

tion' and the passages on value-theory seem to me to deflect the task of engaging with the new currents described by Callinicos and whose outlook derives as much from Nietzsche as from Marx. The inner-Marxist debates are also uneven in treatment and cogency. Callinicos gets away with just a two-page dismissal of GA Cohen's recent painstaking restatement of historical materialism, yet we are given a lengthy Trotskyist account of the revolutionary party and of 'east-west state capitalism'. Some of this is interesting, if somewhat predictable, but the overall impression is of a potentially useful book caught between slightly different objectives.

Anthony Giddens aims to reject historical materialism whilst holding on to Marx's idea that capitalism is the most fully class-divided society. He develops these prongs of argument on the basis of what he calls his 'theory of structuration'. He also hopes to inaugurate a new non-functionalist *style* of social analysis. This ambition gives rise to frequently repeated claims to have discovered a new vein in social theory — claims which stand in ironic contrast to Giddens' hope, expressed in the preface, that readers will take his explorations as preliminary only.

The substance of Giddens' critical stance is that Marx's emphasis on the primacy of the forces of production in social development, and his stress on the class basis of any surplus product, are mistaken. Instead, the appropriation of nature in pre-capitalist societies is said to be governed by the forms of social 'authorisation', and is accom-

plished according to culturally-specific notions of time and space. In an effort to escape the pitfalls of evolutionism and subjectivism, Giddens tries to chart a path which respects both the power of human agency and the structural conditions within which that agency operates.

Valuable though Giddens' critical summaries can be, his theoretical framework is, in my view, delicately founded and inconclusive. Putting together many insights from different academic disciplines is certainly a helpful enterprise (though historians' researches seem under-represented). However, that in itself does not constitute a theory, and three areas of criticism can be suggested. First, Giddens appears to lay personal claim to several objections to Marxism which are entirely familiar from earlier non-Marxist and Marxist debates: for example, the rejection of the 'Asiatic' mode of production and of the concept of mode of production itself; the importance of the city in pre-capitalism, and the role of the nation state in the formation of capitalism; the 'evolutionism' of the productive forces argument, and the under-emphasis in Marxism of nationalism and the coercive logic of states' regimes of surveillance over their 'deviant' subjects.

Second, the theory of structuration is general to the point of vagueness. To say, for example, that power is generated through the reproduction of structures of domination (p4) is all but tautologous. This illustrates Giddens' facility for coining promising *definitions* (so that we hold on to both structure and agency). But his main ideas receive limited *philosophical* elaboration, and seem too classificatory to generate more *historical* explanations.

Third, Giddens adds little to Marx on the nature of capitalism itself. True, he says this. But one comes away from the book feeling that Marx is supporting Giddens, rather than the reverse! The latter's terminology of 'authoritative' and 'allocative' resources (replacing relations and forces of production) doesn't provide an obvious contrast to those discredited terms, at least in some extended definitions of both sets (cfp105). This point is not made in order simply to return to Marx here; but it is to warn against alternatives which give Marx less than his full due.

This somewhat uncharitable conclusion should not gainsay Giddens' interesting appropriation of geographical and existential ideas for sociology. And certainly, his thoughts on the modern state pose genuine dilemmas for Marxists and others who envisage the transition to socialism as a distinct moral advance. But in the context of

the inflated claims currently made by and on behalf of the author, it is not unreasonable to say that he has not produced a new social theory, nor has he — in my view — pioneered a particularly novel or attractive analytical style.

