.²⁵ Here he tries to make sense of

¹⁹ Perry Anderson wrote extended historical accounts in the early issues, often spreading over several issues.

²⁰ *NLR*, issue 1, January-February, 1960.

²¹ *NLR*, issue 8, March-April, 1961. Incidentally, his name is misspelled in the article title.

²² *NLR*, issue 8, March-April, 1961, 'Direct Action – a discussion with Alan Lovell', interview by Hall and Paddy Whannell.

²³ *Ibid.*, page 27.

²⁴ *NLR*, issue 7, 'Student Journals', January-February, 1961, page 51.

²⁵ *NLR*, issue 2, March-April, 1960, 'Crosland Territory'. There seems to be one such article, but the rest must have dissolved as he left the editorship of *NLR*.

Anthony Crosland's *Future of Socialism*.²⁶ Crosland, an Oxford academic and one-time politician, sets out the revisionist argument for the Labour Party's direction. The book focuses on the post-war consensus in which the welfare state is in place, and capitalism charges on forever. He takes an oppositional view towards nationalization of industry, arguing that it is a misguided approach. For him, social equality is the goal, and the present managerialist structure of the State is irreversible. He did not imagine a future socialist society to be a uniform and unimaginative world, but rather a society brimming with creativity, innovation and new ideas. Such an argument played a powerful role in the thinking of the Labour Party of the 1950s and 1960s. Crosland imagined, like many who embraced the 'End of Ideology' thesis, that political problems had been reduced to technical problems, and that an era of unprecedented growth and prosperity was on the horizon. Updating socialism was one of the underlying themes, and the book created massive debate. Hall sees the Crosland position as clearly presenting the right of the party. He traces how the Crosland ideology quickly became orthodox Labour policy written across the texts of the movement. Indeed, the very term 'Socialism' had come to be replaced by the word 'Statism'. What had taken the place of socialism was a cosy vision of a quiet collectivist future which is all but assured by recent ameliorative changes in the State. Capitalists had been replaced by state managers, and society is moving ahead swimmingly. Hall quotes Gaitskell, the Labour Party leader of the time :

... prosperity—the Welfare State, the “comforts, pleasures and conveniences of the home”. “In short”, he summed up, “the changing character of labour, full employment, new housing, the new way of living based on the telly, the frig., and the car, and the glossy magazines - all these have had their effect on our political strength.”²⁷

There is a curiously trans-Atlantic feel to the discussion. American consumerism, in all its voluptuous glories, fridges for all, a car (or two) in every driveway, a chicken in every pot, seems to shape the future. Given that the Eisenhower years had contributed to the Fordist vision of a class-free society in which every citizen would succeed, and given that the major struggles of the pre-war period were economic, these were heady times indeed. For many, these were better economic times along all dimensions. A large array of economic, welfare and social problems had been ameliorated, if not solved entirely. These were not small changes. Entire neighborhoods from war-damaged London had been transplanted into the country and new towns had been built. A substantial and effective health system was in place. Entire industries had been placed under government control in the wake of the war. Much had changed, and from the Labour Party point of view, much had changed for the better. Gaitskell imagined more of the same – defence of the underdog, social justice, racial equality and freedom of the individual.

But Hall cannot accept the fundamental nature of the post-war compromise. He can accept neither the analysis of capitalism that has been undertaken, nor can he accept the factual basis on which this compromise is founded.²⁸ For one thing, the inflation question is not yet resolved, and here Hall seems to be especially prescient. Indeed, it is on the issue of inflation, as well as a series of related issues, that the collapse of this post-war compromise was predicated. Neither does Hall accept that the managers have really taken over control of capitalism. Profit, for him, is what continues to make the world go round, however well-intentioned the public servants are who try to manage the system. Indeed, for Hall, even if the new society seems awash with consumerism, and we are up to our eyebrows in things to buy, this does not mean equality – indeed, he would want to claim that British

²⁶ 1956, Jonathan Cape, London.

²⁷ Ibid., page 2.

²⁸ Ibid., page 3.

society has become more unequal during the 1950s, and that fundamental questions relating to public education, the revitalization of failing industries, health policy and other areas have been neglected. Hall wants to focus, in a series of articles he is sponsoring, on the structural nature of these inequalities, and ask whether they will be swept away by the rising tide of prosperity. He proposes that three themes will guide the new analysis : the relation between capitalism and military expenditure ; the underdeveloped world and capitalism ; and the question of whether a manged economy can move in different directions from the that seeming to be followed by Britain and others countries of similar ilk.²⁹

Is the ‘Good Life’ enough, Hall asks? If society has not provided for the common good through social services, then it cannot be accepted as it is, because such an easy acceptance refutes every principle that socialism has ever stood for. Even if ‘life is better’, to give the fight up now would be to give up in the face of a new utopia – ‘individualism’ – which must be rejected. Hall comments :

To give this up, and lie down before the advance of ‘individualism’, is not so much a betrayal of the past ideals, as a woeful and disastrous failure of the imagination - a collapse before history. Isn’t it extraordinary that a serious political party - and a party of the Left - should set itself as its major task to divest itself of a certain image in the popular mind? One would think that a party of the Left should be constantly searching, analysing, trying to find what is wrong with society and how it can be put right. The present Labour Party leadership seems to think that it can dispense with this kind of fundamental questioning.³⁰

Hall sees fatalism in the Labour Party’s willingness to accept things as they are. The vision of the mindless consumer has taken over the social imagination of the Labour Party, and Hall is outraged that things have come to this. Instead, Hall argues, the left should be charting new horizons, not settling for a self-absorbed, TV-obsessed, car culture in which selfish needs are all-powerful. This failure is a failure, in the end, of political imagination. The ‘Good Society’, however attractive, masks the increasingly class-ridden nature of modern British society, and it must be exposed. Then the Left might be able to work out what to do about it.

Charles Taylor, in *What’s Wrong with Capitalism*³¹ takes up the same theme, and this article appears to be the beginning of the series that Hall mentions above. Again there is the reluctant admittance that things are better, material conditions have improved. It would be so much more acceptable, one senses, to have a full-blown crisis, rather than gradual improvement. But Taylor, while admitting improvement, also begins by listing the failures of the 1950s – damaging errors in foreign policy, crowded classrooms, the under-funded health service, to name a few. Taylor wants to hold our ambitions to a higher form of judgement. Human need still remains marginalised. Profit is still front and center. Like Hall, Taylor bemoans the number of televisions, washing machines and cars flooding out into the community. Can human needs, he asks – all human needs – be met by consumerism? For a nation suffering for years under conditions of economic privation, it is surely naïve to imagine that nothing is improved by a shift in economic conditions, by the relative ease by which people can now be fed and housed. The priorities, Taylor reminds us, however, are with the companies and private enterprise. Education is becoming a mechanism to produce cadres for the new private economic order. While human values would suggest we need to build thoughtful communities that meet the needs for people to live in beautiful environments, Britain is building

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Ibid., page 4

³¹ *NLR*, issue 2, March-April, 1960.

ugly towns everywhere.³² The problem is that there is no public money for development, and that the landscape is now being taken over by the speculator. Charges for medical and dental care have increased, education is being starved of funds, and public transport is being neglected. This is the direction capitalism is taking.

Taylor points to the Crosland model of Labourism.³³ He is at pains to point out that the secular priesthood of managers are still limited in what they can do, and those that work for private companies, even if motivated by worthy ethical standards, are still working in the cause of profit-making – how could it be otherwise. Utopia, therefore, has not been reached. Then Taylor makes a careful review of Crosland’s notion of profit, and it is a profitable review.³⁴ First, profit can mean simply producing a surplus for future development – perfectly sensible for socialist and capitalist economies. Second, profit could mean incentives for good work, an idea that is still useful in both contexts. Third, profit could mean profits for companies. Here is where capitalism and socialism part ways. Such a profit is not needed in socialism but it is the very cornerstone of capitalism, and this places an additional burden on society which is not required. Taylor writes :

*We could have such a society, and if we are to get our priorities right, we must have it. For it is the existence of profit in the third sense, of the ‘profit system’, which is at the root of the problem. Under a profit system, the criterion for what is worth producing is what will sell, and hence make a profit. That is the reason why we have “the fetishism of the consumer durable” we spoke of earlier. But this is the least serious consequence. More important is the fact that a society dominated by the profit system must tend almost irreversibly to put production for profit first. As long as the main incentive is accumulation it will always be very much in the interest of firms to pre-empt resources for production for profit, at the expense of those enterprises—and they include our essential welfare services—which cannot produce a profit, and which therefore will not be defended by a vested interest.*³⁵

Thus, Taylor argues, the problems are structural, embedded in the capitalist system, however well reformed and managed. Under such a system, the community as a whole can only be harmed by the private interests of a few. There are two logics at work here and they are incompatible. The market provides only one form of logic, and it has little to do with the socialist impulse towards community welfare. The Labour Party itself seems to have swallowed whole the notion that capitalism has reformed itself, and is willing to behave in a humane fashion. It is as if, Taylor claims, Labour sees the economy as a machine. Here instrumentalism appears from the blue – the economy and the state characterised as an object that can be pushed, turned and used as required, a neutral mechanism.³⁶ But the system is more like a wild animal than a machine – it bites back and doesn’t follow orders, and this is especially true in the private sector, where, often against public policy, companies go their own way. This means planning is hard to achieve, and the market decides in many cases.

Taylor’s view is that the market still needs the public sector, but only if it’s quiet and doesn’t demand too much. It provides cheap infrastructure, a transport system, health care, and so on, so it has a value. But the market must predominate, as must the logic of the market. The market has powerful

³² Ibid., page 6.

³³ Ibid., page 7.

³⁴ Ibid., page 8.

³⁵ Ibid. The italics are in the original.

³⁶ Ibid., page 9.

weapons. They can export capital, as they did in 1951, and bring down the Labour Government.³⁷ Thus there is a sense of inevitability established, in which the dull, drab and dispirited public services are contrasted with the gaudy, exciting and colourful private consumer society. Who would want to be bored by the tired and exhausted debates about education, health and community services when there's a new washing machine to polish. Can the Left win? Social ownership is the answer provided in Taylor's last paragraph. We sense a feeling of exasperation and loss in the face of the avalanche of consumerism that he is faced with, but also the sense of inevitability when confronted with the power of the market, that the market has a veto power within its grip that cannot be resisted.

In *New Left Review* at this time, there are a series of intellectual stirrings that are surprising and most interesting. For example, there is E.P. Thomson arguing at length when anyone who would give him space to do so.³⁸ But after a quick flurry of work –perhaps he had a backlog that needed airing - he disappears from sight.³⁹ By 1962, Perry Anderson is ensconced in the editorship. I counted 152 articles by Perry Anderson or in debate with Perry Anderson over the years – he seemed at times positively to flood the pages with his texts.⁴⁰ In the early years, Anderson took the journal in the direction of continental theory, a direction that E.P. Thompson was to interrogate vigorously in later years in *The Poverty of Theory*. Veering towards Third World issues for two years, it came to rest its focus on Britain again by 1964. By this time, Edward Thompson was throwing grenades from the battlements of the *Socialist Register* against the NLR theses.

Interestingly, before he embarked on his magisterial histories, Anderson wrote a review of Scandinavian social democracy in these early years as an antidote to the fawning admiration for this social model that seemed to have gripped (and still grips) major elements of the British Labour Party.⁴¹ In the putative Swedish paradise, Anderson still finds much evidence of inequality. But he begins with a litany of achievements that places Swedish society many miles ahead of British society on its path towards a more just world. Strong Social Democratic control over a long period has allowed a massive transformation. Interestingly, Anderson inserts a section on 'Theory', and he seeks to draw abstract, theoretical conclusions from his analysis. Perhaps it is there to show a

³⁷ *Ibid.*, page 11.

³⁸ In 1960, four articles, (*The Point of Production*, Volume 1, *Revolution*, Volume 3, *Countermarching to Armageddon*, Volume 4, and *Revolution again*, Volume 6) and in 1961 two articles (*The Long Revolution*, parts 1 and 2, Volumes 9 and 10) He tapers off with one in 1962 (*The Free-Born Englishman*, Volume 15), returning only in 1976 with an article on William Morris in issue 99.

³⁹ There may have been shifts in allegiances and personal struggles of which I am not aware. The collapse of the CND meant certain writings came to an end in 1961 – Thompson was deeply involved. This early history is briefly recalled in *A Brief History of New Left Review, 1960-2010*. The authorship is unnamed, and the piece appears to float independent of an issue of the journal. I recovered it on January 17th, at <https://newleftreview.org/history>. In this account, the journal famously developed from the wreckage of two other journals – the *Universities and Left Review*, and the *New Reasoner*, and was propelled forward on the back of two intellectual tendencies, anti-Stalinism and resistance to the dominant revisionist orthodoxy of the British Labour Party. The anti-revisionism is strongly at work in the early issues. The anti-Crosland tendency is everywhere. The first two years, the article makes clear, were a separate continent, and the reigns were soon given over to a younger and inexperienced group, at which time much must have altered. At this time, a strong culturalist theme developed before Perry Anderson became editor and was to hold this position for twenty years. For those requiring more details on Perry Anderson, look no further than Gregory Elliot's *Perry Anderson : the merciless laboratory of history*, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, 1998.

⁴⁰ This is the number of articles involving PA that the search engine at the NLR website throws up. But on second glance, few of these articles were written by him or in debate with him. **I am still investigating the confusion**

⁴¹ These are 'Sweden : Mr. Crosland's Dreamland', in *NLR*, issue 7, January-February, 1961, and 'Sweden ; study in Social Democracy', *NLR*, issue 9, May-June 1961.

conscious intent to move away from the familiar English empiricism that might be said to have dominated in previous issues – who can say. Anderson concludes his first article by reviewing the various ways in which class division still manifests itself in Sweden.

In Part Two, he turns his attention to classes and the workplace. The lack of inequality is immediately admitted, as is the lack of substantial class conflict – the long period of dominance of the Social Democratic Party has much to say about that, with the more or less continuous oppositional status of the bourgeois parties. But then Anderson floats off into a discussion of Raymond Williams and other theorists which appears to have little to do with Sweden – perhaps he got carried away over the sherry one afternoon. But at the end of this particular section, he recovers himself, and reminds us that Sweden is a class society, but a much milder and more decent one than Britain.⁴²

Anderson then turns to culture. One is expecting at every moment that he will turn against Sweden and all its niceness, and start tearing it apart as merely a Crosland fantasy. But here again he finds favour with Swedish culture :

No country was ever less philistine. Those who argue that it is authoritarian to seek a change in our culture because the majority will always want the kind of art they are at home with now, should go to Sweden. “Popular” newspapers of the kind that have made the British press infamous all over the world simply don’t exist. The largest circulation in the country is held by the eminently serious and solid *Liberal Dagens Nyheter*. Its rivals, the socialist *Stockholms Tidningen* and the conservative *Svenska Dageblatt* maintain the same standards—easily as good as our “quality” newspapers, only with a much fuller coverage owing to the larger size of the paper. The evening papers *Aftonbladet* and *Expressen* are tabloid in size but otherwise have only relatively marginal differences from the big morning papers. All these papers run 1–2 “cultural” pages daily, and regular scientific features are now becoming more and more popular.⁴³

This eulogy to Swedish cultural life continues for some time, reviewing book reading habits, theatre and much more besides. One cannot help but notice that Anderson has become a convert. He went there ready to attack the horrors of advanced Social Democracy, but fell in love instead. Can the critique be long in coming? Ah, but there are no Swedish playwrights! Very disturbing, says Anderson! And political debate is on a low flame. Art is anodyne and bland.

And what about the workplace? The issue of workers’ democracy receives much attention.⁴⁴ There is strong resistance among Swedish intellectuals to this strategy as an ‘intellectual’s fallacy’ leading to ‘worker egotism’ and political anarchy. Much better, it is argued, to keep central control in the name of social egalitarianism. Workers, it was claimed, want money in their pay packet, not some abstract idea of workers’ control. Whatever the strength and weaknesses of the various arguments, Anderson is again impressed that the discussion is happening at all, and staggered by the amount of research going on around the topic – again, another dimension in which Sweden appears to have the lead. Anderson then rambles off into theory again, and, by his own admission, this theoretical rambling may have little to do with Sweden – the dialectic between theory and evidence is not yet well-oiled.

