Another World is Possible

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As 2007 opens, the world's attention is predominantly focused on the worsening crisis and imperialist violence in Iraq and now, too, Somalia. In both cases, the current context has roots in the contradictions of the Cold War, when the Western powers supported and armed authoritarian regimes (including, during the 1980s, those of Siyad Barre in Somalia and Saddam Hussain in Iraq) and proxy forces (including the CIA-recruited Islamist 'mujahideen' which later formed the basis for al-Qaida) in the name of 'containment'. Now in the era of the 'War on Terrorism' the same imperial logics are reproduced, as imperialist intervention reinforces and arms reactionary, sectarian and authoritarian forces. This may be seen as the other side of a coin on which the face value is the long-term promotion of neo-liberal 'freedoms' across the globe. The immediate nature of the crisis in the Horn of Africa, particularly in Sudan and Somalia, has distracted attention from this underlying agenda in which the condition of Africa had acquired a more prominent place in public discourse in the West, especially after the campaigns and debates surrounding Blair's Commission for Africa and the G8 summit meeting in Scotland in 2005. These events had prompted considerable public debate in Western media which was reflected in a series of articles about Africa published in non-Africanist journals in politics and international relations. One outcome for critical observers from the left was the need for greater analytical input and the encouragement for more work that seeks to understand the interplay between the political economies of specific African contexts and global intentions more deeply than these widely publicised events portrayed, and especially to allow scope for a greater degree of agency for social movements, politicians, organised workers and producers and activists in all those countries which are, or are likely to be, the object of Western attention.

We begin this Issue therefore with the opportunity which these events of 2005 provide, and their reflection of a perspective which is still contemporary, to conduct a critical review of some of the contours of debate and analysis as found in a sample of non-Africanist journals, taking as examples *International Affairs*, *Global Dialogue* and *Historical Materialism.* In our opening essay William Brown highlights some key differences between commentators who broadly accept the framework of Western policy towards Africa, but criticise the detail; and those who offer a more critical, wider perspective, situating conditions in Africa in the context of global capitalism and the legacies of colonialism. He sees three themes emerging across all three journals, to serve as a framework for his review:

> *recent policy responses to Africa's development challenge; broader understandings of the development of capitalism in Africa; and the specific debates around the South Africa/southern African conjuncture.*

Although the first two of these resonate widely across the continent we pick up the third in the remainder of this Issue by focussing on two countries in Southern Africa, Zimbabwe and South Africa, with similar, related histories but with increasingly divergent approaches to the struggles and contradictions of capitalism and neo-colonialism. Here the relationship between the struggles waged during the Cold War and those present is of a different nature to that of Somalia and Iraq (though not necessarily in the neighbouring states of Angola and Mozambique). In both Zimbabwe and South Africa, radical struggles were waged against white rule and settler colonialism. Today, both societies are ruled by capitalist classes yet remain strongly conditioned by the historical legacy of nationalist liberation struggles as well as by international forces. In South Africa, the ANC has embraced the strategy and values of neo-liberal reform in its GEAR policy. In Zimbabwe the government has rejected neoliberal orthodoxy in pursuit of a heterodox policy and remains committed, although not always unequivocally or uniformly, to radical land reform. Sam Moyo and Paris Yeros make an important intervention raising central themes for the left about the current conjuncture in Zimbabwe. They acknowledge the authoritarian and coercive character of the current regime, manifest in particular in the violent mass evictions of irregular urban settlements in 2005, in which thousands of urban poor lost their homes (the actual number remains contested). However, they argue that dwelling on such violations of human rights in isolation from the social relations and contradictions of Zimbabwe's current condition and the logic of imperial sanctions concedes too much to the liberal mainstream. Their central point is that, notwithstanding its authoritarian character, the state in Zimbabwe has become radicalised in a 'fundamentally progressive' manner, although they concede that these developments have allowed for the emergence of a class of African capitalist farmers who have been able to manipulate the redistribution process of European-owned land. They argue that the progressive and radical nature of the current conjuncture must be furthered through the development of radical social movements outside the realm of formal political parties and combining urban and rural class and social forces.

The remaining articles address different dimensions of contemporary policies to transform the character of the apartheid inheritance in neighbouring South Africa. In contrast to Zimbabwe, the ANC government has embraced a neoliberal commitment to market reforms, and seeks to redress the fundamental racial inequalities of the past through the creation of a black capitalist class. The focus of Roger Southall's article is the ANC's policy of Black Economic Empowerment (BEE). Rather than considering struggles for radical alternatives, Southall emphasises the significance of structural dimensions of South Africa's economy and the nature of the political settlement of 1994 in explaining the character of the ANC's capitalist economic strategy. The severe extent of white control of the economy inherited by the ANC government in 1994 made it politically necessary for the ANC to use state power to redress the predominantly white ownership and control of the economy. Southall takes issue with the widely accepted view that the BEE process is creating a narrow 'empowerment elite', arguing that, while the process has led to the enrichment of a number of prominent, powerful figures within the ANC, the process has been more widespread than is generally acknowledged.

In the context of ANC policies which have led inexorably to the commitment of creating an African bourgeoisie, David Thomas examines the fate of the South African Communist Party. The nature and direction of the ANC's policies, described by Southall, are a clear departure from the historical commitment to socialism which

was central to the anti-apartheid liberation struggle. Thomas details the efforts of the SACP to articulate explicit criticism of ANC policies, yet confronts the limitations of these very efforts. The constraints faced by the SACP arise from the historical relationship of solidarity and shared purpose between the SACP and ANC, which is manifest more directly in the over-lapping membership of the two parties. The SACP's written and practical efforts to contest the bourgeois character of ANC policy are blunted by retaining an insistent loyalty to the ANC.

Does the ANC's project of Black Economic Empowerment represent the logical unfolding of historical imperatives, as Southall suggests, or, in Hart's words, the 'consolidation of conservative forces bent on working in alliance with white corporate capital to create a black bourgeoisie'? We are happy to publish in this Issue three essays which arose out of the *Colloquium on Economy, Society and Nature Conference*, organised by the Centre for Civil Society at the University of Kwa-Zulu Natal, South Africa, in March 2006. Gillian Hart, in the first of these essays, confronts the changing stakes of the ever-present relation between race, class and nationalism in South African society, through a reflection on the intense struggles within the ANC and its Alliance partners and the phenomenon of popular support for Vice-President Jacob Zuma, a politician who has been accused (but acquitted) of corruption and sexual violence. While many commentators understand this in terms of 'false consciousness', Hart argues for a more sophisticated and historically informed appreciation of the relationship between political consciousness, nationalism and deep historical memories of the liberation struggle. In order to develop this analysis she returns to earlier debates within marxism centring on the notion of articulation. She traces an important development in Harold Wolpe's understanding of articulation, which shifted from centring on relations in the economic base to an analysis of the cultural mediation of class, influenced by Gramsci through the work of Stuart Hall. This informs Hart's analysis of the way in which the ANC has articulated meanings associated with the National Democratic Revolution to its hegemonic capitalist project. GEAR represents not simply a neo-liberal project, she argues, but a re-articulation of race, class and nationalism, linked to new technologies of rule. Part of this entails inciting 'not only the black bourgeoisie but the population more generally to become "entrepreneurs of themselves"; and making social support conditional on the correct attitudes and aspirations'. The correct attitudes and aspirations involve those of the responsible citizen/paying consumer, and nowhere has the latter been more contentious than in the provision of basic household utilities.

Since the 1990s the ANC has promoted payment for basic services as part of the process of citizens contributing to building the new South Africa, under the banner of *Masakhane* (We Are Building). A variety of 'cost-recovery' measures have been implemented, even in the poorest areas. Prishani Naidoo in this Issue examines struggles which are arising as result of the very direct, concrete social effects of the ANC's commitment to market reforms, providing a detailed account of the efforts of the urban poor to resist the commodification of the basic means of life. This has involved imposing water metering, and charging households for water and electricity consumption. Naidoo describes how, after the initial efforts to resist the imposition of user-charges through payment boycotts, the suppliers have adopted more subtle strategies to compel households to accept the logic of payment, through installation of prepaid meters: 'with cut-offs, one is punished for non-payment *after* receiving a service, whilst with the prepaid meter, you have to pay *before* you receive a service'.

The shift from the radical commitments of the 1970s and 1980s liberation struggle to the current neo-liberal dispensation of the post-apartheid era is taken up again by Salim Vally in the third of the conference essays, in relation to the question of education. Vally describes the prominence of education within the broader liberation struggle and the ways in which the need for education was addressed in a radical manner, as an integral component of the workers' movement. The practice of People's Education developed within the labour movement in the 1980s and served to further raise the consciousness of those involved. However, from the 1990s education has become subordinate to the over-arching goal of market-based economic growth. Even within the trade union movement, values have changed. Experienced and educated trade union leaders find their skills help them to move into management or government positions. The bold promise of education for all has not been realised; on the contrary, user-fees and lack of funding produce major inequalities in access to education.

While these articles address distinct issues in Zimbabwe and South Africa, a number of cross-cutting themes and contrasts emerge. First, there is the question of radical political struggle and its social base. In Zimbabwe, Moyo and Yeros argue that while the relationship between ZANU-PF and the War Veteran's association remains sustained by the War Veterans' organic links with the countryside, one of the key weaknesses of ZANU-PF has been its failure to expand its social base, above all among workers in the urban population. Urban discontent has been mobilised by the opposition MDC, whose trade-union origins, they argue, have become subordinated through its alliance with and influence from Western capitalist forces. This has not led to mobilisation on a working-class platform but to the emergence of ethnic mobilisation and factionalism. In South Africa Thomas highlights that a crucial weakness of the South African Communist Party is its failure to retain and expand its social base among the urban and rural poor. In its loyalty to the ANC it has neglected 'the task of building a mass base of support opposed to neoliberalism'.

Second is the related question of political consciousness, organisation and strategy. In arguing for a 'New Left' rooted in social movements outside of formal political parties, with a social base in the urban and rural working classes, Moyo and Yeros emphasise clearly the strategic imperatives which require the development of clear political consciousness and 'a new level of ideological clarity', in order to avoid cooptation and fragmentation. Yet the question of how to promote progressive, radical consciousness among the rural and urban poor (proletariat, semi-proletariat and peasantry, working and unemployed), whose direct social conditions and lived experiences may differ widely, is by no means straight-forward. As Hart's analysis reminds us, the character of popular consciousness arising from and informing grassroots politics cannot be assumed in advance, and will reflect diverse values, memories and grievances. The necessity for consciousness-raising was recognised in the practices of People's Education described by Vally, which have disappeared in the ANC's market society. However, Vally describes how the struggles of new social movements over education are in themselves providing vehicles for raising political consciousness and organisational skills. The efforts of the SACP are constrained by basic but fundamental issues of cost and literacy, as Thomas highlights. The party's commitment to disseminating socialist ideas and under-standing is hardly realised, its publications only accessible to those who understand English, and who can pay for journals or have access to the internet.

Naidoo's discussion of the spontaneous forms of resistance which have arisen among poor, dispossessed urban communities in South Africa raises further

questions of consciousness and organisation but in a different way. Naidoo describes the acts of resistance and 'direct action' taken by poor communities against private companies and the Johannesburg City Council, centring on the very specific and immediate issue of access to water and electricity. How do the urban activists understand their condition? Here we can draw on Hart's return to the work of Wolpe, Hall and Gramsci, in highlighting the role of memory and nationalism as well as race and class in informing popular consciousness. The movements of 'the Poors' deliberately invoke a trans-racial identity, as Naidoo emphasises, and are fuelled by a sense of betrayal. Rent and service boycotts were part of the struggle against the apartheid state, and so 'it was imagined that free basic services would be delivered by an ANC democratic state'. Thus the actions and demands of 'the Poors' uphold the importance of water as a basic necessity; in words and deeds they reject and refuse the logic of commodification, insisting on the right to free services. Yet, beyond the immediate understanding of and struggles over these basic services, to what extent do such forms of resistance entail broader forms of political organisation and consciousness? What broader forms of social change do they seek, and what sorts of alliances are seen as necessary – if any? Does the label 'the poors', albeit generated from the political struggles of hard-pressed urban residents, describe a historic bloc mobilised over a single issue, but actually in class terms quite diverse, with wage labourers having different though allied interests to those of street vendors or petty commodity producers and petty capitalists of the informal sector?

What is clear from the articles in this issue is that such important but abstract questions of political strategy and struggle cannot be resolved through theoretical debate but demand close, grounded research into actual conditions and struggles. It is precisely such an imperative which has informed the work of so many Southern African intellectuals-activists, including the late Guy Mhone and José Negrão whose work Patrick Bond reviews in a final tribute article. He sets their contributions within the broader context of the question of 'accumulation by dispossession' in Africa, and underlines the continuing relevance of Harold Wolpe's contributions on articulation. Bond highlights the insights to be gained from Mhone's analysis of the 'enclave economy' in post-colonial Africa, drawing on the keynote address by Adebayo Olukoshi at the Durban conference, and points to the impact which dysfunctionality within the enclaves has had on industrialisation in Africa, reinforced by SAPs. The essential links here between rural accumulation and urban growth are followed through in his summary of Negrão's important work on the social reproduction, and potential, of the rural economy, with an underlying philosophy summarised by Negrão himself as 'the need to understand the historical roots of African rurality, where decision-making processes governing the allocation of labour, land and capital involve economic units where production, consumption and distribution are inseparable functions, and thus cannot be contemplated separately for analytical purposes'. Negrão's search for policy solutions to invigorate the peasantry offers a counter to the global pessimism which Brown identifies in the paper by Bernstein in his review of *Historical Materialism*. The section by Bond concludes with two personal recollections on the lives of Mhone and Negrão.

There is a clear line of connection between this concluding review by Bond and the opening essay by Brown, particularly in the contributions contained in *Historical Materialism*. As Brown points out, the nature of the arguments contained in the latter are of a more fundamental, and radical, critical character than most of those in the

other two journals he reviews, where the focus is principally on a Western search for effective policy measures which will overcome African intransigence in fully embracing the supposed benefits of globalising capitalism, duly reflecting the world view of the G8 and Blair Commission. However, although many critics from the left acknowledge the need for a deeper understanding of the actual conditions of production, distribution, accumulation and class formation it becomes all too easy, especially for non-African specialists, to see Africa (and Iraq etc) only in terms of the intentions and practices of imperialism and Western capitalism, and to downplay or ignore the class forces, struggles, various forms of resistance, and indeed occasional victories, which are the concrete experience of day-to-day reality in these countries. The lack of agency allowed to local players, politics and interests can suggest that they are mere puppets in other people's stories which not only demeans their reality but fails to reflect accurately how their reality, interests and behaviours meet and interact with these global patterns. Even journals devoted to the study of African economies, politics and society, such as this one, can be vulnerable to this tendency if the balance between the impact of international factors and their interface with local histories, cultures and power structures is not kept continually under review, with editorial decisions solidly grounded in an African reality that is defined in critical social analysis. A corollary to this is the continuing encourage-ment of ongoing detailed, careful and reflexive research processes which take due account of the different cultural and historical contexts which inform an African praxis. It is perhaps telling that this kind of detailed research and analysis of cases and trends is more easily accessed in South Africa than elsewhere on the continent, given the substantial advantage in resources. The range of case studies from South Africa presented here (and elsewhere) indicates a complex and nuanced pattern of social, political and economic behaviour and purpose, presenting both a challenge and a call for sustained analysis, particularly by those intellectuals and activists living in Africa who are more able to counter the increasingly dominant Western cultural and media propaganda with insights and perceptions that give due weight to local forms and variants of oppression and resistance. We welcome contributions to the *Review of African Political Economy* which reflect this dimension, and which thus enhance the balance which we seek.

Finally, we need to recognise that post-colonial and feminist analysis has taught us to pay far more attention to the spaces, opportunities and sources of power and how they are used by the oppressed, whether these be the self-defined 'poor', women, ethnic groups or all of these together (though without discarding the class element), than many Western influenced academic thinkers and analytical paradigms have previously allowed. Much of this has been addressed in the World Social Forums, the latest of which is being held in Nairobi as this Editorial is being written. Here we have a unique forum with numbers approaching 60,000 and panels that document the struggles, challenges and achievements of most of the important social movements in Africa today. Campaigners for small scale micro-credit, self-help, AIDS and disability groups, slum dwellers, farmers and pastoralists protesting land rights, trade unionists and gay rights coalitions rub shoulders with those challenging key international processes such as US militarisation, the big pharmaceuticals hold over access to anti-retrovirals, the Monsanto GM debate in both South Africa and Kenya; blood diamonds, the rights of indigenous peoples, resource conflict over the Chad/Cameroon pipeline and in the Niger Delta, in a way which highlights connectivity across issues and demands recognition of local, and even domestic resistance to exploitation. We hope to report fully on the WSF in the next issue.

Debating the Year of Africa

William Brown

Rarely can there have been so much media attention on Africa as there was in the twelve months leading up to the G8 summit in July 2005. The crescendo of media coverage which greeted the Commission for Africa's report and the following Live8, Make Poverty History and G8 gatherings came after a year which had seen the launch and subsequent deliberations of the Commission for Africa, Blair's and Brown's various high profile initiatives on aid and debt, the WTO's stalled 'development round' and NGO's ongoing campaigns around all of these. This focus on Africa, led by the UK which held EU and G8 presidencies in 2005, was reflected in a renewed academic focus on Africa and a restating, and some revitalisation, of debates about Africa's politics and development.

Such attention spread beyond the normal confines of specialist 'Africanist' publications with a substantial amount of comment and analysis reaching more generalist readerships. Included among these were a number of journal special issues which took Africa as their focus and came out in the twelve months leading up to the G8 summit in July 2005. Perhaps rather unusually, this article will review three of these special issues in order to get a flavour of the scope and orientation of some of the debates which have arisen. However, by focusing on special issues in non-Africanist journals, it also allows us to consider in what ways they may or may not add to perspectives one might find in the more specialist literature and to assess whether and how the particular orientation of the journals influences their framing of debates. Indeed, the three journals reviewed come from rather different locations in academia: *International Affairs* is one of the leading British international relations journals, produced by Chatham House;[1] *Historical Materialism* is an interdisciplinary journal dedicated to exploring critical and explanatory Marxism; and *Global Dialogue* is the house journal of the Centre for World Dialogue, which aims to promote debate of political, social, economic and religious issues of global concern. As we shall see, this lends a particular flavour to each special issue and shapes the ways in which African development issues are interpreted. However, one of the features of all three publications is that the contributions they contain range over a very wide analytical terrain, making each a broad survey rather than an internally-cohesive debate. As a result, the bulk of this review will focus on the substantive debates which cut across all three publications. In the concluding section I will return to some more general consideration of the special issues themselves.

The three themes which emerge across all three issues, and which will serve as a framework for this review, are: recent policy responses to Africa's development challenge; broader understandings of the development of capitalism and Africa; and the specific debates around the South Africa/southern African conjuncture.

These three interlock in interesting ways although some of this cohesion is imputed and may well not be how the writers concerned would situate their contributions in wider debates. The most immediate issue addressed is, naturally enough, the latest round of donor policy-oriented commentary prompted by the UK government's initiatives since Blair's famous 'scar on the conscience of the world' speech, the Commission for Africa, NEPAD as well as the NGO-driven debates around the 'holy trinity' issues of aid, debt and trade.[2] However, while there are a number of different takes on this issue, as we shall see, there is some recognition across the debate that the latest round of initiatives are at one and the same time premised upon, and intended to achieve, a combination of capitalist development and liberal political arrangements in Africa. The sheer scale of this project calls forth deeper and more profound analyses of the past and present of what we might term 'capitalism in Africa' and 'Africa in global capitalism'. Here particularly (and perhaps unsurprisingly) the contributions to *Historical Materialism* come to the fore in analysing the historical development of capitalism focusing on state formation, agrarian change and recent political responses to liberalisation. Finally, the relationship between capitalist development, the development co-operation policy consensus, and political reactions to it are explored in finer grain in the southern African context. Here, the existence of a much greater level of capitalist development poses sharply the issue of the potential of the current model for the continent's future.

Responding to Africa's Development Failure

Much of the discussion which took place leading up to and after the Commission for Africa report was, as Clapham puts it, a response to the fact that 'Africa was the continent that most obstinately refused to fit into the model of progress that lay before us' (2005:275). In response to this, over the past decade, there has emerged a notable high level consensus between African governments and donors on the broad parameters of development co-operation (Brown, 2006). The contours of this consensus were famously identified by Tony Blair in his 2001 Labour Party conference speech:

> *On our side: provide more aid, untied to trade; write off debt; help with good governance … access to our markets … on the African side: true democracy, no more excuses for dictatorship, abuses of human rights; no tolerance of bad governance … Proper commercial, legal and financial systems* (Blair, 2001).

However, the foundations of this consensus were laid by, on the one hand, shifts in donors' policies as existing conditionality policies morphed into a much more wide-ranging economic, social and political agenda through the 1990s; and on the other hand, significant African governments adopting a rather less confrontational attitude towards demands for political and economic liberalisation. To the extent that such a consensus exists, it is a fragile construction, and limited in scope, with considerable detractors among donor and African governments as well as among the more disgruntled of the NGO community. Nevertheless the broad exchange of policy shifts by donors, on trade, aid and debt, for fundamental change in Africa of the governance of development and economic liberalisation define the field within which the UK government, the Commission for Africa and the G8 operated.

Indeed, arguably it was a belief that 'we know what needs to be done' that spurred Bob Geldof's revitalised activism on Africa. His article in *Global Dialogue* sets the tone to which we have become familiar:

That people should die of want in a world of surplus seemed so intellectually absurd, so morally repulsive, that an absolute rage … was the appropriate response … That anger has lasted twenty years (2004:2).

What was needed, Geldof told Blair and Brown, was a Commission which would arrive at 'a holistic response to the totality of the African misery' (2004:11). His pitch to the Prime Minister and Gordon Brown was successful: '… they considered a moment and said "as long as there is equal pain on both sides", meaning the commission must define and tell the truth not just of ourselves, but of Africa too. Exactly' (2004:5). It is precisely this balance – how equal pain could be translated into change on both sides – that much discussion of the Commission's report focuses on.

Both *International Affairs* and *Global Dialogue* give sustained attention to this latest round of donor initiatives to 'do something' about the African crisis (the contributions to *Historical Materialism* were in many cases written prior to the advent of the Commission, though they do include commentary on NEPAD and South Africa which we come to in the final section). Broadly the responses fall into three categories. The first, what might be termed sympathetic but critical policy interventions, include those who do not have profound disagreements with the general tenor of donors' policies, but highlight potential problems and institutional concerns which might affect the efficacy of policy. A leading example of these, in *International Affairs*, is Tom Porteous' unearthing of the background to the Commission for Africa in a perceptive summary of the British government's policy towards the continent under Tony Blair. Porteous is surely right to highlight the achievement of New Labour in elevating Africa up the policy agenda in the UK and internationally, and the positive role in policy that the creation of the Department for International Development (DfID) has served: 'UK development policy in Africa got a hearing at cabinet level, a more strategic focus and a lot more cash' (2005:282). Not that there weren't problems. Porteous traces the initial tensions between DfID and the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) and the complications introduced as Number 10 became increasingly involved in Africa policy.

