Book reviews

John Pickles

Ground Truth

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Reviewed by Mark Deakin

The chapters in this book deal with the new technologies for gathering, analyzing, and mapping geographic data, and with the implications they have for our understanding of nature and social life.

In the preface it is proposed that over the past two decades the convergence of techniques for advanced computing and enhanced imaging has transformed the ways in which many of us think about and handle information. The book sees the development and deployment of sociogeographic data gathering, handling, and imaging techniques as part of a broader reconfiguration regarding the use of information in society. This reconfiguration is one that puts world making, image, visualisation, place, region, environment and people at its centre. It is also proposed that the sum total of this reconfiguration adds up to

a new economy of information, spatial data handling and such imaging technologies (of which geographic information systems [GIS] are a part), all of which are being widely used in many areas of social life, business, and state management. Within this development, GIS is seen to contribute towards a replacement of the 'visual' and the 'spatial' through its role as an element in the restructuring of global, regional, and local geographies, the assertion of new disciplinary codes and practices, and the constitution of new images of earth and society.

Ground Truth is, first of all, a book about the transformation of data handling and mapping capabilities that have emerged in the past two decades, and the impact they have had within the discipline of geography. Second, it is a book about the constellation of ideas, ideologies, and social practices that have emerged with the development of new forms of data handling and spatial representation. Third, it situates GIS as a tool and an approach to geographical information within the wider transformations of capitalism in the late 20th century: as a tool to protect disciplinary power and access to funding; as a way of organizing more economic and exchange efficient systems; and as a reworking (and rewriting) of cultural codes—the creation of new visual imaginaries, new conceptions of earth, new modalities of commodity and consumer, and new visions of what constitutes market, territory, and empire.

The chapters approach these issues through an analysis of technical change in specific contexts: in the discipline of geography, in the arena of production, in the use of advertising images, in commodification of consumers, in the practice of war, and in the governance of territory. In going beyond a political economy of technical change, *Ground Truth* also signifies an emerging economy of the virtual sign, of cybernetics and cyberspace. An emerging economy of information offers new possibilities for positive social action. These actions would be based upon a critical understanding of communications (in the form of information transfer, and imaging technologies and what it refers to generically as telematics, informatics and virtual reality, or cyberspace) and the way they colonize various domains of economic, social and political life. The so-called 'information highway' that penetrates the terrain of contemporary life, links formerly separate locations, gives rise to new imagined communities and fosters 'spaces' for individual and collective identity.

The chapters in this book, in various ways, all treat GIS as both technique and social relation, and each places GIS in a specific social context. In nearly all of these contexts the issues raised by spatial data handling and mapping techniques overlap with those raised by electronic imaging technologies more generally. Consequently, the chapters are also 'readings' of the discourses, codings, and practices of contemporary geo-graphism in relation to the ways in which social life is being constituted by these more generalized informational technologies and virtual realities. In this sense, the possibilities, impacts, and limitations of new GIS technologies are located within a broader political economy of technical and cultural restructuring.

All the chapters are motivated in one way or another by a deep concern for the impacts of unmediated technical practices on the discipline of geography and other arenas of social life. Most of them address the impact GIS has on the reconfiguration of disciplinary knowledge, practices, and institutions, and the broader implications of these changes for the role of geographic research and teaching. Each raises important questions about the relations between science and society in a democratic society. However, read as a whole the book is a little uneven. The editor provides a preface and

introductory chapter that draws attention to a number of philosophical questions about the new political economy and culture of such communicative developments; others focus on the technicalities of the system in question. Two contributions stand out in particular for their attempts to devise a theoretical framework by which to understand the development. One grounds its understanding in the writings of Adorno, another focuses on the work of Lefebvre.

The editor's closing chapter highlights the opportunities that exist to move towards a common framework for 'ground truth' based on the modularisation of social theory from writings as diverse as, Benjamin, Adorno, Lefebvre, Harvey and Jameson.

Murray E. G. Smith.

Invisible Leviathan: The Marxist Critique of Market Despotism beyond Postmodernism.