⁴² ‘Sweden : Study in Social Democracy’, *NLR*, issue 9, May-June 1961, page 37.

⁴³ *Ibid.*

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, page 41ff.

And what of planning? Anderson finishes his article on this topic. Planning ought not to be simply resources and timelines, but a manifestation of values, he argues.⁴⁵ But in order to change values, you have to change the education system, and that system remains competitive and capitalist in many ways in Sweden, according to our interpreter, and this remains a problem. (a problem at last – thank God for that). Anderson comes away from Sweden with some lingering doubts, doubts that he hoped he could hold onto during his visit, quite clearly, but filled also with a wide admiration for the progress made in this non-socialist radical social democracy.

Through all this discussion, the topic has been regulation. Can capitalism be tamed, can it be managed, and can the lives of the popular masses be improved by state regulation? We have canvassed enough opinion by this stage to see that no socialist can accept anything less than the end of capitalism, the flushing out from bureaucratic corners of the last remnants of the hated enemy, the socialization of the means of the means of production. The despised label of revisionist awaits anyone who holds to the view that state regulation of capitalism will work to the benefit of the oppressed masses. There is a curious ambivalence among the political left at this moment in the early 1960s. On the one hand, the post-war historical compromise, often termed Fordism, has been a success by many measures. Mass production, mass consumption, the virtuous cycle of the new economy has been both a triumph of capitalism, but, as we have just seen in Anderson's review of Sweden, has also brought about tangible rewards and benefits to working people in all the advanced industrial societies. This trend, which apparently stretches out into the so-called 'American' future, seems without end. At the same time, Marxism is on the march, in Eastern Europe, in the scientific achievement of Sputnik, in the Cuban revolution, in China, and Indo-China, and in leftist rumblings in Latin America resisting American imperialism. A case can be made that both systems were on the rise. Yet within the Marxist arena, there were profound and unsettling issues to deal with. The actually-existing states of Communist Eastern Europe were hardly a model for the future. There were, first of all, the revelations of comrade Stalin's purges to swallow, and if these atrocities were not enough, the 1956 revolution, the Hungarian national uprising, which was brutally repressed by Russian tanks, was a salutary moment, suggesting that the hoped-for utopias were far into the future. At this moment many communists, including E.P. Thompson, left the party, and Western Marxism, among which the *New Left Review* must be considered a major organ, began to flourish. At the very least, the Marxist future began to blur out of focus, and uncertainty about the dictatorship of the proletariat, and the precise nature of the socialist alternative to Fordism, began to be widely discussed. The rise of the New Left was on the way, the emergence of a clear independent left view, free from Soviet domination.

Stuart Hall had been a founding editor of *New Left Review*, and an early contributor, but he soon stood down from this role, and his contributions faded. As a member of the Windrush generation, an era in which West Indian workers were encouraged to immigrate to Britain to meet the labour needs of the 'mother country', he was profoundly offended by the cultural domination of black people in post-war Britain, a situation he was to refer to as '... the subaltern position ... on the knees to the dominant culture.'⁴⁶ From the first, then, and in part because of his own experience, he was profoundly committed to the cultural dimension of social class. He comments :

⁴⁵ Ibid., page 44.

⁴⁶ Stuart Hall, interview with Jonathan Derbyshire, 'We need to talk about Englishness', in *New Statesman*, 23 August 2012, recovered January 20th, 2017, from <http://www.newstatesman.com/politics/uk-politics/2012/08/stuart-hall-we-need-talk-about-englishness>.

“One of the things being discussed was what was happening to working-class culture,” Hall remembers. “The cultural dimension of politics became important for me then. Was mass culture, especially the mass culture imported from the United States, unhinging the springs of action in the traditional working class?”

“Then, people thought culture was above politics. The idea that power and knowledge were linked wasn’t recognised. Yet the impact of the affluent society directly affected whether one kind of government would be elected or another. That’s when I began to dispense with an economic definition of class and culture. There’s no permanent, fixed class consciousness. You can’t work out immediately what people think and what politics they have simply by looking at their socio-economic position.”⁴⁷

Distinct differences separated the E.P. Thompson model of socialism, rooted in the English radical tradition, from Hall’s emerging cultural leftism.⁴⁸ Hall co-edited the *Universities and Left Review*, and Thompson the *New Reasoner*. They were joined by an interest in analyzing the ‘actual situation’, and by disavowing the socialist orthodoxies of the past, but there were also unbridgeable differences. The differences contrasted the ‘sophisticated emptiness’ of London, and its smart intellectual Left – the Oxford-London axis, as some called it – and the ‘honest, authentic’ working rural world and the North. Cosmopolitanism faced working class tradition, new ideas faced the old rooted beliefs stemming in a long, proud proletarian history. There was more to thinking about the working class, Thompson was saying, than hanging about in Soho coffee shops. At the same time that he had been editing journals, Hall had been teaching high school in Brixton as a supply teacher, and then, in 1961, he became a lecturer in film and media at Chelsea College, University of London. Hall left the editorial board of NLR in 1961, and withdrew from politics during this period. He began to work for the University of Birmingham in 1964. With Richard Hoggart, he established the Center for Cultural Studies, and he was made Director of this center in 1968. From 1964 until 1979 he stayed with the center, until he became Professor of Sociology at the Open University, where he stayed until he retired in 1997. He died in 2014.

During his period with Birmingham, he began to write an analysis of British society which was entirely unique, and which contributed greatly to a new theory of the State. His writing perhaps ‘took off’ with the writing, with Paddy Whannel, of a book called *The Popular Arts*.⁴⁹ Given its focus on film, and the necessity to take film seriously in a theoretical sense, it seemed a million miles away from the more ‘serious’ issues of class politics, revolution and social transformation. But this cultural interest was to be the foundation for Hall’s thinking for the rest of his life, and it provides the foundation for his new examination of politics, separated entirely from socialist orthodoxy.

The issue at stake at this time was the condition of capitalism and its regulation. Having sustained a long period of regulation in a wide variety of forms, both in the extreme conditions of fascism in Italy, Germany and elsewhere, as well as the extreme statism of war conditions, social democratic capitalism had emerged from the war years with a different ideological face – the face of welfarism, in which gradual improvements were emerging for working people. Should the left dismiss this movement as the mask of hopeless revisionism, hiding the horrors of an ever-exploiting capitalist system, or should these improvements be welcomed, accepted and encouraged. For the Crosland wing of the British Labour Party, the answer was wholesale support for these changes, and an acceptance that capitalism had reached a new stage, a stage that Crosland called ‘post-capitalism’.⁵⁰

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ London, Hutchinson, 1964.

⁵⁰ Robin Blackburn, ‘Stuart Hall’, pages 77-78 in NLR, issue 86, March – April, 2014.

While capitalism might be accepted to be in a new phase – Poulantzas, of course, had referred to a new period of ‘statism’ and ‘monopoly capitalism’ – the New Left also saw the need for the Left to enter a new political and theoretical phase, replacing the Stalinism and orthodoxy of the past. Hall saw the old left was riven with antique views on gender, race and ethnicity, and needed to be replaced. Thompson and others did not share this view, and splits were inevitable.⁵¹ Hall’s brief stint as editor of *New Left Review* was marred by a flood of well-meaning advice which finally overcame his best intentions, and he left by the end of 1961.⁵²

After a brief stint at Chelsea College, University of London teaching film, Hall re-camped to Birmingham to work with Richard Hoggart on the Center for Cultural Studies, and it was here that his emerging theses on culture, culturalism, and, later, Thatcherism, were to develop. In 2010, he sat down to review these early years :

The ‘first’ New Left was born in 1956, a conjuncture—not just a year—bounded on one side by the suppression of the Hungarian Revolution by Soviet tanks and on the other by the British and French invasion of the Suez Canal zone. These two events, whose dramatic impact was heightened by the fact that they occurred within days of each other, unmasked the underlying violence and aggression latent in the two systems that dominated political life at the time - Western imperialism and Stalinism - and sent a shock wave through the political world. In a deeper sense, they defined for people of my generation the boundaries and limits of the tolerable in politics.⁵³

This moment speaks to what Hall calls, in the same article, the breaking up of the political ice age, and the ending of socialist innocence. Thus began the development of a third way, a new start on the political and theoretical possibilities for the left. Thus while the New Left is commonly associated with 1968, it is clear that its roots are much further back.⁵⁴ In these early days, and fundamental to Hall’s vision of the new society and the new state, Hall was arguing for an expansion of the very realm of the political, moving beyond the tired base-superstructure arguments of the past.⁵⁵ Immediately he also looked past Labour reformism and the ‘Crosland’ thesis on post-capitalism. Fundamental to his revisioning of the left project was an attempt to include all sorts of other social forces beyond the class struggle into the political project, most notably the anti-racist movement, the women’s movement, and various forms of cultural resistance that could not always be named or defined using the existing social categories.

The British Labour Party was at the center of all this, ‘for good or ill.’⁵⁶ While Labour was honoured for its traditional championing of the union movement and workers’ rights, its continual statist and anti-democratic structure gave rise to profound concerns among the new social movement. Thus an open and polemical stance was taken towards the Labour leader Gaitskell and his allies.⁵⁷ The focus was on developing, in E.P. Thompson’s phrase, ‘socialist propaganda’, sourced in turn to William Morris.⁵⁸ The hope was to go to the people with this agenda, with this new ‘common sense’. While it was entirely accepted that the common sense of the popular masses did not, by reason of some natural law of society, reside in socialism, the feeling was that a new understanding would prove

⁵¹ Ibid., page 78.

⁵² Ibid.

⁵³ ‘Life and Times of the First New Left’, in *New Left Review*, 61, January- February, 2010, page 177.

⁵⁴ The term ‘New Left’ is credited to Claude Bourdet, the French writer, a leader in the French resistance.

⁵⁵ Hall, issue 61, op. cit., page 187.

⁵⁶ Hall’s term, page 192.

⁵⁷ Ibid., page 192.

⁵⁸ Ibid., page 193.

attractive. While this was, as Hall says, later to be termed naïve and utopian, it was the prevailing mood of the time among the emerging New Left. It was hoped that a new tradition of populism might be started, founded in everyday lived experience, and that a 'historic bloc' of progressive forces could be established anew. In the end, this cluster of social differences that were a result of post-war changes were never adequately incorporated into the New Left project, Hall comments.⁵⁹ For example, the majority of writers and leaders remained men, and the majority of supporting staff were women. Fundamental changes to the structure of the movement were a long time coming. The hoped-for new 'historic bloc' was never formed.

Hall, Cultural Studies and the Theory of the State

In 1964, Hall and his colleague Paddy Whannel published *The Popular Arts*.⁶⁰ Whannel was to become a towering figure in the field of film education, working for the British Film Institute during the 1960s, and roaming the country to talk about film and ways to consider this medium in a serious scholarly fashion. Around him gathered a whole generation of critical film theorists. In *The Popular Arts*, Hall and Whannel tried to set out an agenda for film analysis. The book seeks to help those who teach film, at that moment a relatively new field in education, how to do their job. Both Hall and Whannel had taught film and popular culture in high schools and in college, and it is this experience they draw on to write the book. Thompson, Raymond Williams and Richard Hoggart are celebrated and acknowledged throughout the book, and even the Leavisite tradition, though heavily criticised, is given full credit. In the book, Hall and Whannel establish, for the first time, a methodology for analyzing cultural objects and processes in a self-conscious way that had been lacking heretofore. It is not that cultural matters had not received attention until this point, but popular culture had been largely overlooked. Thus, what the authors did was to assert the significance of a new field as an appropriate intellectual undertaking, and to provide some theoretical foundation from which workers in this newly-emerging genre could take sustenance. As on many other occasions, and as Hall would often say about his own activities, the book enabled others to start working in the field, and thus the book played a significant role in creating this novel academic arena. And given that many young people already inhabited this field in their daily dreamings and imaginings, it provided a powerful avenue down which academic life and popular life could meet. One might say that the book both offered a legitimate role for the study of cultural activities of all kinds, and for popular cultural activities in particular, honouring and celebrating their presence in cultural work as plausible expressions of serious thinking among younger people. At the same time, the authors were maintaining an intellectual and critical distance from those tendencies in mass culture that drove these same cultural products towards consumerism and cynical manipulation.

The culturalist turn was now clearly at the forefront of Hall's preoccupations, and this cultural dimension of politics, hinted at by Gramsci and by Poulantzas, now had clear resonance in his own thinking. He commented later⁶¹ that he was delighted to be able to watch films and listen to music, and at the same time call it work. He had found his field. We find a sense of Hall's political views at this time in the pages of the May Day Manifesto, published first in May 1967, edited by Hall,

⁵⁹ Ibid., pages 195-196.

⁶⁰ London, Hutchinson, 1964.

⁶¹ *Desert Island Discs*, Professor Stuart Hall with Sue Lawley, February 18th., 2000, BBC Radio 4.

Thompson and Williams, and republished in 2013.⁶² It was endless, providing fifty different arguments, including two sections on the State itself. It chose to resist the emerging managerial capitalism of that era, and to express dismay at the direction of the Labour Party. In the republished 2013 version, Michael Rustin comments :

The *Manifesto* was written in a period of political lull. The impetus of the first New Left had faded, with a change in the editorial direction of *New Left Review* in 1962, the decline of the first wave of CND, and the disappearance of most of the 30 or more Left Clubs which had formed around *NLR*. There was widespread disappointment at the failure of the Labour government to live up to the hopes raised by the election campaign of 1964, during which Wilson had seemed to promise a new start. Although there was a remarkable upsurge of radical activity in the United States during the 1960s, with the Civil Rights movement and the rise of campaigns against the Vietnam War, this was only beginning to have its main impact in Britain by 1967. The large Grosvenor Square demonstration against the Vietnam War was in February 1968. The first Women's Liberation Movement Conference took place in Oxford in 1970. My memory of the time is that it was the May 1968 events in Paris which transformed the political atmosphere - it was then that things started to 'kick off' ... One might say that the *May Day Manifesto* set out in a unified political analysis arguments that the early issues of *New Left Review* had developed in a less systematic way.⁶³

It is not at all clear which elements of the manifesto were written by Hall, or which views expressed his own political stance. It was written in a clear, simple, accessible style, each of the many sections only a few pages long, and it was freed from the academic necessity for footnotes and citations. We may imagine that he wrote the sections on 'Communications' and 'Advertising', though this is unclear. There is widespread discussion of American influence, the American economy and its penetration of European business and politics, as well as the full realization that the American military had power all over Europe. Two very interesting sections consider the state directly, and it is worth commenting on these sections. The first⁶⁴ comments on the dramatic demands that private industry made on state resources to remain competitive. The role of state economic planning is also discussed, as is the rise of an incomes policy, later to topple the Callahan government. And in section 35,⁶⁵ the writer sums up what the state does, using a quotation from Galbraith :

The Government fixes prices and wages, regulates demand, supplies the decisive factor of production which is trained manpower, underwrites the technology and the markets for products of technical sophistication.⁶⁶

The question that remains unanswered is who controls the state. Is it now merely the executive committee of the bourgeoisie, or a neutral arbitrator between the social classes? Certainly it seemed to the writers that the upper reaches of the private sector and the state itself were still populated by the same people that had inhabited those positions many years before, with the familiar Eton, Harrow, Oxbridge backgrounds, recruited because of who they knew and were, rather than on the basis of an merit they might have accrued.

⁶² First published in May 1967, edited by Hall, Edward Thompson and Raymond Williams. Many contributors were involved, and it was republished by Penguin in 1968. A further version was republished in 2013, and recovered at <https://www.lwbooks.co.uk/sites/default/files/free-book/Mayday.pdf> on January 23, 2017.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, pages xiii and xix.

⁶⁴ Section 34, pages 123-126, 'The role of the State'.

⁶⁵ Section 35, pages 127-128, 'But what is the State?'

⁶⁶ J.K. Galbraith, cited on page 127 without further reference.

