

The Director's Lectures

Politics after Socialism

Lecture 4-18 November 1998

Third Way politics is actually a defence of social democratic values; if you want to call that socialism, it is a defence of socialist values. That is, an inclusive society, the belief that one has to combat inequality, and the belief that one has to have a society which cares for the vulnerable. If those are social democratic beliefs, the Third Way politics certainly supports those beliefs. It is not socialism for reasons I'll be talking about later in these lectures. That is, socialism, as an economic theory, is virtually dead. No one predicted this would happen, but in retrospect we know the reasons for it. Those reasons I'll be beginning to discuss today, but we'll also analyse in subsequent lectures. Socialism was, above all, an economic theory. Marx intended socialism not to be an ethical theory, primarily, but an economic theory. So it kind of stood or fell by its economic competence, and as we'll be seeing today and subsequently, as an economic theory, socialism has more or less, in the late twentieth century, ceased to exist.

We now have to defend, in my view, social democratic values, but in the context of a globalised world whose economic structures are quite different from those in which Marx and other socialists anticipated. No doubt you will get, if you do go to this debate, however, a variety of views on this subject, so I would encourage you, if anyone is interested, to go. This is a very interesting transition in politics happening in the world at the moment. I hope many people in the LSE will be interested, anyway, in what is happening anyway, especially left-of-centre politics in Europe and elsewhere at the moment. But I will be talking about that directly, as I say, in subsequent lectures.

For the moment, I want to use this lecture, which is the last of four this term...I'll be giving four lectures next term...to finish off discussing the rise and fall of Marx, or the impact of Marx on history, and what went wrong with it. Where we had got to last time, in case you don't remember since it was two weeks ago, was the transition point from capitalism to socialism. Marx was the most astute analyst of capitalism. I hope you can recognise, if you look around you, in the newspapers or whatever, at this moment of history, that many of the things Marx argued about capitalism surely have some substance. Marx argued that capitalism is a system which puts price before anything else, which therefore commercialises things, it puts commercial values ahead of other values. It is a system subject to erratic fluctuations, such that you get periods of boom followed by periods of depression, with large swathes of unemployment. It is a system which tends to polarise between rich and poor, on a national as well as a global level. It is a system which tends to produce monopolies, a concentration of power in the hands of very large corporations. On these, and on other issues, it would be difficult to again not say that Marx was right.

However, Marx recognised or believed his main contribution not to be about the analysis of capitalism. He thought his main contribution was about socialism, and

what he called the inevitable transition from capitalism to socialism, and he regarded his analysis of this transition as his fundamental contribution. I think you could argue it was, because you must remember that Marx changed history. You must remember that Marx did what he set out to do. At least a third of the population of the world, well more at certain periods, had been living under Marxist governments, and a much larger proportion under socialist governments, more generally defined. So Marx did change history. There was something there. We did some kind of transition from capitalism to socialism. But he would never, never, I think, have anticipated is that we have seen a transition back again. That is, that the socialist regimes are now turning to market economics across the world, signalled above all by the demise of the Soviet Union and Eastern European socialism in the 1989 and 1990 period, so this is a truly remarkable historical turnaround.

What did Marx say then about socialism and the transition to socialism? He thought...this is where I left you last time...that there could be two types of transition, both of them would be brought about by the inner dynamics of capitalism, remember. According to Marxian theory, systems tend to transcend themselves from within. You then get a political movement which capitalises upon the economic changes that have already happened. Capitalism was producing socialism from within itself. Socialism is essentially taking social or communal control of our destiny, according to Marx. In Marxian theory, it isn't satisfactory to have an industrial society based upon competitive individualism. You need a society which is linked to human needs, to the community, to the wider society. Socialism means linking production to the needs of the wider social community. That is the root sense of both socialism and communism, as I mentioned in the first lecture.

Transition can occur in two ways. It can happen peacefully, according to Marx – what happens there is that you first of all get a kind of defensive reaction against capitalism in the workplace. Defensive reaction against capitalism is the rise of the labour movement, or the union movement. In the early period of capitalist development, Marx points out, workers have no rights. When you enter the workplace, you have no rights over the disposal of yourself or body, you are the property of your employer. Certainly in early capitalism this was the case. The union movement was a defensive reaction to that. It was a collective movement because workers saw they could only defend their position by joining together. The union movement, Marx thought, then would tend to become politicised, as it became more national and international. It would lead therefore, to socialist parties, or labour parties, emerging within the political sphere. Labour parties, in some countries, could push through a peaceful transition to socialism. So, there could be a peaceful transition based upon the dominance of labour parties representing the majority of the population, the under-privileged classes in the population, who would simply promote a transition along the lines I'll go on to describe.