University of Toronto Press, Toronto/Buffalo/London, 1994 pp. xii +272

ISBN 0-8020-0589-6 £36.00 (hbk)
0-8020-7190-2 £16.00 (pbk)

Reviewed by Alfredo Saad Filho

Murray E.G. Smith's book is an example of the excellent research being produced by a new generation of writers, unconstrained by the fetters of some 'traditional' interpretations of Marx. Smith claims that this book is part of an attempt to apply Marx's dialectics and his theory of value to improve our understanding of the 'modern' world. In doing this, he seeks to confront both the 'subjective reason' associated with Analytical Marxists, and the 'cynical reason' of poststructuralists and postmodernists. Marx's theory of value is the subject of most of the eleven chapters in Smith's book; very little space is given to the Marxian critique of postmodernism, in spite of the title. The author writes well, and his analysis is always penetrating, interesting and provocative.

The 'Invisible Leviathan' is Smith's response to both Thomas Hobbes and Adam Smith. He defines it as 'a structure of socio-economic relations that has usurped from conscious humanity real control over the socio-economic life process and imposed a set of laws that are both very powerful and deeply hidden from view' (p.8). The Leviathan is ruled by the law of value. It is in order to understand the nature and logic of the Leviathan that Smith dedicates the best part of his book to the analysis of the law of value.

In chapter 1 Smith tries to show that Marx's theory of value can be usefully applied to illuminate some of the main features of 'modern' capitalism, starting with the 'wealth' and 'welfare' of his native Canada (number one in quality of life, according to the UNDP). The most important aspect of this chapter, however, is Smith's claim that in order to increase and generalize wealth it is necessary to transcend the value form. This argument, that draws on some of the less well-known passages in the *Grundrisse* (e.g., p.700), will be appealing to most *C&C* readers.

In chapter 2 Smith discusses the importance of the value form and the law

of value through history, especially before the rise of capitalism in the Western world. The most provocative part of this chapter is Smith's review of the dialectics of forces and relations of production in pre-capitalist formations. I find his analysis unsatisfactory, and must reject the statement that '[t]he objective laws governing the historical movement of capitalist society are *much stronger* than those influencing the economic development of precapitalist social formations' (p.15). Instead, I would rather focus on the complex interplay between class struggle and more strictly 'economic' contradictions as the motor of social change in any mode of production; in this context, a statement such as Smith's would be irrelevant.

The next eight chapters (3 to 10) review the evolution of the labour theory of value since Marx's days, and discuss some of its more polemical aspects (such as the concepts of labour and value, the transformation problem, and the theories of crisis and of uneven development). This is certainly the best part of the book. Smith builds upon Rubin, Mage and Shaikh to make an interesting review of the controversies, and offers several important insights on the relationship between abstract labour, value and money. There is also an attempt to apply the theory being developed to the measurement of the rate of profit in postwar Canada (unfortunately, I do not agree with Smith's treatment of unproductive labour, inspired by Mage, which makes it difficult to accept his conclusions). It is regrettable that the presentation is often very demanding, and I do not consider these sections the most 'user-friendly' introduction to Marx's value theory.

Finally, in chapter 11 Smith applies the findings of the previous sections to the debate between 'modernism' and 'postmodernism' and to the critique of 'analytical Marxism'. After the long wait for the critique of postmodernism, I was left slightly disappointed by the lack of a more careful treatment of the relationship between the law of value and the crisis of capitalist modernity (the title of the last section). Moreover, the book has no conclusion, which would allow the author to summarize his findings after this lengthy journey.

On a more negative tone, it is unfortunate that this book has so many typos, and it was hard to believe that the right-hand margin in pp.87 and 89 was left unjustified. These minor problems do not detract from the fact that this is a fine book, and I am sure readers of *C&C* will enjoy it.

Phil Mizen

The State, Young People and Youth Training: In and Against the Training State

Mansell, London, 1995, pp.224

ISBN 0-7201-2169-8 £40.00 (hbk)
0-7201-2247-3 £16.99 (pbk)

Reviewed by Mike Neary

Writing 'in and against' the culture of youth sociology, Phil Mizen has produced a work that attempts to show the real experience of youth trainees as they struggle 'in and against' the training state. In so doing he seeks to disprove the claims

of self-congratulatory Tory training ministers for whom YTS was an unqualified success. He does this by exposing the gap between their rhetoric and the reality of everyday life on YTS. But not only that, he also refuses the positions of youth cultural studies for whom youth is the passive, defensive recipient of social change. He does this by denying the gap between the ideological and political processes by which youth sociologists (eg R. Hollands and P. Cohen) idealize social life and the material ways in which social life is organized.