In the last section of the Manifesto, section 50, the politics of the writing is set out.⁶⁷ A national socialist plan is proposed as being on the agenda of this group. There is a call to unity among dissident groups, with a clear expression of the difficulties that such a move towards unity will encounter. The need for leftist newspapers and other organs of expression are underlined, and there is a strong feeling that the left can manage such institutions. The need for local and national organization is also canvassed. The tone is hopeful and energetic – the time has come. The article finishes with the following words :

This manifesto is a challenge and it asks for a response. There are thousands who share our intentions and our values, and who can connect with and contribute to our analysis and our future work. Those who stand in our situation: we invite your active support.⁶⁸

Some months before the writing of the Manifesto, Edward Thompson had delivered an excoriating attack on New Left Review in the pages of *Socialist Review*.⁶⁹ The article critiques the analysis of Perry Anderson and Tom Nairn that had been established in the pages of *NLR* since Anderson had taken over the editorship in 1962. At one level, this is just a turf fight among left intellectuals, another example of the bitter debate among positions that characterised much of the cultish warfare of the era. At another level, it is an important moment in the theoretical tendencies concerning politics and the State. Anderson and Nairn criticise British left intellectual life as exhausted, empiricist, elitist and traditionalist. Much of the Thompson rebuff seems to miss the point. While the *NLR* argument is about method, theory and the way of doing historical analysis, Thompson seems to want to talk about history itself, and indeed, much of the time, Thompson appears to be talking to himself. Nairn and Anderson hardly appear for pages on end, except as cameo figures in the shadows. But Thompson also usefully shows how cultural factors were at work in class transformation, thus reinvigorating that side of the argument against political and economic reductionism.⁷⁰ Thompson also makes a spirited defence of English intellectual life in general :

Other countries may have produced a "true intelligentsia," an "internally unified intellectual community"; but it is rubbish to suggest that there is some crippling disablement in the failure of British intellectuals to form "an independent intellectual enclave" within the body politic. Rather, there were formed in the eighteenth century scores of intellectual enclaves, dispersed over England and Scotland, which made up for what they lost in cohesion by the multiplicity of initiatives afforded by these many bases and (as the entire record of scientific and technical advance witnesses) by the opportunities afforded for the interpenetration of theory and praxis. Much of the best in our intellectual culture has always come, not from the Ancient Universities nor from the self-conscious metropolitan coteries, but from indistinct nether regions. What our authors overlook is the enormous importance of that part of the revolutionary inheritance which may be described, in a secular sense, as the tradition of dissent.⁷¹

Thompson's complaint is not only that the *NLR* account provides an impoverished vision of British intellectual life – it is that they fail to deal with 'plain facts' in their rush towards theory.⁷² Towards

⁶⁷ 'The Politics of the Manifesto', pages 202-208.

⁶⁸ Op. cit., page 127.

⁶⁹ *Socialist Review*, volume 2, 1965, 'The Peculiarities of the English'.

⁷⁰ Ibid., page 331-332. The takeover of the cultural economy by private enterprise after the rise of Protestantism is a particularly significant argument.

⁷¹ Ibid., page 332.

⁷² Thompson cites four major areas of weakness which he then rehearses at length. 'We may select four critical areas of weakness which both authors display. First, they have an inability to comprehend the political context of ideas and choices. Second, there is an absence of any serious sociological dimension to their analysis. Third, there is a

the end of the article, the *NLR*'s use of Gramsci's notion of hegemony, and the importance of cultural domination is discussed.⁷³ In Part Five, Thompson finally dispenses with history and concentrates mostly on theory. Thompson is at pains to argue that the *NLR* duo have struggled to stretch the facts to fit their theoretical model. The base-superstructure model will clearly not do. Again, culture is placed to the fore.⁷⁴ Yet Thompson cannot find in the new *NLR* model any place for the human, or for human agency or, indeed, human culture. Reductionism is the root cause of their failure, a trying to squeeze all the uncomfortable facts into a tightly-argued model. Capitalism for Thompson is at once economic, moral and cultural – these elements cannot be separated out. Culture does not trail behind the economic. Instead it permeates the economic and lives inside it.⁷⁵

Thompson did not published *The Poverty of Theory* until 1978, an exchange with Althusserian Marxism, but by this time, the theoretical horse had long left the barn and bolted. As early as 1967, Poulantzas was writing in *New Left Review* about Marxist theory in Great Britain.⁷⁶ And if he had not intervened at this moment, it is unlikely that the familiar Miliband debate would have occurred. Poulantzas reads the exchange between Thompson and the *NLR* editors, and leans heavily towards the *NLR* side. In a profoundly theoretical text, he none the less charges Nairn and Anderson with historicism and subjectivism. The claim of subjectivism one can immediately understand, given this was the Althusserian moment in the Poulantzas project, but the charge of historicism is not initially clear. Poulantzas argues :

Without entering into detailed analysis, we can say that, in this approach, the type of unity which characterizes a social formation is not that of an objective, complex whole with a plurality of specific levels of structure with a 'dominant' in the last instance, the economy.⁷⁷

This is a purist Althusserian formula for an adequate class analysis, as well as an adequate Marxist methodology, and Poulantzas is, rather simplistically, finding the British account wanting. He continues with further details of this critique. His historicist claim sees the Nairn-Anderson duo laying out British history as an inevitable flow of logical successions, the one following inevitably from the other. He is profoundly critical of their use of Gramsci, who he feels they have misrepresented and reduced to a caricature more reminiscent of Lukacs than of Gramsci. Nairn-Anderson are further taken to task for an inadequate theory of social class.⁷⁸ In the middle of his paper, Poulantzas introduces a more elaborate exposition of the State and State theory than either Nairn-Anderson or Thompson have offered,⁷⁹ and he introduces his notion of relative autonomy

crucial vulgarization of Gramsci's notion of "hegemony." And fourth, they display not the least insight into the impact upon the British Labour movement of Communism.' (ibid., page 338)

⁷³ Ibid., page 345.

⁷⁴ Ibid., page 351.

⁷⁵ It was not until much later that Thompson finally unleashed all his weapons against *NLR* and structural Marxism long after this influence had reached its apex. Indeed in 1980, Althusser had murdered his wife, and was hospitalized. His influence on Marxism could hardly have been at its apex. Nonetheless, Thompson spent 200 pages (*The Poverty of Theory*, London, Merlin Press, 1978) arguing against Althusser's structuralism, and, in his view, *NLR*'s slavishly following this line of reasoning. He called structuralists 'unhistorical shit', a phrase which was taken from Marx's polemic against Proudhon. Anderson responded with a book-length reply, *Arguments within English Marxism*, London, Verso, 1980. For a review of the relation between E.P. Thompson and the New Left, see Robin Blackburn's 'Edward Thompson and the New Left', in *NLR*, issue 201, September-October, 1993.

⁷⁶ *NLR*, May-June, 1967, issue 43, 'Marxist Political Theory in Britain'.

⁷⁷ Ibid., page 60.

⁷⁸ Ibid., page 62.

⁷⁹ Ibid., page 64.

here. Turning to the issue of the ‘dominant ideology’⁸⁰ he argues for ‘men’ as ‘bearers of the social structure’, and of the dominant ideology as ‘the cement in the unity of the various levels of the social structure’, a profoundly structuralist reading. While Poulantzas dropped the notion of the bearers of social structure in his later writing, the idea of the ideology as a social cement had a more enduring role in his work. Later Poulantzas was to comment that he came under the spell of Althusser only briefly, and doubtless this was so. But if he was under that spell, this was the moment of his most complete absorption into the Althusserian fold, because the writing here could have come from Althusser’s pen. But Poulantzas wants also to claim a complex view of ideology, not reduced to the ideas of a dominant class, but rather to a complex class structure in which a unity may exist, but a unity which is formed from a variety of class fractions. And this leads him to introduce the notion of a ‘power bloc’, a concept he holds onto during the coming years, allowing him to speak of a complexity among the dominant interests, and thus complexity in the system of ideas.⁸¹

In the meantime, while all these vigorous debates are going on in NLR and elsewhere, Stuart Hall had now fled the scene and was beavering away at Birmingham. Hall was writing all the time for NLR in 1960 and 1961, but he disappears from its pages until 1980 with his shift in commitments. After the May Day Manifesto, his next major contribution appears to be a paper on Marx’s *Grundrisse* in 1973.⁸² At the same time Hall and others were developing a series of occasional papers that were published retrospectively in *Culture, Media, Language*,⁸³ and in *Policing the Crisis*.⁸⁴ A mimeographed copy of the 1973 article is still available on the web, carefully typed on an antique typewriter. It comprises a long exegesis on the method and theory that Marx sought to operate. He seems here to be looking for some epistemological foundation on which to rest a body of work that appears to be close on the horizon. He immediately comments on the social nature of the analysis compared to what has gone before. Social connections between people become transformed into the relation between things in a money economy.⁸⁵ This is an unmasking that Marx undertakes, and which gives him the basis of his theory of ideology, and by inference, provides Hall with a way forward. Hall seems to be digging in this text for the foundation of Marxist method, focusing on Marx’s insistence that production does not exist ‘in general’, but only under certain historical conditions, and that production varies enormously in the several modes of production that are widely acknowledged to exist.⁸⁶ But while political economy has begun the journey towards an adequate theory of history, it has not yet arrived at its destination.⁸⁷ This is because political economy takes the world as it is and calls it the natural, unchanging world, when nothing can be further from the truth. Nonetheless, all societies produce things to survive. But to analyse these phenomena, we need new concepts and a new language. Marx’s famous inversion of Hegel’s

⁸⁰ Ibid., page 66.

⁸¹ See especially footnote 18, page 69.

⁸² The article is cited by Robin Blackburn in his obituary for Stuart Hall, (Stuart Hall, NLR, 86, March-April, 2014.) page 82, but the date is wrong as written in 1972. The document, which appears in its original form, is clearly dated November-December 1973. Recovered at <http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/Documents/college-artslaw/history/cccs/stencilled-occasional-papers/1to8and11to24and38to48/SOP01.pdf>, January 27, 2017. There is also a citation to a paper on Althusser which is intriguing. It is called ‘Settling Accounts with Althusser’, and is cited on page 2. See *Understanding Stuart Hall*, Helen Davis, 2004, Sage, Los Angeles.

⁸³ 1980, Hyman, London, edited with Dorothy Hobson, Andrew Lowe and Paul Willis.

⁸⁴ *Policing the Crisis, Mugging the State and Law and Order*, by Stuart Hall, Chas Critcher, Tony Jefferson, John Clarke and Brian Roberts, Macmillan, 1978, London.

⁸⁵ *A reading of Marx’s 1857 Introduction to the Grundrisse*, Occasional paper, Center for Contemporary Cultural Studies, University of Birmingham, Stuart Hall, 1973., page 6.

⁸⁶ Ibid., page 8-9.

⁸⁷ Ibid., pages 10ff.

idealism is cited, as well as his critique of Proudhon. Marx is keen to use the method of the dialectic to penetrate old understandings of what appears to be the natural world of production, exchange and distribution. Hall's writing is profoundly analytic, a true new reading of Marx, a textual interrogation of a very serious nature. For Hall, some of Marx's most significant ideas later developed in *Capital* are first worked out here. As a result, he is able to argue that Marx did indeed see that capitalism had a self-perpetuating form, but that this form had no eternal guarantees – it would not go on forever.⁸⁸ What we are trying to understand, therefore, is a 'finite historical system',⁸⁹ a system with limits within historical time. There is a strong Althusserian streak in his theoretical analysis here, in which he confirms that production 'determines in the last instance', but that also production influences the complex systems of structure that make up the whole mode of production.⁹⁰ And while Thompson gave up on Althusser early on, Hall did not. He remained an influence on Hall's work for a long time.⁹¹

If Althusser was a significant theoretical influence, it is clear that Gramsci was even more powerful as a source of ideas for prising open the closed categories of traditional Marxist scholarship that he wrestled with for some years. His interest was clearly focused on culture as an *object* of study, rather than a new field of work, but serious theoretical matters also preoccupied him simultaneously, as well as an unending concern for the political future of the left. Hall had already commented on the consumer culture in his earliest published work.⁹² Once the consumer has one foot on the status ladder, seeking more and more consumer goods, each better, and to be preferred to what the neighbours have, than the last, then the ladder must be climbed alone. Classes will not do this together. Hall was setting out his stall to examine class and culture. But his theoretical work was also of the highest quality, as I suggest above in his analysis of Marx's *Grundrisse*.

By the late 1960s, Hall was writing consistently about culture, as in his paper on the hippie movement in 1968.⁹³ Hall reads the hippies as a form of resistance to orthodoxy, not simply an expression of peace and love among eccentric young people. This movement he sees as a tactical withdrawal,⁹⁴ a commitment to another way of life beyond the scope of authorized society. But this kind of society is doomed to disappear, a mere momentary glimpse of Utopia without any systematic understanding of how to get there, except on a personal level. As Davis suggests, this is a culturally focused article, but it also has a powerful political dimension.

This enduring concern with politics leads him, in the early 1970s to his *Grundrisse* article, and towards a more sophisticated understanding of political theory and strategy. It also turned him more closely towards the state. His early political writings had been a polemic against the 'Crosland' post-capitalist state argument as a source of critical opposition, and towards further elaborations of his anti-racist arguments. Now he turned more carefully towards theory and the shifting political

⁸⁸ Ibid., pages 25-26.

⁸⁹ Cited on page 27.

⁹⁰ Ibid., page 32.

⁹¹ See especially 'Signification, Representation, Ideology : Althusser and the post-structuralist debates, *Critical Studies in Mass Communication*, Volume 2 number, 1985.

⁹² See especially 'A sense of classlessness', in *Universities and New Left Review*, volume 5, pages 26-32, 1958, where Hall comments, with some surprise, on the rise of the consumer society, and the comparative luxury of the emerging social patterns. See also his 1960 'The Supply of Demand', in E. Thompson, (ed.) *Out of Apathy*, New Left Books, London, 1960.

⁹³ See 'The Hippies : an American "moment"', in J. Nagel (ed.) *Student Power*. Merlin Press : London, pages 170-202.

⁹⁴ Davis, op cit., page 38.

context of the 1970s. Early in the 1970s he starts to examine the media as a source of cultural dominance, citing the work of Adorno and the Frankfurt School.⁹⁵ In addition, as we have already seen, Gramsci's notion of hegemony, coupled with a somewhat elided attraction to Althusserian structuralism, is also evident. The Birmingham School were thus moving away from orthodox forms of cultural analysis towards a new model. With the addition of Barthes' semiology, the School now had at its disposal all the critical-theoretical apparatus required to understand the media in a fresh and creative way. Davis describes this move as the move towards the audience.⁹⁶ In his *Encoding/Decoding*⁹⁷ Hall examines the relationship between those who create media messages and those who decode them. While producers of shows might pay careful attention to the way they want their programs to be understood, and these details may have a very strong, and entirely conscious, effect on the nature of the product that is transmitted,⁹⁸ once they are sent, the message must now be interpreted. Following Barthes, Hall embraces the notion of an encoding on the studio being deconstructed, decoded and reinvented through a process of active meaning making in the mind of the viewer. This decoding, while it may be framed, influenced and shaped by the message itself, is not constrained by this encoding strategy, but instead the code is refashioned, contextualised and remade, both individually and collectively. Sometimes the message is accepted as sent, and at other times a complete reinvention takes place. The point is to understand the viewer as an active meaning maker, and not as a pliant sponge that simply soaks up meaning.

In Davis's book on Stuart Hall, she reminds us of the political turmoil of the 1970s, and she is right to do so.⁹⁹ No-one as politically attuned as Hall could have avoided being influenced by these changes. In essence, the post-war Fordist compromise, mass consumption and mass production, coupled with a strong welfare state, was collapsing. It was not simply that a cultural revolution was taking place, with substantial shifts occurring in social attitudes. It was also a time of economic crisis, culminating in the oil crisis of 1973. There were immigration issues besetting Great Britain. West Indian immigrants who had been welcomed to the U.K. in earlier years were now being prevented from 'coming home'. The Women's Movement was no longer content with demonstrations and complaints – they demanded power and influence, as much in the Birmingham School as elsewhere. The post-war compromise was coming to an end.