Indeed, despite the problems caused by the clumsy fanfare surrounding the 'ethical foreign policy' it was the expansiveness of Blair's vision which for Porteous really highlights the dilemmas of British policy. For what were previously a concern of DfID (governance, non-corrupt administration, 'good policies') or of the FCO (human rights and arms sales) were now wrapped up into a much broader strategic vision, strengthened in the wake of 9/11, of the need to respond to the problem of 'weak states'. While Blair's second term focus on Africa centred on poverty reduction and economic growth through partnership with African governments was not without its own dilemmas, the wider strategic aim of what to do with weak and failing states was even more problematic (2005:290-1). The limitations of donor leverage in the aid field are compounded when facing states which don't 'choose to develop' (Cooper, 2005). 'The UK's experience with Zimbabwe' Porteous claims 'underlines the limits of western policy options faced with a non-cooperative weak state' (2005:291). None of the available options (ignore them, contain them, transform them) is without serious difficulties: 'It is hard to see what an effective UK policy on Zimbabwe would look like' (2005:291).

In addition, Ngaire Woods (also in *International Affairs*) highlights the threats to the new aid deal posed by competing strategic objectives. In her review of the 'new politics of aid' Woods focuses on the impact on aid budgets and delivery of the post

9/11 security agenda (2005). She identifies three challenges facing aid policies: that aid will be hijacked to serve other security interests; that aid moneys will be diverted to pay for costly interventions such as in Afghanistan and Iraq; and that aid will not be coordinated as major donors focus on narrower national security priorities. The US serves as a good illustration here: US aid rose from US$12.9 billion to US$33.2 billion between 2002-2004, yet most of this was directed to support the interventions and reconstruction in Iraq and Afghanistan (2005:397). Woods concludes that 'Development assistance which prioritizes the achievement of human development goals is at risk' and that we face the prospect that as the war on terror progresses, fiscal pressures will mean that there will be an increasing tendency to use existing development assistance budgets for security policy aims (2005:407-8). The maintenance, over the long term, of the 'step change' in support for African economic development promised by the Commission for Africa, looks problematic seen in this light.

And yet, as John Serieux argues in *Global Dialogue*, the ability to sustain increased levels of aid is crucial to Africa's future, particularly to the continent's ability to escape the debt trap in which it has been stuck for much of the past two decades. Serieux begins by unpicking the notion of 'sustainable debt' and argues that for a long time, donors regarded African debt as systemically sustainable, unlike Latin American debt (2004). He charts the tortuous path by which donors came to recognise the negative impact debt had on growth and on the success of donors' adjustment programmes. This, as we know, culminated in the HIPC and Enhanced HIPC schemes of the late 1990s which lowered the estimation of what donors considered sustainable while retaining a strong, albeit modified, element of conditionality in the form of successful adjustment and Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs). Serieux still takes donors to task, arguing that if instead of defining sustainable debt as 'that which doesn't harm economic growth', one defined it as 'only that which does not significantly hinder poverty reduction', then the reasonable estimate of the sustainable debt would be zero (2004:88). Following the Commission for Africa and the G8 meeting, some steps have been taken in this direction – the UK government estimates that up to forty three countries are in line for total cancellation of debt owed to multilateral lenders (HM Government (UK) 2006). Serieux also makes the case that even with full debt cancellation Africa remains susceptible to future debt build ups as external and internal shocks combine with limited economic growth. 'To keep debt burdens low' Serieux argues, 'Africa needs to insist not only on sufficient debt relief, but on adequate resource flows to meet global development targets' (2004:81). It is here that Woods' concerns about the long-term sustainability of pledges of increased aid really matter.

A more negative assessment – one which questions the utility of aid increases and the overall approach of British policy – comes in Ian Taylor's attack on Gordon Brown's policy on Africa (2005). Writing in *International Affairs*, Taylor's is by far the most critical of the policy assessments in that special issue. While other contributors such as Porteous and Ramsbotham et al. (writing about African security capacity building, 2005), unpick some of the strands of the development bargain, Taylor wants to question the very basis of the deal on offer. Brown's policy announcements on the need for massive increases in aid to Africa, to meet the UN's target of 0.7 per cent of GNP and the Millennium Development Goals (MDG), preceded and indeed found reflection in the Commission for Africa report. The most well established of Taylor's objections is that increases in donor aid run the risk of reinforcing and

consolidating corrupt African regimes and 'the neo-patrimonial nature of the African state' (2005:302). For aid to work, there is a prior need, Taylor asserts, to 'change political structures' in Africa, a challenge which he concludes is 'not necessarily an impossible requirement, but difficult nonetheless' (2005:303).

Others share this assessment. Two contributions to *Global Dialogue* focusing on NEPAD – in many ways a precursor and partner to the Commission for Africa – argue a similar line. Castigating NEPAD for 'playing the old guilt trip', Ayittey argues that the most important problems in Africa are internal, ranging from poor governance and civil war to kleptocracy (2004:28-9). Ayittey also attacks NEPAD's 'dependent' call for more aid, claiming 'Why then was Obasanjo badgering the G8 for US$64 billion at Evian, France in 2003 when a year earlier at the OAU meeting he could have asked the thieves sitting before his very eyes for the money Africa needs?' (2004:32). Tim Burke's article, also on NEPAD, shares this scepticism, engaging in a somewhat more patient excavation of African statehood (2004). Burke argues that while NEPAD gestures towards addressing problems of governance, corruption and leadership it combines this with a 'continuation of the language of African nationalism and ignores the extent to which African nationalism is itself a major historical contributor to the evolution of 'bad leadership' after 1960' (2004:40-1). Burke concludes that the remedy for weak states is not strong ones but for states bound 'in chains of law and practice'. African nationalism, he argues, 'never articulated or accepted a constrained conception of political power' (2004:46).

However, for Taylor, the doubt over the prospects for internal political change in Africa is coupled to another very different line of argument which questions whether Africa needs additional external resources at all. Not only has Africa received large amounts of aid in the past without it 'solving' Africa's problems he claims, but the levels of theft and wastage in African states, and the levels of capital flight which have occurred since the early 1970s (estimated at US$187bn) give the lie to the idea that additional resources are required. Here, Taylor is surely right to puncture the more simplistic sound-bites from Brown, the Commission and the G8/Live8 circus that increases in aid will end poverty. However, to imply that additional resources are not required needs a good deal more justification than is given here. Levels of capital flight in the past cannot simply be viewed as 'missing' resources – a pot of money that can somehow be grasped by African governments and turned to more socially useful purposes. Such assumptions rather blithely ignore the differences between public and private funds, and criminal and legal capital flight, and tells us nothing about the macroeconomic requirements of different Africa economies, the state of national balance sheets, investment needs or the possible policy options available. Indeed, the proposition is directly counter to the assessment of most other observers (including Serieux, above and the Commission for Africa) that in the short to medium term, Africa will require additional resources if the sought for accelerated investment in human and physical capital is not going to be funded by increased debt. Far more care, and a good deal more detailed macroeconomic analysis is required, before the assertion that increases in aid are not needed can be said to stand up.[3] In the end Taylor seems almost to come round to this view himself, arguing that 'The G8 countries should also increase their investment in infrastructure and human resource development that will make Africa more competitive' (2005:308). But identifying the need for aid donors to impose conditions, and the difficulties of getting African leaders to 'play ball', doesn't really go much beyond re-stating the problem with which donors have been grappling for a considerable length of time.

A third and more fundamental critique of the current approach to African development takes issue with the overall aim – greater integration of Africa into the world economy – which Blair, Brown and the Commission promote. Leaving the aid issue to one side, it is this integration, delivered through the Commission's proposed changes to trade rules and investment in trade infrastructure – which is questioned. Ray Bush's article in *Global Dialogue* stands out here, arguing that the assumption that greater integration will be beneficial 'precludes any awareness that it is precisely the way in which Africa is integrated into the world economy … that has contributed to the continent's predicament' (2004:14). Bush goes on:

> The mistake here is to imagine that Africa's problem is marginalisation from the world economy … the problem is not that the continent is insufficiently integrated with globalisation, it is that it has been integrated in a particular way … (2004:18).

Indeed, this assumption, Bush claims, informed the choice of Commissioners, drawn from the world of business and finance capital (2004:17). While acknowledging 'indigenous failures' Bush attacks élites in the North and South who have signed up to the idea that 'neo-liberal market policies' will produce growth.

The political and policy corollaries of all these assessments need teasing out further. If Porteous and Taylor need to identify what might replace the current development deal on offer, or what might make it work and give donors the purchase to achieve the change within Africa that they seek, Bush's critique perhaps needs to develop greater clarity on the depth of change required. For instance, on one level, Bush seems to hint at a fairly sharp, zero-sum, conflict between donors and Africa. His assertion that 'the wealth of the rich North is based on the poverty of those in the South' (2004:15) rather precludes the idea of the 'common interest' of which the Commission's report spoke. However, in stipulating the policies necessary to redress Africa's crisis, Bush hints at something more limited: non-reciprocal market access to the developed world's economies, better prices for raw materials, cheaper pharmaceuticals, an end to agricultural subsidies and debt cancellation (2004:19-20). These certainly would alter the terms on which Africa is integrated into the world economy, but are rather similar to the kind of change the UK government has long argued for. True, as Bush indicates, rhetoric is one thing, implementation another, and much commentary on the Commission's report has focused on how far the West is or is not living up to the report's recommendations. True also, some powerful groups benefit from maintaining existing policies (such as protectionist regulation of agriculture). But it probably requires something more disaggregated than an identification of 'interests of capital' to get at the complexities in play (2004: 20).

However, in focusing attention on the historical legacies of Africa's past and current incorporation into the world economy, and the lasting legacies of colonialism on state formation, writers such as Bush direct our attention to the broader critical and historical understanding of African development familiar to readers of *ROAPE*. Furthermore, in raising the issue of the impact of capitalism on the continent, Bush calls forth a wider debate taken up most explicitly in the contributions to the *Historical Materialism* special issue.

Africa, Capitalism & Incorporation

The majority of articles in the *Historical Materialism* special issue, as one might expect, take a rather wider view of the state of Africa than those just reviewed, positioning the continent's development within understandings of the development of capitalism and of the capitalist world economy. The special issue not only shares some home turf with *ROAPE* but many of the writers are also contributors to this journal. Much discussion on this issue, and indeed on donor policies, turns on a long-standing contrast which is brought out by Liam Campling's editorial introducing the *Historical Materialism* symposium on Africa: the identification of the 'negative forces and processes structuring African realities' on the one hand, and 'the progressive aspects and impacts of capitalism … and the forces of change generated … by colonialism' on the other (2004:52). Campling is right to assert the relevancy of these discussions and of the need for the left's 'moral and political role – the identification of tactics and strategies to fuel politically progressive forces' (2004:53). However, as with the discussions in the previous section of this review, too often political or policy implications are left implicit. As we will see, at times a distinction between critique of present-day 'neo-liberalism' and a critique of capitalist development in general, is evaded.

This is true, for instance of Nunn and Price's otherwise most welcome analysis of the EU's Lomé and Cotonou Agreements with the African Caribbean and Pacific states (the ACP). In a sense, their article neatly joins the more policy-specific debates on development co-operation with some broader considerations of Africa's incorpora-tion into global capitalist structures (2004). Nunn and Price argue that the European Union's (EU) 2000 Cotonou agreement with the ACP states represents a 'redesign and locking in' of the ACP's development within a broader neo-liberal hegemonic project (2004). Utilising Gill's analysis of 'disciplinary neo-liberalism' Nunn and Price argue that development cooperation agreements can be viewed as elements within a global regulatory architecture which is designed to consolidate the gains of capital over labour. The elements of redistribution, Keynesianism and 'decommodification' in earlier phases of the EU's relationship with the ACP have been gradually reconfigured in a neo-liberal direction, meshing the EU-ACP trade provisions with wider global liberalisation and aid conditionality, locking in the reforms (2004:211-5).

Nunn and Price go on to argue that the new trade provisions – the negotiation of Regional Economic Partnership Agreements – helps to reinforce the regional and sub-regional dimensions of neo-liberal governance. However, it is where these are unpicked in detail, in the overly-complicated, overlapping regional organisational structure in southern Africa for example, that one starts to suspect that too much might be being made of the coherence of a 'global neo-liberal architecture'. In the context of southern Africa, one could be forgiven for thinking that far from representing any neat multi-level system of neo-liberal governance, the organisation of trade relations in the region is just an unholy mess. Moving to the EU level, one realises that far from being 'neo-liberal', trade relations with the ACP are shot through with the protectionism inspired by the Common Agricultural Policy, resulting in fantastic contortions as to which ACP states qualify for which of the myriad levels of EU market access.

A similar focus on the contemporary importance of neo-liberalism is raised, eventually, by two other contributions to the *Historical Materialism* symposium. The

first of these is Idahosa and Shenton's restatement of a historical understanding of the fate of modernisation in Africa and of national developmentalism (2004). Appreciative of the dynamic impact of the 'wave of modernity that broke upon the African continent from the outset of the nineteenth century', nevertheless the authors are sceptical of the potential for modern state creation today (2004:72). Following Napoleonic incursions into Egypt, Idahosa and Shenton portray an ultimately failed modernist response from within Africa – a response which included attempts to construct modern states in Egypt, Tunisia and Ethiopia, Madagascar, South Africa and Ghana. Initiated by elites seeking to deal with the modernity of the continent's northerly neighbour, only in South Africa, they argue, did these efforts survive colonisation. 'Africa entered the colonial era' they claim, 'bereft of modern states' (2004:81). Echoing Mamdani's (1996) analysis of the impact of colonialism, the authors characterise a 'compromised modernity' of colonial rule based on rapid conquest and co-optation of 'customary' forms of rule to secure European control. Skeletal infrastructure and limited proletarianisation all helped to bequeath to the post-independence leaders an inheritance from which they could never break free. Working within a narrative of national development, post-independence rulers had no option but to use the state as the agent of development, bringing with it the exploitation and coercion of the populations they were supposed to lead. Such doomed and coercive attempts at development were given external support by the 'Third Worldist' apologias of western radicals and cynical Cold War calculations by Western and Eastern governments: 'much was ignored or tolerated' they note (2004:102).

Today, the authors conclude, the advance of neo-liberalism has eroded the space available for 'the historical moment of national development' (2004:105). Like other authors, Idahosa and Shenton use the failed modernisation of the past to question whether it can happen in the future. Hedging their bets somewhat, the authors claim that today's African expert, seeking 'another set of new clothes', will have to assess whether national development is still possible, whether the compromised modernity of the African state can be confronted and overcome, and whether accumulation can serve any developmental purpose in a world dominated by neo-liberalism.

Such scepticism is reflected upon in a second contribution – Bernstein's analysis of agrarian development in Africa (2004).[4] Bernstein takes up the debate about the extent, or the nature of agrarian capitalist development in Africa. Bernstein poses what surely is a crucial question:

> Is there a plausible case to be made that the intensification of commodification of Africa's countrysides in the current periods of structural adjustment and liberalisation will generate more profound and sustained paths of capitalist accumulation and development? (2004:135).

Having critiqued 'primordialist' arguments that fail to grasp the extent of commodification in the African countryside, and others who are unable to grasp the class dynamics of the commodification which is taking place, he surveys materialist accounts which focus on explanations of 'why colonialism did not dispossess African farmers' as well as those who argue that African economies are fully capitalist but not necessarily heading in the direction of larger-scale, wage-labour capitalist agriculture (2004:117-134). As an alternative, Bernstein returns to three 'classic Agrarian Questions' (relations between classes in the struggle for democracy and socialism; the development of productive forces in agriculture; and the contributions of agriculture to industrialisation). He argues that exploring these

requires both an investigation of modern African trajectories as well as interrogation of the assumed contexts within which these questions were originally posed (2004:136-7). In conclusion, the era of globalisation for Bernstein erodes the possibility of a 'classical agrarian transition' as national states and powerful blocks of indigenous capital are rendered ineffective. Marxism's agrarian question comes to an end globally without its resolution in contemporary poor countries (2004:138-9).

Both these contributions present two of the most impressive analyses contained in the special issues, positioning the background to Africa's current crisis as a stalled process of capitalist political and economic development on the continent. The implications of their conclusions appear far-reaching. For if, as they argue, the creation of effective modern states and the capitalist transformation of the countryside, respectively, are not on the agenda, then the heart of donors' and African élites' development consensus is hollow. Yet, on closer inspection, the real block appears to be not something internal to Africa (as critiques surveyed in the previous section would have it), but the role of the external economic and political environment. One suspects that the barriers are greater in Bernstein's formulation than Idahosa and Shenton's. For the latter, the obstacle is neo-liberalism, which erodes the space available for national development strategies by African states. This is a theme which has in recent years been picked up by some commentators who have argued that to become 'developmental', African states need 'policy space' within which to operate, the reference point being the experience of industrialisation in East Asia. However, in many respects, the neo-liberal obstacle comes down to a set of relatively specific policy positions held by the developed states and donor institutions. Without further, specific analysis of these, it is hard to evaluate how insurmountable the neo-liberal obstacle is. In short, for Idahosa and Shenton, a great deal – the creation of modern statehood – comes to ride on something very specific. One suspects that though it is not fully explored, for Bernstein the barrier to capitalist development assumes rather larger proportions, being the 'era of globalisation' itself – a phenomenon (if one believes in it) which is not so amenable to policy change.

Sharing a concern with the effects of neo-liberalism, Alex Colas' essay on the Maghreb (also in the *Historical Materialism* symposium) is unusual not only in focusing on the North of the continent but also in its dissection of a particular political movement. Colas situates the rise of Islamist parties in the spaces left by state retreat under adjustment (2004). Colas seeks to position a marxist interpretation of populism as not

> *of capitalism but in capitalism … although [populism] cannot be read off as mechanically corresponding to the political representation of a particular class, it cannot equally be read without reference to specific class antagonisms generated through capitalist development* (2004:245).

Like others, Colas utilises Mamdani's analysis, transposed to the Maghreb, where 'free' capitalist exploitation was co-joined with pre-capitalist, extra-economic forms of coercion, especially of labour. It is this uneven reproduction of capitalism in the region, Colas tells us, which delivers the 'amorphous, chameleon-like' politics of populism (2004:246). It is in this context that Colas interprets Islamism, in Abrahamian's (1990) terms, as a modern political movement 're-inventing' a new space within a broader populist politics in the Maghreb. Colas concludes that the

analysis undermines simplistic notions of cultural clashes and indicates the need to probe the political dynamics which lie behind the competing alternatives of 'collapsed states and Islamic-populist alternatives' (2004:257).

Aside from the contributions to *Historical Materialism*, three articles in *International Affairs* and *Global Dialogue* touch on closely related issues of Africa's incorporation into global capitalism, focusing instead on the importance of debates around Africa's natural resources. Often cited as part of the 'untapped wealth of Africa', for many, natural resources are seen more as a curse. As Nzongola-Ntalaja illustrates in *Global Dialogue*, the struggle for resources has played a central role in civil wars such as that in DR Congo as big powers, transnational networks and African states are drawn into such complex emergencies (2004). As the search for new supplies of oil hots up, and as growth in the world economy (particularly China) drives up demand for raw materials of various kinds, the need to understand the effects of natural resource endowments has never been greater. Focusing mostly on policy-related questions, Shaxson's article in *International Affairs* addresses the problem of volatility in oil revenues which tend to exacerbate fiscal problems and increase economic and political instability (2005). Shaxson argues for reformulating oil contracts between governments and companies, such that income streams are rendered more stable for governments and more of the burden of volatility is carried by companies. While high global demand might indeed give African governments some leverage in this regard, Shaxson's earlier statement that traditional measures work well in countries which are 'already well managed' makes any policy solution, including this one, problematic (2005:312). It is this political context which is the crux of the problem also for Ray Bush writing in *Global Dialogue* (2004). The prospect of resource export-led development, set against others' prognosis of a resource curse, prompts Bush to argue convincingly for a more serious engagement with the 'rentier politics' associated with resource dependency. Resource-based industrialisation is not necessarily flawed, he argues, nor is spoils politics and corruption inevitable. But there is a need to appreciate that where barriers to corruption are weak and where opportunity for capital accumulation is 'structured primarily through membership or connection to the state élite and linkages to foreign capital' then rentier politics become more likely (2004:191).

The Southern African Conjuncture

That all three special issues devote some space to debates about South Africa perhaps demonstrates the country's importance to the continent, both in terms of its developmental potential and its role in shaping the whole discourse on Africa in the run up to 2005. Nowhere are the politics of capitalist development, the relationship with donor policies and the left's responses to these, thrown into sharper relief than in South Africa and its troubled northern neighbour, Zimbabwe. In many respects South Africa serves as something of a test case for a whole series of debates. No country in Africa is more developed, nor been more active in creating the current high-level consensus and partnership with donors.

All bar one of the articles covered, take a critical position in relation to South Africa's policies under Mbeki's government. Perhaps most strident of the critics is Patrick Bond in articles in both *Global Dialogue* and *Historical Materialism*. He charges Mbeki's leadership as undertaking a systematically authoritarian defence of capital and oppression of those resisting neo-liberalism (2004b). Not only did the ANC allegedly bail out white business from a 'classic organic crisis of capital' at the end

of apartheid but it has then proceeded to turn the screws on South Africa's poor who have faced falls in income and state charges for water and electricity. Mbeki is accused of increased state repression in a 'Zanufication' of South Africa and while Mbeki 'talks left and walks right' Bond argues,

> *it would be impossible to seek allies in the fight for global justice amongst the nationalist leadership of South Africa, no matter … the occasional anti-imperialist rhetoric* (2004a:167).

Somewhat more temperate in tone, Barchiesi, writing in *Historical Materialism*, analyses the dilemmas posed for the left by Mbeki's politics. Like Bond, he argues that ANC rule has re-inserted the country into the global circuits of capital. However, where Bond asserts a straightforward, if fantastical, set of demands in response ('delinking from the most destructive circuits of global capital … close the World Bank, IMF, WTO and … rejection of the United Nations' neo-liberal functions and lubrications of US imperialism' (2004b:140)), Barcheisi recognises that, as with the left in Britain and elsewhere, neo-liberalism has been able to disorganise opposition forces. Established paradigms on the left in South Africa, traditionally aligned with the ANC, have been disrupted as the ANC's language of national liberation has been transformed into a legitimation of the enrichment of a new black bourgeoisie (2004:330-1). Desai, too notes the switch from the Keynesian Recon-struction and Development Plan (RDP) to the much more liberalising Growth, Employment and Redistribution (GEAR) policy in 1996 as a crucial turning point. And including and beyond the traditional left, the ANC 'magically' tied up all opposition parties in one way or another to acceptance of this approach (Desai, 2004:389). Within the ANC, Desai continues, 'Mbekism' becomes ever more presidential, lines between party and state are blurred, history is rewritten.

All three of these writers focus on the growth of new, grassroots social movements – 'the poors' – as an important element of the left response to Mbeki. For Barcheisi and for Desai, in the finer detail, the contrast with Bond's prognosis is notable: where Bond calls forth a unified opposition to neo-liberalism, Barcheisi recognises the plurality of associations and of policy options and strategies being offered in opposition to Mbeki (2004:350). Desai also points to the different ways in which the poors have engaged the state in campaigns to rein back the commodification of basic services (2004:399). Where Barcheisi concludes that the South African left, 'owes it to itself' to respond by 'redefining the field of what is 'possible' and 'feasible' (2004:350), Desai holds out the prospect of a move into electoral politics, participating in local government and waging a 'struggle inside and outside the institutions of power' (2004:401).