Mizen's work then becomes an attempt to provide a more complete documentary account of young work (child labour) and youth training in a condition of massive industrial decay in Coventry during and after the 1970s. Through an ethnographic based study of the lives of young people in work while at school, as they prepare to leave school and as various forms of youth trainee, Mizen records the way in which the young working class reflect on their experiences. The significance of the work, and what distinguishes it from similar ethnographic studies, is its attempt to formulate this experience within a theory of capital relationships and in particular within theories of the state developed within the CSE and elsewhere (e.g. S. Clarke, J. Holloway). This allows Mizen to situate youthfulness as a condition of logical and historic struggle 'in and against' the capital relation in the form of the training state. In this way, for the first time, Mizen allows the possibility for opening up the category of youth to a real sociological examination.

But having established the methodology for such an analysis Mizen fails to develop it. Not only is the theoretical chapter disconnected from the empirical sections of the book, a structural problem of exposition which questions Mizen's promise to unify theory and empirical research. But, more significantly, the potential for an immanent ('self-critical') critique offered by capital relation theory is eschewed in favour of an external analysis focusing on the psychology of 'the sociological imagination' (p.3), a mystification that celebrates the formal universe rather than being any attempt to deconstruct it. This includes a reduction of forms of young social existence to youthful behaviours, a notion which consolidates formalistic interpretations of youth and denies their existence as social formations (real abstractions). That is 'youth' as a sociological category is not problematic for Mizen. He is concerned with how young people behave: thus the notion of youth is closed in the moment that Mizen claims to be opening it up. This closure is enforced by the lack of historical examination of the development of youth 'in and against' the historical form of the training state.

The contradictory nature of the social relations of capital is explored at a formal level ('the imagination') in a manner which denies the abstract existence of real social life. Contradiction is reduced to that between rhetoric and reality, i.e. between what the state claims to do and what it actually does (p.8); between the appearance of addressing real need and the inability of the capitalist state to meet real need (p.203). The product of social relations are examined as if they are immediate concrete categories: labour is developed in capital and not as capital; the working class is regarded as an independent autonomous category with its own needs that capital cannot address; and, despite an understanding of the state's contradictory historical and logical derivation, there is no analysis of the way in which the training state has developed (p.19). The consequence of this is that the question 'what is youth?' is never asked, it is assumed as a generic term. Therefore, any investigation into 'youthfulness' is restricted to behaviouralist psychological

categories which enforce the theoretical gaps that Mizen is so anxious to close.

This question concerning the real existence of youth is ignored by Mizen because youth appears to be a simple and obvious sociological category. It is, however, something altogether more complex and determined. Youth is not a natural condition posited by nature, nor is it enough to say that youth is a social construct. This is merely to replace naturalized youth with a naturalized vision of society. An investigation of youth therefore requires an investigation of the development of modern society. This demands an organic examination of the way in which society has developed and been produced.

Mizen has his own solution to the problem of youth which, following the traditions of the sociology of youth, involves the imposition of youthfulness through consumption. For Mizen the needs of young people can be met through the consumption of 'real jobs'. It is necessary then to establish the conditions for 'a fully rounded and more fulfilling working life for all… giving priority to 'real jobs', the creation of youthful and rewarding forms of work and training…' (p.204–5), and to recognize 'oppositional forms of politics' through the implementation of policies which tackle the real issues facing young people, and by trade unions going beyond traditional form of workplace organisation.

But in capitalist society work is imposed by enforcing the separation between need and capacity, the material foundation for the separation between economics and politics, ideology and real social life. So Mizen's solution imposes the forms of separation that he is anxious to subvert. The basis for his confusion is that while Mizen understands capital relation theory (the law of value) as a reasonable and everyday perception he fails to grasp its dialectical possibility: not just what youth is or even how it behaves, but the process of its own becoming not only 'in and against' the training state but 'in and against' itself as youth. So that what presents itself as a critique of the cultural sociology of youth is, in fact, the sociology of youth in another form. In Mizen's world the gap between theory and practice, ideology and politics is still firmly in place even if he has redrawn the separation with his own formulation, based on a different ideology: socialism, and driven by a different political project: the Labour Party (p.204–205).