These shifts in the tectonic plates of politics required a theoretical and intellectual response. Hall had started this response with the piece on the *Grundrisse* cited above in part because much of the continental work from neo-Marxism was not available until somewhat later. For example, Poulantzas's writing was only just reaching British shores, and translations often took several years. An important theoretical point is also being made here, and that is the question as to whether theory can be revised and perfected entirely in the world of theory. It is Hall's point that this is never possible. It is also Marx's argument, but for a moment Althusser, and indeed Poulantzas, in the early pages of *Political Power and Social Classes*, argue differently. For Marx and for Hall, it is in the dialectic with evidence, experience and human activity that theory can be shaped, refashioned and improved. Hall is moving away from the high halls of pure theory. Hall also wants to reject Althusser's notion that Marxist theory is ahistorical and beyond social context. In this move, Althusser wants to render Marx's writing 'scientific', and capable of understanding history from a

⁹⁵ Op. cit., page 43.

⁹⁶ Ibid., page 59.

⁹⁷ *Encoding and decoding in the media discourse*, CCCS stencilled paper, University of Birmingham, 1973.

⁹⁸ Davis, op. cit., pages 61-62.

⁹⁹ Ibid., pages 70ff.

position beyond history.¹⁰⁰ Again, Poulantzas follows him there for an instant, only to reject that position, however attractive, in his later writings. Hall never accepts this position, and instead insists on the social context that surrounds Marx's theoretical formulations. They are human writings, like any other form of writing, and there is no privileged space apart from society from which this 'science' can be manufactured.

As he struggles with new understandings of the 'natural' qualities of common sense, dominant ideology and hegemony, Hall also wants to understand the role of the state, and in this he turns to Althusser in the first instance. Althusser's familiar work on ideological state apparatuses is now invoked.¹⁰¹ Here, as will be well known, the role of the 'class-neutral' state, in its educational and ideological functioning, is seen to take a major role in disseminating, inculcating and transmitting common sense to the popular masses. In this way, cohesion, unity and consent are created out of difference and separation. This is straight from the Gramsci-Poulantzas songbook.

Hall had always been driven by ethnic politics, by his own experience as a Caribbean immigrant, and by the fate of others like him in a racist Britain. The rise of a 'new right' in the 1970s, normally called Powellism because of the leadership of Enoch Powell,¹⁰² inspired Hall and others to speak out against racism during this time.¹⁰³ But this is also the period of his detailed work on culture. In *Culture, Media, Language*¹⁰⁴ Hall sets out a program of work that can now be followed by offering up an array of theoretical and methodological tools available for intellectual and political workers. The four sections deal with ethnography, media, language and English Studies.¹⁰⁵ While Hall seems to have been the primary writer and manager of the project, the work is profoundly collective, with multiple voices involved in the writing. The work is self-consciously self-analytic – there are long introductions reviewing the theoretical and epistemological foundations of the Centre's work, these followed by equally extended accounts of how to do ethnography the Centre's way before we get to substantive work. There are articles of ethnographic method, and on housewives and BBC Radio before we encounter yet another introduction to media studies, followed by further examinations of ideology and media, Hall's encoding/decoding piece, television and the social contract, another piece by Hall in theories of language and ideology, and a final contribution on audiences. A section on language has yet another introduction, and comprises an exposition on theories of language, especially semiology, Saussure, Barthes, Derrida, Freud, Lacan and the feminist appropriations of his work, as well as Foucault – everyone who had ever said anything about language, and whose ideas were still deemed plausible in the 1970s, is there. There is an article on sexuality and advertising

¹⁰⁰ Davis, op. cit., page 78.

¹⁰¹ Ibid., page 64ff. This paper was initially published as Althusser, Louis (1970). "Idéologie et appareils idéologiques d'État (Notes pour une recherche)". *La Pensée* (151).

¹⁰² A conservative member of parliament from 1950 to 1974. A brilliant classics scholar and a full professor by 25, Powell became synonymous with the most extreme forms of racist politics, and he opposed anti-racist legislation. He is known most infamously for a talk that came to be known as the 'Rivers of Blood' speech, in which he said :
As I look ahead, I am filled with foreboding. Like the Roman, I seem to see 'the River Tiber foaming with much blood'. That tragic and intractable phenomenon which we watch with horror on the other side of the Atlantic but which there is interwoven with the history and existence of the States itself, is coming upon us here by our own volition and our own neglect. Indeed, it has all but come. In numerical terms, it will be of American proportions long before the end of the 20th century. Only resolute and urgent action will avert it even now.' (20 April, 1968, Birmingham). The Times called it an evil speech, and he was thrown out of the Conservative Party by Edward Heath.

¹⁰³ Davis, page 99. See especially Davis, chapter five for further details. Full details of all Hall's articles on racism are provided.

¹⁰⁴ Op. Cit.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid., page 9.

before the book ends with a section on English Studies. Here there is yet another introduction, and several further reviews. The focus of attention is on the work of Raymond Williams and the 'scientific Marxist criticism of Terry Eagleton'.¹⁰⁶ None of this work is overtly political in a structural sense, though the politics of writing and intellectual work is clear enough. For his more overtly political writing, *Policing the Crisis*¹⁰⁷ is more obviously concerned with the state and national issues. The book focuses on the demonization of young black men as the source of social disorder. Hall is at pains to argue that the existing understandings of racism following the liberal tradition are entirely inadequate to the task of understanding the emerging law and order crisis. Instead, the roots of the crisis lie in the economic and political relations between the black community and the larger white society. Thus as black youth become excluded from the economic life of the nation through racist hiring practices, they are driven into alternative forms of life, of rebellion, resistance, and, sometimes, crime. Hall is able to show that Powellism, while an extreme form of racist argument largely dismissed by orthodox opinion, has crept into orthodox reasoning, and has become the undercurrent of much new political thinking, and especially of Thatcherism :

In Thatcherism, racism comes home to be perfectly respectable and even 'responsible' English ideology. Something that will not be shifted, will not be budged from. We know it in our bones, we know what our culture is. We have forgotten why people from another culture came here or indeed how much your culture depends on having their culture somewhere else and why you brought them from where they were to be where you are now and why you would like them to go back. As if you can switch populations around at the whim of a moral anxiety. That is the nature of racism from above. Coupled with racism from below it creates the exposed political nerve on which fascism operates.¹⁰⁸

In 1979, Hall makes his moves from Birmingham to become Professor of Sociology at the Open University. Now Hall engages with Thatcher and with the state systematically in a series of articles that emerge in *Marxism Today*. This line of reasoning had already begun at Birmingham as the last sections of *Policing the State* suggest. Hall starts with the 'revolutionary opening' presented by the events of 1968 worldwide. As usual, he comments, 'America lead.'¹⁰⁹ But the revolution was incomplete, the challenges contradictory and the outcome unclear. Very soon, the hippies went back to work and joined corporate America, disaffected blacks returned to the ghettos, and the new corporatist state was on the march. In short, while 1968 looked like a moment of liberation, it was precisely the opposite – it was the moment that signalled the shift towards authoritarianism.¹¹⁰ The moment signalled the end of the post-war compromise and, as Hall puts it, the exhaustion of consent. Hall sees the state changing shape through an incomes policy established during the 1970s which curtailed the rights of workers.¹¹¹

At the same time, British capitalism itself was in crisis, and the state needed to engage in a drastic rearrangement in order to deal with it. Global capitalism faced increasingly intense competition, high rates of inflation, resistance to tax increases, the rise of the fuel crisis, and increasing demands for higher wages. These elements of what have been called a 'perfect storm' came together to form the crisis, felt as much in Britain as elsewhere. The corporate management of the state was falling apart. The happy compromise between the regulated economy, rising wages and steady profits

¹⁰⁶ This term has an unmistakable Althusserian flavour to it.

¹⁰⁷ Op. cit.

¹⁰⁸ Hall, cited in Davis, page 103.

¹⁰⁹ *Policing the Crisis*, page 241.

¹¹⁰ Ibid., page 247.

¹¹¹ Ibid., page 263.

could no longer be held together. A voluntary incomes policy, in which these elements were agreed to 'by consent' fell apart by 1974.¹¹² The long-term attempt by the Labour Party, and on some occasions by the Tories, to incorporate the union movement into the state, was now a failure. The state was unable to deliver to the unions those elements of material improvement that were required to ensure agreement, and the assumed compliance throughout the system was now at an end. Strikes, social unrest and political change were now the order of the day.

The 1970s began with a series of crises left over from the 1968 pseudo-revolution. In the first place, there were concerns about the ghetto riots in America shifting to the United Kingdom, an anxiety fuelled by Powell and by others in the law-and-order wing of the Tory party. In addition, some of the student unrest from the 1968 era re-emerged in the early years of the 1970s, sometimes spontaneously, at other times on a more organized basis. In any event, as Hall indicates,¹¹³ the politics of the past was at an end. Labour clung to the view that they could continue to deliver social harmony and the agreement of the unions, but the Conservatives knew this game was up. Instead, they became aligned behind the law and order issue. With ethnic, student and industrial unrest to manage, they conceived an emerging winning strategy for the ballot box. The country began to move slowly towards a law-and-order state.¹¹⁴ The courts began to take a firmer view in cases of social disorder, and the Heath government of the early 1970s also took direct aim at the union movement, focusing attacks on industrial unrest. The Northern Ireland crisis, the extended moral crisis that focused on mugging, the rise of Mary Whitehouse and the moral right all provided further fuel for the flames. In the industrial arena, a series of miners' strikes further led to repressive measures.¹¹⁵ The political story of the 1970's then emerges as a series of crises. Neither major party seemed able to resolve the myriad of problems that arose during this period. Hall comments on Mr. Heath¹¹⁶, the conservative Prime Minister of the period, and his attempts at crisis management :

Mr. Heath then turned to his 'final solution' - one dictated entirely by the political motive of breaking the working class at its most united point. Its damaging economic consequences precipitated Britain's economic decline into 'slumpflation'. The miners had to be defeated, fuel saved; more important, the 'nation' had to be mobilised against the miners by projecting the crisis right into the heart of every British family. The economy was put on a three-day working 'emergency', and the country plunged into semi-darkness.¹¹⁷

By 1974, the Heath experiment had come to an end, and an election was called. By the end of the year, two elections had been called, and Labour had won both, the first through an uncertain coalition, the second by a slim majority. Harold Wilson¹¹⁸ and the Labour Party came back to power. However, Wilson was beset by the same crisis, a crisis Labour could not resolve, and Wilson resigned in 1976, at which point, and after a leadership struggle, James Callahan became Prime Minister. This was the Thatcher moment. In her own leadership struggle with Heath, Thatcher had taken control of the Conservative Party in 1975, and had begun, from a moderate starting position, to develop a series of policies and themes that were later to become known as Thatcherism. In the meantime, the Callahan Labour government lurched from one crisis to another. While Callahan began by establishing 'The Great Debate' which focused on national educational

¹¹² Ibid., page 265.

¹¹³ Hall, *Policing the Crisis*, op. cit., chapter nine.

¹¹⁴ Ibid., page 278;

¹¹⁵ Ibid., page 295.

¹¹⁶ Edward Heath was Prime Minister from 1970 until 1974.

¹¹⁷ Ibid., page 309.

¹¹⁸ Wilson had been the Prime Minister during the 1960s from 1964 to 1970, and he was returned to power in 1974.

issues, and had a high-sounding tone, full of sensible and progressive language, at the same time he was forced to engage in a series of awkward political steps to maintain power, including a referendum on Scottish Home Rule, as well as facing runaway inflation and high unemployment. He cut expenditure to try to tackle inflation, and seemed likely to win another election should he have gone to the polls in 1978. As we have seen above, he failed to call an election, the familiar 'Winter of Discontent' took place, and Thatcher came to power in 1979.

Hall's state theorising continues throughout this period, and he is writing from the middle of the crisis. Hall offers a detailed ideological argument that follows the shifts in popular sentiment, as well as the changes in government policy during this period. This was an attack on the welfare state, first and foremost, an attack on the very notion of government intervention as the enemy of personal and private enterprise. He sees in this the rise of a petty bourgeois mentality perfectly aligned with grocer's daughter Thatcher, and indicative of a decisive swing to the right. The crisis seems to him to have a series of major elements. First, it is a crisis in general for the British economy, part of the global economic crisis flooding the international scene at that time. Second, it seems to him a crisis in the balance of social forces,¹¹⁹ in the political alliances and compromises that had held together since the war. Third, it is a crisis of the state, with an expansion of its functions into new areas, and especially into the new terrain of economic control and crisis management.¹²⁰ Fourth, there is a crisis in political legitimacy, a loss of common belief in the social contract, a dissolution of an assumed common sense. Consent is gradually being replaced by coercion. Hall comments :

This is an extremely important moment: the point where, the repertoires of 'hegemony through consent' having been exhausted, the drift towards the routine use of the more repressive features of the state comes more and more prominently into play. Here the pendulum within the exercise of hegemony tilts, decisively, from that where consent overrides coercion, to that condition in which coercion becomes, as it were, the natural and routine form in which consent is secured. This shift in the internal balance of hegemony - consent to coercion - is a response, within the state, to increasing polarisation of class forces (real and imagined). It is exactly how a 'crisis in hegemony' expresses itself.¹²¹

The state comes to take on an exceptional form, but it does this slowly through a series of stages and over a period of time. This is not fascism, and to use such a term obscures more than it reveals. It is, instead, a state of 'legitimate coercion'.¹²² And this shift is primarily ideological and cultural, a shift that is taking place globally among many advanced industrial nations. In a period of crisis, the state's role is to provide a sense of direction. Hall again :

... as the crisis deepens, and the forms of conflict and dissent assume a more explicitly political and a more clearly delineated class form, social anxiety also precipitates in its more political form. It is directed against the organised power of the working class; against political extremism; against trade-union blackmail; against the threat of anarchy, riot and terrorism. It becomes the reactionary pole in the ideological class struggle. Here, the anxieties of the lay public and the perceived threats to the state coincide and converge. The state comes to provide just that 'sense of direction' which the lay public feels society has lost. The anxieties of the many are orchestrated with the need for control of the few. The interest of 'all' finds its fitting armature only by submitting itself to the guardianship of those who lead. The state can now, publicly and legitimately, campaign against the 'extremes' on behalf and in defence of the majority - the 'moderates'. The 'law-and-order' society has

¹¹⁹ Ibid., page 317.

¹²⁰ Ibid., pages 318-319.

¹²¹ Ibid., page 309.

¹²² Hall's phrase used on page 321.

slipped into place.¹²³

The profoundly ideological and cultural quality of Hall's state theorizing must now be clear. For him, first and foremost, this is a crisis in the ideological structure of consent. Somewhere, and not far away, an economic crisis is bubbling along, but the crisis manifests itself culturally as a series of moral panics, among which the crisis surrounding muggings is predominant among his concerns.

Hall is now willing to turn his lens on Thatcher in full in his familiar 'Great Moving Right' article. This article comes right after *Policing the Crisis*, and it summarises Hall's sense of the political at this moment. Hall is now escaping his role as the leader of the Cultural Studies movement, at least in the day-to-day sense of running the Birmingham Program. He was free now to talk about broader issues. Hall begins by asserting the inevitable belief that things are moving to the right politically. This would have been no surprise after Thatcher's rise to power. It was, perhaps, harder to discern during the later stages of Callahan's Labour régime. He is at pains to argue that the present forms of analysis of this shift to the right are inadequate. First, he dismisses the notion that 'worse is better', than an economic and social crisis further exacerbates the contradictions, and thus provide ripe territory for the left.¹²⁴ Nor does he accept that the changes going on are predictable, that the Thatcher phenomenon is just the latest stage in Tory reaction, and that the National Front are always with us. We see immediately the use of Poulantzian language – the phrase 'pertinent political or ideological effects' – appears on the first page, and we are reminded that Hall was about to interview Poulantzas himself,¹²⁵ and was later to write an obituary about him.¹²⁶ Hall is arguing against any analysis of history which tells us we've seen it all before – nothing is new under the sun. He is also rejecting the 'iron laws of history' approach, which argues that history will take care of any problems that the right might throw up, since the future is determined by the iron laws of scientific socialism. Instead, he wants to reject any form of economism that argues for the role of the economic as a determining factor. Anyone who has followed his career until now must clearly see that his focus will be on the ideological as a relatively autonomous realm. As well, he wants us to pay attention to the specific conditions that prevail in Britain in 1979. Nor is this a fascist moment. We need to carefully rethink the politics of the left. What we are witnessing, Hall argues is a rise of 'authoritarian populism' and the emergence of a new kind of state. The issue here is the argument that Thatcher and the emerging Conservative majority have developed a new common sense, that they have achieved a limited form of cultural hegemony, which Hall terms 'an active popular consent.'¹²⁷ In this analysis he turns to Gramsci and his notion of an 'organic' phenomenon, a moment in which 'political forces are struggling to conserve themselves'¹²⁸ A new historic bloc is forming, and it seeks to meet the current political crisis.