The international corollary of Mbeki's neo-liberalism at home is, for Bond, an activist foreign policy which he claims has turned South Africa into a 'sub-imperialist partner of Washington and the European Union' (Bond, 2004b:136). Against this view, in one of the only positive assessments of Mbeki, Laurie Nathan argues that South Africa's foreign policy has been 'entirely coherent' containing 'considerable achievements' (2005:362). Nathan claims Mbeki's foreign policy is rooted in democratic, Africanist and anti-imperialist paradigms and chief among the gains have been a de-militarisation of South Africa's security agenda, a pacific foreign posture and support for multilaterialism (of which the AU and NEPAD are prime examples) (2005:363-5). Nevertheless, the coherence of the foreign policy stance has come into question where these three paradigms conflict with each other, notably in policy towards Zimbabwe (2005:366-9). Other stances – on HIV/AIDS, arms sales

and purchases, and migrants and asylum seekers – also come in for some criticism from Nathan. However, by focusing on the question of 'coherence' Nathan doesn't really do enough justice to the importance of Mbeki's stance on Zimbabwe, nor go anywhere near far enough in interrogating the politics of it. As Clapham notes, forced to choose between NEPAD and African solidarity, even South Africa – for some a liberal beacon in the continent – chose solidarity with the despot to the north (2005:278). Such policy stances, as well as the more repressive elements of Mbeki's policy at home should give all pause for thought in how easily they dismiss South Africa and Mbeki as an imperialist, or neo-liberal, stooge.

The debate over South Africa's policy towards Zimbabwe inevitably spills over into debates about the crisis in Zimbabwe itself and two articles in *Historical Materialism* address this subject directly. As Raftopoulos and Phimister note in a wide-ranging survey, the Zimbabwe crisis has a purchase and standing far beyond the country's importance because it 'lays open the recurring challenges of moving beyond the imperatives of neoliberal capitalism, in forms that do not repeat the historical failures of the international left on the question of democratic alternatives' (2004:376). The authors note the deep divisions in academic debates about the nature and extent of violence that accompanied land seizures and the character of the land seizures themselves (2004:364-8). A crucial aspect of the debate turns on whether the land crisis can be interpreted as a part of a process of primitive accumulation (and hence a prelude to capitalist development) and/or the extent to which it represents a 'democratisation' of land and the economy more widely and a defence of Zimbabwe's 'sovereignty' from imperialism.

Raftopolous and Phimister use the article to respond to earlier published work by Yeros and Moyo (2004) which had argued that critics of the land seizures were 'co-opted by imperialism'. Yeros and Moyo chose to side with the 'uncivil' forces endorsing land acquisition rather than the 'inherently bourgeois' civil forces struggling for political democratisation who spoke from 'the imperialists' reper-toire' (as cited in Raftopoulos and Phimister, 2004:377-8). For their part, Raftopolous and Phimister argue that Yeros and Moyo ignore the internal political dynamics underlying the crisis and give 'an extremely benign view of the form of authoritarian nationalist state that has emerged …' (Raftopolous and Phimister, 2004:377-8).

David Moore takes up the debate utilising Marx and Gramsci to interpret the character of the 'two lefts' in Zimbabwe. On the one hand, Moore argues, are the 'agrarian nationalists', purporting to defend sovereignty and economic rights underpinning the ruling factions. On the other are the 'global critical cosmopoli-tans' who emphasise the importance of freedoms and political rights but whose support for democratic participation in production separates them from global neoliberals (2004:409-10). The conjuncture for both is a process of 'stalled primitive accumulation' forcing the former to accommodate authoritarianism, the latter to abandon nationalism. Yeros and Moyo fail ultimately because their preferred agents of capitalist transformation – the newly landed 'semi-proletarians' – are incapable of the historic task set them, and so end up relying on the state as the key agent of capitalist transformation, yet according to Moore they have no theory of the state. However, Raftopoulos and Phimister are similarly hobbled, Moore asserts, offering even less idea on ways out of 'blocked primitive accumulation' (2004:414-418).

The debate over Zimbabwe will no doubt continue to run and as these writers show, it exposes some of the deep fault lines within the left and in particular the cleavages

between what journalist Nick Cohen has termed the anti-fascist left and the anti-imperialist left. For his part, Moore suggests 'simple principles and light theory' – in particular democratic principles as a guide to political action in a context of flux, stagnation and ruling party turmoil:

> *… no democratic Marxist could support ZANU PF or its haphazard policies, whether or not some of them resulted in a 'land revolution'. Even a Stalinist would be hard put to pull an accumulation strategy out of this hat: a follower of Bukharin would find it even harder. A democrat would not even try* (Moore, 2004:408).

Conclusion

In conclusion it is perhaps appropriate to consider two general questions which arise from this review. First, what are we to make of these special issues as special issues? and second, what, taken as a whole, can we make of debates around the 'year of Africa' which they convey?

Rather unsurprisingly, the concerns and approaches in *Historical Materialism* are closest to the central aims and orientation *ROAPE* readers will be familiar with, namely, critical Marxist understandings of Africa's development. Indeed, several of the contributors are well known to *ROAPE*. Running to some 375 pages it is by some measure the most substantial of the three special issues and one has a sense from reading it of a well established and relatively cohesive, though still quite diverse, mode of enquiry. Perhaps this isn't surprising given the theoretical orientation of the journal, but there is certainly something to be gained from the fact that, more so than the other two journals, the contributions to the *Historical Materialism* symposium approach African debates from a broad historical conceptualisation of capitalist development. This lends the journal a dimension of a shared arena of debate which is less apparent in the other special issues. However, while this is certainly a real benefit to readers of *Historical Materialism* who are not normally engaged in African studies, it is perhaps a little less novel for those more used to reading critical Africanist journals. In this sense, the special issue serves as something of a showcase for African issues rather than drawing in new contributions by generalists to African studies debates (though Colas and Shenton are perhaps among the exceptions to this). In addition, in terms of topic (rather than theoretical) orientation, *Historical Materialism* has much less of a sense of a focus on issues arising from debates specific to the year of Africa itself. This isn't surprising given that several if not most of the contributions pre-date the Commission for Africa launch (despite being published in 2004). As a result, analyses touch on general issues of development such as state formation (Idahosa and Shenton), agrarian development (Bernstein), mining (Bush), donor policy (Nunn and Price), and southern Africa (Bond, Desai, Barchiesi, Moore and Raftopolous and Phimister). These, taken together, do give a real sense of, and new contributions to, some of the different debates on African development which are necessary for us to make sense of the year of Africa, but they do not translate in any simple way into policy or broader political responses to donors' recent initiatives, as the debates on South Africa and Zimbabwe show.

Arguably, the opposite is true of *International Affairs*. Here the focus is more explicitly on UK policy leading up to the Commission for Africa, as one might expect from a Chatham House publication. This is both a strength and weakness. Viewed positively, what it provides are relatively in-depth assessments of a series of

important policy areas – aid, security, weapons proliferation, resources – which for the most part engage with existing policies on something like their own terms. By this I mean the authors provide assessments based on discussions of existing policy aims, obstacles and outcomes which are often lacking from contributions to *Historical Materialism*. In these terms, the contributions to *International Affairs* represent a more mainstream and accommodating set of policy debates than one finds in *Historical Materialism* (or indeed, *ROAPE*) but should be of interest because of that. The most impressive of these perhaps is Porteous' appreciation of the sheer difficulty the Blair government – or any government – faces in achieving policy aims which go so deep into the transformation of the politics of Africa. Yet, despite Christopher Clapham's typically erudite context-setting in the introduction, the broader debates about the possibilities and extent of capitalist development in the continent, and how this delimits the politically-possible for donors and Africans, get a much sparser hearing. Viewed in these terms, the *Historical Materialism* and *International Affairs* special issues provide an interesting coupling, though we are left with a none too simple task of to trying to bridge some of the divide ourselves.

The *Global Dialogue* special issue is a much more eclectic collection than either of the other two. Consisting of a large number of short contributions it conveys a broader survey of issues and contrasting political positions (so much so that I have touched on barely half the articles in the rest of this review). Like *Historical Materialism*, the overall tenor is critical left-ish in political orientation, though with considerable areas of divergence. Also like *Historical Materialism*, the collection may be of more use to non-African specialists, providing in one place a take on a whole series of different issues that regular readers of Africanist journals would probably be more familiar with. Unlike the other two, *Global Dialogue* has been able to include contributions from a significant number of African scholars, other than ones based in South Africa, though most are located in US universities. This addresses one of the marked failures of the other two special issues (and something Liam Campling laments in his introduction to the *Historical Materialism* symposium) though less notable to *ROAPE* which is routinely much more successful at providing a forum for African and non-African scholars alike. Interestingly, this gives space to discussions of particular African themes (as is found in Lumumba-Kasongo's discussion of pan-Africanism) as well as some of the more strident and overt criticism of African governments (for example, Ayittey's contribution).

However, a case can be made that, despite the breadth of issues covered in these special issues, and the undoubtedly impressive contributions which they include, the combination of elements that we need to make sense of the year of Africa remain elusive. The problem posed to us by the Commission and the G8 and Live8 events is difficult because it calls for analysis at very different levels. While much of the policy discussions of 2005 were on very important but confined issues (levels of debt reduction, aid contributions, changes to tariff rates and so on) the overall aim the Commission set itself – and donors, and Africans – was anything but. It was asking for, as Sandbrook (2005) noted, 'nothing less than a Great Transformation in Africa', that is, a far reaching change to social, political and economic relations in the continent and sustained, liberal, capitalist development. It is this vision which sits at the heart of the development deal currently on offer. However, an assessment of this therefore requires us to straddle rather different registers: the kind of deeper historical assessments of capitalist development in Africa of the kind provided by *Historical Materialism* and the more specific policy focus of the kind found in *International Affairs*. Particularly for those self-consciously positioned on the 'critical

left' (contributions to *Historical Materialism*, *Global Dialogue*, and *ROAPE* included), this is a particularly pressing task.

One way of illustrating this dilemma is consideration of use made of the term 'neo-liberal'. For many of the authors surveyed, neo-liberalism serves as a touchstone by which almost everything – from the failings of NEPAD, the Commission, Mbeki and the EU to the rise of Islamic populism and the absence of modern statehood in Africa – can be critiqued. Yet nowhere in all the articles surveyed is there an attempt systematically to set out the meaning of neo-liberalism, assess how important it is in specific development policies in particular, and capitalist development in general, and evaluate the political implications of it. Instead, rather passing references are made, as if a reader can be left to assume what neo-liberalism refers to, and to agree that it is a bad thing. One is reminded of Sender and Smith's criticism of left responses to the Berg report which they argued relied on 'bogey theories of awfulness' to condemn without going to the trouble of more specific analysis of the associated policies and the conjuncture in which they arise (1985). The confusion is added to because the implications of criticism of 'neo-liberalism' in turn, seem to range from something as limited as modest changes to trade regimes to a dismissal of the very possibility of capitalist development in Africa in the foreseeable future. As with the broader discussion of the year of Africa, there is a failure to bridge the divide between specific analysis of policy and assessment of the state and prospects for social transformation.

Two suggestions follow from this. The first is that we need greater clarity on how far we can label current policies as neo-liberal, and if we do, what the connotations of this are. For example, we are told by several writers (Taylor, Burke, Idahosa and Shenton, Porteous and others) that political practice in African states diverges by some distance from what one might assume a neo-liberal model to be in terms of the levels of corruption, state intervention, political authoritarianism and so on. In addition, we are told by others that the political practice in the North includes, among other things, extensive trade protectionism (which is assumed, probably correctly, to be damaging to African economies), yet is a practice that is completely at odds with neo-liberal strictures. The problem is that without greater care in this regard, the political and policy implications of analysis remain implicit at best and at worst confused: Is the implication that Africa would benefit from a more liberalised trade system? Is Northern pressure for liberal governance in the south to be welcomed or not? Is the problem with donor policies that they are neo-liberal or that they are hypocritical? Second, if neo-liberalism is seen as just one, albeit arguably a dominant, form of capitalist development, then what perspectives are there on the necessity and possibility of capitalist transformation in more general terms? One implication of the critique of neo-liberalism, is that other forms of more regulated or Keynesian capitalism are possible and potentially more beneficial to Africa. However, another is that the critique of neo-liberalism is a disguised critique of capitalism *per se*, and a new version of a rather older, rejectionist stance about the impossibility or undesirability of capitalist development in the South altogether. Greater clarity on these kind of assessments would considerably enhance the analysis of the year of Africa contained in these special issues.

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Endnotes

1. Chatham House, also known as the Royal Institute for International Affairs, is a non-profit foreign policy think-tank, based in London; www.riia.org.

2. The term comes from Franks, 2005.

3. Nor does the analogy with Marshall Plan aid to Europe really work – for either Taylor or Gordon Brown. Against Brown's call for a Marshall Plan for Africa, Taylor claims that Africa has already received several Marshall Plans worth of aid. What both seem to miss is that Marshall Plan aid was given to countries which had largely already undergone the transition towards capitalist industrialisation. This is simply not the case in Africa – indeed this transformation is in fact the objective of much development policy. Per capita aid requirements cannot therefore be directly compared for these different historical tasks.

4. Further developments of this analysis were published in *ROAPE* – see Bernstein, 2003.

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Primitive Accumulation, Enclavity, Rural Marginalisation & Articulation

Patrick Bond

In March 2006, the University of KwaZulu-Natal's Centre for Civil Society in Durban aimed to reinvigorate a tradition of political economy by considering the legacies of Guy Mhone and José Negrão (who died in 2005) along with two others whose work was based on accounts of 'primitive accumulation': Rosa Luxemburg and South African sociologist Harold Wolpe (who died in 1996). The analytical traditions are diverse but complementary. Together they capture many of the ways that primitive accumulation continues to structure and reproduce systems of inequality.

For example, from Luxemburg comes a sense of primitive accumulation as a permanent mode of imperial 'accumulation by dispossession' (in David Harvey's terms) such that,

> *Force, fraud, oppression, looting are openly displayed without any attempt at concealment, and it requires an effort to discover within this tangle of political violence and contests of power the stern laws of the economic process. Bourgeois liberal theory takes into account only the former aspect: 'the realm of peaceful competition', the marvels of technology and pure commodity exchange; it separates it strictly from the other aspect: the realm of capital's blustering violence which is regarded as more or less incidental to foreign policy and quite independent of the economic sphere of capital. In reality, political power is nothing but a vehicle for the economic process. The conditions for the reproduction of capital provide the organic link between these two aspects of the accumulation of capital. The historical career of capitalism can only be appreciated by taking them together. 'Sweating blood and filth with every pore from head to toe' characterizes not only the birth of capital but also its progress in the world at every step, and thus capitalism prepares its own downfall under ever more violent contortions and convulsions* (1968 [1923]:453).

As an example of the wide-ranging Colloquium deliberations, Gillian Hart's essay in this issue takes concern about articulation of capitalist and non-capitalist spheres of economy and society onto the terrains of politics, race and gender, in a conversation with Wolpe and Stuart Hall and through them with Althusser and Gramsci. Practical implications of the critique of primitive accumulation – of its 'commodification' of social spheres like water and education – are related by Prishani Naidoo and Salim Vally. Other papers from the Colloquium offer a strong sense of revived Southern African and international political-economic reasoning that stretches from economic to social to environmental factors.[1]

Consideration of how capitalism's crises of sustainability and volatility drive the system towards super-exploitative relations quickly leads to debates about resistance. Colloquium participants pondered how struggles against exploitation in

production and reproduction, racism, sexism and ecological destruction contest the market itself, under circumstances of permanent primitive accumulation. Southern Africa is a central site for this discussion, since market forces have systematically 'looted' other modes of production, society (especially women's unpaid labour, via racist colonialism) and the natural environment. The South African government has recently taken to explaining that this legacy is based upon a division of 'first and second economies', and Thabo Mbeki claims a 'developmental state' is being built to fix matters. Naturally many of the contributions criticised both the analysis and practice of neoliberal states in the region.

Mhone was a major theorist of the 'enclave economy' in post-colonial Africa. Adebayo Olukoshi's keynote contribution surveyed his work:

First of all, an enclave sector was … triggered by foreign capital, whether it be merchant, industrial, service or financial. Often it was a conglomerate combining all. … Secondly, the enclave sector displayed a high level of capital intensity which was ironic in the context of massive labour surplus, and which basically sucked in the most skilled strata of the labour force, whether it was a racialised labour market or not.

Thirdly, the enclave sector was structured to facilitate large-scale production, and key players in the sector also exercised a host of monopolistic or oligopolistic advantages. Guy Mhone's contribution often stressed not just the use of market mechanisms to establish control, but also the use of extra-economic means, including political intervention and coercion, in order to secure advantages in the market to exercise monopoly or to exercise oligopolistic advantages.

Fourthly, as a terrain dominated by foreign capital, the enclave sector was ... the upper arena for an expatriate investing or managerial elite. In the context of Southern Africa, the arena was distinctly racial capitalist. In almost all cases, the role of local entrepreneurs or indigenous economic actors were either absent completely or were subordinate to the foreign investor.

Fifthly, the enclave sector was the central factor in the external orientation of the African economies… And that extroversion … meant that the enclave played a central role in this vulnerability of African economies in the 1960s and 1970s. One of the most interesting approaches undertaken by Mhone, connect[ed] his 1982 study of the Zambian copper industry to the most recent work he did on Botswana and Namibia as vector economies … [T]he core developmental project was not driven by an internal logic, but by external logic which meant that attention was not paid to the development of the home market, to create effective demand, but rather to the capture of opportunities in the external markets. These were characterized by … cyclical crises such as in Zambia during the collapse of the copper economy … [or which] the apartheid economy experienced on account of the enclave nature of the accumulation process.

The sixth characteristic is that the state itself assumed the key role in the development of the enclave sector. … The profitability of the enclave sector is assured through security, tax holidays and the government's liberal grants to foreign investors active in the enclave sector through tariff walls erected to give them protection against external competition as import substitution. [T]he policy orientation and incentives created were decisively in favour of the enclave sector, in contradiction to policy in the informal sector and what Mhone was talking about as the 'communal sector', particularly in South Africa.

The seventh characteristic is the strong linkage between the enclave and the international market, through the web of transactions established during the structural period of

imperialism. Transactions between the enclave and the rest of the world were structured as that of the periphery to the centre, with very few backward connections to the rest of the economy. So technological intensity was not refracted, in an organic manner, with what was going on in the informal economy.

In some of my own collegial debates with Mhone, these features invariably generated comparisons of enclavity as an 'outcome' of capital on the African semi-periphery and periphery, with uneven development as a 'process'. As we combined these insights, for example, in a comparative study of Botswana and Zimbabwe (Mhone & Bond, 2002), I came to realise how Mhone's approach forced open the doors to new intellectual problems of a relatively unique sort.

As interpreted by Olukoshi, these problems relate to contradictions during accumulation crises which in turn affected the character of subsequent industriali-sation: 'It was difficult to capture the moments when qualitative shifts were possible within the enclave itself', especially under circumstances Mhone regularly pointed out, when 'in South Africa and Zimbabwe and to some extent Namibia and Botswana [there was] disfunctionality within the enclave itself.' This disfunctionality proved an important basis for semi-peripheral industrialisation in other parts of Africa, according to Olukoshi, such as Kenya, Côte d'Ivoire, and to some extent, Nigeria. Yet such truncated accumulation requires far greater attention to 'the economic nationalism associated with the settler population [which] meant the process of accumulation was not easily captured in analysis, in spite of very interesting debates brought to many of us outside of South Africa by the *Review of African Political Economy*.'

It was partly because of a 1970s Poulantzian fascination with, as Olukoshi reminds, 'understanding which fraction of capital had an upper hand at what point in time, without connecting this simultaneously to either the national question or to issues of race', that by the 1990s radical political economy began to lose many of its South African adherents. Likewise, he continues,

Very little attention was paid to the important role of the work of women and the modes in which the relationship between men and women particularly in the labour reserves was central to the sustenance of the enclave economy. It was left to our feminist colleagues, people in gender studies in the 80s and 90s, particularly in the emergence of studies on the economy of care and other aspects of our understanding of livelihoods on the continent, to draw attention to the definite silence in the debates around enclavity on the issue of gender.

Olukoshi also underlined the need to transcend the classic analyses restricted to a defined national territorial boundary and to incorporate agency of both labour and smallholder rural populations who resist enclavity: 'at the intermediate scale, the impact of enclavity in Southern Africa was relatively underdeveloped in the literature, and this is one area in which Guy Mhone's contribution was thought to be quite outstanding.'

Pointing to Mhone's last great work, a soon-to-be published study for Codesria – 'in our quest for an alternative framework for African development beyond structural adjustment', Olukoshi reports that

[Mhone], perhaps more than any other person, contributed substantially to rescue the notion of enclavity from its treatment as simply a geographical matter … not connected … to local

social and economic dynamics in ways that would produce what Mhone called a 'virtuous cycle'… The enclave's island character tended to weaken the foundations of accumulation and to exacerbate vulnerability to external shocks.

Formidable policy challenges arise from Olukoshi's reading of Mhone, such as regional labour migration:

In the post-colonial era, enclavity has also played itself out as a result of a lot of anomalies and contradictions in ways that have fueled xenophobia and ethnicity. Consider the post-apartheid immigration policy, which attempts to maintain rigid boundaries in the context that was preceded by the sucking of labour from other parts of Southern Africa without regard to boundary … This policy flows out of the unemployment-underemployment nexus that characterizes primary discrimination in Mhone's analysis of the centrality of race to enclavity in Southern Africa. [P]rimary discrimination is … built into the political economy of the enclave in a way that permanently dampens wages for the working class.

For Mhone, the enclave was a rich metaphor that told us a coherent story of the linkages – or lack thereof – between capitalism and non-capitalist terrains of life via distorted labour markets, racial discrimination, and the 'double jeopardy' that – in Olukoshi's words – meant the region's accumulation was shaped first by

being former colonies of Britain or Portugal, and second, by being subordinated to South Africa, to the logic of South African capital within Southern Africa. It was domination at the global level, but also at what one may call the sub-imperial level, which played itself out almost in a zero-sum logic in which the development of accumulation and of infrastructure in South Africa was at the expense of the rest of the countries of Southern Africa.

The policy analysis Mhone has left critics of neoliberalism is exceptionally rich, because structural adjustment 'further re-enforced enclavity', leaving Africa de-industrialised and facing 'the massive expansion of the boundaries of the informal'. Mhone's books included *The Political Economy of a Dual Labour Market in Africa* (1982); *Malawi at the Crossroads* (edited, 1992); *The Case for Sustainable Development in Zimbabwe* (co-authored, 1992); and *The Informal Sector in Southern Africa* (1997). He published dozens of articles and chapters in major journals and academic books, on structural adjustment, labour markets, agriculture, industrialisation, the informal sector, women workers, HIV/AIDS, and other facets of socio-economic policy. He worked in and wrote about every country in the region. Throughout, Mhone's gentle temperament, quiet dignity, extensive experience, courage and powerful intellectual contributions inspired colleagues and students. He explored the limits of neo-classical economics applied to African conditions and, in the process, questioned dogmas associated with labour and capital market theory. Olukoshi's tribute concluded with a call for,

a theoretical dialogue between the cumulative works of Guy Mhone and … the contributions of people like Samir Amin, the earlier Samir Amin, [addressing] in particular the Africa of labour reserves and small holders, and of the plantation economies.