Paul Thomas

Alien Politics: Marxist State Theory Retrieved

Routledge, 1994

ISBN 0-415-90869-8 £40.00 (hbk)
ISBN 0-415-90870-1 £12.99 (pbk)

Reviewed by Darrow Schecter

Since Marx's famous remark that 'one thing especially was proven by the Commune, viz., that the working class cannot lay hold of the ready-made State machinery and wield it for its own purposes', a distinct strand of revolutionary left thought has argued that contrary to both Leninists and social democrats, Marx saw state power, like that of capital, as a *relation* rather than as a thing or substance to be smashed or

seized. If one could speak at all about a Marxist notion of seizing power, it lay precisely in the need to change the relations of power and domination which in legal terms often appeared as equal relations. Thus the capital-labour relation could be understood in legal terms as a contract between equally consenting partners, i.e., between those buying and those selling labour power at an agreed price, when in fact the violence inherent in a relationship that enabled capital to buy and then command labour in the workplace belied any possible notions of real equality in this exchange. Similarly, the idea that we enjoy legal equality as citizens is often understood as something that unites us above all other differences that might separate us, when it is those differences that are given legal sanction within the framework of bourgeois forms of equality as political citizenship. From his earliest writings on Hegel to his comments on the Paris Commune, Marx unmasks the power relations embedded in the conception of equality of citizenship in an alienated political sphere which, rather than guaranteeing real equality, sanctions manifest inequality in the worker/capitalist, man/woman, blacks/white, etc. relations in the supposedly non-political sphere of civil society. Paul Thomas's *Alien Politics* ably chronicles this relational Marxist conception of power and the emancipatory politics of changing state/civil society relations in Marxist theory from Marx to Gramsci and beyond to Poulantzas and Eurocommunism. The book is an important contribution both to our understanding of this tradition of thought within Marxism and the possibility of conceiving radical politics today as the struggle against 'alien politics'.

Since the Russian Revolution of 1905, socialist and communist parties around the world usually adopted rhetorically reformist-social democrat or revolutionary-Bolshevik approaches to attempt exactly what Marx had cautioned against: the laying hold of the ready made state machinery in order to wield it in the interests of the working class. Where the revolutionary strategy worked, as in the Soviet Union, the results were political authoritarianism and eventual economic disaster. Where the reformist path was tested it was soon found that control of the State was undermined when no socialist economy was there to support socialist policies. The reification of 'the political' as a state to be captured is rejected by the tradition of theorists and militants like Gramsci and others who show that both the state and capital express relationships of domination that must be simultaneously made transparent through critique and democratized through practice. That is, the diffusion of power in a plurality of sites requires a diffuse response that in effect even challenges the political party as the most effective vehicle of revolutionary struggle.

This is where the problems of the book begin, however, since Thomas does not discuss how Marx's analysis of the 'laws' of capitalism lead the author of *Das Kapital* away from a radical democratic critique of parties and State power toward a quasi positivist conception of social evolution. Nor does Thomas discuss the far from accidental links between some of Marx's ideas and Lenin's vanguardism, on the one hand, and the Leninism of people like Gramsci and the Eurocommunists, on the other. That is, the tradition of radical democratic relational Marxist thought that Thomas defends is not itself without ambiguities. One wonders why he does not enlist the support of other non-Marxist thinkers like Kropotkin and Foucault who could make the 'alien politics' argument even better than the Marxists that Thomas seems to want to save from ignominious oblivion in a post 1989 world. The problem

seems to be that Thomas is committed to defending his version of Marxism, even if (1) Foucault's (and others') analyses of power are in many ways more subtile and rich in insights than the Marxist version, and (2) the Marxist tradition Thomas is defending offers no radically democratic alternative to planned and market economies. This leaves one with the inescapable conclusion that although *Alien Politics* is an invaluable work of Marxist scholarship, it also makes clear why *by itself* the Marxist tradition of political thought is inadequate to the very task that Thomas assigns to it: to illuminate the contours of a pluralist and libertarian politics for the 1990s.