Hall then turns to the history of the crisis, which he has already rehearsed at length in *Policing the Crisis*. He canvasses Britain's political and economic weakness during the 1960s and 1970s, the failure of the Wilson and Heath governments to deal with the crisis, and the state expanding the range of its power in the role of crisis-manager. All this he has argued before. He reminds of the ceaseless attempts to establish an incomes policy, first by, then by coercion. He sees, in all this, the destruction of the social democratic project, and the establishment of a replacement. For social democracy to flourish, it must deliver the class compromise at the center of its project – the

¹²³ Ibid., pages 321-322.

¹²⁴ *Marxism Today*, January 1979, page 14, 'The Great Moving Right Show.'

¹²⁵ *Marxism Today*, July 1979, 'Interview with Nicos Poulantzas' (with Alan Hunt.)

¹²⁶ *New Left Review*, 119, January-February 1980, 'Nicos Poulantzas : State, Power, Socialism'.

¹²⁷ Great Moving Right Show, page 15.

¹²⁸ Gramsci, *Prison Notebooks*, page 79, cited in Hall, op. cit., page 15.

agreement – some will say the obedience – of the working class to engage with the state in the furtherance of the national project. The failure of the Labour Party, as well as failed attempts by the Conservatives to address the same issue, means that the social democratic compromise can no longer be achieved. In the wake of the ‘Winter of Discontent’, the evidence seemed unequivocal. After a decade of financial and economic failure, social unrest and industrial disharmony, a new form of common sense needed to be formed, and Thatcherism was one such attempt.¹²⁹

The elements of this new ‘common sense’ are now set out :

It is a particularly rich mix because of the resonant traditional themes - nation, family, duty, authority, standards, self- reliance -which have been effectively condensed into it. Here elements from many traditional ideologies - some already secured at earlier times to the grand themes of popular Conservatism, many others with a wider popular connotation—have been inserted into and woven together to make a set of discourses which are then harnessed to the practices of the radical Right and the class forces they now aspire to represent.¹³⁰

In this new characterisation, the state, rather than a benign presence in the lives of the popular masses, becomes a threatening and obstructive presence. Labour is hopelessly connected with the state, whereas Mrs. Thatcher presents herself as the champion of the people acting against the state.¹³¹ In education, traditionally a place where the discourse of equal opportunity resides, Thatcher has been able to capture new territory as well. The crisis over falling standards, and the failure of the comprehensive system to deliver results has meant changes could take place and the social democratic orthodoxy challenged. The productivity of the nation is at risk. Something must be done. The ‘Great Debate’ on education that Callahan had initiated thus became a plaything of the right because of the failure of the social democratic process. The quiet shift towards technical education, job skills and preparing for the workforce has thus occurred, even before the rise of Thatcherism. The right has also won power in the area of race relations and on the law and order issue.¹³² ‘Good’ and ‘Evil’ are the main players here – these are moral battles worked out in the practises of the state. And in the case of law and order :

... the law and order issues have scared people ... In some versions of the discourse of the radical Right, moral interpellations play an important role. But the language of law and order is sustained by moralisms. It is where the great syntax of ‘good’ versus ‘evil’, of civilized and uncivilized standards, of the choice between anarchy and order constantly divides the world up and classifies into its appointed stations. The play on ‘values’ and on moral issues in this area is what gives to the law and order crusade much of its grasp on popular morality and common sense conscience.¹³³

In race relations, even though Enoch Powell and his extreme policies had been routed, some elements of his ideology has entered the realm of the new common sense. Hall draws several conclusions at the end of his article.¹³⁴ The first is that the rise of the new right reflects the failure of the left, of the social democratic compromise that had ruled for so long. Second, the right has managed to secure a gap between the state and the popular masses in securing a new populism, a discourse that reaches out to large numbers of ordinary people, and seems to offer solutions to

¹²⁹ ‘Great Moving Right Show’, pages 16-17.

¹³⁰ Ibid., page 17.

¹³¹ Ibid., page 18.

¹³² Ibid., page 19.

¹³³ Ibid.

¹³⁴ Ibid., page 20.

intractable problems. Finally, Hall returns to culture and ideology. He concludes that these new discourses work on established ways of thinking, digging back into cultural memory to reshape old, familiar understandings based on new conditions. This is a shifting of the shape of political and ideological class struggle – again a tune from the Nicos Poulantzas hymnbook. This reshaping shifts the terrain of the political struggle to come, and suggests the strategy from the left must also be altered.

Hall's appearance in *Marxism Today* coincided with a brief spell, almost simultaneously with prominence of Thatcher, of a rise in popularity of this journal against the odds. Hall played a role, not just as the author of the *Great Moving Right Show*, which became the centre of debate, but also as a dissident voice on the left advocating new positions, and focusing, as before on cultural and ideological issues. In a self-congratulatory piece, the editor, Martin Jacques was later to write :

Though it might sound a little far-fetched for those whose generation post-dates *Marxism Today*, it is no exaggeration to say that *Marxism Today* was easily the most influential political magazine in Britain between 1978 and 1991 ... It created a new kind of writing style, which combined the best aspects of journalistic and academic writing ... It was not infrequently been suggested that *Marxism Today* begat Blair. This contains an element of truth in that, like Blair, but more a decade before him, *Marxism Today* recognized the obsolescence of much of the left's proposition. But in another sense, it is completely wrong : while *Marxism Today's* project was the creation of a new kind of left – and left proposition – for an utterly transformed world. Blair's project was the opposite, namely acquiescence in the Thatcherite agenda and a denial of the very notion of the left.¹³⁵

The style of the latter issues of *Marxism Today* – visually experimental and graphically based – seemed to coincide with Hall's own interest in popular culture. He wrote a series of short articles for the journal in the end, the most significant of which was perhaps the *Great Moving Right Show*, and an interview with Fredric Jameson in 1990¹³⁶, which focuses on the changes of 1989, and the notion of post-modernism. In the meantime, he was to engage in debate with Bob Jessop and others in the pages of *New Left Review*.¹³⁷ Jessop and his colleagues began the debate, and Hall replied a year later.¹³⁸ Hall begins his reply by suggesting that his readers had expected too much of the very limited argument he had proposed on authoritarian populism. It was never meant, he argues to be a general theory, but instead an idea that explained a narrow area of political and cultural life. Most interestingly, Hall cites Poulantzas as the source of this new understanding, and he mentions particularly the last sections of *State, Power, Socialism* :

The actual term 'authoritarian populism' .. emerged in 1978 after I read the concluding section to Nicos Poulantzas's courageous and original book, *State, Power, Socialism*, which was also – tragically - his last political statement. There, Poulantzas attempted to characterize a new 'moment' in the conjuncture of the class democracies, formed by 'intensive state control over every sphere of socio-economic life, combined with radical decline of the institutions of political democracy and with draconian and multifiform curtailment of so-called "formal" liberties, whose reality is being discovered now that they are going overboard'. (I especially relished that final phrase, since it put me in mind of how often the fundamentalist left is scornful of civil liberties until they find themselves badly in need of some.) More seriously, I thought I recognized in this account, and in my brief conversations with Poulantzas at the time, many similarities between his characterization and those I had been struggling

¹³⁵ Recovered from http://banmarchive.org.uk/collections/mt/index_frame.htm on February 9th., 2017.

¹³⁶ *Marxism Today*, September 1990.

¹³⁷ *NLR*, issue 147, Bob Jessop, Kevin Bonnett, Simon Bromley and Tom Ling, 'Authoritarian Populism, Two Nations and Thatcherism', September-October, 1984, pages 32-60.

¹³⁸ Stuart Hall, 'Authoritarian Populism – a reply', in *New Left Review*, issue 151, May-June 1985, pages 115-124. Jessop et al. replied in 'Thatcherism and the Politics of Hegemony', in *New Left Review*, issue 153, September-October, 1985.

to formulate in *Policing the Crisis*, 'Drifting into a Law-and-Order Society', and so on. Poulantzas called this the moment of 'authoritarian statism'.¹³⁹

Hall reminds us of the other elements of the Poulantzian argument – that this moment of 'authoritarian populism' was part of a series of stages through which late capitalism appeared to be moving, that this was neither the birth of fascism nor state exceptionalism. Instead Authoritarian Statism was a shift in the balance between consent and coercion in the direction of coercion.¹⁴⁰ And he was able to show that the struggle for power was now happening on 'new fronts', and in particular in the ideological and cultural realms.¹⁴¹

Hall found considerable sympathy with this line of reasoning but found it deficient in two directions. First, Poulantzas neglected to provide a thorough account of the new right anti-statist strategy. Second, he was unable to elaborate the mechanism by which a new 'historic bloc' was fighting for the establishment of a new hegemony, a new common sense. This led Hall to move from the use of the term 'authoritarian statism' towards using the alternative 'authoritarian populism'. By this shift, Hall suggested that the shift was certainly authoritarian, but also called on populist sentiments in the political and cultural spheres, a dimension that the Poulantzas definition lacked. He is critical of Jessop et al.'s argument that all concepts should work only at the abstract level, and claims instead a role for the empirical use of theoretical terms. Then Hall repeats his claim that his analysis was only ever part of an explanation of Thatcherism – how could it have been anything else?

Hall takes exception to the claim that he imagined Thatcherism to be hegemonic, but he does assert that Thatcherism does have hegemonic ambitions to make headway, both within the state structure, but also in civil society more broadly. Hall insists that the Thatcherites know they need to establish and to claim a new common sense, but that their project is incomplete. None the less, Hall claims that the left has something to learn here from the successes that have already been achieved. Hall further takes exception to the further claim that he has concentrated on the ideological to the neglect of the political and economic dimensions.¹⁴² Indeed, he wants to counter-pose the view that Jessop et al. and others have neglected this realm of activity to their detriment. He rehearses the commonly-held view that if you concentrate on the cultural then by general definition you must be neglecting the economic and the political, a mistake that has been so often repeated that it should now be self-evidently wrong.¹⁴³ Jessop and his colleagues appear to believe that Hall has become the captive of the discourse-theoretical camp, in which some views tend towards the idea that all of society can be reduced to language. While accepting the value of some of this work, Hall is at pains to say which parts of the argument he accepts, and which he rejects. Discourse theory has much to say about the rise of Thatcherism, but it can only explain some of what is happening.

Hall is then able to say more clearly what he means by Thatcherism :

Thatcherism has managed to stitch up or 'unify' the contradictory strands in its discourse - 'the resonant themes of organic Toryism - nation, family, duty, authority, standards, traditionalism, patriarchalism - with the aggressive themes of a revived neo-liberalism - self-interest, competitive individualism, anti-statism' ... I pointed to the highly contradictory subject-positions which

¹³⁹ Ibid., pages 116-117.

¹⁴⁰ Ibid., page 117.

¹⁴¹ Ibid., page 118.

¹⁴² Ibid., page 120ff.

¹⁴³ Ibid., page 121.

Thatcherism was attempting to condense. I deliberately adopted Gamble's brief but telling paradox - 'free market, strong state'.¹⁴⁴

Hall then reminds his critics of his long list of analyses he has already undertaken on the Keynesian welfare state, a set of writing that they seemed to have missed. The point debated is, again, an old one. Since the post-war welfare state was not 'socialist' in any formal sense, can it be of any value? This seems an absurd argument for his critics to raise. As Hall comments, why should anyone on the left be fighting against welfare cuts if nothing is at stake. Only an extreme fundamentalism of the left would argue against such an activity. A position of all-or-nothing would need to be taken to argue against resisting welfare cuts. Hall points to the ambiguous and contradictory nature of the post-war state and of Thatcherism as the source of these complications. Jessop et al., Hall claims, are still obsessed with the problem of 'corporatism', a problem on which much ink has already been spilled, and about which they don't seem to have any new answers. The key issue, Hall concludes, is what forms of analysis will help us best to understand Thatcherism, and what strategies would result that could help us overcome the régime.¹⁴⁵

Hall continued to write about Thatcher throughout the 1980's. In *Gramsci and Us*,¹⁴⁶ he brings us up to date with his thinking. It is a brilliant, stimulating and evocative piece. In it, he reminds us of the world Gramsci lived in, a world in which, for several years, it seemed possible that a worldwide proletarian revolution might be possible, that, as he puts it, if the politicians and the managers could be got out of the way, the workers could run the new, industrializing world.¹⁴⁷ With the dramatic turn to the right, Gramsci was then faced with drastic failure, a huge shift in social conditions, an ugly violence and repression that seemed to stretch endlessly into the future. This is the world he inhabited. Hall's point is not that the left face similar disastrous political conditions in the 1980s, but that Gramsci was able to find the theoretical tools to think his way out of his conditions, and that the task in Britain in the 1980's takes on a similar, if somewhat less dramatic, role. The key issue Hall insists upon is that the political terrain is shifting, and that the left needs to understand this shift. It is not business as usual – the old ruling class has changed its game, and the left must change too. Thatcher did not set out to command the upper reaches of the state. Indeed, she set out to rebuild and attack the state and to deny its value, to reinvent it as a corrupting force on the British people. Moreover, she set out to rebuild the Conservative project as a long-term change, not a short-term electoral apparatus. The project is both a modernising project, taking us forward, but also a reactionary project, taking us back to the 19th. century of pre-welfarism and 'catch-as-catch-can', self-reliance, and the survival of the fittest. Simple instrumentalist theories of the state will not do to explain what is going on. He is harsh in his criticism of existing Marxist thinking :

¹⁴⁴ Ibid., page 122.

¹⁴⁵ Ibid., pages 123-124. Jessop et alia answered Hall again in the pages of *New Left Review*. See NLR, issue 153, September-October 1985, pages 87-101, 'Thatcherism and the Politics of Hegemony: A Reply to Stuart Hall'. Kevin Bonnett, Simon Bromley, Bob Jessop and Tom Ling. Hall continued to write about the prospects for socialism throughout the 1980s in other venues. See, for example, 'The Battle for Socialist Ideas in the 1980s', in *Socialist Register*, 1982, volume, 19, in which Hall sets out the problem as the battle for the common sense of the age, which he believes Thatcher has hijacked. In *The Politics of Thatcherism*, Hall and Martin Jacques brought a collection of essays, mostly from *Marxism Today*, together as an early account of the rise of the new régime. (*Politics of Thatcherism*, edited by Stuart Hall and Martin Jacques, Lawrence Wishart in association with Marxism Today,, 1983, London.) Curiously, in the pages of *Marxism Today*, (July, 1983) Malcolm Rutherford accuses the authors of creating Thatcherism out of nothing, as if it did not exist, and that by naming it, something new was formed.

¹⁴⁶ First published in *Marxism Today*, June 1987.

¹⁴⁷ Recovered from <http://www.hegemonics.co.uk/docs/Gramsci-and-us.pdf> on February 10th, 2017. This version is unpagged. But in the *Marxism Today* original, this is page 16.