The great rural analyst José Negrão is equally inspirational in struggles for social justice. As noted below by Sabina Asselle and Joe Hanlon (Briefings, pages 202-203), Negrão was no armchair academic. He was responsible for a unique post-independence *praxis* by facilitating a formidable peasant land rights campaign. In his major study of 'How to induce development in Africa? The case of Mozambique', Negrão was concerned with four major challenges to conventional dualistic wisdom (2001:1-23):

1) As rural/urban migratory flows exceeded the supply of jobs the *subsistence economy* became less and less able to perform its social reproduction function, and the demand for modern sector output tended to fall;

2) Despite a rising per capita GDP, as wealth was concentrated in an insignificant fringe of society in real terms this meant declining annual per capita income [for the majority];

3) The assumption that there was surplus time that could be applied in mechanised farming was erroneous because the agricultural calendar and gender relations within the family production unit meant that periods of so-called free time did not coincide with periods of peak agricultural activity;

4) Women were increasingly marginalised and relegated to maintaining the subsistence economy, while men sought employment in the modern sector in towns.

The Mozambican case was tragic. The promise of post-independence rural protectionism, as a response to market failure, was not carried out:

> *Despite the rhetoric about cooperativism, the government support it received was minimal compared to that given to the state sector. The terms of trade between the urban industrial product and the rural agricultural product were clearly unfavourable to the latter.*

This mirrored at the local level some of the problems with import-substitution industrialisation that were evident in North-South relations. According to Negrão:

> *Contrary to predictions, the gap between the poor and the rich got wider, the middle class was eliminated and there was a flight of capital. The various limitations identified include: import controls tended to inflate costs; protectionism only benefited some and was rarely translated into local investments; protection for industry tended to lower the purchase price of goods produced by rural families; and the prices of the protected agro-industrial products of countries in the South were unable to compete with the subsidised prices of conventional crops controlled by the North.*

But Negrão and others in his group, Cruzeiro do Sul, found that trying to cure these diseases, intrinsic to semi-peripheral enclave economies with neoliberal medicine would only kill the patient. With financial liberalisation a major strategy of post-marxist Frelimo, 'the profits from capital flows from the *traditional* to the *modern sector* are channelled to offshore financial markets and … the tendency for interest rates to rise produces a fall in effective demand and thus in output.' For Negrão, true to economic training, the core strategic problems stemmed from limitations of bourgeois theory:

- Contrary to the theoretical assumption, in the real world markets are imperfect or incipient – in pure form they simply do not exist;

- The 'invisible hand of the market' itself causes externalities, particularly for women (due to the opportunity cost of their work time) and the environment (due to dis-economies of scale);

- There is a tendency for savings to be transformed into market capital and internationalised, rather than go into productive investment within the country; and

- Rural families do not have access to sufficient savings to enable them to choose options based on the economic rationality of market signals.

Negrão sought a way out of the empiricist box, in which neoclassical thinking imposes 'theoretical limitations with regard to strategy', ranging from markets to political governance:

> *The epistemological rupture in the production of knowledge on development has created a theoretical vacuum that has led international agencies, donors and governments to an excessive empiricism in their activities. The manifestations of this empiricism include: the cost of money in the country is systematically ignored on the unverifiable assumption that the market will take care of it; the role of induction and theory are disregarded and results are measured by output rather than by prevailing dynamics; the insistence that in order to reduce poverty rural units must increase supply because it is assumed that demand is perfectly elastic; instead of being considered flexible mechanisms open to change, institutions are equated with the legal framework approved by national parliament, where a sector approach focusing almost exclusively on ministries demonstrates an ostrich-like naivety; the western model of representative democracy is imposed as being qualitatively superior, without taking into account endogenous practices of participatory democracy that exist to some extent throughout the country.*

Drawing from two decades of research, Negrão came to question four common features of orthodox thinking: *the end of the peasantry in Africa* due to urbanisation is unrealistic, given limitations on job creation; the *technical ignorance of rural families* 'does not fit the facts' given 'local experience and understanding that should not only be esteemed but should also be stimulated in order to enrich the individual and social formation of knowledge'; the *lack of endogenous organisational capacity* is false, given 'time-honoured mechanisms and forms of organisation in rural societies that should be put to good use'; as is the assumption about *lack of market information*. As a result, for Negrão, reversing rural marginalisation required a bottom-up challenge to power, but one entailing acute sensitivity to the circumstances of rural producers. He called for two fundamental correctives:

> *The first is the adoption of a holistic approach where the set of economic (productivity and growth), environmental (eco-systems and bio-diversity) and social (identities, power, access etc.) aspects are more than just the summation of the sectoral components of the national accounts. The second is the need to understand the historical roots of African rurality, where decision-making processes governing the allocation of labour, land and capital involve economic units where production, consumption and distribution are inseparable functions, and thus cannot be contemplated separately for analytical purposes.*

To move in this direction would necessarily entail a break from orthodox political practice:

> *The limitations of representative democracy on the ground are evident – the capital is too far away, power elites reproduce themselves and the rhetoric of party politics frequently becomes a fixture in the futile discourse of local civil servants. Studies have shown that social and political stability requires much more than just delegating power through a vote; it requires effective participation in decision-making processes, from the family up to the national level – it requires the exercise of participatory democracy.*

Hence, 'The fewer obstacles to the delegation of power created by public institutions, the faster fundamental rights are materialised and the higher the national savings.'

This was by no means either a conservative libertarian or anarcho-syndicalist position, for, like Mhone, Negrão insisted on a linkage of local and national strategies that also revived sophisticated post-Keynesian insights.

His policy prescriptions would be relatively simple to implement by a genuinely developmentalist state, were such to arise: 'making available cheap money to the national business sector with the aim of increasing demand in the family sector through agro-industry', and in the process linking natural resources of the family sector with the 'technology, management know-how and market access' of capital; ensuring 'basic education, better quality potable water and general sanitation' as central prerequisites to peasant well-being and productive capacity and likewise 'reducing relative distances to services, markets and resources by building infrastructure, providing low-cost transport and gradually replacing wood fuel by electricity'; and by 'rebuilding the institutional fabric based on principles of participation in decision-making processes at all levels, gender balanced relations and the inclusion of endogenous and crosscutting institutions in governance.'

As was evident in the peasant movement that Negrão himself helped to construct, an agenda with these sorts of features will continue to be pursued by progressives in Mozambican civil society, and indeed these are some of the core strategies that are to be found more generally in African economic justice advocacy. Whether they can be generalised will depend upon the success of vehicles like the African Social Forum and the myriad economic justice networks springing up as structural adjustment ideology wanes.

The broader strategy of attacking neoliberal capitalism in Africa will require these kinds of approaches to rural marginalisation simultaneous with concern about macroeconomic enclavity. It is here that we turn, finally, to Wolpe's insights into the 'articulation of modes of production'. His work was based upon demystifying the construction of South Africa's 20th century system of social and economic control ('apartheid' after 1948 but essentially the same migrancy-based approach to 'cheap labour power' beforehand). Although there have been fruitful debates about Wolpe's chronology and methodology, there can be no question that the capitalist mode of production relied upon earlier modes of production for an additional 'super-exploitative' subsidy. This happened via a reduction in the cost of labour power's 'reproduction': for instance, workers came to the labour market very inexpensively because of multiple oppressions across society. Colonial-era arrangements for compulsory work included slavery and other forms of forced labour, taxes and fees, indebtedness, and wholesale expropriation of land. One of the most advanced of these systems was South Africa's apartheid, where super-exploitation was based upon simultaneous class/race/gender/ecological power, and led to an initial labour inflow from Bantustan reserve areas to the cities, mines and plantations where workers earned a pittance – certainly not enough to support the reproduction of an urban family. This was Wolpe's seminal insight from a 1972 *Economy and Society* article:

> *The supply of African migrant labour-power, at a wage below its cost of reproduction, is a function of the existence of the pre-capitalist mode. The dominant capitalist mode of production tends to dissolve the pre-capitalist mode thus threatening the conditions of reproduction of cheap migrant labour-power and thereby generating intense conflict against the system of Segregation* (1972:426).

Luxemburg had much the same in mind, after reading voluminous literature on South African relations of production, in arguing that,

> *Capital cannot accumulate without the aid of non-capitalist organisations, nor … can it tolerate their continued existence side by side with itself. Only the continuous and progressive disintegration of non-capitalist organisations makes accumulation of capital possible* (1968:452).

Although this understanding of an articulation of capitalism and non-capitalist relations is essential to correcting teleological marxist (especially Warrenite) understandings of Southern African political economy, Ari Sitas placed Wolpe's contribution in context:

> *We must remember that the dominant idea in South Africa at that historical moment was the liberal idea which argued that the economy was in essence 'colour-blind' and there was, through Apartheid, an imposition on it by forms of racial domination that were irrational. The separation between the forms of domination and the economy allowed for only one conclusion: the economy, left to itself, would set everyone free and more or less equal* (2006).

Since formal apartheid has ended, and since socio-economic conditions have deteriorated for the majority in the post-apartheid era, the fallacy of the liberal promise is exposed in reality. While the race of the rulers has changed, the basic structure has continued relatively undisturbed. We thus need to pay the kind of attention to articulation that Wolpe insisted upon, as Sitas notes, especially 'the link between the reserves, the homesteads, their social welfare provided by women working the land in pre-capitalist ways and what was happening in the city through the migrant labour system … [and] if we stretch[ed] it further, issues of cultural pluralism, of ethnicity and of 'homeland independence' could be read as so many attempts to buttress the sustainable and sustaining exploitation of black people'. This provides the kind of research agenda that Wolpe – who died in 1996 – might well have worked on since, according to Sitas:

> *First, he would have followed up on his work on the state, a project he did not complete, asking the same question: what is the degree of space within the state for a transformation project? Secondly, he would have been still concerned about the customary areas and how the urban and the rural get articulated in post-apartheid South Africa. Third, he would have had to think about the democratic content of policy in a class society.*

> *Yet, even in his absence, we are goaded to think how the elements of perceived reality interconnect. What steers, who steers and how? The world after all is an unequal, interconnected, patterned and evolving sociality. Do we have anything substantive to say about it or is it enough to enumerate social issues and crises? Wolpe would have thought the former; we have become experts in avoiding [the question].*

With strong foundations provided by Luxemburg, Mhone, Negrão and Wolpe covering the global, the regional, the rural and the urban-rural linkages, there is no excuse for neglect of primitive accumulation, enclaves, rural marginalisation and articulation in our ongoing work. As each scholar-activist would have enthusiastically agreed, there is an enormous amount to be understood from *praxis,* from tracking the left project in civil society during this era of state/party drought, a time when neoliberal encroachments in all these areas quicken and deepen, but are also sometimes repelled.

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Endnote

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From People's Education to Neo-Liberalism in South Africa

Salim Vally

In his address at the 10th Anniversary celebration of the Foundation for Human Rights in Pretoria, 29 November 2006 Neville Alexander posed the following question:

> *Why is it that in spite of a constitution that was arrived at in a 20th century model of democratic bargaining and consensus building and in which are enshrined some of the noblest sentiments and insights concerning human rights, we are living in a situation where very few of those rights appear to be realised, or even realisable, in practice?*

This paper attempts to answer this question through an analysis of the struggle to attain education rights in South Africa. This exercise it is hoped, will also allow us to further unravel the class nature of the South African state, the political economy of the transition (for extensive and excellent analysis of the latter see Marais, 1998; Bond, 2000 and Alexander, 2002) and the importance of the oppositional role of the new and independent social movements.

A founding principle of South Africa's constitution is common citizenship and equal enjoyment of an array of citizen rights including freedom of belief, religion, expression, assembly and association. A range of socio-economic rights including the right to basic and adult education and the rights of children are emphasised in the Bill of Rights. There can be no doubt that the end of formal apartheid and the attainment of a liberal democratic dispensation has been a momentous victory for the people of South Africa and of humanity. The lyricism of the phrases in our constitution and the promise of its words of justice, after decades of apartheid, has become a symbol of hope for advocates of social justice the world over. Yet two years into the second decade of our democracy, social injustice remains pervasive and inequality is growing, despite progressive changes to various aspects of our society, reminding us, once again of Marx's view that 'One cannot combat the real existing world by merely combating the phrases of this world'.

Unfortunately, the resonant words in the constitution can do nothing on their own and the social processes that give them effect tend to thwart whatever progressive promise they might hold (Bakan, 1997). This is not to deny the possibility that constitutional litigation can get results especially where social injustice is congruent with the liberal form of rights such as discrimination on the basis of colour or gender. Legal scholars can also acknowledge the gap between the words of the constitution and the law's practice. Yet, this paper argues that the constitution and the various laws that supplement it, including education legislation rests on and sustains

specific patterns of asymmetrical social relations and political order. The constitution has not been able to compensate for the systematic undermining of ideals of social justice by the routine operation of society's structures and institutions.

Veneration of the law is often possible because of the focus on normative questions within the legal system from a narrow juridical point of view (Mosher, 1997). In the last section of this essay, following Mosher, I will show how attempts to rectify asymmetrical social relations by social movements in South Africa are sometimes reduced to finding solutions within the boundaries of the legal system. Law as a social phenomenon, including the constraints of the wider social structure as well as its ideological and economic dimensions can be easily missed. All too often the law's autonomy from politics and society is the presumption.

Institutions such as the South African Human Rights Commission, the Commission for Gender Equality, the Public Protector and others, for all the good work some of them do, often disguise the vicious nature of the society we live in. The discourse of rights, championed as the mainstay of our public institutions and the constitution has often served to promote a fiction (Felice, 1996). Acting as if certain rights exist for all in an equal way inhibits people's ability to recognise when they are in fact, illusory, and why society does not act to protect these rights. A single mother in Soweto compared to a suburban corporate executive cannot be said to have the same power of political persuasion or opportunity. These are real distinctions that give some people advantages and privileges over others. The fiction that promotes the view that real social differences between human beings shall not affect their standing as citizens, allows relations of domination and conflict to remain intact.

Taking Suffering Seriously by William F. Felice comes with recognition that ruling ideology, often in the form of rights, disguises reality, blurs perceptions and creates illusions (Felice, 1996:34). Taking suffering seriously also means taking active steps to disclose the discrepancy between the existing normative framework of society and its reality. It also comes with an understanding that protecting human rights should take into account that the most pervasive and chronic forms of distress are a consequence of economic, social and political structural circumstances that impact upon groups, as well as upon individuals.

This view of collective human rights is opposed to the liberal conception of rights based on the notion that those who succeed in society do so because of their own individual attributes, and those who fail, do so because of their deficits and weaknesses. This view is possible because the philosophical foundation of the dominant human rights discourse sees human beings as individuals instead of as social beings – products of a web of relations – social, economic and political, from which social relations arise.

Felice critiques neo-liberalism from the perspective of the collective rights of millions of people around the world trapped in permanent conditions of poverty at the margins of economies (Felice, 1996:xii). These inequalities and injustices make a mockery of our basic humanity let alone human rights. Falk, in his preface to Felice's book, concurs that neo-liberalism as an operational ideology, despite its pretensions of expediently promoting democracy, is radically inconsistent with the defence of human rights, if human rights are perceived in relation to suffering rather than as 'abstract ground rules governing the relations of individuals to the state' (Felice, 1996:xii).

Pointing to the double standards often employed in human rights discourses and the presentation of values in an apolitical and ahistorical way, the veteran Tanzanian activist and intellectual Issa Shivji (2002:3) writes:

> *The setting of human rights standards through international conventions and declarations is itself a very contentious political process. We should be wary therefore of a perspective on human rights which does not treat [it] in the context of history and social struggle.*

Shivji contends that the various conventions of the United Nations and declarations of human rights differentially bequeath rights without challenging the unequal world order and therefore in essence leaving the human rights landscape unchanged.

Education Social Movements in the Seventies & Eighties

In this section I argue that the nature of the negotiated settlement, the continuation of the capitalist character of the state (despite the discourse of human rights and development) and the incorporation of South Africa into a global market economy ruptured the education principles and practices established by civil society in the 1970s and 1980s. Understanding these social processes will reveal how the once hegemonic education vision in the democratic movement has been reduced to mere 'footprints in the sand'. I refer here, for example, to free quality education at all levels, education with production, participatory democracy in education, critical thinking for political action and access to higher education for the poor and workers. Also, how traditions of worker education based on collectivist learning were transmuted into competitive individualism, exclusionary stratification and an emphasis on more formal hierarchical forms of knowledge and the notion of improving learning through rationalised learning outcomes (Cooper et al. 2002). This section concludes with the belief that while radical education praxis has been weakened, it still exists, and its centre of gravity has shifted to the new social movements post-1994.

People's Education

In the 1980s up to the early 1990s the concept of People's Education, in contrast to the apartheid education system, captured the imagination of many South Africans. It promised liberation from an authoritarian and unequal education system to one which could provide an alternative and a basis for a future democratic system fulfilling the potential of its citizens. It was defined variously as 'an educational movement, a vehicle for political mobilisation, an alternative philosophy, or as a combination of all three' (Motala & Vally, 2002:174).

A significant influence on and the forerunner to the People's Education movement of the eighties were the ideas and methods of the Brazilian educator Paulo Freire. Freire's ideas were introduced to the University Christian Movement and through it to the South African Student's Organisation (SASO) as early as 1970. Although the state banned Freire's books, hundreds of copied versions *of The Pedagogy of the Oppressed* were clandestinely distributed at black universities and 'eagerly studied by the young activists of the Black Consciousness Movement' (Alexander, 1990:22). SASO students and others applied Freire's ideas to many literacy and other 'coscientisation' projects in urban townships and rural areas. The appeal of Friere's pedagogy to educational activists and theorists resided in the fact that:

Freire's anti-capitalist social theory accorded with the experience of and the insights at which the liberation movement in South Africa in general and the educationists active in it in particular had increasingly arrived at;

The situation out of which Freire's pedagogy had been formed resembled that which existed in South Africa's ghettos and homelands;

Freire's pedagogical method of combining education/culture with conscientisation and politicisation accorded with the views of the BCM and was subsequently adopted by the broader liberation movement.

The specific organisation of the liberation movement in the late seventies and especially in the eighties as a grassroots movement anchored in groups and projects in the 'community' brought with it an exceptional sensitivity regarding democratic principles. This sensitivity reinforced by Freire's pedagogy became integral to the practice of People's Education.

People's Education was seen as a vehicle for conscientisation, promoting critical thinking and analysis and alternative governance structures in education. Critical thinking in this sense should not be confused with what is traditionally thought of as merely problem-solving skills, in vogue again through Outcomes Based Education, serving the post-Fordist production process. Rather, critical in this sense implies being able to understand, analyse and most importantly affect the socio-political and economic realities that shape our lives. The emphasis on democratic governance was expressed in the call for the establishment of Student Representative Councils and Parent-Teacher-Student Associations (PTSA). The concepts of democracy, access and equity emerged in the call for a unitary anti-racist and anti-sexist schooling system, an end to sexual harassment and corporal punishment, better resource provisioning, a different curriculum and free compulsory education. From the mid-1980s, supporters of People's Education were not only concerned with the transformation of schools; they also provided the impetus in the formation of hundreds of non-governmental education organisations and also actively challenged academics and the academy around three key areas: 1) accountability within the university and communities around them; 2) Implementing People's Education in the universities themselves and 3) support for developing People's Education in schools through the production of alternative courses and teaching methods (Motala & Vally, 2002:183).

While radical interpretations of People's Education remained dominant throughout the better part of the 1980s, liberal views on education gained cachet from the beginning of negotiations between the ANC and the apartheid regime in the early 1990s. The role of civil society organisations and even the language of People's Education became increasingly marginal to the overall project of education change. The discourse and content shifted substantially from radical demands which focused on social engagement and democratising power relations, to one which emphasised performance, outcomes, cost effectiveness and economic competitiveness. Simultaneously this form privileged secretive negotiations (hardly a Gdansk-like transparency) instead of People's Power on the streets and in the classrooms. The reasons for this included the particular interpretations given to equity and redress in the negotiation process and the nature of the participatory process in policy-making.

The National Education Conference (NEC) in 1992 and the establishment of the National Education Training Forum (NETF) in 1993 provide useful examples of how state and civil society organisations began to engage in education policy formation. The NEC, composed of constituencies active in the oppositional activities of the 1980s, attempted to define a policy agenda based on the principles of People's Education, linking the structure and content of education and training to the ideological and political project of civil society, emphasising equity, situating education within a more holistic development framework, including economic restructuring, democratic governance and changing social relations at the school level. The NETF, on the other hand, while framing its goals in terms of the principles of democracy, inclusiveness, and transparency, in fact often reflected the interest of its broad stakeholder grouping which favoured business and the state. The NETF's two important contributions were the proposed development of a qualifications framework, later the National Qualifications Framework (NQF), and proposals for curriculum reform. It could also be argued, however, that it supported a technocratic framework for education related to issues of economic growth and human resource development at the expense of addressing issues related to social justice and redress. As Chisholm and Fuller (1996:705) note, 'In the NEC the democratic movement was dominant; in the NETF it was hopelessly outnumbered by representatives of the old order'. The NETF represented the principal political agency in the pre-election period. It served to critically weaken and emasculate the radical content of the NEC's broad education agenda.

During the NETF process, constituencies were excluded from contributing to the development of a more equitable and effective education and training system. Although this exclusion was not formal, it resulted from the lack of resources and planning by organisations that deferred to the ANC. There emerged a clear shift away from civil society's earlier emphasis on changing social relations and a bottom-up approach to policy making.

Trade Union Education

Cooper et al. (2002:112) argue that the 'vision of the meaning and purpose of worker education had not emerged easily – it came out of long years of building organisation and struggle within the labour movement; nor was it easily maintained. Although it gained widespread support during the height of the struggle against apartheid, this vision no longer dominated the labour movement by the year 2000. On the contrary, in contrast to the earlier period, it is now based on 'consensus politics' which assumes the essential compatibility of all 'stakeholder' interests.

Having won some rights for time-off for shop-steward training through recognition agreements, union education became increasingly planned and structured from the early 1980s onwards. A significant feature of this period was the emergence of new forms of worker self-education, in particular, shop-steward councils and all-night seminars known as *siyalala* (Vally, 1994). Important processes of informal education took place in the shop steward councils as worker leaders with experience in building strong shop floor structures in the 1970s passed their knowledge on to the insurgent workers of the 1980s. Demonstrating a strong commitment to trade union education, shop steward councils began to formalise these learning processes by appointing one worker as an education secretary who was charged with co-ordinating education for the council. Later education committees linked to councils

were also formed. All these education initiatives were influenced by the growth of broader political struggles from the early 1980s onwards, and expressed a desire on the part of workers to shape and influence the nature of this struggle. This period saw the growth of militant civic, youth, and student struggles in which workers became increasingly involved. Through their informal learning experience as well as the intensive education carried out in shop-steward councils and through *siyalalas*, worker leaders gained confidence to engage with their unions' intellectual leadership on controversial organisational and political issues.

Unions have been referred to not only as 'schools of labour' but also as 'laboratories for democracy', where workers could test out new ideas, arrive at new understanding, and develop and enrich collective practices (Vally, 1994). Grossman (quoted in Cooper et al. 2002:120) writes,

> *Workers searched memory, each other, history, the world, political texts, for ideas and knowledge, bringing everything into their intellectual embrace.*

Workers came up with the concept of 'moving meetings', turning buses and trains into vehicles of mass education to popularise the campaigns. Education work within Cosatu also built on the growing tradition of worker cultural initiatives: at Cosatu's second congress in 1987, there were poetry readings, worker choirs, plays and art exhibitions. The mid- to late 1980s saw the emergence of over 300 cultural locals within the federation and the rapid growth of workers' theatre (Vally, 1994). Worker plays gave expression to the feelings of alienation of workers in factory conditions and their bitter experiences of racism, poverty and arbitrary dismissals.

