



Late Soviet Britain

Why has the United Kingdom, historically one of the strongest democracies in the world, become so unstable? What changed? This book demonstrates that a major part of the answer lies in the transformation of its state. It shows how Britain championed radical economic liberalisation only to weaken and ultimately break its own governing institutions. The crisis of democracy in rich countries has brought forward many urgent analyses of neoliberal capitalism. This book explores for the first time how the ‘governing science’ in Leninist and neoliberal revolutions fails for many of the same reasons. These systems may have been utterly opposed in their political values, but Abby Innes argues that when we grasp the kinship in their closed-system forms of economic reasoning and their strategies for government, we may better understand the causes of state failure in what remains our inescapably open-system reality.

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Why Materialist Utopias Fail

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The aims of the system reveal its most essential characteristic to be introversion, a movement towards being ever more completely and unreservedly itself, which means that the radius of its influence is continually widening as well. This system serves people only to the extent necessary to ensure that people will serve it. Anything beyond this, that is to say, anything which leads people to overstep their predetermined roles is regarded by the system as an attack upon itself. And in this respect it is correct: every instance of such transgression is a genuine denial of the system ...

‘The Power of the Powerless’, (October 1978)
(translated by Paul Wilson), *East European Politics
and Societies* 32 (2) (2018): 353–408, p. 361.

Václav Havel

We always knew that everything the Party told us about communism was a lie. What we didn’t know was that everything they told us about capitalism was true.

A post-Soviet joke

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