Now, usually when the Left asks that old classic Marxist question in the old way, we are not really asking a question, we are making a statement. We already know the answer. *Of course*, the Right represents the occupancy, by capital, of the state, which is nothing but its instrument. Bourgeois writers produce bourgeois novels. The Conservative Party is the ruling class at prayer. Etc, etc ... This is Marxism as a theory of the obvious. The question delivers no new knowledge, only the answer we already knew. It's a kind of game, political theory as a Trivial Pursuit. In fact, the reason we need to ask the question is because *we really don't know*.¹⁴⁸

Thatcherism appears to be the ideology of the petty bourgeoisie representing the national common sense. Hall then makes the claim that we are all complicit, if only to a small degree, in the Thatcherite project :

... make no mistake, a tiny bit of all of us is also somewhere inside the Thatcherite project. Of course, we're all one hundred per-cent committed. But every now and then - Saturday mornings, perhaps, just before the demonstration - we go to Sainsbury's and we're just a tiny bit of a Thatcherite subject ...¹⁴⁹

Hall is underscoring, again and again, the contradictory nature of the new ideology, the new common sense. Hall pinpoints the beginning of this sea-change in 1975, the year that Thatcher took over the Conservative Party, and the siren song of monetarism started to be sung, by, among others, Peter Jay, the economics editor of the Times, and the son-in-law of the Labour Prime Minister, James Callaghan. The story of the benign welfare state was over. We could no longer afford to be nice. We have to face up to reality. We had to change. The hard rhetoric of the right was developing. Reality had to be faced. Tough decisions needed to be taken. Thatcher and her allies were the ones to face up to the challenge :

Mrs. Thatcher speaks to this 'new course'. She speaks to something else, deep in the English psyche : its masochism. The need which the English seem to have to be ticked off by Nanny and sent to bed without a pudding. The calculus by which every good summer has to be paid for by twenty bad winters. The Dunkirk Spirit - the worse off we are, the better we behave. She didn't promise us the giveaway society. She said, iron times ; back to the wall ; stiff upper lip ; get moving ; get to work ; dig in. Stick by the old, tried verities, the wisdom of 'Old England'. The family has kept society together; live by it. Send the women back to the hearth. Get the men out on to the Northwest Frontier. Hard times - followed, much later, by a return to the Good Old Days.¹⁵⁰

By dealing with the social imaginary, Thatcher had flown past the policies and minutiae of the past and soared into the public consciousness. Hall sees the left fumbling with policies, and unable to deal with the level of discourse required to wrestle with the new phenomenon. There is more than a little Thatcher envy in the writing – a fascination with the partial success of the project, even though he is intensely opposed to everything she stands for.

At the heart of the crisis for Hall is the crisis of authority. The loss of the social democratic project as an over-arching ideology that seemed to deliver the goods, and improve life for many ordinary people, means a vacuum has opened up in the heart of British politics. The state remains central to our concerns, and indeed Hall sees Thatcher using the state for her purposes, even as, simultaneously, the popular call goes out into the community at large, seeking out the new common sense. Old political identities, Hall claims, are dissolving. The old notion of Socialist Man has gone forever. The laws of an inevitable history will not save us from this new world. Instead, politics,

¹⁴⁸ *Marxism Today*, June 1987, page 19.

¹⁴⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁵⁰ *Ibid.*

conceived on a broad scale, must be reconstructed. And, for Hall at this moment, the left does not seem able in any way to be able to develop a way forward.¹⁵¹

This is a fascinating moment at which Hall seems to have lost hope in the leftist project entirely, which he sees as an exhausted enterprise. In a rare mood of pessimism, he spends the last part of the article railing against the present agendas of the left. It is a curious moment to do this because, and perhaps surprisingly, Thatcher would be usurped from her position as Prime Minister and retreat to her constituency in Dulwich within a year, (as Hall mentions might happen) and Tony Blair and Gordon Brown would begin their plotting of their highly successful new left agenda.

New Times, Fordism, Post-Fordism and New Labour

From 1988 to 1991, when it closed, *Marxism Today* carried a series entitled 'New Times', a feature that generated some thought-provoking pieces but too much euphoria that failed to spy the clouds on the horizon. Addressing the charge that '*Marxism Today* begat Blair' (editor) Martin Jacques had the candour to write - in 2006 - that there was 'an element of truth in that', since New Labour and *MT* both 'recognized the obsolescence of much of the left's propositions'. However, he insisted: '*Marxism Today's* project was the creation of a new kind of left', while Blair's project was the opposite, 'namely acquiescence in the Thatcherite agenda and a denial of the very notion of the left'.¹⁵²

Hall's claim that the political climate had drastically changed was challenged not just by Jessop and his allies, but also by Miliband writing in *New Left Review*.¹⁵³ But it was with Martin Jacques and *Marxism Today* that Hall took his case forward. In July 1987, Hall wrote about the third Thatcher victory against Labour.¹⁵⁴ His verdict was of a competent Labour campaign run on the wrong ground. Neil Kinnock, the Labour leader, had an excellent personality, full of confidence and good sense. The Conservatives were portrayed as greedy, selfish and privileged. Labour presented itself as caring and sensible.¹⁵⁵ None the less, Labour lost, and Hall thought he knew why. The shift in the political landscape was not ephemeral but deep-structural and organic, and Labour were skimming over the surface of these changes. Any electoral hopes that Labour still nurtured would require fundamental shifts in their approach. The paradox of the election, one among many, was that the Labour faithful and the party workers had high hopes of success, and were buoyed along by good feedback from the community, strong leadership and a solid message. None the less, the party were soundly defeated. In key areas of policy, where Labour had traditionally succeeded, such as welfare, housing and education, the Conservative policies were preferred. Hall latched onto the 'image-centred' nature of the campaign, as if it had ever been a struggle in which the dry and dusty policy documents of the Labour Party had ever played a role. However, the point was well taken.¹⁵⁶ Policies needed to be captured in images to attach, in turn, to the broad political imagination. It was in their superior imagining of the future in which the Thatcherites succeeded in the end. Labour

¹⁵¹ *Ibid.*, page 21.

¹⁵² Robin Blackburn, pages 91-92, in 'Stuart Hall', *New Left Review*, issue 86, March-April 2014.

¹⁵³ See Blackburn's account in the same article, and especially Ralph Miliband, 'The New Revisionism in Britain', *New Left Review*, issue 150, March – April 1985, pages 5–28.

¹⁵⁴ *Marxism Today*, July 1987, 'Blue Election, election blues', pages 30-35.

¹⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, page 30.

¹⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, page 31.

tried to fight the ideological battle but it failed.¹⁵⁷ Hall's story focuses on shifting identities, emerging and complex alliances, and the non-existence of dependable Labour majorities arising from class position. With a dramatic shift in industries, the changing nature of the petty bourgeoisie and the middle class, Labour could no longer count on vast armies of the left to rise up and support the cause. Changes were needed. Thatcher has been able to create a commanding social bloc, a group of people closely aligned to the new enterprise culture and its ideology, and who saw in Thatcherism a plausible future to which they could attach themselves. Thatcher played a 'power to the people' move in offering working class people a way to buy state houses, a quicker, alternative health care system, and better educational opportunities. The fact that few of these options worked, or even actually existed at all, was beside the point. The ideological battle had been won.¹⁵⁸ Many of the codes over which the struggle was taking place were hidden. Thatcher was anti-women, anti-gay, anti-black, but this was all hidden behind the attacks on the 'loony left' that the reactionary press used again and again. Labour hid behind traditional Labour values, but these were codes for respectable, male-dominated, trade union, working class life. Such images were no more attractive than Thatcher's alternatives.¹⁵⁹ While many still urgently needed the welfare state, the attempt to defend such values was hopelessly backward-looking and unimaginative. This image of Labour – paternalistic, rooted in trade union values, male-dominated – could not compete with a new vision of a Britain of personal wealth, private success and individualism. Nor could Labour attach themselves to a shifting political constituency that they neither understood, nor reached out to.¹⁶⁰

It is useful at this point to remind ourselves of the changes in the political landscape of this time. After Thatcher's initial election in 1979, she had been returned to power twice, once in 1983 and the third time in 1987, but in November 1990, as the result of a leadership coup within the Conservative Party, she was overthrown, and John Major, as the new elected leader within the Party, came to be Prime Minister. Major had been a cabinet minister under the Thatcher régimes. He had succeeded Geoffrey Howe as Foreign Secretary in July 1989. Three months later, with the resignation of Nigel Lawson as Chancellor of the Exchequer, he was appointed to that very senior post. He had moved from the most junior position in the Cabinet to the most senior in two years. Michael Heseltine had challenged Thatcher for the leadership in November of that year, and Major had supported Thatcher. When she realised she could not win, she resigned, and Major stood for the post. He won in the second round ballot, and became Prime Minister on November 28th, 1990. He was to win re-election by a slim majority in 1992, before Blair and the Labour Party won three straight elections, starting in 1997.

In 1988, Hall added a further article to his commentary on the Thatcher régime.¹⁶¹ Writing again in a journalist style, with a text surrounded with dramatic graphics, Hall was celebrating, in openly admiring style, a Margaret Thatcher who had gained the national common sense. Ironically, within a

¹⁵⁷ Unless I am mistaken, there is a date error in the article. Thatcherism is said to have engaged in ideological struggle since 1919. I am assuming 1979 was meant unless Thatcher was arm-wrestling Lenin long before any of us understood this. (See page 33).

¹⁵⁸ Ibid., page 33.

¹⁵⁹ Ibid., pages 33-34.

¹⁶⁰ Ibid., pages 34-35. The notion that Thatcher really did undertake a revolution and that the State was dramatically changed by the Thatcher régime was challenged by many. The State remained heavily involved in economic activity, and the proportion of the economy under state command actually increased in the early years of Thatcher. Nor did the dramatic changes proposed in health and education actually take place. See, for example, Bill Schwartz, in *Socialist Register*, volume 23, 'The Thatcher Years', 1987.

¹⁶¹ 'Thatcher's lessons', in *Marxism Today*, March 1988, pages 20-27.

year, she would be on the ropes, well behind Labour in the polls, and, by 1989, losing to Labour in the European elections, and struggling under the weight of the deeply unpopular poll tax proposals. But Hall wrote this article at the beginning of this period, and he was still impressed by the right's hegemonic project. His attack was again ideological. He begins, somewhat reluctantly, by accepting that the Labour Party is trying to reform itself, but with few new ideas. Ideas within a theoretical framework is the lesson of Thatcherism for Hall, and still he sees no alternative from the left. His claim, entirely heretical and much despised at the time, was that the left could learn from Thatcherism.¹⁶² He comments :

Now, nothing is more calculated to drive the Left into a tizzy than this scandalous proposition - especially when advanced by *MT*. The very idea of Thatcherism is anathema to the Left. Decent people everywhere hate and revile it. Where Thatcherism is, there the Left cannot be. They inhabit two, not only different and hostile, but mutually-exclusive worlds. What on earth could the Left possibly *learn?*¹⁶³

Hall is making his general claim again – that however much the left may hate and despise Thatcher and all her works, the political terrain has shifted tectonically, and the game has changed irreversibly. For Labour to succeed they must learn to accept this new reality and work with it. He uses the case of the National Health Service as a case study to make his point. By the late 1980s, the NHS was on the ropes, lurching from crisis to crisis, and Thatcher could do nothing about it, yet the left had offered no alternatives. The left is agreed the post-war settlement is over, but it seems to be unable to see what has taken its place. Hall wants to wean the left away from abstract arguments about capital and the laws of history, and move them on to the contemporary arena of politics and ideas. Since the left have not yet developed a counter-hegemony :

... the balance of ideological advantage slowly turns Thatcherism's way, because the specific issue of the NHS is secured for the Right by a deeper set of articulations which the Left has not begun to shift. These include such propositions as : the public sector is bureaucratic and inefficient; the private sector is efficient and gives 'value-for-money' ; efficiency is inextricably linked with 'competition' and 'market forces'; the 'dependency culture' makes growing demands on the state - unless ruthlessly disciplined - a 'bottomless pit' (the spectre of the endlessly desiring consumer) ; public sector institutions, protected by public sector unions, are always 'overmanned' (*sic*). ; 'freedom' would be enhanced by giving the money back to the punters and letting them choose the form and level of health care they want ; if there is money to spare, it is the direct result of Thatcherite 'prosperity'; and so on. In short, the familiar Thatcherite litany which is indelibly imprinted on the public mind and imposed on public and private discourse everywhere.

Thatcher continued to win the ideological battle, and she had secured the thematic high ground. Hall was sticking to his themes of the last ten years in arguing that the battle is being waged in the world of ideas, images and beliefs, and that the left has no weaponry to bring to the battle. For Hall, a careful student of Gramsci, and of Poulantzas, who he was talking to and reading at this time, Thatcher, in their terms, had created a hegemonic project, and had established a power bloc. She had done what Gramsci and Poulantzas had described in their accounts of fascism, and in their proposals for the left of past years. Here Hall sets out the arguments about Fordism that were to flourish briefly at this time when he seeks to describe the fundamental shifts in the economy that have recently occurred, and which the left must deal with :

¹⁶² Ibid., page 20.

¹⁶³ Ibid., page 20.

'Fordism' stands for the large-scale, flow-processes of the modern factory, the skilled factory proletariat, the intensification of management, the rise of the corporate giants, the spread of mass consumption, the concentration of capital, the forward march of the technical division of labour, the intensification of world competition and the further spread of capitalism as a 'global system'. This was never only an 'economic' revolution. It was always a cultural and social revolution as well (as Gramsci, who discussed the connection of 'Fordism' with the re-organisation of sexual life in his classic essay, *Americanism and Fordism*, perfectly understood).

Now, the period of Fordism, and especially its mass consumption, mass production qualities, has passed. We are now in a period of 'Post-Fordism', of flexible production, niche consumption, boutique stores rather than box stores, variability rather than standard products, and the loss of the traditional mass working class and their sites of production. This is the new world that Labour must understand. Instead of Labour having history on its side, it appears that the conservatives have captured history themselves. Ironically, this was a discussion that was occurring at the end of the Thatcher era, and while Major held power through until 1997, the moment of high Thatcherism and unbridled hope for a conservative future was starting to wane. But for the moment, Hall is wrestling with the case of the NHS. The NHS was not working well long before Thatcher came to power. How, then, will the left reorganize it? There is a fiscal crisis of the state to deal with, and the left must face this. And we must think of more imaginative ways to solve the crisis beyond simply throwing more money at the problem. Part of the solution might be to offer up some of the qualities of Thatcherism but from a leftist position. Is there something especially conservative about choice? Hall thinks not. Why should working class people not be given a choice when considering health alternatives? Can the left capture some of the best of Thatcher's ideology?¹⁶⁴ Hall thinks they can.

But how can the left appropriate the market? And it seems clear that if the state is not to be the caretaker of socialism, it is unclear what will be. Can a highly regulated market take the place of a state-centred strategy?¹⁶⁵ Perhaps a pluralised 'civil society' might become part of a progressive leftist strategy. The left must now consider how to establish a 'power bloc' around the health system that will bring about an alliance that will work. This must start from the assumption that there are no natural majorities to call on any more – this kind of thinking must be revised. Hall is calling for a new activism here :

Majorities have to be 'made' and 'won' - not passively reflected. They will be composed of heterogeneous social interests, represented through conflicting social identities - like the ones emerging around the NHS. Unless they are unified by some larger political project which over-rides, without obliterating, their real differences, they will fall apart.¹⁶⁶

The left needs to pay closer attention to the needs of families and mothers, to changing trends in dietary matters, to the specific needs of emerging communities. The left has only old ideas inherited from a long-forgotten past that urgently need replacing if they are to compete with the right at the ballot box.

Hall and Hobsbawm were the intellectual leaders of Marxism Today at this time, with Martin Jacques providing the editorial and administrative support, albeit in a somewhat anarchic and madly

¹⁶⁴ Ibid., page 25.

¹⁶⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶⁶ Ibid., page 27.

driven style.¹⁶⁷ Hobsbawm had written in 1988 in ‘The Forward March of Labour Halted’¹⁶⁸ that the old laws of history on which Marxism had long depended were no longer operable, and Labour had to look elsewhere for inspiration :

My conclusion is that the development of the working class in the past generation has been such as to raise a number of very serious questions about its future and the future of the movement. What makes this all the more tragic is that we are today in a period of world crisis for capitalism, and, more specifically, of the crisis – one might almost say breakdown – of the British capitalist society ; i.e. at a moment when the working class and its movement should be in a position to provide a clear alternative and to lead the British people to it.¹⁶⁹

Marxism needed to be rethink everything, he concluded, but he was not the one to do it. Hopelessly out of touch with the feminist currents of the moment, let alone the anti-racist tendencies and the rise of the Green Movement, Hobsbawm could not connect with the emerging shifts in the political field of the left. It was left to Hall and others to carry this analysis forward.