During the height of the struggles in the 1980s, the labour movement played an educative role not only for organised workers, but also for many other sections of the black working class. Workers brought to community organisations traditions of participatory democracy, accountability, worker-leadership and mass action as well as a critique of capitalism and a growing vision of a transformed socialist society. The development of its vision of worker education was also closely linked with community and school struggles for a People's Education.

At the very moment at which workers were participating in mass action on a larger scale than ever before in South Africa's history, a very different process was getting under way. By 1988, it was clear that the broad liberation movement was being led into a course of negotiation with the apartheid state. The labour movement came under pressure to review its role, as well as its strategies for change and its vision of the future (Cooper et al. 2002:123). In line with the newly dominant politics of a negotiated settlement in the late 1980s and early 1990s, the trade union leadership responded by shifting its declared vision from that of opponent and adversary towards a stated goal of 'equal partner' with business and government. This involved participation in tripartite negotiating forums over policy development for a post-apartheid era. Increasingly, the leadership of the labour movement insisted on a partnership with the former 'capitalist enemy' and a common commitment to international competitiveness and appeals for foreign investment. These changes were to have two significant kinds of impact on worker education. First, the priorities, form of delivery, and key target audience of trade union education were shifted. Second, the labour movement was to become increasingly involved in workplace training issues guided by a new commitment to increased productivity and international competitiveness (Cooper et al. 2002:123). This had significant impact on the nature of worker education. Cooper et al. (2002:124) explain:

In the late 1980s and early 1990s, unions began to engage in a wide range of policy forums with management and later with the post-apartheid government. They faced growing pressures to produce 'experts' who could engage with management and government on questions of education and training policy that ultimately came to reflect concerns about productivity and profitability. This reflected a worldwide trend to reshape worker education in the light of the new politics of the post-cold war era. Whatever else this involved, it meant a pressure to turn away from the struggle to acknowledge and affirm experiential learning, in favour of the certificated knowledge of 'experts'. Once the knowledge based on certificated expertise was advantaged, it became increasingly difficult to challenge its authority and affirm any other kind of knowledge.

Crucial aspects of the earlier progressive tradition in worker education were being challenged. This went together with associated challenges. It undermined the notion that worker education was a source of value for the workers' movement and the working class as a whole, not simply an instrument for personal career development. An article in the *South African Labour Bulletin* in 1992 commented on the growing exodus of key trade union leadership from the trade union movement into government or into management, and quoted one worker leader as saying that trade unions were not only 'the best schools of the working class' they seems to be the 'best sources of trained personnel for everyone else in South Africa' (Ibid. p.124). Whereas earlier Cosatu resolutions on worker's education had stressed its role in liberating the working class, the 1991 Third Education Conference resolutions were far more moderate.

During the 1990s, union education programmes became more directed towards union leadership and full-time staff, with little or no education for the rank and file. This was paralleled by a growing tendency within the unions to formally elect more educated workers to leadership positions resulting in the style, language and setting of education were increasingly directed towards this layer of workers. These developments had a particularly exclusionary effect on women workers who are generally less formally educated, and who usually fall into the less skilled categories. It also eroded the tradition of the older generation of workers (often with lower levels of formal education, and less fluent in English) and prevented them from passing on their experience and knowledge.

Education Policy & Education Rights after 1994

A plethora of policies and acts were introduced after 1994 to redress the legacy of disparities and inequalities left by apartheid. The South African Schools Act of 1996 and the National Education Policy Act of 1996 govern the administration of education in South Africa. The South African Schools Act repealed the many discriminatory education laws that existed under the apartheid education system. The National Education Policy Act is aimed at 'the advancement and protection of the fundamental rights of every person' to education as guaranteed in the constitution; the Act empowers the national minister of education to determine national education policy in terms of the principles embodied in the constitution; the Act provides an infrastructure that requires consultation with a wide variety of bodies before determining policy. The government dismantled the pre-1994 education system, consolidating the eighteen segregated departments into one central department and nine provincial departments. The constitution vests substantial powers in the nine provincial legislatures and governments to run education affairs subject to the national policy framework, and each province also

has an education department. School attendance is compulsory for South African children from the ages of seven to fifteen.

Equity reforms introduced in the late-1990s did appear to try to equalise funding among the provinces, schools and socio-economic groups. The Norms and Standards for School Funding (Department of Education, 1998), was intended to guide the distribution of the provincial departments' non-personnel expenditure between schools. Under these guidelines, schools were ranked on the basis of two factors: the poverty of the school community and the conditions at the school; subsequent resource allocation was based on this school poverty index. The funding principle determined that 60 per cent of non-personnel resources should go to 40 per cent of the poorest schools. Many problems with this policy have been identified elsewhere (see Wildeman, 2001 and Chisholm et al. 2003).

While the 'Norm and Standards' policy does shift funds to the poorer schools, it only distributes on average, 7.8 per cent of provincial education department's budgets (Chisholm et al. 2003:765). For Wildeman the aim of the policy was to isolate the primary beneficiaries, the 'poorest of the poor' and increase the ability of the state to hold on to the twin objectives of fiscal discipline and redress.

Relative to schools in other African countries, South Africa has a favourable enrolment of girls although this achievement in the context of a high level violence and sexual harassment is often nullified. Many education policies in the last decade were formulated under the prevailing assumption that after the 1994 elections the new political dispensation would automatically translate into a better educational system for all – gleaming rhetoric that suggested anything replacing the past was better. Moreover, dissimilar realities of 'race', class, gender and geographical location were not factored into the politics behind 'stakeholder' composition (Motala, Vally & Modiba in Chisholm et al. 2003:592). Policy documents reflected a 'negotiated compromise' – a careful balancing act between contradictory political imperatives, chiefly social justice and economic development. This attempt at consensus without addressing the cleavages in society left an indelible imprint on the evolution of policies.

Those previously involved in education social movements, expected that the new political dispensation would translate into a better and more equitable education system. It seemed almost as if civil society was collectively holding its breath. The new educational laws and policies boosted this hope. The initial hope for change from above was misplaced but by 1998 civil society began to move from a sense of disillusionment and powerlessness to a situation where it tentatively began to re-assert itself. The initial impetus for this renewed activity began with the Poverty and Inequality Hearings organised by the South African Non-Governmental Coalition (SANGOCO). Between 31 March and 19 June 1998 over 10,000 people participated in the campaign by attending the hearings, mobilising communities or making submissions.

The hearings were organised thematically and were held in all nine provinces, dealing with employment, education, housing, health, the environment, social security and rural urban development. These hearings were supplemented by background papers compiled by NGOs and research organisations. Research focused on the legacy of poverty and inequality in each sector and its impact on people's lives, the extent to which current practices and policies contributed to improve conditions, and recommendations on the measures required to assist

groups to access their socio-economic rights. The Education Policy Unit (of Witwatersrand University) co-coordinated the gathering of submissions and served as a resource for the Education Hearings. The Hearings provided concrete evidence that the inability to afford school fees and other costs such as uniforms, shoes, books, stationery and transport were some of the major obstacles blocking access to education. In some cases, parents or even the pupils themselves discontinued schooling as the costs of these items imposed too heavy a burden on the family. The lack of electricity, desks, water and sanitation facilities in schools were also referred to in a number of submissions. Overcrowded classrooms continued to be a standard feature in poor communities. Frustrated by unfulfilled promises, many poor communities, particularly women in these communities, scraped together their meagre resources in order to provide rudimentary education facilities. A random look at some of these testimonies will be useful (Vally in Chisholm et al. 2003:470-472):

> *Annah Mokgabane said that the pre-school in Bofula 'is a little shack built by the community. There is nothing that the children can entertain themselves within the pre-school.'*

Adam Dichaba explained how parents were bearing the costs of running pre-schools:

> *We are paying for those teachers because we know the need. The government promised us that it will help us sometime, but it has done nothing so far.*

Although many hoped that education would provide the key to the door out of poverty, Konela Lekafola speaking for the Free State Unemployed Graduate Initiative (FSUGI) soberly reminded those assembled at the Hearings that thousands of graduates are unemployed and have no employment opportunities. Many people like Johanna Sebetlela expressed the fear that her younger brother would drop out from school because 'so many standard tens have passed but they are just roaming around because there are no jobs.' While FSUGI aims to discourage anti-social acts by getting 'young graduates to assist with voluntary service in the community', Konela felt at the very minimum they require some form of basic subsistence and training to sustain their activities. In the long-term Konela insisted that 'education alone is not enough. We need a new economic system based on need and not on profit.' After attempting to meet with different government ministries, Konela has come to the realisation that, 'It is not us that cause the problem but government polices and deficits'. In addition to the verbal testimonies, co-ordinators received scores of written submissions from parents, teachers, school governing body members, early childhood education and adult education and training providers and learners, student and youth organisations, trade unions, NGOs and church groups. These ranged from the carefully worded, logically argued views of research organisations to the poignant testimonies of some of the most marginalised such as child workers and prisoners.

The poor identified a range of obstacles preventing the eradication of poverty. At the conclusion of the nationwide Hearings the conveners arranged a list of responsibili-ties for politicians, government officials, the private sector and civil society in order to ensure that the fight to end poverty becomes the nation's priority. For government officials and politicians these included reversing the neo-liberal macro-economic strategy, increasing social spending and meeting basic needs; renegotiating the apartheid debt and releasing this money for poverty eradication as well as treating individuals and their concerns with respect and dignity. Unfortunately the

Hearings arrived at a cul-de-sac in the absence of grassroots community organisations to take the demands forward.

Three years after the Hearings, the Department of Education's School Register of Needs Survey (Department of Education, 2001) which quantifies the provision of physical infrastructure for South Africa's schools continued to show that adverse conditions persist and in some cases have even increased. It estimated that 27 per cent of schools had no running water, 43 per cent no electricity, 80 per cent were without libraries and 78 per cent of schools had no computers; 12,300 schools used pit latrines and 2,500 schools had no toilets at all. In schools that did have toilets, 15.5 per cent were not in working order. Schools requiring additional classrooms numbered over 10,700. According to the Survey, the number of state-paid educators decreased dramatically by 23,642 while School Governing Body-paid educators increased by 19,000. Clearly, a labour market involving the purchase of teachers has begun as the state is determined to reduce personnel expenditure as teacher shortages become more severe – a result of the HIV/AIDs pandemic and previous rationalisation policies.

A consequence of this trend, while saving the state a salary bill of many millions, is the increase in disparities and inequality between schools. It is largely rich schools that can afford employing additional teachers to supplement the number of state-paid educators. While the argument that the state's savings on personnel costs automatically translates into an increase in non-personnel expenditure is tenuous at best, it is a certainty that the practice places an additional burden on communities to carry the overall costs of education. The maintenance of school buildings has also seriously declined as schools prioritise other areas such as the payment of utility bills. In many instances School Governing Bodies, contrary to the vision of the role of PTSAs in the 1980s, have become 'glorified fund-raising committees'. They are constantly under pressure to increase user fees and at times illegally prevent children from poorer backgrounds access to schools.

Additional concerns relate to the dire lack of retention of students and the state of adult education. According to the Department of Education's statistics only 40 per cent of learners who enrol at entry level (Grade 1) reach Grade 12. Ivor Baatjies (2003) poses the rhetorical question:

> *Can we really talk about a democracy when almost 10 million of our adult population remain poorly educated and lack the basic knowledge and skills necessary for active participation in our society?*

Adult basic education continues to receive just above one per cent of the education budget. Most NGOs that worked in this field no longer exist because of lack of funding and, as a result, public adult learning centres are poorly supported.

While previously Technical and Further Education would have catered almost exclusively as a lever for the disadvantaged, they are now course-designed with specific niche training needs in mind. In this conventional human capital explanation, knowledge is valued according to its potential economic outcomes and education becomes purely instrumental to economic production and growth. And life-long learning is a signifier for life-long adaptation to the 'needs' of the global economy. The message to workers is about a skill crisis rather than jobs crisis. 'Get retrained and jobs will come', is the message from management and various government training bodies set up by politicians eager to be seen to be addressing job

creation. The reality, of course, is that alarming levels of unemployment continue. The assumption is that unemployment and low standards of living is a result of the inability of workers to keep up with technological change and that socio-economic development is contingent on the 'productive' role of education.

Education is seen as an economic investment in which students and workers are value added products and a means by which the economy is to be improved. Education and training are transformed into a panacea for economic performance as it is assumed that investment in human capital and technology will automatically increase productivity on the shop floor. It also conveniently transfers the responsibility for unemployment to individual deficiencies, implying that lack of employment is a reflection of a person's level and abilities instead of an intrinsic deficiency of the economic structure and how employment is distributed.

At the same time, macroeconomic policy as expressed in GEAR means the marketisation of education, public-private partnerships, fiscal austerity, budgetary constraints, cost recovery and cuts to education and other social services. Much of the cost of education is passed on to parents and students. Policy in South Africa sees the education and training system as a vehicle to improve productivity of the workforce and hence the competitiveness of the South African economy, while simultaneously providing rhetorical support for redistribution and redressing historical imbalances. It has been shown elsewhere that these two goals do not necessarily complement each other (Samson and Vally, 1996).

The New Social Movements & Education

The lack of public educational provision and educational inequalities prompted the Education Rights Project (ERP), formed by staff from the Education Policy Unit together with activists from various social movements to comment that

> the right to basic education and adult education for those from working class communities is no more than a mere constitutional declaration.

The difference though with the period of the Poverty and Inequality Hearings was the presence of nascent but increasingly expanding social movements. These included the Anti-Privatisation Forum (APF), the Landless People's Movement, the Anti-Eviction Campaign and the Concerned Citizen's Forum. The ERP worked closely with these movements in its five campaign areas namely, the cost of education infrastructure and facilities, sexual harassment and violence, farm schooling and adult basic education.

Like the earlier People's Education Movement, the ERP's participatory research initiatives with the various emerging social movements and community organisations, is a form of social accountability. It asserted the need for civil society to have access to collective self-knowledge, independent of government, in order to hold the state to account for its policies. It is used as a social check on the state's 'numbers' and 'statistics' which are forwarded by state functionaries as 'official justification' for its policies, and in this instance, the right to education. This critical research according to Kincheloe and McLaren (1998:264) 'becomes a transformative endeavour unembarrassed by the label "political" and unafraid to consummate a relationship with an emancipatory consciousness'. Those in the ERP initiative see their research as 'the first step towards forms of political action that can address the injustices found in the field site or constructed in the very act of research itself' (Ibid.).

During a process of collecting testimonies detailing the views and experiences of learners, teachers and community activists about their local schools, cold statistical data on school fees, transport, feeding schemes, child labour, infrastructure and facilities were given new meaning. The troubles and struggles of individuals and communities to educate their young in very trying conditions, to make the hard-won constitutional right to education a reality, are vividly portrayed in these testimonies. For instance, in Gauteng, a number of communities linked to social movements have designed or are in the process of designing and collecting data about their communities on basic issues such as the amount of school fees charged, cost of uniforms, books transport, provision of meals in schools, household incomes and violations of their rights because of the inability to pay school fees. With the assistance of the ERP, the data are analysed and then presented at community meetings where a discussion is held regarding actions to be taken to deal with the problems identified.

The importance of such a research process is that it promotes democratic and co-operative practices in the production and the designation of what constitutes knowledge and demystifies the research and facilitates a social and active response to complex policy issues. The outcomes of the research inform the design of a campaign aimed at improving local education. This will ultimately contribute to democratising the debate on, for instance, the impact of government budgets on local education as communities themselves will have the data to challenge or support assertions made by the state or other organisations about provisioning for education.

Issue papers on the five campaign areas have been written and debated in the ERP and its reference group, consisting of researchers and social activists working in education. An issues paper on the fifth campaign area, adult basic education, is currently being prepared. In this way the project ensures that scholarship makes a contribution to dealing with social challenges and that, without romanticising the capacity of communities to conduct research, that communities themselves profoundly inform, direct, own and use research produced through their efforts.

Throughout the country, initiatives such as the ERP in alliance with social movements, have created a groundswell of support for free quality education. Due to the extensive lobbying and campaigning of social movements,[1] and unfavourable press coverage of the costs of schooling, the government initiated a Ministerial Review of the Financing, Resourcing and the Costs of Education. In September 2002 the Government set up a reference group of 27 members, consisting of a core team from the Department of Education, and 'prominent economists and managers from inside and outside government' (Department of Education, 2003a:8) as well as the World Bank.

Although the purpose of the review was to 'stimulate and inform constructive discussion' on how government schools are resourced, the Review Report was formulated amid numerous complaints by labour and community-based organisa-tions, who charged there was no participation by any representatives of the labour movement's education unions, school educators, governing bodies and community organisations (Anti-Privatisation Forum submission, April 2003).[2] In addition to the lack of participation by key groups, critics argued that the Review was not adequately publicised to encourage wide ranging responses and the time frame for submissions did not allow for democratic processes to run their course.

Beyond the limitations in democratic participation, several submissions to the Review by civil society organisations raised additional key criticisms. Perhaps most striking is how the Ministerial Review addressed non-personnel funding norms (which consist of only 5 to 10 per cent of the budget) whilst remaining largely silent on the other 90 to 95 per cent of the budget which addresses post-provisioning personnel expenditures. This omission, the South African Democratic Teachers Union (SADTU) argued, had major implications for redress and equity in the system (SADTU response submission, 2003). Despite its recognition of some major strides in shifting non-personnel funding towards the poorest schools, SADTU also assailed the report for the 'unreliable data' upon which the allocations were based and called into question a formula which has tended to penalise poor communities with a reasonable existing infrastructure. SADTU describes 'large disparities between provinces in per learner non-personnel spending and vastly different poverty profiles … which it claims ends up 'robbing the poor to pay the very poor'.

Others have pointed to some of the other erroneous assumptions put forward by the Review and vigorously criticised the skewed use of research data to write off claims of public dissatisfaction with school funding and deleterious conditions. For example, according to the report, opposition to fees only comes from a minority (15 per cent) of parents. For some, serious concerns were raised over the Review's use of the particular survey that suggested parents found 'school fees reasonable'. After conceding that the survey question was ambiguous (it was unclear whether the question addressed the user fee system or fees at the school in question) the Review revised its claim to suggest that there was a 'sense of satisfaction of parents with the system' (Department of Education, 2003a:88). Participatory research done by the Education Rights Project (ERP) indicates significant *dissatisfaction* with the school fee policy, with most participants calling for the abolition of school fees. Motala (2003:4) also calls into question the lack of specificity of the report. She writes:

> While a number of extremely important issues are raised, the specific legislative, resourcing and governance mechanisms of how they are to be addressed are not made clear. The policy adjustments proposed by the Review are not linked to time frames or resource commitments. It is understandable therefore that some have cynically speculated that the report should be read for its political currency shortly before the general election and an 'attempt to head-off and manage the growing grassroots discontent instead of a realistic endeavour to achieve redress and equity' (ERP submission, 2003).

The 'closed budget approach' in the Review is also criticised. The premise of this approach is that the available resources for public schools are essentially fixed and the only way to consider what priorities should be addressed and what administrative systems put in place is within the parameters of this closed budget.

The Review attempts to shift blame around key problems to local communities. This is akin to blaming the victims themselves instead of self-critically taking responsibility for the many failures in the education system. For example, problems schools face in paying their utility bills is largely and strangely ascribed to 'runaway consumption of water and electricity', this in a country where 43 per cent of schools do not have electricity and 27 per cent have no water. The latter deficiencies are not even addressed. Instead, the Review suggests the favoured neo-liberal prescriptions such as pay-as-you-go electricity meters and vouchers for those schools that have electricity. The Review states that a variation of this option would be to explore 'the possibility of rationing electricity supply eventually, so that ESKOM would cut

electricity after the monthly consumption limit had been exceeded and then to re-connect it at the beginning of the next month' (ERP submission, 2003:2).

The ERP also found fault with further class-based assumptions that 'school fees serve an important accountability function' (Department of Education, 2003a:98) and the ultimate dismissal of governmental responsibility, the Review suggests that funding and resources are not the problem and argue that 'certain schools perform well despite deplorable conditions' (Department of Education, 2003a:66).

There were some in academia though who argued against the scrapping of school fees. In an article originally titled 'On the constitutionality of school fees: A qualified defence', Fleisch and Woolman (2004:111) critique an ERP issue paper on school fees by reiterating arguments contained in the Ministerial Review, they write:

> … empirical evidence suggests that school fees do not constitute a significant barrier to access, cannot be organically tied or causally linked to an inadequate basic education and would not meaningfully enhance human dignity if eliminated.

They also argue that a fees based system encourages community engagement and a vested interest in parents and learners participating in the schooling system. Based on these arguments it would not be churlish to suggest that the second part of their paper's title should be amended to read 'a qualified defence for privilege'. Research provides evidence that the user fees based system was consciously decided upon in order to placate white and middle class interests that they would not lose control of their schools. A number of studies, including a few mentioned in this paper, clearly dispute the Ministerial Review's assumption that school fees and secondary costs are not a significant barrier to education. Fleisch and Woolman also uncritically accept the Ministerial Review's contention that there is a large variation between the performances of poorly resourced schools, and therefore that resources alone do not determine educational outcomes. The fact that certain schools are able to perform well despite 'deplorable physical conditions' (DoE, 2003a:66) should not, however, be used as a punitive reason for failing to resource all schools adequately and redressing the apartheid legacy. As an aside it should also be pointed out that the 'basic minimum package' arrived at in the Ministerial Review was set on the experience of atypical schools that perform well with low levels of resources or as it was stated 'well performing but poor primary schools' rather than representative poor schools.

In June 2003, recommendations from the Ministerial Review led to a 'Plan of Action for Improving Access to Free and Quality Basic Education for All' (DoE, 2003b) which proposed that:

> From 2004 the poorest 40 per cent of schools would not charge fees;

> A proposal to revamp the exemption system, to include 'hidden' costs and uniforms and to make exemptions automatic where families qualify for welfare grants;

> Government can only afford a R500 basic minimum package per average learner;

> A basic minimum package for the poorest schools to provide for non-personnel, non-capital goods costing between R600 to R1000, well above funding levels for poor learners in several provinces;

Provincial shortfalls in complying with the new national minimum norms and new resourcing targeting tables can be remedied by re-prioritising within existing budgets.

Some of the Plan's proposals have been promulgated in an Education Laws Amendment Act (The Presidency, 2006). The latter Act calls for an annual list of schools designated 'no fee schools' through the *Government Gazette*. This is likely to be done in late 2006. The Act though does state that even if schools are designated 'no-fee schools' they can levy fees if the level of funding per learner is below that contemplated in the 'norms and standards for school funding'. A more fundamental problem which will exacerbate inequalities between fee-rich and poor schools is that while poor schools are prohibited from raising fees, middle and high income schools are permitted to top-up state funding to an unlimited level.

Finally, there was no serious engagement with alternative positions such as free education through progressive taxation. This approach is in line with the National Association of School Governing Bodies (NASGB) proposal, which is not to encourage an exodus to rich schools, but to 'demand a complete and radical transformation in the resourcing of education that will ensure access to quality education for all' (NASGB submission 2003). Rather than tinkering with the various equity formulas for redistribution (to allegedly favour the poorest) it was suggested to radically change the funding pie. Put plainly in the words of the NASGB 'It is our view that only a progressive policy of taxation that favours the poor, enabling the state to access much more financial resources from the wealthy, will enable an education system of free education, the scrapping of school fees and the redistribution of resources from rich to poor' (NASGB submission, 2003:4).