This was another thing that Marx was right about, because in virtually all countries there was the rise of a labour movement; there was the rise of labour parties, or socialist parties. The United States is usually reckoned to be the only society which has not produced a significant socialist alternative to conservative parties. But, of course, many people would say the Democratic Party was essentially quasi-socialist, or labour party anyway, since it tended to be linked to the interests of organised labour. From that it would follow that Marx was correct in projecting the rise of labour

parties as significant political actors, or socialist parties, in the industrial countries. This is something that happened after Marx's death, so it would certainly count as a genuinely verifiable prediction.

The alternative route to revolution is violent. Marx thought this would happen in countries where there was a strongly established dominant class with repressive state institutions that could only be changed through active confrontation. Some subsequent Marxists argued that the only effective revolutions are violent revolutions. This is the kind of view which the founders of the Soviet Union took. Lenin, the prime founder of Soviet society, tended to argue that revolution needs to be violent, because it is only through violence that you can overthrow the existing structures. If you don't produce a direct confrontation with those structures, you tend to accommodate yourself to them, and in the end you don't change them very much. The sort of path you might argue which parliamentary socialism actually took in the West European countries; an accommodation to capitalism rather than an attempt to actually overthrow capitalism as a society and a system of production.

Remember, Marx thought that Russia could be the sparking point that would join the two together. You might have a violent revolution in Russia, on the margins of capitalist development. This might spark a series of more peaceful transitions in the European countries, Marx thought. Of course, his prediction about Russia came true, but the core of his prediction, that there would be revolutions in the West European countries, did not happen. There were revolutionary periods, for example in 1917 it was not just Russia, it was also in European countries, there were various revolts and uprisings, but there was no revolution in the European countries or, much less, North America. And now there never will be a revolution, for reasons I'll go on to discuss subsequently, because there no longer is a working class, the main class in which Marx pinned his hopes, or at least the working class has become a much more minor part of the industrial countries than it was in Marx's day. The dream of proletarian revolution is certainly now one of the dead dreams of history, and a dead dream forever in history today.

What kind of society did Marx anticipate a socialist society would be? A socialist society of the future, Marx argued, would be a classless society, a society without classes, and the reason for this is quite straightforward, and quite powerful. In the past, you remember, there have been societies based upon poverty, or lack of development. The earliest forms of primitive communism were classless societies. They were classless societies based upon deprivation; there wasn't much to go around. The classless society of the future, Marx argued, would be a classless society based on abundance. It will be based on the fact that industrial production can create so much wealth, and that wealth can sustain a diversity of forms of lifestyle, a society in which no one needs to live in poverty, and no one needs to be seriously deprived. It would be a classless society (there is a fairly simple back up for this) because private property would not be the organising mechanism of industrial production. Marx thought that a capitalist society was an irrational way of organising the fruits of industrialism. It is irrational because it is based on a kind of uncontrolled competition between thousands or millions of capitalist producers. We need to link this system to our own history, which means we need to control of it, which means that private property would become no longer relevant to it.

Marx thought he had a way of demonstrating this, in a sort of latter phase of development of capitalism, with the rise of the joint stock company. Joint stock companies tend to become prominent in a period of monopoly capitalism, when large corporations dominate the economy. A joint stock company is a company in which thousands, or maybe millions, of people own shares. In ICI or General Motors, shares are owned by millions of people. Now, in such companies, Marx thought, control over the company is no longer in the hands of those of own capital, the shareholders. There are so many shareholders that they can no longer these big companies. Capital, therefore, Marx thought, private property...even within a capitalist society, or in the last stages of a capitalist society...has here become detached from economic control. He put it in this way, in a famous phrase, *the joint stock company is capitalism without the capitalist*. In other words, in a large company it is the managers not the owners who run the corporation. That shows you, you don't need private property effectively to run a modern industrial system. What happens therefore after the stage of revolutionary transition is in a way the whole economy would be run like a large company. Private property would no longer be relevant to it. It wouldn't be who owned the capital, it would simply be a managed economy with planned production, in which production would be planned according to human need, rather than according to the vagaries of the market place.