At the heart of all this writing was the apocryphal issue of *Marxism Today* called ‘New Times’, delivered to the public in October 1988. Fragments of these arguments had appeared before, but this issue brought them together in a form of a manifesto. ‘Post-Fordism’ was the underlying theme, a theme largely developed by Robin Murray,¹⁷⁰ who, according to Harris, brought the theme to the British setting. Murray describes what Hall and others had already alluded to, but the writing grossly overstated the demise of the old mass production, mass consumption society. New trends were certainly emerging. Murray knew of these trends first-hand from his work with the GLC :

Murray had played a key role at Livingstone’s GLC, where he worked as the grandly titled director of industry, and set up the Greater London Enterprise Board, aimed at giving the council an active role in the capital’s economy. At first, he and his colleagues had decided only to work with companies larger than a minimum size, thinking that Thatcherism’s fetishisation of small business was something to oppose. But when they took control of a bankrupt furniture factory in the Lea Valley that had 1,000 workers, they discovered it was being trounced by competitors in Italy – whose businesses were far smaller, did not have huge production lines and often worked co-operatively. This realisation led them to immerse themselves in a new world of so-called flexible specialisation, and industries increasingly organised along much more agile, fast-moving lines, not least in retailing. When they worked with people from London’s music industry, the upshot was even more obvious: even if Fordism still defined large swaths of the world, in the late-20th century’s leading economies, Henry Ford’s world of vast production lines and standardisation – which had arguably been tested to destruction in the Soviet Union – was clearly on its way out, and this conclusion had huge implications for politics. “The forms of organisation – the Labour party, the trade unions, all these things – had all been formed around the same model as the corporate innovations we’d had in the early part of the century,” Murray told me. “It was *all* Fordist. So another theme was a critique of those structures, and how you could have much more open, democratic forms.”¹⁷¹

¹⁶⁷ For a detailed account of the goings-on at *Marxism Today* during this period, see ‘Marxism Today : the forgotten visionaries whose ideas could save Labour’, in *The Guardian*, Tuesday September 29, 2015, by John Harris, recovered from <https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2015/sep/29/marxism-today-forgotten-visionaries-whose-ideas-could-save-labour> on February 15th., 2017.

¹⁶⁸ *Marxism Today*, 1978, September.

¹⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, page 286.

¹⁷⁰ See his ‘Life After Henry (Ford)’ in the October 1988 issue of *Marxism Today*.

¹⁷¹ Harris, *op. cit.*

In his 'Life After Henry' article, Murray stressed the shift not only of employment patterns but of sector changes – by 1998, he argued, more than a third of people worked in offices and stores.¹⁷² Fordism had comprised an era in which products were standardised, and thus each task could be standardised. Mass production also implied mass consumption – there needed to be people available with sufficient resources willing and able to buy these products.¹⁷³ But while these forms of industrialization were thought to be synonymous with modernism, this was a temporary condition. These forms of work were embedded in socialist ideas of planning and politics. The two sets of activities are hopelessly bound together. But there had been a substantial shift in production towards flexible consumerism,¹⁷⁴ and understanding these changes required us to come to terms with a new anthropology of consumption. Consumers are no longer interested in repetitive, unimaginative products. They are pulled instead into an arena of personal choice, and choices which need to be met quickly if the purchase is to be completed. This requires changes in the production and distribution process, so that rapid changes in the need structure of consumers can be met in time to close the production-consumption cycle.¹⁷⁵ Harris comments :

Murray poured his thoughts into an article titled Life After Henry (Ford). As well as the economics of post-Fordism, he wrote about its political manifestations: not least, a new politics of consumption, rather than production (“the effects of food additives ... the air we breathe and surroundings we live in, the availability of childcare and community centres, or access to privatised city centres”). He talked about what we would now call the “work-life balance”. He emphasised the need for decentralised public services and structures of government. He pointed out that post-Fordism was widening the gap between the job market’s winners and losers, and that any future Labour government would have to “put a floor under the labour market, and remove the discriminations faced by the low-paid” (it would be another decade before the introduction of a British minimum wage). And he asked profoundly difficult questions to people still attached to the idea of jobs-for-life and the post-war settlement: “How real is a policy of full employment when the speed of technical change destroys jobs as rapidly as growth creates them?”¹⁷⁶

The questions he raised provided the foundation for the new thinking in this issue of *Marxism Today* and much of the writings in *New Times* that were to follow. Hall, for example, in the same edition, argued that subjectivity was now coming back into fashion, because what Post-Fordism implied was a refashioning of the individual and of identity, arguments that he had canvassed for some time, but which were now given a persuasive political and economic foundation.¹⁷⁷ For Hall, this new era is uncertain and unstable. Much of the old Fordist régime may still remain while the new order comes into being. But cultural and social fragmentation is also happening at the same time that the economy is changing shape. Changes are happening both in the exterior world of culture and economics, but simultaneously also in the subjective sphere, in the sense of the self and in the formation of identity.¹⁷⁸ The rise of the subject is especially problematic for the left, who have been used to talking in the language of structures and not in the language of individuals, feelings, sensibility and self. Reading politics and culture off economic structures was all very well in the Fordist past (though hardly adequate even then) but it would certainly not do now. Postmodernism is the term Hall turns to when he examines these changes in the cultural sphere – Hall was to interview Jameson two years later :

¹⁷² Ibid., page 8.

¹⁷³ Ibid., pages 8-9.

¹⁷⁴ Ibid., page 11.

¹⁷⁵ Ibid.

¹⁷⁶ Harris, op. cit.

¹⁷⁷ See Hall's 'Brave New World, *Marxism Today*, October 1988, pages 24-29.

¹⁷⁸ Ibid., page 25.

'Post-modernism' is the term which signals this more *cultural* character of 'new times'. The modernist movement, it argues, which dominated the art and architecture, the cultural imagination, of the early decades of the 20th century, and came to represent the look and experience of 'modernity' itself, is at an end. It has declined into the international style of expressway, slab skyscraper and international airport. Its revolutionary impulse has been tamed and contained by the museum. 'Post-modernism' celebrates the penetration of aesthetics into everyday life and the ascendancy of popular culture over high arts.¹⁷⁹

Hall, it seems, has bought into the notion of post-modernity and post-Fordism with a vengeance, and has a repertoire of new theoretical terms to use to explain these new phenomena. This shift hails the end of grand narratives, the endless assertion of the power of history, and the loss of the Master Thinkers of the past. What is Hall to make of these sweeping changes, because he undertakes a rapid review of much new thinking here. Global capitalism is clearly in a new phase, expanding into new areas in novel ways. That much is certainly happening. He comments, as these new theories swirl around in his consciousness :

... the really startling fact is that *these* 'new times' clearly belong to a time-zone marked by the march of capital simultaneously across the globe and through the Maginot Lines of our subjectivities.¹⁸⁰

The question all these complications bring to light is whether or not these changes provide opportunities for the left or not. The Right appears to be in charge of the changes, since most of these shifts have occurred under the management of neo-liberal governments, and especially those of Reagan and Thatcher. Yet the left seems demolished by Thatcherism,¹⁸¹ and bereft of ideas. Collapsing the distinction between subjectivity and objectivity might offer a way forward, Hall proposes. The acceptance of the cultural nature of these shifts must also be accepted – Hall is encapsulating his argument of some years now, and asserting the primacy of the cultural over other spheres. It is as if the dislodging of Fordism from its traditional moorings has allowed Hall to dive in, and replace it with an unambiguous cultural politics front and centre. We can no longer ignore the private cultural consumption of the citizenry, nor can we ignore the entire world of desire and pleasure that reside in subjectivity, areas long neglected by the left. The left have also too long neglected sexual politics and questions of sexual identity, questions raised in significance in the new order.¹⁸² In contrast, Thatcherism has theorized these areas very fully around antique ideas of patriarchy and traditional values. In addition, the left have paid too little attention to ethnic issues : Thatcher has again taken the high ground of defining identity on a national and ethnic level. All now has shifted. Hall ends with Marx and his famous quotation :

Could there be 'new times' without 'new subjects'? Have the forces remaking the modern world left the subjects of that process untouched? Is change possible while we remain untransformed? It was always unlikely and is certainly an untenable proposition now. It is one of those many 'fixed and fast-frozen relationships, venerable ideas and opinions' which, as Marx predicted, 'new times' quietly melted into air.¹⁸³

¹⁷⁹ Hall, *op. cit.*, page 25. The bold text is in the original, and it is manifestly clear that the highly visual style, and the new forms of text being used in *Marxism Today* were postmodernist in their graphical affiliations, associating themselves directly, and merging into, popular culture. This contrasted with the dry and dusty (and endless) texts that the left bored each other with in the more formal journals of the time (including, perhaps, *New Left Review*) which were clearly part of an older, and perhaps Fordist régime.

¹⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, page 27.

¹⁸¹ *Ibid.*, page 28.

¹⁸² *Ibid.*, page 29.

¹⁸³ *Ibid.*, page 28.

Just as Thatcher was regaled as the arch-enemy of the left in these pages in 1988, barely two years before the end of her reign, so too *Marxism Today* was succeeding brilliantly just before its collapse. It was selling 20,000 copies a month in 1988, being reviewed in the broadsheets, having its authors celebrated and feted at conferences and on television. W.H. Smith, the mainstream bookseller with booths in every railway station, was selling them as quickly as they arrived from the printer. This was a most curious state of affairs, given that the journal was the official organ of the British Communist Party, and that the party had very few members and even less influence. As Harris comments :

... the politics of Marxism Today dominated what remained of the CPGB, whose membership was now down to around 7,500. A new party mission statement, titled Manifesto for New Times, was being put together. Here were the ideas of New Times – indeed, the whole project pursued by MT over the previous 12 years – in the form of programmatic politics. The manifesto made the case for proportional representation, a written constitution, a strong emphasis on environmental sustainability, the possibility of an English parliament, a guaranteed citizens’ income, “the potential of information technology to decentralise and strengthen local control”, and the writing-off of developing-world debt – and had a prophetic view of Scotland, where “a new confidence” and “aspiration for self-determination” were emerging.

(Editor Martin) Jacques explained these ideas as the keynote speaker at the party’s annual congress, but by that point, it was clear that the CPGB was expiring, at speed. As Campbell put it, the new dominance of Marxism Today thinking in the party represented “a triumph over a corpse”.¹⁸⁴

But before its demise, *Marxism Today* was to host two celebrated authors who were to figure prominently in later years. In the November 1989 issue, Gordon Brown¹⁸⁵ wrote a very brief piece commenting on New Times, in which he argued that the state was ‘too small a stage’ on which to resolve problems, and that these will have to be considered at a global, national and local level simultaneously. How this is to be achieved is the major issue facing the economy of any nation. Local decision-making must play a part, rather than the invisible hand of the market.

Even more significantly, a minor figure in the Labour Party at this time, Tony Blair, also contributed an article. In October 1991, Blair wrote ‘Forging a New Agenda’, in which he dismissed the false dichotomy between the market as the state as an illusion. Thoughtful critics should have read the signs, but few did. If individualism has its limits, so too does collectivism, argued Blair.¹⁸⁶ The heart of socialism for Blair is collective action, but it is a world in which the state and the market will each have a place. This is no state-centred socialism, but nor is it yet neo-Thatcherism. Community is the diluted term that Blair uses to try to deal with the complex issues facing the left. By this time, of course, Thatcher had gone, but a version of soft Thatcherism remained under John Major’s management, so the Thatcher legacy still remained in operation. Blair starts by rehearsing the history of socialism as a struggle with wealth and capital, a struggle that is a part of a long history. Public ownership was to be central to this struggle. The Soviet Union was, in Blair’s terms, a caricature of socialism, socialism under dictatorship. But neither did the social ownership of the social democrats work.¹⁸⁷ For over half a century social democracy struggled with this problem. Social democracy succeeded at first in providing health care, education and a modicum of human rights. But it is important to see that Thatcherism succeeded by attacking this notion of society,

¹⁸⁴ Harris, op. cit. The text is unpagged.

¹⁸⁵ *Marxism Today*, November 1989, page 39.

¹⁸⁶ *Marxism Today*, October 1991, page 32.

¹⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, page 32.

rather than proposing an alternative. Blair is making his case for the merged forces of the state and the market here – free enterprise by all means, but appropriately regulated. Both should be subject to the public interest.¹⁸⁸ To deal with these issues, the state ‘must be transformed’. What should this transformation be like? Blair sets out some key points : a constitution is needed ; a new economics of the public interest ; a thriving competitive market providing personal choice ; an avoidance of monopoly and socially responsible behaviour by companies ; an awareness of the limits of the market ; the market must be subject to society’s needs ; a Social Charter to protect workers’ rights. Blair concludes by hoping for a more confident Britain that will take the lead in Europe and elsewhere.¹⁸⁹

In 1979, Jessop et alia published an article about Thatcher and New Times in the pages of *New Left Review*.¹⁹⁰ Apart from their discussion of the Thatcher project, they are also at pains to comment on ‘New Times’ in the writings in *Marxism Today*. They see a crisis in Thatcherism emerging before her political end had occurred. This end had been forewarned several times before, so this particular assessment was not without value. The loss of Nigel Lawson, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, in November 1989, was a serious blow to her régime.¹⁹¹ They had already proposed a periodization of Thatcherism.¹⁹² In criticising the *Marxism Today* line, they point to the failure of the Hall ‘Authoritarian Populism’ argument to account for her domination. They then comment on the ‘New Times’ argument that rests on the move to Post-Fordism. Jessop and his colleagues doubt whether Britain was ever truly Fordist, or whether Thatcherism was moving the social order into a post-Fordist condition.¹⁹³ Instead they see the current crisis that Thatcher faced as an economic crisis, and not at all the loss of the political common sense that they argue Thatcher never really controlled. They briefly mention the ‘New Times’ initiative before delving deeply into the supply-side economic crisis. They summarise this thinking in this way :

Pulling all these different strands together, we can say that the Thatcher years have been quite distinctive in macro-economic terms. Economic growth has taken the form of a consumption boom financed from borrowing, from dividend and interest incomes, from redundancy payments, and from an increased volume of state benefits (unemployment benefit, pensions). In turn this is linked to a pattern of investment which is skewed towards sectors which service the consumption boom (retailing, distribution, personal financial services and credit) rather than those involved in tradeable commodities. This has been partially disguised by productivity increases in industrial sectors which have reorganized since 1981. But, since manufacturing matters, this is not a sustainable basis for economic recovery. The ‘soft landing’ hoped for by Lawson and Major is unlikely to secure this.¹⁹⁴

The authors seem intent on dispelling most of the critical orthodoxy about Thatcher – the idea that her régime meant a shift to the right of the political common sense, which they take to be a suspect idea.¹⁹⁵ It is a curiously atheoretical piece given Jessop’s long history of theoretical writing about the state. There is a cursory mention of Gramsci, almost as a joke, but there is much practical fact-finding about the economy and the disparities of the Thatcher era. They return to ‘New Times’, however, at the end of the paper. The authors suggest that the ‘New Times’ line ‘concedes too

¹⁸⁸ Ibid., page 33.

¹⁸⁹ Ibid., page 34.

¹⁹⁰ Kevin Bonnett, Simon Bromley, Bob Jessop, ‘Farewell to Thatcherism ; Neoliberalism and New Times’ in *NLR*, issue 179, January-February, 1990.

¹⁹¹ Ibid., page 81.

¹⁹² Ibid., page 82.

¹⁹³ Ibid., page 83.

¹⁹⁴ Ibid., page 92.