Conclusion

Many of the new social movements characterised by mass mobilisation are employing the methods of critical pedagogy. As Modi (2000:23) puts it,

their process is Freirean reflection and action, their direction is horizontal, their leadership is internal and their end is an equitable economic and social whole in which the individual is one active subject.

The new social movements in South Africa are evolving and remain uneven in many respects. Much of their activity has been spawned by the new conditions of accumulation that lie outside the ambit of the trade union world and its style of organising (Desai, 2002).

Greenstein (2003:39-48) argues that the affiliates of the Anti-Privatisation Forum/ Landless People's Movement use the discourse of rights mainly in order to bolster political mobilisation and to legitimise public action, rather than as a serious legal argument. In terms of the activities of these organisations he also points out an internal contradiction where activists use illegal tactics in the fight to assert legal rights. These tactics, Greenstein argues, has yielded limited results and have not moved beyond the boundaries of protest and pressure politics. For Greenstein the Treatment Action Campaign through the 'legal activist route' instead poses a fundamental challenge to the way power is reconfigured in post-apartheid South Africa. Greenstein is surprisingly sanguine about the ability of judges and law courts to correct the unequal distribution of power in society. Ollman's sardonic riposte to those who believe in the impartiality of the Constitutional Court is appropriate:

The Supreme Court is where the Wizard of Oz, with a wave of his Constitutional wand tries to turn a land bleeding with capitalist excesses into a Walt Disney fairy tail about 'the rule of law'. The purpose of it all is not justice but legitimation (Ollman, 2001:7).

Furthermore, Mosher (1997:617-626) writing about the 'harms' to social movements by dominant lawyering practices in Canada finds resonance today in South Africa. Problems which clients present to lawyers are quickly conceptualised and categorised as 'legal' problems. Avenues open for the resolution of any given problem thus, not surprisingly, appear to lie within the boundaries of the legal system. In practice, lawyers and sociologists like Greenstein rarely acknowledge the possibility of non-legal forms of action and remedies. For Mosher,

… the lawyer's world is professionally centred and dominated; some might say myopic. Part and parcel of this tendency of lawyers to look to the law and the legal system is the belief that legal remedies are both attainable and efficacious.

Another feature of lawyering is its commitment to instrumentalism. Perhaps precisely because lawyers believe in the efficacy of legal remedies, their practices are dictated by efforts to obtain them. Within this outcome orientation (wherein the world of possible outcomes is circumscribed by the notoriously narrow range of judicial remedies), 'success' is understood to be the securement of a favourable result. This is true both of individual client representation and of instances of 'interest group' representation, wherein groups seeking social change have optimistically (but often unrealistically) presupposed that the securement of a favourable judicial result would lead to substantial change in the lives of their members. Over four years since ruling in favour of the housing needs of the poor, the conditions of residents in the celebrated Grootboom case has not improved. Doctrinal juridical analysis rarely opposes or attempts to critique the social, economic and political conditions underpinning legal doctrine, legal process and particular legal results.

Bakan's (1997:152) central claim in his book on the Canadian Charter of Rights (eerily similar to our own Bill of Rights) that constitutional litigation and rights discourse are blunt tools for redressing social injustice. His conclusion is appropriate for this report:

The struggle for social justice is much larger than constitutional rights; it is waged through political parties and movements, demonstrations, protests, boycotts, strikes, civil disobedience, grassroots activism, and critical commentary and art.

Throughout the country, initiatives such as the ERP and the Campaign for Global Education have created a groundswell of support for free quality education. In the course of the ERP's work with communities we have heard numerous stories of hardship, dashed expectations and often of an uncaring, aloof and callous bureaucracy. Yet increasingly, silent apathy and hopeless resignation is giving way to creative initiative and courageous attempts by young people, their parents, some teachers and education officials to challenge the prevailing system. More and more people are realising that ultimately real education transformation will depend on the capacity of the poor and their supporters in different sectors to mobilise, coordinate their struggles and become a powerful social movement.

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Endnotes

1. The demands for a review of funding came from a variety of civic and social organisations – chief among them were civil society groups, student and community organisations who were key in boycotting school fees; the Global Campaign for Education; the Education Rights Project; and the South African Democratic Teachers Union.

2. It is worth underscoring the role that social movements played in pressurising the government for a comprehensive review, particularly because their absence from the Review Committee and its deliberations is striking.

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Struggles Around the Commodification of Daily Life in South Africa

Prishani Naidoo

Post-apartheid South Africa has seen the emergence of new social and community movements making demands on the African National Congress government to deliver on its promise of 'a better life for all'. In these struggles, the identity of 'the poor' has been increasingly mobilised, both by movements reminding the state of its obligations to its people, and in official policy discourse seeking to introduce neoliberal macro-economic changes. This paper explores how the category of 'the poor' is mobilised in struggles for basic services in urban areas in South Africa, and in state policy that seeks to draw poor people into agreements to pay for services. In doing this, it explores the possibilities inherent in capitalist society for change and the building of relations that challenge or subvert the dominant logic of commodification and, in turn, of capital.

'We are not Indians, we are the poors' (Girlie Amod); 'We are not African, we are the Poors' (Bongiwe Manqele): both at a demonstration in 1999 (quoted in Desai, 2002:44).

At today's meeting in Kempton Park, the South African Local Government Association Consultative Assembly agreed to a campaign to register the poor throughout our country in the war against poverty. The aim of the campaign is to ensure that the most marginalised of our people – the poorest of the poor – receive a subsidy from their municipalities for basic services. This will go a long way to ensure service delivery to the poor, who are deprived of a basic amount of water, sanitation services and electricity because they are too poor to pay for these services rather than unwillingness to pay for services (Media Statement, Father Smangaliso Mkatshwa, 16 June 2004).

Reflected in these quotes are two distinct angles on 'the poor' in neoliberalising South Africa. In the first, activists mobilise 'the poors' as a political bloc in defiance of ethnic classification; whilst in the second, the poor are to be 'registered', captured and contained to evade their potential for subversion. The struggles which are here expressed in mobilisation of 'the poors' focus on the commodification of the necessities of life in urban areas in South Africa. These are struggles that pit a determining 'logic of capital' against the 'life processes' that lie outside of capital but are crucial to its reproduction (see debate in Chakrabarty, 2000:16-18).

This paper explores campaigns for free basic services in South Africa post-1994, with a constant tug-of-war between poor communities and local municipalities as the logic of commodification comes to define service delivery. It exposes how the state has responded to these struggles and, in turn, how the identity of the poor has been employed in policy discourse and state strategies for enforcing the logic of commodification in the lives of the poor.

In his book entitled, *We Are The Poors*, Ashwin Desai recounts how a simple retort against a government official lent force to a movement that, from 1999, had mounted resistance to evictions and cut-offs in Chatsworth, Durban:

> *As the Council officials retreated, a defining moment in the struggle for Chatsworth occurred. One of the designer-bedecked (African) councillors began castigating the crowd. She had once lived in a shack, she screamed. Why were Indians resisting evictions and demanding upgrades? Indians were just too   privileged. One elderly aunty, Girlie Amod, screamed back: 'We are not Indians, we are the poors'. The refrain caught on as councillors hurried to their cars. As they were leaving they would hear the slogan mutate as Bongiwe Manqele introduced her own good-humoured variant, 'We are not African, we are the poors.' Identities were being rethought in the context of struggle and the bearers of these identities were no respecters of authority. The particular identity congealing in this moment had no grand ideological preconditions and so could not be co-opted by government. It was organised around the primary realisation that resistance had to be offered against the hostilities being visited on the poor* (Desai, 2002:44).

After Chatsworth came Soweto, Khayelitsha, Tafelsig, Diepsloot, Harrismith, Orange Farm, Kennedy Road … All over the country, poor communities, visibly 'forgotten' by the 'democratic transition' and its 'rainbow nation', rose up against neoliberal policies. In particular, the delivery of free basic services became a site of immense struggle between poor communities and the state. Through these struggles, the image of the glorious rainbow nation has come under threat, and the identity of 'the poor' has come to represent those seemingly excluded from the transition, a blemish on the mythologies of inclusion and reconciliation. The identity of 'the poors' has subsequently been mobilised by community and new social movements to make a range of far-reaching demands on the state, often citing the African National Congress (ANC) government's historical commitment to serving the needs of poor people. They call for the delivery of basic services outside the logic of commodification and the language of cost-reflective pricing and cost recovery (Barchiesi, 2004; Desai, 2002; Naidoo & Veriava, 2005; Indymedia video footage 2001-2005).

The many struggles cited above have arisen outside of traditional civil society. A description of the actions and character of community and new social movements in post-1994 South Africa resonates with what Partha Chatterjee has identified as 'political society' through his exploration of various case studies of poor and marginalised communities in twentieth century Bengal, India. In trying to understand the persistence of the conflict between 'the universal ideal of civic nationalism, based on individual freedoms and equal rights … and the particular demands of cultural identity, which call for the differential treatment of particular groups on grounds of vulnerability or backwardness or historical injustice, or indeed for numerous other reasons', which he situates 'at the heart of modern politics in most of the world' (2004:4), Chatterjee describes how particular groups of poor, excluded and marginalised communities in Bengal, as a strategic means of survival, mobilise their status of exclusion in order to elicit certain demands from a state that already recognises their need for special redress as a result of this status as an identifiable population group. These mobilisations often take place outside of the law, but are nevertheless effective in eliciting a response from the state, often positive in the case of Bengal, that sometimes lead to paralegal re-arrangements in the collective interests of a particular group.

With the idea of political society, Chatterjee presents us with an understanding of resistance in contemporary society as a result of the changing forms that power assumes (here he draws on the work of Foucault). It is around the very existence of governmental programmes directed at ensuring the welfare of the population, that groups and communities have been able to mobilise their status as specific population groups in order to access real gains from the state (Chatterjee, 2004:74). How different identities are mobilised and to what ends, is determined by contingent factors and the strategic benefits as identified by a particular group at a particular time. Political society represents a particular form of antagonism to capital that appears with the development of governmental technologies. In Chatterjee's terms, then, Chatsworth begins to speak about the problems of government in terms of 'the politics of the governed'. Chatterjee views political society in direct opposition to peaceful civil society, stating,

> *political society will bring into the hallways and corridors of power some of the squalor, ugliness and violence of popular life. But if one truly values the freedom and equality that democracy promises, then one cannot imprison it within the sanitised fortress of civil society* (Ibid. p.74).

At another point he writes that civil society is 'restricted to a small section of culturally equipped citizens', and is different from political society in that it prioritises legal and constitutional avenues for change as opposed to illegal or violent means (Ibid. p. 41). This is not, however, to imply that legal strategies are not employed in political society. The difference identified by Chatterjee is that both legal and illegal, peaceful and violent means for effecting change are mobilised, dependent on conjunctural considerations rather than on any principled and over-arching commitments to the law and non-violence.

In struggles for free basic services in post-1994 South Africa, we see the continuation of different struggles of parts of the political society that struggled against apartheid, and the constant changing of state policy in response to their resistance. In particular, we see the increasing mobilisation of the identity of 'the poor' by such groups, and the growth in discourses of poverty and programmes targeting the poor by the state. The experience of Johannesburg is particularly significant as it has seen the use of targeted programmes for the poor in order to contain the growing power of political society.

Under apartheid, non-payment in the form of the rent and service boycotts (or 'payment boycotts'), became modes through which black households negotiated their poverty and circumstances. As opposed to merely surviving in the under-resourced and under-serviced ghettoes created by apartheid for its cheap labour force, township residents actively came together to boycott payment for rates and services, giving people greater scope to make use of their low apartheid wages and helping to shape the liberation movement by empowering ordinary people (of the middle and working classes) to take control of their lives and to struggle against the apartheid regime. The payment boycotts spurned a widespread network of local civic organisations and relationships in antagonism to the apartheid state. With the unbanning of the ANC in the 1990s and the widespread acceptance that they would participate in the shaping of a democratic post-apartheid state, civic organisations increasingly came under the sway of the ANC in its preparation for democratic governance. In this context, it was imagined that free basic services would be delivered by an ANC democratic state (Barchiesi, 2004; Bond, 1999; McDonald & Pape, 2002; Naidoo & Veriava, 2005).

As the realities of neoliberal ideology became more pressing, however, the state began arguing that payment for basic services should be encouraged, as basic service delivery offered a significant avenue for revenue mobilisation by local municipalities. Under this new logic, the responsibility for service provision became that of the individual paying customer, portrayed as the 'responsible citizen'. Recognising the strong spirit of refusal on which liberation movement campaigns were built, the 1990s saw the ANC embark on a programme called *Masakhane* (We Are Building), aimed at encouraging people to pay for their basic services. Fundamental to this campaign was the recasting of the spirit of refusal against an exploitative system as 'irresponsibility' in the form of 'a culture of non-payment'. *Masakhane* therefore marked a clear recognition by the ANC government of the need to change the ways in which people imagined their relations to each other and to their basic needs (means of (re)production) if it was to be successful in implementing neoliberal policies based on a logic of commodification of basic services and individualised relations between people. In order to do this it would come up against new forms of the political society that rose up against apartheid.

Over time, clear separations were made between those who could afford to pay but would not, and those who were really unable to pay as a result of their poverty. While these separations are defining features of official discourse of the time, they were not yet, at the time of *Masakhane*, the defining features of official policy. As struggles for free services came to be taken up increasingly by communities identifying themselves as poor and therefore unable to pay, however, this separation would come to play a bigger role in policy.

Masakhane came at a time when South Africa's embrace of neoliberal policies was beginning to take effect, with widespread job losses, the growth of precarious forms of work, and the introduction of the logic of 'cost recovery' in all spheres of life – i.e. water, electricity, housing, land redistribution, education, health, and welfare. In this context, non-payment for basic services continued to affect the life strategies of the poor for dealing with unemployment or lower wages, or payment became simply impossible for the majority. With *Masakhane's* failure, manifest in the accumulation of individual debt, came widespread cut-offs and, with them, the emergence of community movements, reasserting the right to free water and electricity, and reconnecting the disconnected to their water and electricity supplies. In Johannesburg, the Soweto Electricity Crisis Committee (SECC) was formed in 2001 at the height of electricity cut-offs in the township. In these struggles, demands came to be made increasingly in the voice of 'the poor', those who could not afford to pay, identified as struggling, black, unemployed, sick, and largely female, those seemingly 'forgotten' by the transition (Fiil-Flynn, 2001; McDonald & Pape, 2002).

Significantly, while the civic movement of the 1980s consisted of networks between working class and middle-class individuals and communities, the movements that have arisen since 2000 at township level have remained networks of poor communities and individuals, with the boycott of payments remaining a strategy mobilised by the poor in reaction to the threat against their sources of provision for basic needs. Bricks Mkolo, Chairperson of the APF and Organiser of the Orange Farm Water Crisis Committee (OWCC), argues that the fact that recent struggles against the commodification of basic services have not been broadened to include middle-class communities and individuals is problematic, as it tends to speak of the problem only in terms of the immediate needs of the poor rather than seeing the struggle as a broad one against the logic of commodification in the delivery of basic

services in society. He goes on to argue that such an approach might be playing into the tactics of the neoliberal policymakers and strategists as one of their approaches is to separate those who can pay from those who cannot pay (Bricks Mkolo, Group Discussion, Orange Farm, September 2006). A possible reason for this movement portrayal of the struggle for free basic services as a struggle of the poor could be the very fact that 'the poor' (those who cannot afford to pay) as a population group (produced by neoliberal governmental discourse) had already been identified as a target group requiring intervention by the state, and was therefore viewed as a means towards effecting real redress for the immediate problems being faced by poor communities.

In keeping with its arguments for responsible citizenship through payment for services, the state responded by criminalising legitimate community struggles, arresting people for 'illegal reconnections' and other protest actions against commodification, and painting members of new movements as 'irresponsible' and as 'spoilers' of democracy. However, with the persistence of movement struggles, the 'dis-respecters of authority' have managed to win certain victories. The Johannesburg municipality has periodically (at times of heightened struggle) offered people certain 'concessions' such as the scrapping of the collective electricity debt of R14 million in Soweto in 2001 after the growth in popularity and support of the Soweto Electricity Crisis Committee,[1] and its actions and protests against the Johannesburg municipality and ESKOM[2] (Naidoo & Veriava, 2005).

Another significant change was introduced by the state as a result of growing national resistance but also as a response to deaths in the rural Madlebe community in Kwazulu-Natal following an outbreak of cholera after water cut-offs and resort to polluted steams (prepaid water meters had been introduced in 2001, Department of Water and Forestry). This led to the provision of certain free 'lifelines' for water and electricity – 6kl of water and 50kw of electricity per household per month. A few studies (Fiil-Flynn & Naidoo, 2004; Coalition Against Water Privatisation, 2004; Meth & Diaz, 2004) have shown how the introduction of 'lifeline' provisions has entrenched inequality as a defining feature of service delivery in South Africa. It has been used by the government to 'prove' its 'commitment' to free basic services for the poor without any acknowledgement of how minimal these provisions are, considering the generally large average household size in poor communities and the restrictive role that such provisions play in the lives of people, tying all that they do to the logic of the market. These studies have also exposed how much lower than the actual needs of households these 'lifelines' are. Research conducted by the Coalition Against Water Privatisation in Phiri, Soweto (2004 & 2006) highlighted the fact that many households include tenants occupying backyard rooms and illegal shacks. This not only results in the 'lifelines' having to be shared amongst more than one household, but also creates extremely unequal relationships between the different households sharing free water and electricity. These extremely low 'lifeline' provisions for water and electricity ensure the permanence of 'the poorest of the poor' as a separate group in society, unable to exercise free choice in matters of life.

A significant consequence of such concessions is that collective political demands are converted into individualised bureaucratic arrangements, forcing individuals into binding technical agreements that erase the politics. The demand for free services slowly transforms into a debate about how high a 'life-line' should be, or what the average household size is, issues related to how populations should be measured and managed, and how demands formulated in struggle can be converted

into quantifiable 'outputs' and so on. In this manner, state policy and responses to political society, while they might offer some redress for population groups that demand action on their part, almost always also seek to contain political society and to capture its heterogeneity in homogeneous categories and processes.

This is clearly evident in the most recent strategies announced by the Johannesburg City Council for basic service delivery and revenue collection which clearly target the poor. They are contained in the City's latest indigency management policies, entitled the Municipal Subsidies Scheme (MSS) and the *Reathusa* ('We Are Helping') Municipal Account Scheme. Most striking about these strategies is how they represent responses to the struggles of political society, with the poor being a specific target group of policy changes, and with the fact that the central issue being fought for by the poor (basic services) has come to form the cornerstone of new management policies. It is also significant how the status of poverty is being used by the state to try to contain the strength and power of political society, with the MSS and *Reathusa* using the language of political society to enforce its own logic of commodification.

But the path towards the MSS and *Reathusa* are equally significant in highlighting just how municipal policy has mutated as community struggles have grown. The introduction of prepaid technology at the height of protests against water and electricity cut-offs in Johannesburg and the growth in illegal reconnections, is evidence of this. With cut-offs, one is punished for non-payment *after* receiving a service, whilst with the prepaid meter, you have to pay *before* you receive a service – you are cut off until you can pay. The prepaid meter also removes any responsibility for delivery from the state and the private service provider, making the individual responsible for gaining access to basic services. In a context of high unemployment and low household incomes, part of the life strategies developed under the practice of cut-offs – i.e. reconnections – have come under attack, with prepaid technology developing ways of preventing any collective acts of resistance to the system of commodification and completely individualising the relationship of people to the resources necessary for life (Coalition Against Water Privatisation, 2004 & 2006; Harvey, 2005; Ngwane & Veriava, 2004). Enforcing the logic of prepaid has become the terrain on which the struggle for free basic services is being waged currently.

In May 2005, after years of struggle, the Johannesburg municipality announced that it would write off all service arrears for the indebted. In an interview with *The Star* newspaper, Roland Hunter, acting chief executive of the city's revenue shared services centre, explained that this move was necessary despite its cost to the municipality, stating, 'Last year we took action against everybody who owed. This resulted in a push-back from very poor customers' (*The Star*, 9 June 2005). In one move, the municipality seemed to give in to the demand that has been the focus of community movements since their inception.

But lurking behind the media splashes of debt write-offs was the stipulation by the scheme that in order to qualify for a write-off, one would have to sign onto prepaid systems of delivery for water and electricity and sign a binding agreement to pay for services from then on. Mobilising a new discourse of commitment to the needs of the poor ('those who cannot afford to pay'), the Municipal Subsidy Scheme represented an innovative means of enforcing the logic of prepaid technologies on poor people in a manner that seemed to speak directly to the demands being made by poor people's movements in political society. In particular, the City and service providers have attempted to build individual relationships with customers that encourage payment

through the creation of 'incentives' for the client, and through proactive mechanisms aimed at 'rehabilitating' those in debt. In this manner, poor people refusing to pay for services have been targeted as a population group requiring 'rehabilitation' through education and 'incentives' that draw them into the logic of commodification. Re-emerging in this new language of 'incentives' and 'rehabilitation' is the overarching aim of 'creating a culture of payment' (Amos Masondo, quoted in City of Johannesburg press releases, 30 January 2006 and 6 April 2006; Councillor Parks Tau, quoted in City of Johannesburg press release, 9 December 2005). The City described the MSS as 'a major incentive to poor communities in Johannesburg to relieve their burden of debts, but at the same time create a new culture of payment, and is intended to ease the burdens of those on a pension, child-headed households, HIV and AIDS breadwinners or orphans, low income earners, the unemployed and the disabled' (press release, 6 April 2006). Responding to the specific problem of basic services as raised by groups of poor people, the MSS is an example of how governmental strategies are shaped by political society in South Africa today.

In January 2006, the City launched *Reathusa*, billed as the second phase of its indigency management policy (press release, 30 January 2006). It targets municipal account holders with a gross monthly income of R6,500, allowing them to have half their municipal debt erased if they enter into a formal agreement to pay off the remaining half, and sign onto prepaid water and electricity meters; good repayments also offer the chance of having the remaining debt erased. While the basic principles behind the MSS and *Reathusa* are the same, the fact that a separation has been made between two levels and categories of poverty is significant. In discussions and descriptions of these policies there is now a separation between those 'who can pay but will not pay' from those who are 'genuinely poor' (Nomasonto Radebe, Bongani Nkosi, interviews, 20 November 2006). This has the effect of enforcing a distinction between 'responsible' (paying) citizens, and those individuals who are portrayed as 'irresponsible' and 'criminal', and thereby the attempted criminalisation of political society.

While the promises of debt write-offs may be winning some people over to the logic of commodification, community activists are adamant that they will continue to encourage people not to buy into the 'trap'. In the words of Bricks Mkolo:

> We will continue to tell people that this indigent policy is a trap. It is a way of forcing people to accept that they have to pay for water and electricity. By not paying we have said that we do not believe that we should be paying for these basic services. Now they want the poorest of the poor to sign that they will pay – where will they get the money to pay when they are not working? This is nothing but a trap. Reathusa is just a lie – how are they helping the poor when they expect them to pay for what they need to live? (Bricks Mkolo, conversation, February 2006).