So Marx thought that control of enterprises would be progressively shifted into the hands of government, and democratically elected government would provide the means of creating the direction for economic enterprise. That is essentially what happened in the Soviet Union. In the Soviet Union, there was a process of rapid collectivisation of farming and industry. The individual owners of industry and farms were put together in collective units. They were administered by the state, by government, not by private individuals, not by private property. That is why the Soviet Union, strangely to external observers, always saw itself as a classless society, a society on the way to eliminating classes. A classless society, in sum, is a society where private property no longer dominates economic or political power. And this is true of the Soviet Union, because in the Soviet Union, for example, you couldn't get to the top through wealth. Private ownership of wealth really didn't mean a great deal in the Soviet Union, it was a kind of consumer privilege rather than a means of rising to the top. They weren't wealthy people who could pass on their inheritance to their children. It wasn't a society where money actually counted for all that much. In large sectors, it was a non-money economy. People had loads of money, but they had nothing to buy, nothing to spend it on. It was very different from a Western market economy, whatever its other defects.

A classless society, Marx says, is not a society without inequality, it is not a society of uniform greyness, it is not a society where everyone becomes the same. That isn't what a classless society means. A classless society is about the mechanisms of economic control, it is about regulating production so as to make it more effective, it is about ironing out the problems of erratic, fluctuating capitalism. It is certainly about re-distributing wealth and income, but Marx argued that in a socialist society, people would be able to develop their own individual talents and capabilities, and they would be given the freedom to do so.

Now, Marx reckoned there were two phases in the development of the society of the future. The first phase, he didn't call it this but later Marxists came to call it this, was

the phrase of socialism. And the second was the so-called higher phase of communism; second phase development of a post-capitalist society. The socialist phase of development was a sort of transitional period. Marx thought that immediately after a process of transition had occurred, you are starting to get rid of market mechanisms, you try to democratise the society further. In that kind of society you have a lot of remnants of the past. So, you have a lot of...for example, the old dominant class still has some power, old land owners still have some power, mechanism of inequality are still alive. In that kind of society, therefore, which Marx thought might go on for many decades, you are struggling to break free from the past. During most of the period of its existence, the Soviet Union believed itself to be in the socialist stage, a society trying to break free from global capitalism, but not having yet moved to the higher stage.

The higher stage of socialism or communism, according to Marx anyway, would involve two things that, first of all, might sound improbably or even ridiculous, but they are not actually, they are quite sensible and interesting ideas that still have some relevance today outside of a socialist or communist context. One was what he called the *abolition of the state*. By the way, the socialist period was characterised by what Marx called the *dictatorship of the proletariat*. When Marxism was still alive as a doctrine in the Soviet Union, as it still is in China, what the dictatorship of the proletariat meant was a very contentious issue. Lenin tended to interpret it to mean his own dictatorship, and Mao did the same. But arguably, Marx really meant a society in which the majority, for the first time, would be on dictating terms to the richer minority. Because, the term *dictatorship* didn't have the kind of fierce sense that it later acquired, but that term anyway was very contentious within Marxist circles for quite a long while.

The second was the *abolition of the division of labour in industry*. I'll explain what these things mean. By abolition, Marx didn't mean getting rid of the state or getting rid of the division of labour, he meant transcending and re-organising them. The abolition of the state means the transformation of government, and the transformation of democracy. Marx believed that capitalist democracy was not democratic enough. He certainly, although he is a bit ambiguous about it, seemed to support the progress of parliamentary democracy. But he regarded it as a sham, in several ways. At the time in which he wrote, remember, the latter part of the nineteenth century, even though democracy declared that everyone should have the vote, more than half the people did not have the vote. Democracy in most Western countries was limited to people who owned property above a certain level, and women were almost universally excluded from the franchise. Women did not have the vote in most Western countries until well into the twentieth century, and of course women had to actively struggle to get the vote alongside men. Marx thought this was a sham – why proclaim universal political rights, and then most of the population are denied these rights? He pressed therefore for equal rights of voting, and democratic rights for women and other excluded groups.

He also thought it was a sham in a more profound way, because he thought, well, you get to vote once every five years, but what use is that? You vote for one or two or three political parties that seem to be more or less the same anyway. All you seem to do is be in a position to have elites that circulate, who then tell you what to do anyway. Where is the democracy in that? Marx thought, therefore, that we should

have more democracy, both within politics and within other spheres. He thought that politicians should be recallable, that there should be a more fluid system of officialdom in the civil service, that people shouldn't just be unaccountable, civil service officials.

