Abstract

1956, 1968 and 1989: these are, on any conventional reckoning, major milestones in the odyssey of the post-war Western Left. They are likely to figure as epochal moments in any typical history: from Khrushchev’s ‘secret’ speech at the 20th Party Congress and the invasion of Hungary, through the ‘revolution’ of May ’68, to the collapse of Communism and the destruction of the Berlin Wall; from a ‘New Left’ seeking a third way beyond Stalinism and social democracy, through anti-war and student movements, Western Maoism, Eurocommunism and the new social movements, to the politics of identity and discourse; from a socialist-humanist Marxism, through Althusserianism, post-structuralism and post-Marxism, to post-modernism and beyond.