Darrow Schecter

Radical Theories, Paths Beyond Marxism and Social Democracy

Manchester University Press, Manchester and New York, 1994. pp.205

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ISBN 0-7190-4385-9 £14.99 (pbk)

Reviewed by Jules Townshend

In the light of the collapse of most of the self-proclaimed Marxist states and of the 'end of history' triumphalism, Darrow Schecter has undertaken the timely task of historical recovery, of giving voice to certain radical theorists effectively silenced by the previous hegemony of different forms of statist socialism within labour movements, East and West. In the writings of these theorists, he argues, are contained the seeds of a non-statist alternative to liberal capitalism that will take us 'beyond' Marxism and social democracy. They are directly relevant to '*the most immediate theoretical and strategic issue,*' which is '*establishing a democratically controlled economy within Civil Society*' (p.185, Schecter's emphasis). He calls for a socialist or democratized, non-market, no growth environment-friendly civil society, based upon decentralized planning. There will exist an institutionalized 'dialogue between producers, consumers and representatives of the community', accomplished through a 'network of revitalized trade unions, consumer councils and civic councils', enabling 'all affected interests to be consulted.' (p.185). Political parties of a non-vanguardist variety 'articulating interests and opinions' are also envisaged.

Schecter analyses the contributions of different schools of thought to this project, namely, revolutionary syndicalism, anarchism, council communism, Guild socialism and different forms of market socialism and eco-socialism. He provides in a clear, accessible and contextualized way a useful survey of these various schools, sensitive to the differences and similarities between them, and indicating some of their strengths and weaknesses. The practice of Spanish anarchism and the theory of G.D.H. Cole's Guild socialism are regarded as exemplary, the former demonstrating that a co-operative, non-statist economy could actually work, and the latter offering a vision of a genuinely pluralistic economy and polity, and taking account of the needs of producers, consumers and society as a whole. And unlike Marx, Cole did not propose a 'transcendent' solution to the state/civil society problem, but the democratization of both.

Given that the authoritarian shortcomings of social democracy are self-evident, the key question is whether Schecter persuasively goes 'beyond' Marxism in a 'theoretical and strategic' sense, especially in demonstrating that the statism of 'existing socialism' revealed 'theoretical problems within Marxism'.(p.2) Whilst he values the young Marx's critique of Hegel's assumption that the state/civil society couplet was irreducible, he suggests that the emancipatory vision of the older Marx, inspired by the Paris Commune of 1871 was fatally flawed. A contradiction existed between the political decentralisation of the commune model and the centralisation implicit in economic planning 'entrusted to a small number of experts.'(p.9). Into the breach walked Lenin's vanguard party that would politically supervise the experts.

This view of Marx is slightly gratuitous. First, Marx's commitment to political decentralisation was not absolute. The state had a 'few functions for general national purposes.'[1] Second, there is little evidence that Marx favoured economic planning by a few experts, especially in the light of Hunt's characterisation of Marx's vision as 'democracy without professionals'.[2] Third, in any case Marx's political recommendations were always provisional. He was merely reporting the 'best practice' of workers attempting to emancipate themselves within a certain context. If other forms of practice arose which achieved the twin goals of overcoming political and economic alienation, these too no doubt would have been commended. Lastly, above all this, the question remains as to whether the Soviet regime was the necessary product of Marxism, or merely one possible (Leninist) variant, fostered by the specific circumstances surrounding the Russian revolution.

Although at one level Schecter claims to be going 'beyond' Marxism, at another it is clear that he merely wants to transcend Bolshevized Marxism, for the text is redolent in approving references to Gramsci, Korsch, Pannekoek, Kollontai and Rosa Luxemburg, all self-proclaimed Marxists, mainly critical of Bolshevik practice. This brings us to the crucial question of whether radicals ought to go beyond Marxism in totally rejecting it, or in the 'dialectical' sense of 'sublation', of simultaneous transcendence and preservation. If the latter option is preferred, then the question is which elements of Marxist theory and practice ought to be preserved and transcended. Certainly its faults include a general avoidance of utopian thinking for good and bad reasons, good because of potential elitism and impracticality, bad because without a fairly concrete but realistic notion of an alternative to capitalism people are unlikely to struggle for it. Arguably in the revolutionary crisis of 1917 Lenin's hastily concocted vision, even if adhered to, based on quotations from Marx and Engels, was far too primitive to serve as a guide for practice. Yet one of Marxism's enduring strengths, in its non-dogmatic form, is a capacity for self-criticism, an openness to new forms of knowledge and experiences of those struggling against exploitation and oppression, and an ability to be practical in the light of specific political, social and economic contexts.