And he thought that there should be economic democracy alongside political democracy. Because, he thought, you have these rights of voting, but again, when you walk into the factory and you start to work, work is a main part of most people's lives, what rights do you have? The only rights you have are negative rights, fought for by the union movement. We should, therefore, have democracy within the industrial sphere. Most communist countries, and quite a range of capitalist countries too, have striven to attain this. Germany is probably the best example, in a so-called stakeholder model of German capitalism, employees do have the right to elect representatives to boards of management. That system has never been very popular in the UK or the US, but it is firmly established in Germany. That is the sort of think that I think Marx had in mind, although I think he wanted a more radical version of it than you find in most Western countries. The abolition of the state really means the democratising, the further democratising, of government, and the attempt to make sure that state officials do not become unaccountable in respect to the populations whom they govern.

Abolition of the division of power of labour means the same thing; the transformation of work. The division of labour means the division of labour between different jobs or occupations that people do in industry. Marx thought that the division of labour as it existed, simply denied people the right to express their own creativity in work. Marx says, in a capitalist system you have lots of people working on a production line, for example, they might do the same thing all day, a routine set of operations all day, what kind of life is that for people, what is the point of having a system that delivers so much wealth but at the expense of denying people any kind of creative involvement with their work, work again being a core part of human life? And so, Marx says, in work the humans become animal and the animals become human. The humans become animal because a monkey could do what human beings do on a productive line. What is the human rationale for? There is none.

Marx had an interesting set of comments to make about this, because he linked the transformation of the division of labour under socialism to the progression of automation. He was one of the first authors to discuss the impact of automation in industry. And he thought, what would tend to happen is a kind of progression like this...say you first of all take an industrial task, say for example, the task of the stone mason? The stone mason, originally, is an artisan, and the stone mason has control of all aspects of his work. A stone mason is someone who can construct a monument in stone, it is kind of a total product, the individual has knowledge and skill which allows him or her to produce the whole product. With the progress of capitalism, Marx thought, you get the development of what he called the detailed division of labour. The detailed division of labour means breaking down the task into its component parts, mechanising them, and then having a system in which each individual only does one part of the total task. So, in modern systems of production, in stone masonry for example, it is no longer a craft occupation, it is done by machines, and individuals working on these machines do relatively unskilled tasks.

The detailed division of labour breaks down a skilled job into a load of less skilled jobs, in order to increase productivity, and it does increase productivity.

However, Marx thought, especially in a socialist society, where you try to re-organise these things consciously, you would have a phase beyond a detailed division of labour, and this would be a phase of automation. Because, if you have reduced what the stone mason did to a series of just individual small tasks working on a machine, why can't other machines then take over those tasks? Why can't other machines take over the kind of machine-like work you have given human beings to do? So, Marx thought that what would happen in a socialist society was that you would get rid of a lot of the drudgery of industrial production by a further element of mechanisation, which is automation. You would remove most of the more boring, mundane jobs that people have to do in industry. Rather than creating unemployment, he believed anyway, this would create a kind of fluid division of labour for jobs that people did. He seemed to have foreseen a reduction in the number of hours people worked, much more flexibility in work, he thought, for example, that some professions tend to dominate their clients, and there should be a more kind of liberal, shared division of labour which would improve everyone's lives. So, he thought the medical profession, for example, could easily give some of its knowledge to patients, there could be patient power, there could be other forms of power, which would make for a more fluid division of labour.

So, he thought through these two mechanisms, you would be able to create a society where probably work would be less important, but work would be more involving, than it is in a capitalistic society. These predictions have only partly come true, but the thesis of automation has in some part, come true, as you will know, not in a socialist context but in a capitalist one. In most areas of the motor car industry – the motor car industry was one of the most soul-destroying forms of production line to work on. This is well after Marx, but named after Henry Ford, this came to be called Fordism. Fordism was mass manufacture on the assembly line. Cars were made on the assembly line, individuals might spend all day screwing a bolt in a hole, or putting a piece of fabric on a door. But now these things are automated. In most of the advanced car manufacturing plants, it is robots rather than human beings who do these relatively simple tasks. What hasn't happened is the release of the kind of creativity and fluidity in other parts of the system that Marx anticipated.

These things having been said, it is important to emphasise that Marx didn't say a great deal more about what a socialist society would be like, and this is either famous or notorious, depending on how you look at it. Marx thought he didn't want to present a complete blueprint for the future. People who presented a complete blueprint, he thought, were dangerous, because you can't know the future, all you can know is that certain possibilities will be there. He thought you relapse into utopian socialism, and remember he didn't like utopian socialism, if you create some elaborate view of what society must be like. So he said, I'll just give you a few indications of what the future would be like, and then you have to make the future yourselves, after a transition to socialism. This was a problem for the first Marxist revolutionaries, because in a certain sense, they didn't really know what to do. They were supposed to be following Marx, but they only had a few clues from Marx's writings about how they were supposed to put all this in process.