Gregor McLennan

MISSING

Thomas Hauser

Penguin 1982 pbk £1.75

ISBN 0 14 006453 2

ASSASSINATION ON EMBASSY ROW

John Dinges and Saul Landau

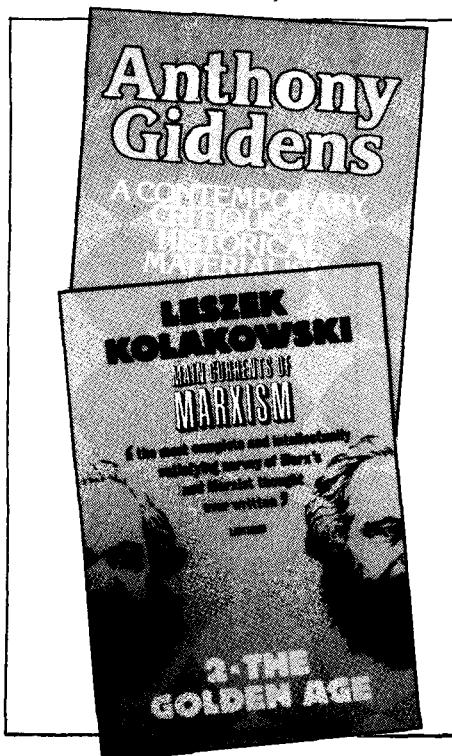
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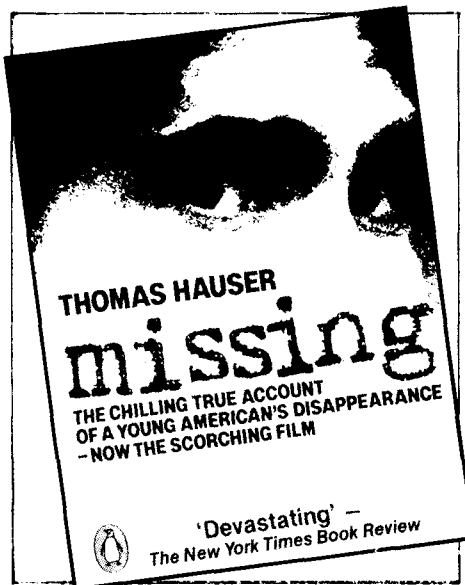
ISBN 0 906495 43 1

An unnerving symmetry emerges from these two books. One tells of Charles Horman, born in New York City, and murdered in the national stadium in Santiago, Chile within days of the coup of September 1973; the other of Orlando Letelier, a Chilean who was blown to bits in Washington DC in September 1976. These deaths, of a US citizen in Chile and of a Chilean in the USA, were linked by the thread of counter-revolution. In each case the Chilean government was directly responsible. And in each case, as the authors demonstrate, the State Department and the CIA were deeply implicated, in all probability having foreknowledge of each murder. Indeed, in Horman's case the only convincing explanation is that US representatives in Santiago planned and ordered his execution — a direct link having been established between the Chilean military and the US embassy. In the more complicated and protracted organisation of Letelier's death, the thread coiled around Chile, Paraguay and Miami before leading to the CIA in Langley, Virginia and Washington.

It's a neat irony, then, that it was due to the work of Hollywood (so frequently written off as the most infamous agent of US cultural imperialism) that Costa-Gavras was able to produce the film of *Missing* so that — to the discomfort of the State Department — the circumstances of Charles Horman's death could be relayed to a mass public.

It's not often, in its tenth year of fascism, that Chile hits the metropolitan media. The brutal shock of September 1973, Chile's cruellest spring, is unlikely to disappear from collective political memory for at least another generation. But aside from the catastrophic trauma of the defeat itself, the experience and political realities of dictatorship — as the Franco regime illustrated — don't make news. The labour movement is still torn to pieces; the terror, more selective and





highly-tuned than in the early years, is no less effective; and accelerating unemployment moves in line with the Chicago programme of cheap credit and an influx of consumer goods for the wealthy, marking a deepening social polarisation and immiseration. According to some estimates a tenth of Chile's population is now scattered throughout every city in Europe and North America, a diaspora in which thousand upon thousand endure the emotional and political pains of exile. Those Madison Avenue agencies employed by the Chilean state have done well, endeavouring to keep their client unobserved — an international football match, a minor earthquake, but little more. Even during the Falklands crisis the cynical deal between Mrs Thatcher and General Pinochet was wrapped so tight it barely touched the front pages or TV screens.