¹⁹⁵ Ibid., page 94.

much to Thatcherism'.¹⁹⁶ Thatcher's failure, in their view, lay in her inability to rebuild the state in her own image. Their argument, instead of following NT in the easy shift from Fordism to Post-Fordism, is to suggest that Britain was never clearly Fordist, and that the shift to Post-Fordism is, at best, equally incomplete. They end by reminding us of the profound economic and social damage rendered on British society by Thatcherism. They claim that Thatcherism has no strategy to win the post-Fordist high ground.¹⁹⁷ Instead of an energetic Thatcherism, they see an exhausted régime. Thatcherism, the poisoned chalice, is not yet done, and the left seems bereft of ideas.¹⁹⁸

Marxism Today itself collapsed in 1991. The connection with the exhausted communism of the period cannot have helped, and nor, according to Harris, can the physical exhaustion of the editor, Martin Jacques :

Thatcher had been toppled by a Tory revolt in 1990, but the Labour party went on to lose its fourth consecutive general election in April 1992. Meanwhile, Jacques and Turner spent a year working on a possible successor to *Marxism Today*. It was to be a monthly magazine with an international focus; the working title was *Politics*, but it came to nothing. Jacques then helped Geoff Mulgan set up *Demos*, the think tank that would attach itself to New Labour and supply it with no end of policy ideas. After a spell spent writing for the *Sunday Times*, Jacques then became deputy editor of the *Independent* between 1994 and 1996.

When Tony Blair became the leader of the Labour party in 1994, Jacques initially dispensed warm words. But three weeks before Labour's great victory at the 1997 election, he and Hall announced in a piece for the *Observer* that, before the party had even taken power, it had been pushed in completely the wrong direction. "Blair embodies the ultimate pessimism – that there is only one version of modernity, the one elaborated by the Conservatives over the last 18 years," they wrote. "He represents an historic defeat for the left, the abandonment of any serious notion that the left has something distinctive to offer." The whole point of *New Times*, as they saw it, was to understand the new world and then set about challenging its injustices with a fresh kind of left politics. New Labour had attempted the first part, but replaced the second with a doctrine of surrender.¹⁹⁹

In Harris's account, this swing to the right was foreseen by Jacques in 1988, when he argued that Labour would present a cleaned-up version of Thatcher and no more. It has been claimed that *New Times* was the catalyst for New Labour's rise to power, but it is clear that there is only a marginal connection. What annoyed the left about *New Times*, and Hall, in the end, was its catchiness. Hall was exactly right when, in his 1987 article he had spoken of the masochism of the English psyche – the need to face the 'hard decisions' or 'be ticked off by Nanny and sent off to bed without a pudding.' It was the sheer fluffiness of 'New Times', its ease of reading, its lack of difficulty, its fashionable faddism that made it reprehensible to the left, who were used to generations of hard struggle, of fighting in that old masculinist way against impossible forces, of suffering pain and discomfort. Here comes 'New Times', all plump and pleasurable, speaking of the new universe of desire and consumer durables – could anything really be more difficult for the old left to digest? There were photos and drawings in the very heart of the articles, there was popular culture – things that one might see in the high street or on the telly – could this really be what the left was all about? It was clearly not to be born. So while there was a moment when *New Times*, Eurocommunism and Tony Blair had their dalliance, it was a brief encounter, and Blair soon set up his stall in a new

¹⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, page 98.

¹⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, page 101.

¹⁹⁸ See also the article by Michael Rustin, 'The Politics of Post-Fordism or the trouble with *New Times*', in *New Left Review* issue 175, May-June 1989.

¹⁹⁹ Harris, *op. cit.* The text is unpagged.

direction. In ‘New Labour, New Times’,²⁰⁰ Blair made it clear what was at stake. Clearly at the heart of this new endeavour is a series of contrasts – exhausted Conservatives versus energized Labour ; a new way, compared to the old ways of the traditional, two-party system ; a radical party compared to the orthodoxy of past thinking. At its core, it promises a revitalised health care system, a primary emphasis on education and an acceptance of the global economy on its own terms. Most importantly, it rejected the famous ‘Clause 4’, which had called for the social ownership of the means of production’, and replaced it with an adherence to market economics. In this single move, Blair heralded a break with much of Labour’s past, and a break with many of the established left. For some, and not all were die-hards of socialist orthodoxy, Labour ceased to be a party of the left at this moment. Rather than an orthodox political party, ‘New Labour’ were a rebranding social movement, a political régime closely committed to regaining the common sense from the Conservative Party, and they did this in a highly successful way if electoral results were anything to go by. In 1997, they won a historic victory against the Tories, with a majority of 179 seats. They followed this up with another powerful majority in 2001, with a majority of 167, and continued their success, albeit with a reduced majority of 66, in 2005.

Their electoral success did not find favour with Hall. As early as 1998, Hall and others had written a hostile attack on the newly-formed Labour government :

Hobsbawm, Hall and Jacques joined forces to produce a special one-off issue of *Marxism Today* in November 1998, a year into Blair’s tenure, dedicated to a swingeing critique of New Labour and its wholesale surrender to the Thatcherite agenda. The cover of the issue had a photo of the Labour leader with the word wrong spelt out in large letters beneath it. Stuart’s piece was entitled ‘The Great Moving Nowhere Show’.²⁰¹

In his article²⁰², Hall begins by arguing that Thatcher, no lover of society, which she once pronounced did not exist, and no lover of intellectuals either, was a firmly-committed and unthinking follower of Adam Smith. The market solved all problems in a mysterious and unexplained way. The ‘invisible hand’ was at work everywhere. In Hall’s view, Blair has fashioned himself in Thatcherite style as a strong leader, to some positive effect.²⁰³ Certainly Blair was ambitious, not in the ‘small’ sense of changing policies, but in the larger sense of selling a broader vision for British society as a whole. His culturalist theory of the state focused on messaging and branding in a compelling and systematic way. Certainly, argues Hall, things had changed. Individualism and the new market forces needed to be assessed and dealt with in a new way. So much, as ‘New Times’ has already proposed, is taken for granted. But how will Blair achieve this rapprochement? Through the think tank *Demos*, founded by *Marxism Today* editor Martin Jacques and contributor Geoff Mulgan, the new left had an avenue into the Blair camp. Some of the Eurocommunist ideas that flourished in *MT* were brought into the realm of practical suggestions through this channel. In 1997, Geoff Mulgan went to work for Tony Blair and ideas from *Demos* were considered close to those of New Labour. What struck Hall as ‘disingenuous’ about the new thinking from the start, however, was the sense they had that all the new thinking had been done – it was just a question of implementing policies. And what also strikes Hall about the ‘The Blair Project’ is its consciously hegemonic quality.²⁰⁴ Through the strategy of ‘The Third Way’, which

²⁰⁰ New Labour, New Life for Britain, recovered from <http://www.politicsresources.net/area/uk/man/lab97.htm> on February 17th., 2017.

²⁰¹ Blackburn, op. cit., page 92.

²⁰² ‘The Great Moving Nowhere Show’, in *Marxism Today*, November-December 1998.

²⁰³ Ibid., page 9.

²⁰⁴ Ibid.

was, in part, the result of the work of sociologist Anthony Giddens, Hall sensed that turning these ideas into practical solutions might lead us to :

... some ‘vacant space between the Fourth Dimension and the Second Coming’. The ‘Third Way’ has been hyped as ‘a new kind of politics’. Its central claim is the discovery of a mysterious middle course on every question between all the existing extremes. However, the closer one examines this via media, the more it looks, not like a way through the problems, but a soft-headed way around them. It speaks with forked, or at the very least garbled, tongue.²⁰⁵

It is certainly true that many traditional solutions were exhausted and worn out – that much the electorate could agree to. One of the issues the ‘Third Way’ struggles with is its inclusiveness – no-one is excluded, nobody its enemy. The Hall language on this issue is too good to miss :

This suggests that, by some miracle of transcendence, the interests represented by, say, the ban on tobacco advertising and ‘Formula One’, the private car lobby and John Prescott’s White Paper, an ethical foreign policy and the sale of arms to Indonesia, media diversity and the concentrated drive-to-global-power of Rupert Murdoch’s media empire have been effortlessly ‘harmonised’ on a Higher Plane, above politics. Whereas, it needs to be clearly said that a project to transform and modernise society in a radical direction, which does not disturb any existing interests and has no enemies, is not a serious political enterprise.²⁰⁶

Chairman Mao, tea-parties and revolution comes to mind. Hall is clearly of the view that any politics that avoids conflict and tumult is hardly politics at all. Hall is sceptical that companies will share the benefits of a new society with their workers by a process of osmosis. There are further troubling elements of the ‘Third Way’ that unsettle Hall. There is the sense that the globalization trends are unstoppable, rather like the weather. One has to learn to live with them. New Labour seems to have accepted the invisible hand of the global market just as Thatcher had embraced the same invisible hand in the domestic market. This, for Hall, has fundamental implications. It means that Britain must adapt itself to the ‘new realities’ of the global market. This results in managerialism in the state, privatization of state assets, instituting a culture of private provision, and accepting the influx of the neo-liberal strategy from the global masters of capital.²⁰⁷ And while there are some worthy initiatives in education and training, most of these initiatives are taken to meet the needs of capital, not to further the cause of social equality. Thus Blair is at a loss about what to do with welfare. Great debates on such issues are announced, but they never take place. The problem is, Hall claims, that a ‘low-flying authoritarianism’²⁰⁸ is at work in which Daddy Blair knows best, and that nothing is really up for debate. Hall summarises all this in the sense he has that all serious action has been reduced to spin, that talk of ‘hard political choices’ is just that – talk. Thus ‘authoritarian populism’ can be said to have come into being.²⁰⁹ The new régime is corporatist and managerialist in style and highly moralistic. Blair at first made a pitch towards Middle England, and the traditional values of the past. Since coming to power, however, his tone had turned more towards populism. The ‘people’ have replaced the working class, and New Labour have now cosied up to business, continually encouraging the culture of success. ‘Cool Britannia’ came and went, and Blair had recently turned his critical attention on ‘the chattering classes’, the intellectuals and the dissenters in various pockets of the liberal media. Labour had done some good things, Hall is willing to admit, but a great opportunity, with the 1997 landslide victory, had been missed.

²⁰⁵ Ibid., page 10.

²⁰⁶ Ibid.

²⁰⁷ Ibid., page 11.

²⁰⁸ Hall phrase on page 13.

²⁰⁹ Ibid.

What, then, is the ‘shaping philosophy’ of New Labour? The ‘Third Way’ seemed to Hall uncertain and ambiguous. A soft Christian humanism seemed to motivate Blair. But it is impossible to avoid the fact that, after eighteen months in office, Blair and New Labour had moved onto the terrain established by Thatcher and the Right. He had moved onto the project of modernization, but has failed to fill this new territory with sensible leftist ideas.²¹⁰ The last word I leave to Hall :

Blair's historic project is adjusting Us to It. That touches half- the modernizing part - of the task, as Marxism Today argued it. But the other, more difficult, half - that of the Left reinventing a genuinely modern response to the crisis of our times – has been largely abandoned. At the global and domestic levels, the broad parameters of the ‘turn’ which Thatcherism made have not been radically modified or reversed. The project of renewal thus remains roughly where it did when Marxism Today published its final issue. Mr. Blair seems to have learned some of the words. But, sadly, he has forgotten the music.²¹¹

It seems that all the thinking in *Demos*, in the pages of *Marxism Today* and elsewhere were not sufficient to provide New Labour with the tools they needed to reinvent the left. Either there was too limited thinking going on, or they were unable to implement these policies once in power. Hall’s charge was more fundamental. He is accusing them of bad faith. They knew what to do – they simply didn’t want to do it when push came to shove, and they missed a historic opportunity.

Stuart Hall further developed his critique of New Labour in his later journal undertaking, *Soundings*. In the summer 2003 issue, number 24, Hall continued in his article ‘New Labour’s double-shuffle’, to excoriate the direction Labour were taking – the failure to cash in on the historic win of 1997, the lack of bold, innovative thinking, the willingness of some of its strongest advocates – Peter Mandelson is named – to throw their lot in with the rich from the start, but also the need to deal with globalization, which they did inadequately. Hall charged New Labour with colluding with Thatcher in deconstructing the welfare state. He accused them of lying, of being economical with the truth, with the kind of verbal duplicity that long hounded their governments. Their friendly critics still hoped for a dose of ‘English pragmatism’, but Hall did not share the optimism.²¹² For all the spin, the reassuring words of Anthony Giddens, and all the talk of reforming the state, Hall saw merely a neo-liberal strategy at work. Everywhere business and the entrepreneur are heralded as the moral and ethical role models of the new society – nothing could be more clear.²¹³ A new vision of governance is implicit here – running the country on behalf of the business class seems to be at the bottom of it. The managerialism that Poulantzas wrote about looms large in Hall’s writings. Old, bureaucratic ideas embedded in traditional state practices must now be reinvented to chime with the new order. New replaces old in every corner of society. Choice and consumers replace the old vocabulary of public support and citizens. Everything is brought into the arena of commerce, especially the evolving discourse being used to explain the changes going on. A new culture, a new ‘habitus’, is being formed.²¹⁴ Hall’s familiar culturalist theory of the state is elaborated in full here, as he recounts in detail how he thinks the language and the practices of the state are being refashioned. He also invokes Bourdieu’s newly evolved theory of habitus to give some further weight to his argument. For Hall, in the end, two societies are being formed – the entrepreneurial society, which we have already heard about, and the subaltern society, which necessarily comes with it. The subaltern society

²¹⁰ Ibid., page 14.

²¹¹ Ibid.

²¹² *Soundings*, issue 24, summer, 2003, page 13.

²¹³ Ibid., page 14.

²¹⁴ Ibid., page 18.

attached itself to the old Labourist values – the welfare state, social supports, the health system. But at the higher levels, the leadership of the party no longer believed in such values. The purpose of clinging to residual values such as these are that they are electorally efficient – they bring in the votes.²¹⁵ Thus New Labour was keen to improve public services, but tried to do so using managerialist logic and language. This was why ‘spin’, culture, discourse, was at the heart of the New Labour enterprise.²¹⁶ Hall’s enduring culturalist theory of the state was exonerated in Labour’s rise and fall.

Hall’s writing was always profoundly rooted not just in the politics of the day, but in the theoretical writings on the state that he surrounded himself with. Early on these influences came from Marx and Althusser. In the late 1970’s he came under the spell of Poulantzas during the period leading up to Poulantzas’s death, and his writing shows clear signs of this influence. He took to heart Gramsci’s and Poulantzas’s nostrums that the cultural was a semi-autonomous world in which the state might manage class struggle in a decisive way. His entire analysis of Blairism was focused on this idea, and he gave us a detailed account of how this struggle actually took place under New Labour. This was an extraordinary contribution. Gramsci remained central to his thinking until the end.

Marxism Today contributed a moment of sheer lunacy and vitality to the left in the 1980s. Who could have thought that the journal of the British Eurocommunists, an irrelevant group of a few thousand, could contribute directly to the policies of a hegemonic government that was to take over the Thatcher mantle and reinvent it. It seemed entirely unlikely, yet it happened. Its combination of a close attachment to new cultural trends, brilliant writing, to which Hall contributed in no small measure, and the use of vivid graphical art, made it essential reading for large numbers of people for a while. At the same time, *New Left Review* continued to contribute to these debates, rather like a serious parent quietly lurking in the background, even though Hall had often published elsewhere. It had been there all along, as the Klieg lights shone in other directions. As Stefani Collins commented on *NLR*’s 50th. Anniversary :

It is hard not to be intimidated by New Left Review. At times, the journal can seem like an elaborate contrivance for making us feel inadequate. One’s relation to it conjugates as an irregular verb: I wish I knew more about industrialisation in China; you ought to have a better grasp of Brenner’s analysis of global turbulence; he, she, or it needs to understand the significance of community-based activism in Latin America. For many ... readers ... the journal functions like a kind of older brother whom we look up to – more serious, better informed, better travelled, stronger, irreplaceable. Well, maybe a tiny bit solemn at times (we could draw lots for who gets the job of telling Perry Anderson to lighten up), and perhaps when we were out of touch for longish stretches, life seemed a bit easier. But then we meet up and it’s a case of respect at first sight, all over again.²¹⁷

²¹⁵ Ibid., page 20.

²¹⁶ At the same time, Labour’s involvement in Iraq is beginning to bite, and the Labour machine was beginning to run down. Blair’s last landslide had already happened, and a reduced majority of only 66 was achieved in the 2005 election before his resignation, and Cameron’s rise to power in 2010.

²¹⁷ Stefani Collins, ‘A life in Politics ; New Left Review at 50.’ Guardian Newspaper, 13 February 2010, unpagged.