As in Orange Farm, community activists in Soweto continue to oppose the logic of the prepaid meter and the latest promises of debt write-offs. However, prepaid technology has certainly had negative effects on collective struggle and strategies of resistance. While the rhetoric of the SECC and the Phiri Concerned Residents Forum (PCRF) continues to suggest that the majority of Sowetans are still resisting the rollout of prepaid meters, recent research, conducted by the Coalition Against Water Privatisation and the APF (to which the SECC and PCRF belong) suggests that resistance has faced serious challenges. The latest report states:

Three years since the launch of Operation Gcina manzi, and the start of resistance against the installation of prepaid water meters in Phiri, our findings suggest that residents have had no choice but to accept the prepaid system, and have begun internalising the logic of payment for water. For the few who have chosen not to sign onto the prepaid system, life has become more difficult, with access to water made possible only by walking to standpipes outside one's yard, and living without flush toilets. For the majority, life has come to mean finding ways of accessing water through the prepaid system. While the PCRF argues that a majority of Phiri residents are bypassing their water meters, our findings suggest that residents have begun to speak the language of 'saving water' and 'budgeting efficiently' in order to meet their basic water requirements within the prepaid system (Coalition Against Water Privatisation & APF, 2006:26).

As struggle has waned in Phiri, in other areas of Soweto, such as White City, Jabavu, and Dlamini, reconnections, bypassing of meters, and other forms of resistance have begun. As conditions in different parts of Soweto change, political society appears in different places. And different parts of political society begin to use different strategies.

Earlier this year, the Coalition Against Water Privatisation launched a constitutional case against the Johannesburg City Council, challenging its roll-out of prepaid water meters in Phiri, in the hope that some of the losses made in struggle could be won through the courts. However, recent changes in the indigent management policy would have to be considered in the event of a victory for the Coalition, as it is unclear whether it would apply to current policies. Significant is the fact that this battle will be waged on the terrain of political society where a range of strategies and tactics will be mobilised over the coming months by both the state and movements.

Chatterjee argues that the value of political society lies in its ability to expand existing practices of democratic political participation, and to transform the ways in which people choose to be governed. This might mean celebrating the self-reliance or self-government of the excluded and their capacity for collective decision-making following experiences and moments in the struggles of communities that make demands on the state but shun participation in it.

Following this path would mean accepting the mobilisation of the identity of 'the poors' by Girlie Amod (followed by Bongiwe Manqele) as a strategic act that occurred as the result of a number of contingent factors, and its subsequent mobilisations in various struggles and acts in the building of movements in post-apartheid South Africa as the coalescence of contingent modes of suffering and struggle that individually and collectively disrupt the homogeneous rainbow nation, but without any prior conception of how these problems would be addressed or what political form their engagement with institutional power would take. In his account of a movement of squatters in Bengal, Chatterjee writes,

Although the crucial move here was for our squatters to seek and find recognition as a population group, which from the standpoint of governmentality is only a usable empirical category that defines the targets of policy, they themselves have had to find ways of investing their collective identity with a moral content. This is an equally crucial part of the politics of the governed: to give to the empirical form of a population group the moral attributes of a community (Chatterjee, 2004:57).

It is in this understanding that a population group can be transformed in the interests of community to produce new relations that challenge the logic of capital. This allows for political society to be more than just a means of ensuring that the welfare of the poor is (sometimes) secured. However, this potential is dependent on struggle and the ways in which political society is imagined and constituted.

In this way, 'the poor/s' that arise to resist the logic of capital and to reassert their belief in a society free from relations of domination and exploitation constantly produce resistance, struggle, antagonism and crisis, that, in turn, come up against the homogenising force of capital through the neoliberalising organs of the state. This allows us always to see 'the poor', represented both in state and struggle discourse, as a reminder of capital's internal limit.

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Endnotes

1. The SECC was formed in 2000 at the height of electricity cut-offs in the township. Initially providing advice for residents who had been cut off, the SECC grew into a movement as residents came together around the act of illegal reconnections.

2. ESKOM is a public utility responsible for the supply of electricity in South Africa, and large parts of Africa.

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Ten Propositions about Black Economic Empowerment in South Africa

Roger Southall

Black Economic Empowerment (BEE) has become one of the most high profile strategies of African National Congress (ANC) government. Yet BEE has also become highly controversial, critics arguing variously that it serves as a block to foreign investment, encourages a re-racialisation of the political economy, and promotes the growth of a small but remarkably wealthy politically-connected 'empowerment' elite. There is considerable substance to such analyses. However, they miss the point that BEE policies constitute a logical unfolding of strategy which is dictated by the ANC's own history, the nature of the democratic settlement of 1994 and the structure of the white-dominated economy. This paper seeks to unravel that logic through the pursuit of ten propositions. An overall conclusion is that while there is a strong case for arguing that BEE (or some similar programme to correct racial imbalances) is a political necessity, the ANC needs to do more to combine its empowerment strategies with delivery of 'a better life for all'.

Since arriving in office in 1994, South Africa's African National Congress (ANC) government has sought to address the imbalance of power within the state and economy between the minority white population and the majority blacks. This strategy of Black Economic Empowerment (BEE), in its widest sense, has included passage of such important measures as the Employment Equity Act of 1998 and the Promotion of Equality and Prevention of Unfair Discrimination Act of 2000 which have imposed important obligations upon employers to render the workplace demographically representative. However, in its more popular sense, BEE has come to refer to a mix of political pressures, government procurement practices and legislation, notably the Broad Based Black Empowerment Act of 2003, which is designed to advance black ownership of and control over the economy.

BEE has become one of the government's most controversial policies. Criticisms range from the argument that BEE constitutes a drag on the economy, notably by frightening away investment, to the widespread complaint that BEE has led to the creation of a small but remarkably wealthy ANC-connected 'empowerment elite'. Such interpretations are far from groundless. However, they tend to miss the point that BEE policies constitute a logical unfolding of strategy which has been largely dictated by the ANC's own history, the nature of the democratic settlement of 1994, and the structure of the economy. This is not to argue that BEE policies and outcomes have been 'historically inevitable', nor that the ANC government has not had a considerable degree of autonomy in decision-making. It is to argue, first, that the

ANC is inherently predisposed to pursuing some BEE-like policies; and second, that it has to do so in conditions which are not always of its own choosing. I propose that the logic and unfolding of BEE can be understood through the elaboration of ten propositions.

Proposition 1

> The ANC's use of state power to assert greater black ownership and control of the commanding heights of the economy was politically necessary and inevitable given the overwhelming extent of white domination of the economy in 1994. The use of state power to assert greater black ownership and control was consistent with the decolonising principles of the ANC's theory of the National Democratic Revolution (NDR).

The economy of apartheid South Africa was dominated by whites and skewed to their interests: 350 years of white hegemony had systematically deprived Africans and Coloureds of the possibility of independent economic existence, severely (geographically and socially) circumscribed business opportunity among Indians, and transformed blacks as a whole into a supply of cheap labour, leavened only by a small middle class of professionals, many of whom served the needs of their own immediate communities within the African reserves/homelands or other 'Group Areas'. When apartheid began to crumble, two broad processes came into play. First, white capital responded to an increasing shortage of white skills by absorbing black labour into semi-skilled and skilled occupations. Second, from around the mid-1970s, the regime responded to the combined effects of skills shortages, political protest, international sanctions, disinvestment and growing external pressure by redoubling its efforts to construct supportive, pro-capitalist middle classes, notably through a cautious lifting of restrictions upon black trading and business. While racial inequalities did begin to decline, the extent of difference remained profound: as late as 1996, the white minority (8.2 per cent of the population) enjoyed 51.9 per cent of personal incomes, while Africans (76.9 per cent) received just 35.7 per cent (SAIRR, 1996/97:7; Terreblanche, 2002:392-393).

Two further features of the political economy need emphasising. First, settler colonialism in South Africa had provided for a greater development of capitalism than in territories where peasant commodity production predominated under colonial rule. Settler states were self-propelling. Settlers arrived as 'fully developed capitalist man', and with their forcible acquisition of vast supplies of land and cheap labour, a potentially productive combination immediately came into being:

> *In South Africa, the particular equation included also great mineral resources, and their association with British capital and African labour under settler supervision … produced very rapid economic development by world standards* (Good, 1976:604).

The introduction of capitalism into South Africa led to the most advanced level of capitalist development (and class formation) on the continent.

Second, white ownership and control of productive resources were monopolised to an enormous extent. Whites controlled the state, which through the parastatals was directly contributing about 15 per cent of Gross Domestic Product by the early 1990s. The parastatals' development had been dictated by the state's need to service the 'minerals and energy complex' (MEC) which constituted the core of the economy (Fine & Rustomjee, 1996). Furthermore, the private sector exhibited what was

officially described in 1976 as 'an exceptionally high degree of concentration of economic power in the major divisions of the economy' (RSA, 1977, cited in Davies et al. 1984:57). The degree of monopolisation increased substantially thereafter as political instability and international disinvestment encouraged the growth of conglomerates which spanned mining, industry and other spheres. By 1981, over 70 per cent of the total assets of the top 138 companies in South Africa were controlled by state corporations and eight private sector conglomerates (Davies et al. 1984:58). By 1985, the top six conglomerates controlled 71.3 per cent of the total assets of non-state corporations and controlled over 80 per cent of the companies listed on the Johannesburg Stock Exchange (JSE) (Davies, 1988:177; Fine & Rustomjee, 1996:108).

The ANC therefore had no option in 1994 but to use state power to promote greater black ownership and control of the economy. By the time the ANC took office, it had the advantage of being able to survey the wreck of post-colonial hopes left behind by earlier decolonisers, not least those of regimes where attempts to gain control over dependent economies through extensive nationalisation of mines, industry, services, marketing and agriculture had run foul of skills shortages, corruption and the hostility of international investors. Yet the ANC also had its own referents. One was how the National Party (NP) government after 1948 had used its control of the state to systematically promote Afrikaner control and ownership of the economy through affirmative action in the parastatals, deployment of state contracts and patronage to Afrikaner firms, and outright political pressures upon 'English' capital (O'Meara, 1996). The other was its theory of the NDR.

The ANC was in many ways a classic nationalist party, yet the combination of South Africa's advanced level of development with the extremity of white political oppression had thrust it into a long-established association with the SACP, whose alignment with the Soviet Union had established the framework of its theorisation of the liberation struggle. This prescribed a 'two stage' theory of revolution in which the NDR was outlined as the precursor to socialism, a formula which was sufficiently ambiguous to allow the co-existence of both nationalist and socialist elements within one movement. However, given the collapse of the Soviet state socialist model in 1990, revisionist thinking was thereafter to assert that there was no 'Chinese wall' between capitalism and socialism (Cronin, 1996). This enabled the nationalist elements which came to dominate the ANC during the political transition to quietly abandon the transition to socialism as an historical goal. However, the ANC needed to retain its identity as a 'liberation movement' and to remain a home for its radical and working class constituencies. The NDR therefore continued to frame the official discourse in which the ANC and its partners in the SACP and the Congress of South African Trade Unions (Cosatu) discussed South Africa's long term strategy, its inherent ambiguities allowing for the papering over of recurrent differences between them.

The NDR theorised relations between whites and blacks in South Africa, an independent country, as those of 'internal colonialism'. Hence the objectives of the NDR are those of 'internal decolonisation': to overcome the legacy of racial oppression of the black majority; to achieve democratisation; and to transform power relations as a basis for societal equality. Whilst capitalist market forces will continue to play an important role, the skewed structure of the economy dictates that the state must assume a critical role of ensuring equitable economic growth. Inevitably, the success of the NDR will lead to the growth of a black capitalist class and black middle strata. This is viewed as a welcome development, as black –

notably African – people were denied education, wealth and upward mobility under apartheid, a key reason why the small black middle class had thrown in their lot with black workers in the struggle for freedom. Yet in order to prevent black capitalists and middle class elements misusing relative privilege, they should adhere to certain strict codes of behaviour, becoming a 'patriotic bourgeoisie'. Meanwhile, the ANC is charged with mobilising all oppressed classes while also winning over those who have previously benefited from inequality. In short, the theory of the NDR (i) legitimates the 'historic' role of the ANC in leading South Africa; (ii) validates the need for an interventionist state to radically transform society; (iii) justifies the existence, expansion, wealth and function of a black bourgeoisie and middle class so long as they play by the rules laid down by the party; and (iv) endorses the need for cooperation with white capitalists whose objective interests may eventually lead to their incorporation into the 'patriotic bourgeoisie' (Southall, 2004a).

Proposition 2

> The essence of the negotiated settlement was that the ANC would secure political power while simultaneously accepting the principles of market economy. If this, in shorthand, translated into 'black' control of politics and 'white' control of the economy, large-scale capital was nonetheless aware of the need to reduce its political exposure by developing alliances and class interest with aspirant black capitalists.

A number of key features structured the transition (e.g. Bond, 2000; Terreblanche, 2002). First, the NP lost much support among 'big business' from the mid-1980s; second, 'big business' increasingly looked to find an accommodation with the ANC (even prior to the formal transition process) through 'elite' meetings in Senegal, Lusaka, Geneva and elsewhere, whilst for its part, the ANC sought to present itself as a partner with which large scale capital could play; third, the collapse of Soviet socialism in 1990 fundamentally changed the international landscape in favour of capitalist economics; and fourth, this enabled those leaders within the ANC (notably Oliver Tambo and Thabo Mbeki) whose experiences in Eastern Europe had left them less than enamoured with state socialism to shift the ANC's economics in a more pro-market direction (Gumede, 2005). These factors, combined with persuasion from bodies like the World Bank, underlay the ANC leadership's shift away from the 'people-driven' Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) (the ANC's 1994 election manifesto) to the Growth, Employment and Redistribution policy (GEAR) in 1996.

The adoption of market-friendly macro-economics came at the immediate expense of the poor and to the benefit of the established bourgeoisie and of the incoming senior ANC politicians. Terreblanche (2002:98) terms GEAR a '50 per cent' solution, in that it excluded the poorest half of the population, and argues that in agreeing to it, the ANC became 'trapped in the formidable web of the domestic corporate sector and the international financial establishment'.

The complement to 'big business' securing the shift in ANC economic policy was the need to embrace the incoming ANC elite into the direct sphere of capital. The approach was broadly two-fold: increasing the recruitment of blacks into corporate employment as managers and board members; and facilitating the rapid expansion of ANC-related black-owned business.

Randall (1996) details how large companies had been responding to external demands that they promote principles of racial equality in their employment practices since the early 1980s. 'Black advancement' and 'equal opportunity' programmes had increasingly enabled blacks to enter white corporate structures in both multinational and large domestic companies. Such initiatives were to be pursued with much greater vigour after 1994. However, the tendency, given their lack of technical and financial training, was for blacks to be appointed into mainly 'soft' positions in personnel, marketing and public relations. Yet as they gained experience, so the more prominent amongst these 'corporate sophisticates' joined an increasing throng of black 'consultants' and 'conference circuit champions' in being invited to join corporate boards. From there, it was a short step to their being appointed to head subsidiaries, form joint ventures with white business, or financed to launch their own firms.

A key aspect of the launch of black firms or joint ventures in the early 1990s was the political influence which it was assumed nascent black capitalists would hold with the new government. Some of these were former political prisoners, and hence close to or part of the ANC elite: whilst the white partners brought money capital to joint ventures, former political prisoners brought political capital (Randall, 1996:671). In some instances, the political connection was explicit. For instance, ANC notables established Thebe Investments in 1992 as an investment arm of the ANC, promising direct access to the new government to those with whom it went into business (Randall, 1996:672). However, reliance upon political connections was too unsure a way of grounding a black capitalist class which could serve as an effective ally to large-scale capital over the long term. The safer path was for large-scale capital to provide for a more solid partnership through the transfer of skills and provision of necessary funding. Randall (1996:673-675) cites the example of KKS Food Services, a company owned 66.6 per cent by Kagiso Trust Investments, in which KTI secured the establishment of an affirmative action programme whereby training of blacks would be linked to the natural attrition of white managers. Similarly, in linking up with Moribo, a subsidiary of Thebe Investments, Ster-Kinekor formed a joint venture, Ster-Moribo, and committed itself to recruiting and training black managers, and handing over the functions of finance, distribution, procurement, marketing, within five years. Such strategies flowed from the political insecurity of white capital, and the recognition by white capitalists of the need to make fundamental adaptations if they were to operate successfully under black majority rule.

Proposition 3

Black Empowerment was initially most easily pursued through South Africa's parastatal sector.

The creation of an instant black capitalist class after 1994 was always going to be difficult because, with few exceptions, aspirant black capitalists lacked capital. However, in taking charge of government, the ANC also inherited management of South Africa's parastatal sector, which it immediately viewed as a vehicle for extending black control of the economy, expanding the black middle class, and promoting BEE through privatisation and procurement.

In 1994, 300-odd state-owned enterprises (SOEs) employed around 300,000 people. They ranged from financial bodies like the Industrial Development Corporation (IDC), the Public Investment Commission, and the Development Bank of Southern

Africa (DBSA), to significant industrial undertakings and utility companies. Overall, however, the public sector was dominated by the 'big four' SOEs (Transnet, Denel, Telkom and Eskom). In 1999, these comprised approximately 91 per cent of estimated total assets of the top 30 SOEs (R130.8 billion), provided 86 per cent of their turnover (R76.9 billion) and 94 per cent of their net income (R7.9 billion), and employed 77 per cent of their employees (*Financial Mail,* 26 June 1999).

The parastatals were widely regarded as overstaffed and inefficient. It was not surprising, therefore, that the ANC initially espoused privatisation of SOEs as a key plank of GEAR. However, it was not long before the government's fervor for privatisation waned in favour of a more pragmatic approach based on retaining state control of key industries whilst disposing of parastatals' 'non-core' assets. This came about for three reasons: first, the early privatisation exercise faltered in the face of financial and logistical obstacles; second, privatisation has encountered strong resistance from Cosatu; and third, given the failure of GEAR to promote envisaged inflows of foreign capital, job creation and growth, the ANC has moved away from brazenly pro-market policies towards the pursuit of a 'developmental state' (Gumede, 2005; Southall, 2006a).

The ANC initially viewed privatisation as a strategy for transferring state assets into black hands. The difficulties, however, were clear. Many SOEs were heavily indebted, rendering them unattractive for sale unless their debts were to be written off. Meanwhile, economic prudence dictated not only that state corporations should be transferred to entities with the capacity to run them efficiently, but also to those who could afford the large amounts of capital needed to buy them. Notwithstanding the creation of the National Empowerment Fund, whose objective was to be the buying of shares in SOEs being privatised at a discount for resale to the 'historically disadvantaged', the uncomfortable reality was that unrestricted privatisations would mean largely selling SOEs to established or foreign capital. It was against this background that the ANC's experiences with privatisation were therefore distinctly mixed. Particularly salutary was the outcome of the partial privatisation of Telkom in 1997. Ten per cent of its shares were put up for sale to black investors, yet the government proved unable to find sufficient appropriate buyers. When the deal was completed, the former wholly South African-owned enterprise was now 30 per cent owned by Malaysian and US interests. The collapse in the valuation of Telkom from R19bn in 1997 to R15.6bn in 2003 was to severely embarrass Ucingo Investments, an empowerment group which had managed to buy into the company, and which was subsequently forced to radically restructure its debt.

Even while shifting regarding privatisation, the ANC government recognised parastatals as 'sites of transformation'. This had two closely related aspects. First, democratisation required that the SOEs were turned around to pursue the ANC's agenda. Second, while adhering to constraints imposed by the 'sunset clauses' of the transitional 1994 constitution (which guaranteed white public servants their jobs for a minimum of five years, or equivalent financial recompense), the ANC put in place top officials and managers it felt it could trust, and overhauled public sector staffing policies via strategies of 'affirmative action' and 'employment equity'. By 2002, for instance, the proportion of blacks in senior management at Transnet had risen to 51 per cent and in middle management to 41 per cent, while by 2005, 58 per cent of Eskom's senior management were black (*The Star*, 13 June 2002; 16 April 2005). Meanwhile, the parastatals' spending power was increasingly deployed to boost black companies: for instance, Eskom, Denel and Transnet deployed a

combined BEE procurement budget of R9 billion in 2001-02 (*Enterprise*, 31 July 2002). Just as the NP had used the state after 1948 to promote the welfare and upward mobility of Afrikaners, so now the ANC used it to favour its own constituency (Southall, 2007).

Proposition 4

The ANC was particularly keen to promote black ownership and control of the 'commanding heights' of the economy: mining, energy, and finance.

As noted above, historically the South African economy had been constructed around an 'MEC' serviced by such parastatals as Transnet and Eskom. By the late 1980s, this MEC economy was dominated by just six conglomerates (SA Mutual, Sanlam, Anglo-American, Liberty/Standard, Rembrandt/Volksas and Anglovaal), each with varying interests in mining, manufacturing and the financial sector. Although these conglomerates began to 'unbundle' in the early 1990s, it was not surprising that government strategies placed particular emphasis upon 'empowerment' within the MEC and that ANC-backed empowerment figures who emerged as the major 'BEE moguls' very often had strong connections with individuals and institutions in mining, energy and finance. Just as the 1956 Freedom Charter had committed the ANC to nationalising the 'commanding heights' of the economy, so now the ANC wanted to pursue a private sector version of the same broad aim.

Three developments can usefully be highlighted. First, little time was lost in appointing key black individuals, some with strong political connections, to head the major parastatals and public financial institutions. For instance, Saki Macozoma, an influential member of the ANC's National Executive Committee, left parliament to become Deputy Managing Director of Transnet in early 1996, and was promoted to Managing Director later in the year. He was succeeded by his own deputy, Mafika Mkwanazi, when he departed Transnet for the private sector in 1999. Sizwe Nxasana, who had previously launched his own accounting firm, became Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Telkom in 1998, resigning to become CEO of FirstRand Bank in late 2005. Meanwhile, a first black Chief Executive was only appointed to Eskom as late as 2000, in contrast to Denel, which by 2004 had already had unhappy experiences with three black CEOs (Seshi Chonco for 1997, Max Sisulu 2003-04, and Victor Moche 2004-05). Although the government has now highlighted its concern to prioritise efficiency above mechanical empowerment with regard to the restructuring of the parastatals, notably by the appointment of Maria Ramos to head Transnet in 2004 and Ian Liebenberg to head Denel in mid-2005, the senior posts in the major SOEs are increasingly held by blacks. Most of these, like Mvuleni Qhena who was appointed CEO of the IDC in 2005 and Mandla Gantsho, CEO of the DBSA since 2000, have risen through the ranks of the public sector, although a minority, like Qhena's predecessor at IDC, Khaya Ngqula, (who now heads SAA) were plucked from the private sector (*Financial Mail 2005-06*; Southall, 2007).

Second, after delivery of the Black Economic Empowerment Commission (BEEC) Report in April 2001, the mining & energy and financial sectors were the first to be targeted by the government's subsequently more assertive empowerment strategy. This was centred around the negotiation of industry-specific, target-setting, empowerment 'charters'.

The first of these, for the petroleum and liquid fuels industries, which actually preempted the formal handing over of the Commission's report, was signed in

November 2000 by all the major oil companies, establishing a target of 25 per cent black ownership of the sector by 2014 (the bulk of this transfer to be funded by the IDC). The second, for the mining industry, was proposed by the Department of Mines and Energy in July 2002 and set a target of 51 per cent ownership of the sector within ten years, whilst to secure a new mining license a company would have to have an empowerment partner with at least a 30 per equity stake in existing operations. Published in the wake of a bruising battle with the industry over a mineral and resources development bill whose basic intent was to vest sovereignty over natural resources in the state, the charter was subsequently subject to intense negotiations which saw its final version emerge in a much milder form (the empowerment targets having been substantially reduced – now requiring mines to be 15 per cent owned in five years and 26 per cent in ten years, albeit with the industry agreeing to raise R100 billion to fund the transfer). Nonetheless, alarmed by the prospect of state intervention, the financial services sector published its own pre-emptive draft charter in July 2003, setting black ownership targets of ten per cent by 2008 and 20 per cent by 2014 in contrast to the state's 25 per cent by 2014.