Well, Marx did change history, and out of Marx's input into history there arose essentially three main branches of socialism, if you regard socialism as a kind of encompassing thing, including Marxism and other variants too. First of all, after the revolution of 1917 in the Soviet Union, later in China, in Cuba, and in many other countries across the world which experienced Marxist revolutions, these were dominated by a particular outlook, which came to be called Marxism-Leninism. Based supposedly upon Marx's scientific interpretation of the transition from capitalism to socialism, but added to this the impact of Lenin. Lenin argued for the importance of what he called the *vanguard party*, the party which re-organises the society. He sought to make the Soviet Union a one-party state dominated by the communist party. The vanguard party was a key idea in Leninism, it wasn't really there in Marx. Lenin added this, and it became a core part of the ideology of these countries. So, Marxism-Leninism was official Marxism for a period of something like seventy or so years, which is quite a chunk of twentieth century history. Marxism-Leninism was an important political philosophy. Remember, however, it is only post-1945 that you have got any other Marxist society apart from the Soviet Union. The Soviet Union is the only one which existed for more than fifty years.

In Western countries, you have the rise of *parliamentary socialism*, sometimes called *reformist socialism*, involved in socialist or labour parties. Reformist socialism, or parliamentary socialism, believed in a great deal of what Marx had to say, but thought that you should only take the peaceful path to transition. Parliamentary socialists were against Marxism-Leninism, because Marxism-Leninism stressed violent revolution. The parliamentary socialists wanted a peaceful transition within the parliament to a more just and equitable order. Nearly all of the existing labour parties, centre-left parties in Europe, have their origins as Marxist parties. This is true, for example, of Gerhard Schroder's party in Germany at the moment, the SPD. The social democrats in Germany began as an explicitly Marxist party. Engels had quite an impact on it. It was the first mass socialist party. It started as an explicitly Marxist party. This was true in most Western countries. Britain is one of the exceptions. Here there is, of course, a socialist party, the Labour Party, but Marxism was never quite as important in its origins, as it has been in most of the other West European countries. For a subsequent period, most of the repudiated Marxism. The SPD, in the post-war period, broke with Marxism, and most parliamentary socialist parties did at some point explicitly break with Marxism. Now they have broken with socialism, which will be seeing next term. Most socialist parties have changed their name, post-1989 they have not just broken with Marxism, they have broken with socialism more generally, for quite good necessary reasons, I think.

Thirdly, you had the tradition of what came to be called *Western Marxism*. Very, very important in the intellectual and political life of post-war Europe and South America, and other places. Western Marxism was people affiliated to Marxist, or to communism, working outside of the Soviet Union, and the other Marxist-Leninist societies, but committed to Marxism. Western Marxists were critical of the Soviet Union. They thought of the Soviet Union as a degenerate worker's state. Western Marxists wanted to change both the Soviet Union and Western Countries. A whole variety of major thinkers in the post war period would be lumped together under the category of Western Marxism, such as Jean-Paul Sartre and Jürgen Habermas, probably the most famous social thinker of the current period; they were explicitly affiliated to the tradition of Western Marxism. Western Marxism has also collapsed,

post-1989. All of this has more or less collapsed, post-1989, which is quite a remarkable thing.

Now, when you start to look for the reasons why it collapsed, and what went wrong with socialism, you have to start with Marx himself, and I would like to conclude this lecture by just briefly listing some of the structural problems inherent in Marx's ideas. Some of these problems really only came to the surface later on, but it is clear that they were there from the beginning. They came to the surface later for reasons I'll mention in a subsequent lecture.