Indeed, whilst Schecter acknowledges the need for a strategy, he does not address this problem with the degree of seriousness that some of the figures in his book eventually did, with Gramsci helping found a Communist Party and Cole becoming a prominent member of the British Labour Party. A sustainable radical vision if it is to be more than a 'super-ego' for those with 'dirty hands' requires an infusion of realism. This entails more than satisfactorily explaining the marginalisation of the council communist movement, as

noted by the late R. Miliband, whatever its normative virtues.[3] It also means considering the problems of social agency and 'anti-systemic' movements, the international nature of modern production and consumption (alluded to by Schecter, but not fully addressed) and the sheer size of modern societies impacting upon individual political autonomy, as suggested by Rousseau. Furthermore, in defiance of the Marxism of Marx, it means asking the hard questions: can we really hope to live in a non-bureaucratized world without 'professionals'? And in defiance of anarchism, is it really feasible for a pluralized world to exist without a process of authoritative conflict resolution, which may require different layers of government from local to international? Perhaps the state will have to be 'politicized', along with civil society, in a way that transcends Marx's often simplistic notion that politics will disappear along with class under communism. This certainly requires some normative theorising, to which the later Marx was generally allergic. Maybe Marxism and radical utopian thought need each other.

Notes

1. 'Civil War in France', in D. Fernbach, *The First International and After*, Penguin, Harmondsworth, 1974: 252.
2. R.N. Hunt, *The Political Ideas of Marx and Engels*, Macmillan, London, 1984 vol.2: xi.
3. 'Reflections on the Crisis of Communist Regimes', in R. Blackburn (ed.) *After the Fall,* Verso, London, 1991: 12.

John Westergaard

Who Gets What? The Hardening of Class Inequality in the Late Twentieth Century

Polity Press, Cambridge, 1995, pp.216

ISBN 0-7456-0107-3 £35.00 (hbk)

Reviewed by Bob Carter

With evidence growing daily of the danger, distress, exploitation and poverty stemming from a resurgence of the power of capital, socialist and Marxist analysis of class relation is due for a revival. Perhaps it is time that more analyses concentrated on the material transformations that are taking place instead of focusing on refutations of post-modernism. Westergaard's contribution to this project, coming twenty years after his (and Resler's) well-received and much-used, *Class in a Capitalist Society*, provides a good a starting point. It deserves to be widely read, being clearly organized and of great relevance to a wide range of current debates. The appeal of the book beyond the left should be increased by its non-polemical style: Westergaard being able to marshal the evidence available, as well as the arguments, to undermine systematically current political and sociological orthodoxy.

Three themes run through the book: the persistence of class inequality—indeed, its hardening; the varying role of public policy in modifying or accentuating it; and the key place which concerns with

distribution of welfare and with social justice warrant in an analysis of it. These themes allow Westergaard to complete a, for the most part, straightforward demolition of the idea that class structure and consciousness are dead. Taking various versions of the 'death of class' thesis— based on restructuring of employment; differing consumption patterns; domestic strategies; life cycles; and voting patterns— Westergaard advances a three stage analytical process which: first identifies the sources of power in capitalist society— command over key economic resources— and the privileges which accompany it; then maps the effects of these unequal resources on the life circumstances and opportunities of people at large; and thirdly, and only after these considerations, examines subjective responses.