Missing, written by a Manhattan lawyer, derives from a radical, liberal Perry Mason tradition within the United States, one which concentrates above all on the constitutional rights of the individual citizen. This is both its strength and weakness. The book gives a potted, journalistic account of Popular Unity and its destruction (quoting the extraordinary document conjured up in the first days of Allende's government by Nixon, Kissinger and Helms, promising to 'make the Chilean economy scream'). It recounts Charles Horman's tourist trip on the eve of the coup to Vina, on the Pacific Ocean, during which he stumbled across a number of US counter-insurgency personnel who happened to brag to him about their work. This arbitrary chain of events appears to have been the major reason for his downfall. On his return to Santiago he was taken

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Wales

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from his home to the national stadium, transported to the Ministry of Defence for interrogation (with a US official in tow) and then killed. The narrative pace and political impact of the book derive from the reconstruction of the search for Charles conducted by his father, Ed Horman — a grizzly odyssey through morgues, hospitals, prisons and endless offices. At every turn the US embassy obstructed these investigations. Gradually Ed Horman, the conservative Christian Scientist, comes to appreciate the full degree of US complicity in his son's disappearance.

It's a revealing, sympathetic account, dramatising an individual American's disillusionment with his government, and time and again forces the reader up against the facts of US involvement in Latin America, as it did for the Hormans. A book like this does not attempt to explore these relations politically. But almost despite itself, it demonstrates that when one pushes to the limit constitutionalist liberalism, there follow more questions than answers.

Assassination on Embassy Row, although of the same genre of investigative journalism, is altogether weightier. Undoubtedly it will have less popular impact, but it is a superb book. It, too, focuses on an individual, Orlando Letelier — Allende's ambas-

dor to Washington and Minister of Defence at the time of the coup. After internment on the notorious Dawson Island, touching the tip of the Antarctic, Letelier was freed and became active in the resistance against Pinochet. He was murdered as a result. But however moving is the account of Letelier's heroism, the sweep of the book's analysis is broader than this alone. Tracing the development, under General Contreras, of the Chilean secret police, the DINA, and one of its agents, Michael Townley, the authors connect Letelier's murder to the attacks on General Prats in Buenos Aires in 1974, and on the Christian Democrat, Bernardo Leighton, in Rome in 1975.

The most remarkable sections of the book, however, analyse the shifting balance of forces inside the junta in 1977, which forced Pinochet to announce during that summer his 'Chacarillas' plan. By this period the continuation of Contreras's strategy of wholesale and systematic repression against all the regime's opponents was becoming politically too costly. By and large mass terror had already done its job. Pressure from the Chicago-trained technocrats, organised around *El Mercurio*, and from Carter's 'human rights' policy gave Pinochet no option but to break with Contreras, his old pal and political crony, and to dismantle

Contreras's personal empire, DINA included. The Letelier murder provided the pretext and Contreras was dismissed. But as the authors show, few government officials in the United States were keen to indict the Chilean authorities for the Letelier murder, for that would have brought accusations too close to home. Townley and his gang of Cuban exiles were charged in the US courts and convicted. Pinochet, no doubt involved from the start, was not only rid of Letelier, but also managed to ride out the internal political crisis.

Letelier was an important political figure. Thousands more Chileans who died in the streets and dungeons will never be the subjects of bestsellers: their memory will take a different form, at once more collective and more personal. But the scenario is not one of complete catastrophe. Resistance in Chile is by no means obliterated, and the exiled groups, though badly fragmented, periodically show hope of effecting a transcendence of their enforced marginality. And once more the role of the USA in Latin America is again prominent in the news. However, in the foreseeable future the strategic destiny of Chile lies less within its own frontiers than in the current struggles in Central America, Bolivia and Argentina.

Bill Schwarz

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LETTERS

THE UNIONS

There is a saying to the effect that a spoonful of tar will spoil a barrel full of honey. It is a pity that Tony Lane did not have such a thought in mind before including his provocative and divisive remarks on "perks and fiddles" by "a new working class elite" of shop stewards and other trade union delegates. Especially as in that context he refers to the TGWU buying a London hotel to *reduce the expenses* of said shop stewards and delegates. Or does he think they should camp out on the Embankment?

At the same time it would be no less a pity if the outburst of indignation which predictably followed Tony Lane's purple patch (which no less predictably was seized on by the anti-trade union press as a welcome gift) diverted attention from the purport of the main body of the article. The impact on the trade union movement of de-industrialisation and the restructuring of remaining industry is too serious an issue to be lost sight of, and on this issue Tony Lane's article breaks new ground and merits thoughtful consideration.

Dave Goodman, Stoke

WOMEN WRITERS

I have a complaint to make! Why so many male contributors to Marxism Today? Over the last few months the male contribution has varied between 62 and 83%. There is no shortage of women on the Left able to contribute so why are there not more in the pages of Marxism Today?