First of all, there were basic problems with Marx's ideas, and with subsequent Marxism, on the idea of economic theory. Marx, like other socialists, advanced what in modern terms you would call a *cybernetic* model of economic management. What Marx thought was a market is not a rational way of organising a capitalist economy. We must have more steering control, management and planning. We must plan the economy in order to relate it to human need. Planning means having something like a cybernetic monitor. A cybernetic monitor means a regulator, a higher order of consciousness that regulates the system. So for example, the thermostat is a cybernetic monitor in a central heating system, the brain is a cybernetic monitor of the activities of the rest of the body. Marx thought you could largely transfer economic control to a directive intelligence, and that directive intelligence would be government. That was the basic theory of Marxism, and of socialism. Well, it has proven to be wrong, or at best, only partial. In the case of a modern market economy, as experience has shown, and the problems in which the Soviet Union got itself into showed, you cannot substitute systematic, centralised planning for the operations of markets, or you can only do so to a limited degree if you want economic efficiency, and indeed even equity. The reason is that in a highly complex system, you can't get enough information, you can't get it quickly enough, and you can't take enough rational decisions about it, if you are government, if you are the directive intelligence. Only markets can do it. You need an awful lot of low-level signalling on the ground, which signal to millions of buyers and sellers what they should do, and no-one at the moment knows a substitute for price and profit, as the mechanism for doing this. This has become increasingly clear, and it has kind of exploded the very economic basis of Marxism, and of socialism more generally. I will say something more about it in subsequent lectures since it is very important.

Second, Marx was wrong about capitalism's prosperity. Marx thought that...and forgive me for saying these things dogmatically, it is just limitations of time really, I'll come back to some of them in subsequent lectures...Marx thought that in a capitalist society there would be limits to the productivity of capital inherent in a system, because of its tendency to crisis. So, he thought a capitalist society could not produce general prosperity for people. You would tend to get a division between a small minority of richer and richer people, and a large majority of impoverished people. Now, capitalism does not produce equality, but it does produce rising prosperity, and almost everyone shares in this prosperity. If you look at the economic conditions of Britain in 1900, and you compare it with the economic conditions today, even for people in the poorest occupations, or in the weakest sections of society, their income is about four or five times what it was in the turn of the century in real terms. Capitalism is a system which produces prosperity in a way in which no other system has managed to do, and this certainly includes Soviet communism. This has

proved an explosive discovery, really, for those on the left, who are still struggling to see how they can accommodate to it.

Third, Marx had major problems with ideology. The Marxist society of the future, the classless society of the future, Marx thought, would be a post-ideological society. You would not need ideology because there would not be classes. You could therefore argue that Marxism had very little protection against itself being used as an ideology, and I think you could say that is exactly what happened to Soviet-style society. Marxism was used as an ideology of domination which produced a society in which the communist party, and the cadres of the communist party, had a position of power well above, probably, any group in a Western-style society, which tends to be more pluralistic. In Soviet-style societies, Marxism became an ideology. It didn't have the defence against this which it should have had if it had paid more attention to liberalism, I think. And this has always been a problem, the status of Marxism as a supposedly post-ideological system. It cannot be a post-ideological system if ideology means how you defend power.

Fourth, ecology. Marx was a child of his time in that he believed in economic advance. The advance of the forces of production, the advance of industrialism. He wanted to create a more wealthy society, and he wanted to use that wealth more rationally than a capitalist system can do. Consequently, he paid very little attention, but nor did non-Marxists either, to the impact of industrial expansion and technology on the fabric of the earth. Ecological questions are, at best, only a very minor aspect of Marx's writings, and of the emphasis of subsequent Marxists. So you find that, even though the West has a very poor ecological record, that East European countries had the worst ecological record of all. Further, the pollution problems which are faced in Russia today are absolutely frightening, and they are problems which bear on the rest of us. You cannot have, in the late twentieth century, a critical theory of society which is not anchored in the ecological crisis. Marxism does not, by and large, provide such a theory, and this has emerged, again, as a fundamental weakness and problem of it.

Finally, and perhaps in a way most interesting, and certainly most subtle of all, is the problem of history itself. Marx thought that we could understand history in order to change history. The whole point of Marxism was that collectively, as human beings, we would take control of our own history. That was Marx's theorem; that we understand history in order to master our history. That was the theorem of enlightenment. Marx was a child of the enlightenment. The idea is the more we get to know about the world, the more we can control the world for human needs. The late twentieth century has shown us that this premise, attractive though it is, is false; that there is something much more complex involved in the relationship between human knowledge, history and control. The advance of human knowledge, including science and technology, does not lead simply to a world more and more under our control. In some respects, it produces a world out of our control, as you can see from the very ecological crisis itself. The ecological crisis is not a crisis of nature, it is a crisis of human intervention in nature. Science and technology have created many new risk situations for us which were not anticipated in the nineteenth century. The overall issue, the fundamental enlightenment issue, then is in some part behind the struggles of socialism and capitalism in the latter part of the twentieth century.

History will not bend itself to our will in the way in which Marx believed it could, and should.

Well, I hope to see you all again next term. It is a bit early on, but I wish you all a happy Christmas, and I look forward to seeing you at some point in January. Thanks very much for coming.