This approach allows him to argue that while business power has become more impersonal and 'anonymous' than it was, 'there patently is an upper class and one indeed which, through dominance in a still more evidently capitalist economy, enjoys still more power and privilege in Britain now than just a decade or two ago' (p.127). The concentration of wealth and the rising income inequalities throughout the 1980s provide 'signal evidence that the material class structure has been hardening, not softening' (p.137). This is the case even when gender divisions are taken into account. There are clearly inequalities between men and women but the divisions among women roughly parallel the ones between men. So, while gender is a dimension of inequality distinct from class, the effects compound rather than neutralize class divisions. A similar argument is constructed in terms of 'race' and class: class constitutes a prime structure through which the distinct inequalities associated with 'race' are articulated. The implications are not 'that class inequality "explains" gender or ethnic inequality. Nor that the latter two would vanish *ipso facto* if, somehow, the former were to be abolished … But … a hypothetical near-classless society would give gender and ethnic inequality less room to play' (p.146).

There are numerous other insights in the work and Westergaard is particularly strong on the relationship of public policy to, what he considers, the two primary rules of capitalist distribution: 'the rules of property and of labour market earnings' (p.104). Various public policies are examined which modify the impact of the two rules but with the exception of one objective, despite progressive purposes and effects, they involve no significant disjunction with capitalism's working rules:

> Provisions for minimum livelihood in adversity, and for further income-graduated reduction of personal risks, are explicitly intended to avoid a clash with profit and employment incentives. Measures towards equality of individual opportunity echo an aspiration as old as liberal capitalism, which the latter's internal contradictions and everyday social realities continue to impede. None of these three asserts any norm of distributive justice which might fill the moral vacuum of an economy geared to private enterprise …redistribution of diffuse character has not in fact taken place so far as to block business activity or shred its basic prescriptions for unequal access to the good things in life (p.104).

The one exception immunizes distribution in a particular field from private property and market forces. People have access to resources on an equal basis regardless of means and according to needs. In Britain, the provision of health care comes closest to this model and while true equality of health care can never be possible while other conditions of existence remain unequal, it is still a breach of capitalist distributive principles.

This breach has implications for the determination of class. While Westergaard recognizes both the specificity of the state sector and its variable functional relationship to the needs of capital, he is unable to solve the apparent paradox that, while state departments have different relationships *vis à vis* capital, the formal structure and conditions of employment differ little. This inability is in part connected to his relative neglect of relations in production. According to Westergaard, state employees are workers only in so far as 'their work can reasonably be taken to help in making—by boosting, maintaining or protecting—an overall surplus for privileged appropriation with at best only a limited share for themselves' (p.21). The police and the professional army have exactly that role of protecting the surplus, but have hardly been considered in classical socialist analysis as workers in uniform.

The failure to pay sufficient attention to relations in production is a reflection of Westergaard's wider theoretical stance. Accompanying his systematic attack on the idea of classlessness is a particular argument against structuralist Marxists with their concentration of class determination through 'place' in productive relations. Westergaard is quite rightly critical of the abstract and classificatory nature of much of the work, but nevertheless fails to locate its growth as a reaction to an almost complete absence of concern with 'the capitalist labour process': an absence that produced its own formalism, with class location being reduced to ownership or non ownership of the means of production. Moreover, the work he cites was written in the 1970s and is hardly influential today, certainly in its past form.

His preoccupation with this tendency stems from his contention that, within it all, concern with the distribution of benefits has been labelled Weberian. This may have a degree of truth (although Westergaard fails to cite any specific instances) but the heart of the matter was not a disagreement that income and resources were unevenly distributed, but that these unequal shares in themselves, without reference to their source in production relations, fail to reveal the exploitative relations at the centre of capitalism. In his own way, Westergaard himself accepts this in his three stage model of analysis. Moreover, there are elements within his analysis perfectly compatible with a perspective that utilizes the distinction between functions of capital and functions of the collective worker as important determinants of class.

In effect, Westergaard has a notion of structure based on unequal access to key resources, and a picture of the outcome of this inequality—unequal distribution—but has little place for exploitation as a daily process at the centre of the system. Exploitation is seen only as 'substantial exclusion from the global surplus of a capitalist economy: in practice as a matter of the size of share in the aggregate of wealth produced' (p.24). This latter position begins to change the emphasis. From being a reflection of relations to, and within production, distribution becomes formally as important in the determination of class: 'The question of who gets what must then be as central to class mapping as the question of who does what' (p.24). Such an emphasis would be compatible with a social democratic programme of the type about which Marx was so withering in his Critique of the Gotha Programme.