Certainly a lack of confidence may be part of the reason because the great (but false) mystique surrounding writing does discourage people — but this discourages many men as well. From my experiences I'm sure that when potential subjects and contributors are thought of for the journal it is men and male values that come to mind — and BIG NAME contributors to boot! Except that is where specifically 'women's issues' are involved. I suggest male values are embodi-

died in the emphasis Marxism Today places on particular topics — for instance, why are there more women writers of the shorter articles than of the 'Features'? How does the Editorial Board think of contributors — what networks are used to get contributions?

A conscious policy is needed to break down the divide between 'women's issues' which you get women to write about and 'mainstream' political issues, which tend to be dominated by men. I hear in the CP of the need to encourage women to write, to take part, to contribute, to speak etc. But what feminists are in large part saying is aimed at the men and male values — you must change your attitudes, your values, your journals and newspapers, *you* must become knowledgeable about feminism and feminist issues. Such changes would remove many of the barriers that prevent women's equal participation.

Mary Braithwaite, Cardiff

RELIGION

Paul Fauvet (Letters in September issue) makes too sweeping an attack on religion. Some religionists who use religion to support USA militarism, ruling class supremacy, racism, and so on, ought to be vehemently attacked. Yet many others though non-marxist (eg: believing man utterly depends upon God), are not anti-marxist, being progressive on issues such as peace, ecology, economic structures, racial harmony. Also there are a few religionists, such as myself, who claim to be Marxist. Thus we don't believe God is all powerful, but is evolving and needs humanity as much as vice versa; and that humanity is evolving with the right and duty to forge its own destiny, etc. 'Process' and other forms of radical theology are not necessarily incompatible with Marxism.

Obviously more than a short letter is required to thoroughly argue this case or describe the complexities of the issue: witness the long history of writings on Marxist-Christian dialogue. Was the atheism of Marx and Engels a fundamental crucial essential or a natural stance forced by particular contemporary religious theory and practice?

To achieve a Marxist society requires both strenuous opposition to religionists of ill-will and honest co-operation with religionists of good-will; including a full acceptance of the few whose doctrines do not contradict Marxist concepts of humanity, the eco-

nomic basis of society, etc. Such a view is not alien to the comments of Lenin.

Rev Philip Reynolds, Huddersfield

WALES

Dave Lloyd, in his comments on my article, 'Land of our Fathers' (August issue) invents a curious but revealing fiction of his own when he refers to (I quote) 'the fears of the English Welsh, *as he calls them*' (my italics).

I have never used the expression 'English Welsh' in my life. The article, which took some pains to distinguish between language and nationality, employed the term 'English-speaking Welsh'; which is a banal but neutral and clinically accurate description of the four-fifths of the Welsh population and the two-thirds of the native Welsh who use the English language.

If Dave Lloyd is in so wretched a state that he finds himself not only incapable of distinguishing between the two usages but also seized with an irresistible urge to infect other people with the same disease, he should abstain from writing about Wales until he has cured himself of this distressing affliction.

Gwyn A. Williams, Cardiff

LEFT FAMILIES

Gwyn Williams' remarks on the family (August issue) were naive, ill-considered and ultra-leftist. As such they were tailor-made for selective quotation in a Sunday Times leading article (22/8) which I, as a Communist, found politically embarrassing.

I run a social work unit dealing with family problems and trying, with very limited resources, to defend working-class family life from the ravages of a capitalist system in decay. If Gwyn wants a target for his rhetoric he should try Tory hypocrisy on the subject of the family. They have been working hard to abolish the family — for real, not on paper.

It may not be trendy, but I'm for the family. I do not see the working-class surviving this crisis without it. They will need to defend the family just as surely as they defend their unions, cooperatives and political parties.

I am fed up with utopias which seem to envisage a future where children are confined in state-run orphanages while the unemployed "grown-ups" sit around trying to work out what sex they are. I don't know if such spectres haunt the bourgeoisie, but they scare the hell out of me.

Gordon Wardman, Harlow

We welcome your letters for the November issue. They should be no longer than 200 words and arrive at the office not later than Friday 8 October.