There followed a rush by virtually every other sector to adopt their own charters, while government drew up its own proposed 'codes'. Both charters and codes related to targets for black employment, training, procurement etc as well as for ownership, and there remain considerable difficulties in ensuring that they can be reconciled. Yet while the government's codes are justified by the argument that official action has been necessary to propel the private sector into adapting to the required rapid rate of change, the evidence from the minerals, energy and financial sectors is that large-scale capital, at least, is scurrying to 'transform', establish its credentials with government, and reduce its exposure by forging strong connections with the emergent empowerment elite. In all three sectors, major deals have been struck between established players and empowerment companies: by 2002 BEE companies' ownership of the petroleum industry had increased to 14 per cent from 5.5 per cent two years earlier; the major mining firms have all struck alliances with emergent black companies; and over the last couple of years, in one of the largest BEE deals so far, Standard Bank has announced its sale of 10 per cent of its shares to black partners (40 per cent of these going to a consortium led by tycoons Saki Macozoma and Cyril Ramaphosa), while the purchase of 50.1 per cent of the shares of ABSA Bank by Barclays (UK) would directly involve the Batho Bonke consortium led by Tokyo Sexwale and, indirectly, the Ubunthu-Batho consortium, led by Patrice Motsepe (Iheduru, 2004; Southall, 2004a and 2006).

The third aspect of government strategy, which inter-locked with personal ambition, was the 'deployment' of party stalwarts into these key sectors of industry with the objective of their establishing black presence at the heart of the economy. This can be illustrated by reference to the four largest black moguls at the present time:

Cyril Ramaphosa, former ANC General-Secretary, is executive chairman of the Shanduka Group (previously Millenium Consolidated Investments), which is largely funded by Old Mutual. Although he recently lost control of (what was left of) Johnnic, he has strong connections with First National Bank and Investec as well as Anglo-American/De Beers, and serves on the boards of SABMiller, Macsteel, Alexander Forbes (pensions) and Standard Bank.

Tokyo Sexwale, former Premier of Gauteng and Robben Islander, is chairman of Mvelaphanda Holdings (mining), which he established in 1999 and which is largely funded by ABSA. He is also chairman of Northern Platinum, the Trans Hex

Group, and Mvela Resources, and a director of ABSA, Goldfields, Broll and Wingate Capital SA. He is said to have the backing of Afrikaner capital through the Ruperts family, had additional connections with mining magnates Roger and Brett Kebble, and has further support from Alexander Forbes (financial services).

Saki Macozoma, who remains an influential member of the ANC's NEC and is particularly close to Thabo Mbeki, is chairman of Standard's asset management group Stanlib and Andisa Capital, but his major vehicle is Safika, which is largely funded by Standard Bank. (Safika emerged from what was the largest BEE deal yet in 2004 owning just 1.79 per cent of Standard and 2. 2 per cent of Standard's insurance subsidiary, the Liberty Group, but also owns 25 per cent of Stanlib). He also sits at the centre of a powerful network of political and public sector personal connections, as well as being close to Mzi Khumalo, the former ANC activist from KwaZulu-Natal, who has built one of the largest financial asset bases owned by black businessman with links to Rand Merchant Bank.

Patrice Motsepe, one of whose sisters is married to Cyril Ramaphosa and another to Transport Minister Jeff Radebe, is said to be South Africa's first black rand 'billionaire'. His major vehicle is African Rainbow Minerals (ARM), the black controlled mining house created in 2004 when Motsepe, in collaboration with Harmony, took over the former Avmin mining company. He has close links to Sanlam (once the vanguard of Afrikaner nationalism) but is also funded by Nedcor (*Noseweek* 66, April 2005:18-19; *Financial Mail 2005-06*).

The prominence of the 'fab four' has been central to much criticism that BEE has primarily benefited a tiny black elite. Certainly, they were peculiarly favoured by South Africa's largest companies offering to sell or grant them equity stakes at advantageous terms, often financed by the sellers themselves, in return for connections to government and the black marketplace. However, although they often have to contend with the criticism that they owe their positions and wealth to large scale capital, the logic of their position is the necessity of blacks climbing quickly to the top of the monopolised corporate structure if the aims of BEE are to be realised:

> *First you become a financial investor to accumulate capital, because capital does not fall from the sky. Once you are accumulating capital, you can begin to acquire skills and skilled people who you can deploy in various businesses. The third stage is acquiring control of companies and beginning to be an operator, running a proper business. Part of all that would mean having capital to start your own businesses* (Cyril Ramaphosa, cited by *Time*, June 2005).

> *There is no way I would support a free-enterprise system that tolerates poverty. But with five or six of us (black moguls) spread throughout the economy, that can make a difference in a fundamental way* (Saki Macozoma, cited by *Time*, 2005).

Proposition 5

Given the underdeveloped state of black business under apartheid, aspirant black businessmen were 'capitalists without capital'. They therefore required financial assistance from either the state or the private sector (notably banks) to leverage ownership and control of corporations.

The problem for the overwhelming majority of aspirant black businesspersons in the early 1990s was that they were 'capitalists without capital'. Segregation and apartheid had deliberately inhibited black capitalism. While this did not fully

prevent the development of an Indian merchant class in Natal, it had crippling effects on African capitalism. To be sure, under the 'separate development' strategy promoted after 1948, African capitalism was encouraged in the homelands through assistance proffered to aspirant African entrepreneurs by development corporations and competitive restrictions imposed on white economic activity. Furthermore, after the Soweto uprising, the government cautiously enacted measures to promote African business in urban areas as an intended buffer between white hegemony and the black masses. This inevitably meant that the African capitalism which did develop had an ambiguous relationship with the state, contesting its economic boundaries while remaining entangled in its strategies for ensuring white domination. By the early 1990s black capitalism was too under-developed, under-financed and ill-equipped politically to develop independently (Southall, 2005:459-460).

Two broad conclusions follow. First, if aspirant capitalists were to prosper then they needed to acquire rapid access to capital. Consequently, whilst many of the empowerment deals were immensely convoluted, they revolved around the basic tenet that the only way to get significant capital into black hands was through loans or gifts (Katz, 2006). Second, if blacks were to position themselves as likely recipients of loan or gift capital, then they had to establish a track record within the corporate or public sectors, or demonstrate valuable political connections and a capacity for business. Black empowerment financing was thus overwhelmingly provided by large banks and finance houses, or state finance institutions (both routes increasingly supplemented indirectly by government procurement policies favouring recognised empowerment companies or joint ventures).

Today, twelve years after the political transition, black companies control only approximately 4 per cent of the JSE's total capitalisation. Nonetheless, an estimated R150 billion worth of BEE transactions had been concluded by mid-2005 (Standard Bank 2005), while in terms of the Financial Services Charter alone, some R125 billion of designated investments will be made available by the sector for empowerment by 2014 (although only R50 billion for transaction financing, the rest for transformational infrastructure (R25 billion), low cost housing (R42 billion), agriculture (R1.5 billion) and black small and medium business development (R5 billion)). BusinessMap (2005, 2006) has reported that conservative valuations of 250 BEE deals announced in 2004 amounted to R62 billion, while 350 deals in 2005 amounted to R55 billion. These are not trivial amounts, and whilst a significant proportion of this funding is provided by public investment institutions, the major proportion is drawn from the private sector. In such circumstances, it is not surprising that the likes of the 'fab four' are so closely associated with established financial sector institutions and conglomerates.

Proposition 6

There have been three phases of black empowerment with regard to the private sector. The first phase of advance of black ownership was halted by the 'Asian crisis' of 1997-98. The second phase, inaugurated by the Black Economic Empowerment Commission reporting early 2001, was to see the state adopting a more assertive policy towards BEE through charters etc. The third and current phase is seeking to respond to criticisms that BEE has favoured only an elite by requiring 'Broad based black empowerment' (BBBE).

The outlines of three phases of BEE are becoming increasingly distinct. The first phase, centering around board appointments and share transfers, was kick-started in 1993 by the IDC's facilitation of the R137 million acquisition by black investors in New Africa Investments Ltd. (NAIL), led by Dr. Nthato Motlana, of a ten per cent stake in the Cape Town based insurance group, Metropolitan Life, from Sanlam. The IDC warehoused the Metropolitan shares until Motlana's group had raised the money to pay for them. In 1995, NAIL became the first black company to be listed on the JSE. The IDC financed 802 empowerment deals between 1990 and 2002 (Iheduru, 2004:13), providing some R7.7 billion worth of loan capital for other black ventures, including the hugely successful Mobile Telecommunications Network (MTN) cell phone company, the bulk of its funding going into manufacturing, followed by communications, mining, and retail and wholesale sectors. Along with lesser funding provided by other state financial institutions (notably the R1.3 billion for small and medium sized businesses by Khula, a government small business promotion agency, between 1996 and 2002), public funding for BEE during the first decade of democracy was not insubstantial (Iheduru, 2004:14). Nonetheless, it was significantly less than that provided by banks and private financial institutions, which during the early 1990s were promoting alliances with aspirant black capital through innovative lending mechanisms. In the glow of the 1994 settlement, the mood was broadly optimistic – yet the 'feel good' sensation was soon to crash upon the rocks of the sharp downturn in the value of the stock exchange in the wake of the Asian crisis during 1997-98.

The initial burst of empowerment deals saw black business reportedly capturing up to ten per cent of shares on the JSE between 1994 and 1997 (Jacobs, 2002). By the end of the decade this proportion had collapsed to between 1 per cent (Jacobs, 2002) and 3.8 per cent (Singh, 2001). The reasons are clear. Apart from a substantial number of early deals being politically driven during a period when the conglomerates were beginning to 'unbundle', most black inroads were made into sectors of industry which were highly vulnerable to fluctuations in the global market. Operating on borrowed money, many came unstuck when the JSE crashed in 1997, and thereafter, between 1998 and 2003, the stock market performed poorly. The number of BEE deals concluded in the late 1990s slumped following the stock market collapse (Jacobs, 2002). Yet the fundamental point was that black business was involved primarily in financial investment rather than entrepreneurship. Black investor groups typically took up less than 20 per cent of equity in companies offered to them, meaning that they did not acquire executive control. In effect, they became investment trusts which were not operationally involved in the underlying investment; and as the principal risk lay with the lending financial institutions, BEE companies were not really motivated to add value to their investments because they had little to lose (Southall, 2004a:319).

The second phase of BEE was inaugurated by the report of the BEEC in early 2001. This bemoaned the limited progress of BEE hitherto and proposed that government adopt a wide-ranging, state driven programme to drive more concerted progress. The government responded swiftly, with Mbeki announcing the drawing up of a 'Transformation Charter' that would set BEE benchmarks, timeframes and proce- dures, and eliminate uncertainty amongst investors (Southall, 2004a:323). There followed a flurry of legislation (e.g. the Mineral and Petroleum Resources Act of 2002 which vested all mineral rights in future in the state and laid down BEE targets which eventuated in the Mining Charter); proposed laws (e.g. a bill drawn up by the

Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) which broadened the definition of black empowerment to include the notion of a 'black empowered company' as one with just 25.1 per cent black ownership in order to encourage white companies to relinquish part of their equity without fear of losing control); and announcement that the government would draw up a global empowerment charter which could serve as a model for charters in different sectors of industry.

These initiatives forced the pace of change, as companies scrambled to set in place black ownership, recruitment and other targets. However, the progress of BEE was hampered by the relatively slow pace of stock market recovery. BusinessMap (2004:55-56), which considers 35 per cent ownership of equity as indicating control, recorded that by the end of 2003, the number of black-controlled companies on the JSE stood at 21, far from its peak in August 1991 of 38, although in the same period market capitalisation of black controlled firms had risen from R53 billion to R58 billion. Yet the factor which attracted most public attention was that the principal BEE deals appeared inexorably to favour a small empowerment elite, such criticisms focusing heavily upon the apparent enrichment of the 'fab four'. BEE heavyweight companies continued to dominate, with DTI reporting that 72 per cent of the total BEE deal value in 2003 involved at least one of six BEE heavyweights (Southall, 2006b:192).

Such debate reached fever pitch with announcement of the Standard Bank and Barclays/ABSA deals in late 2004. Although the banks touted the deals as implementing 'broad-based empowerment', they were seen as empowering 'BEE–llionaires'. Even if the discussion failed to grapple with how to propel blacks to the top of the corporate heap without hugely enriching them, it did highlight the related issues of how to widen black participation in capitalism whilst simultaneously rendering that capitalism more responsive to the needs of the entire population.

The third phase, heralded by the Broad Based Black Economic Empowerment (BBBEE) Act of 2003, sought to consolidate BEE through the issue of ten codes of good practice (to which sectoral charters would have to conform). A first round tabled four of the codes which covered the conceptual framework of BEE, measurement of ownership, measurement of management and control, and interpretations of the individual statements. The second round, introduced in December 2005, covered employment equity, skills development, preferential procurement, enterprise development, residual matters, and measurement of qualifying small enterprises. Together, the codes of good practice provide the basis for a 'generic scorecard' against which firms' empowerment credentials will be measured when they compete for government contracts. BEE charters will be required either to prove that their construction has been sufficiently consultative and embodies the broad objectives of the BBBEE Act (becoming legally binding on state and public entities), or (more stringently) to prove to an independent third party that they embody all the requirements of the Act and the generic scorecard (SAIRR, 2004/5:236-237).

While the upturn in the stockmarket since 2004 has seen something of a recovery in BEE (BusinessMap, 2006), many within the corporate sector fear that the new emphasis upon broad-based empowerment will lead to South African capitalism becoming increasingly entrapped in a web of red tape.

Proposition 7

The widespread critique of BEE as having favoured only an elite is exaggerated, as black ownership and control is extending across different levels and sectors of the economy.

The argument above most certainly proposes a logic which favours the development of a corps of 'black moguls' and concentrations of black economic power in large black corporations which can join, if not challenge, major large-scale white and multinational capital at the apex of the South African economy. This logic is endorsed by those critics who propose that the problem of BEE is not that it has created a handful of black millionaires, but that it has not created enough! The 2005 World Wealth Report indicated that 38,000 of Africa's estimated 75,000 *dollar* millionaires live in South Africa, and all but a tiny few of these are white (*Sunday Times*, 17 July 2005). Clearly, while the indications are that South Africa's 'power elite' is in the throes of becoming deracialised, a particular problem for the BEE-llionaires is that they are extraordinarily visible, and although admired, their success is envied. However there is evidence to suggest that BEE is more 'broad based' than is generally allowed. The argument rests on three methodological points.

First, research into BEE privileges deals conducted through the JSE. These are generally the most public, the most noticed by asset managers, and the most 'measurable' by organisations like BusinessMap and Empowerdex. These organisations' data-gathering is invaluable, yet they freely admit that it is not comprehensive, as not all BEE deals concern companies registered on the stock exchange. While a large proportion of the value of recorded deals concerns just a few major black companies, the remaining value involving other concerns is not insignificant. For instance, Deputy Minister of Finance Mandisi Mpahlwa has stated that 40 per cent of the transaction value of BEE deals completed in 2004 involved broad-based entities and at least 6.4 per cent involved employees. Hence I have argued elsewhere that

> *BEE deals, large and small, are being concluded over a wide array of sectors, by a wide array of BEE entities (owned variously by individuals, managers, employees, investment trusts and unions), and through a variety of devices (outright purchase, loan purchase, joint ventures with established firms, buyouts and partnerships)* (Southall, 2006b:196).

Second, although the DTI has excluded black-owned pension funds from counting towards BEE status, many calculate that such 'indirect black ownership' is significant. Empowerdex has indicated that in June 2002 'empowerment owners' owned R143.4 billion (or 9.5 per cent) of the largest JSE-listed companies. Of this, 53 per cent was owned by government agencies and pension funds, 26 per cent by SOEs, 8 per cent by municipalities and the remainder by other bodies (Southall, 2006b:190). Cosatu especially has been lobbying to have black pension monies count as a qualifying criterion for empowerment status, arguing that this would strengthen their right to formal recognition upon pension fund boards and hence their capacity to influence investment.

Third, the normal measurements of BEE are mainly urban-based and private-sector oriented, systematically excluding other forms of procurement activity. This means that we know very little about what contracts are offered, and to whom, by provincial and local governments around the country. Anecdotal evidence indicates that there is widespread corruption in the allocation of contracts at these levels, with ANC

functionaries making decisions behind closed doors and favouring family and friends. This requires further research; provincial and local governments have considerable spending power, which seems to be increasingly directed towards black owned firms, many of them very small, and very local.

Proposition 8

Given the centrality of political leverage to the promotion of BEE and the structure of the South African economy, black capitalism and black capitalists are as likely to tend towards 'cronyism' and 'compradorism' as 'Weberianism' and 'patriotism'.

Our present ideas of what drives entrepreneurship have been much shaped by Max Weber, for whom the motivations of ascetic Protestantism in seventeenth-century Western Europe constituted a major influence on the development of capitalism. Making money through the systematic and rational pursuit of production became both a business and religious ethic. Matched by the associated virtues of personal austerity which encouraged saving and reinvestment, these values survived the growing secularisation of society and translated into the 'spirit of capitalism'. The notion of the 'patriotic capitalist' which emanates from the theory of the NDR is not dissimilar. From this perspective, emergent black capitalists should be driven less by the motivation for personal benefit than for the collective benefit of historically-oppressed blacks: the temptations of relative privilege must not be allowed to evolve into parasitism, and dedication to the success of the NDR should dictate the behaviour of the 'patriotic bourgeoisie'.

In practice, the centrality of political leverage to the promotion of BEE works to undermine 'patriotism' and encourage a tendency towards 'compradorism' (the subordination of local capitalists in post-colonial countries to imperial capital) and 'cronyism' (the interlocking of capitalism with the state based on personal political connections which blur the distinction between legality and illegality). This is a hugely contested issue, driven by media revelations of many instances of corruption, the 'struggle backgrounds' of many of the new black capitalist moguls, the ANC's own involvement in various business ventures, the movement of individuals from party and state to business, and the suspected favouring of politically well-connected individuals in the allocation of contracts at all levels of government. However, rather than empirical citation, my concern here is to sketch the logic inherent in the dynamics of BEE explored above. I would like to reduce this to a number of sub-propositions.

First, blacks' lack of capital dictates a dependence upon state and/or large scale capital to acquire the necessary funding to undertake business ventures. In this regard, black capitalists today are very much following the same path undertaken by Afrikaner capitalists from the 1920s on.

Second, political connections are therefore at a premium. The ANC's control of the state predisposes the latter to favour those in good standing with the party; politicians and senior civil servants moving across to the private sector will have a good sense of future business opportunities emanating from government departments; and white and multi-national firms seek out the politically influential in order to ingratiate themselves with government.

Third, the elite at the apex of empowerment is small and strongly inter-connected by political, emergent class, personal and often family ties, and largely committed to

BEE as a socially just and politically necessary way of correcting past racial imbalances. Political shortcuts may therefore be seen as morally if not legally justifiable.

Fourth, despite party injunctions to the 'patriotic bourgeoisie' to consciously use their wealth, power and investments to promote the black community as a whole, their high level of indebtedness predisposes many black capitalists to realizing short-term gains rather than emphasising long term profitability. The urgency towards short-term gain may also encourage a willingness to cut legal corners and lapse into criminality.

Finally, the massive inequalities of wealth in South Africa, and the poverty and hardships from which many black capitalists have come, predisposes many not to austerity and saving but to becoming, in the words of Phumzile Mlambo-Ncuka (now Deputy President), 'filthy rich' (Bond, 2000:19), and emulating the opulent lifestyles of their white counterparts.

All this is not necessarily to contest the views of commentators such as Randall (1996) and Iheduru (2004) that BEE is providing the basis for the evolution of a significant black capitalist class with the capacity to promote growth in the ANC's South Africa. Nor is it to suggest that black capitalists are any more inherently 'corrupt' than their white counterparts, or indeed capitalists in countries as diverse as the USA, Italy, Japan or Indonesia. Nor indeed, is it to ignore the quite extensive measures which the government has sought to put in place to prevent 'undue influence by business' (Sangweni, 2006). But it is to say that textbook separations of economics from politics do not reflect the realities of modern corporate capitalism, especially in countries such as today's South Africa whose historical background of highly uneven development normally impels the state to assume a central developmental role.

Proposition 9

> The ANC's pursuit of the NDR through a mix of the market and 'the developmental state' has fostered the rapid expansion of the black middle class. However, the trend towards the deracialisation of the upper levels of the class structure has had little positive impact upon working class and poor South Africans.

'One of the most visible signs of South Africa's democratic revolution has been the spread of affluence to certain categories of African people whose effective participation in markets and the formal economy were curtailed and distorted by apartheid laws'. So writes Schlemmer (2005:1), who adds that the two factors driving this widening economic participation are the 'silent revolution' of opportunities that capitalist growth brings, and legislative advancement through policies of affirmative action and BEE. There is considerable hype about the expanding black middle class in South Africa, much of it emanating from market research companies exploring changing racial patterns of consumption and indebtedness. Schlemmer is correct to emphasise the *visibility* of the new black middle class, which more than assuming the trappings of affluence records the ANC's capture of the state and the re-orientation of the media. Yet a fundamental social factor about the black middle class is that it remains disproportionately very small.

Much of the evolving debate about the black middle class involves a complex numbers game, this in turn following upon issues of definition. Estimates of its present size range from 1.6 to 3.6 million people out of a present population of around 44 million. Taking an highly inclusive definition from top (professionals and managers) to bottom (white collar workers), around 74 per cent of the white workforce can be said to be middle class, whereas only around 27 per cent of the African *formally employed* workforce and only around 30 per cent of the entire black (African, Coloured and Indian) *formally employed* workforce can be said to be middle class (calculated from Table 1, Southall 2004b). Adopting a much more exclusive definition, Schlemmer (2005:5) argues that the core African middle class was as small as only 11 per cent of the entire middle class in 2004.

Whatever definition we take of the African or wider black middle class, evidence shows that it is growing rapidly. Using the Livings Standards Measure (LSM) customarily employed by marketing surveys, Schlemmer (2005:4) reports that 'the number of Africans in the top LSM category has grown by a phenomenal 21 per cent a year over the decade to 2003, more than eight times faster than the adult population as a whole'. However, the gains of increased upward class mobility have not been equally spread. 'State managers' and the 'corporate black bourgeoisie' have done considerably better than the 'civil petty bourgeoisie' (the bulk of black civil servants and 'lower professionals'). The 'trading petty-bourgeoisie' has done particularly badly, despite BEE, in part because of BEE's principal orientation towards the formal and core economy, in part because of the limitations on its growth imposed by GEAR and the persistence of dramatically high levels of unemployment (Southall, 2004b). Thus although increasing numbers of blacks are joining the middle-class, South Africa is seeing a widening income gap between rich and poor.

Proposition 10

Malaysian experience suggests that affirmative action will only work to promote 'a better life for all' if it is systematically combined with anti-poverty strategies.

The Malaysian development experience, which since 1970 has seen an activist state drive rapid growth with a relatively successful assault on poverty, has attracted considerable attention from the ANC, not least because it has been combined with a concerted shift towards the elimination of income disparities between the majority Malays and the better off, minority Chinese. Resulting from a political crisis in 1969 (provoked by discontent of Malays with post-colonial continuance of inter-racial disparities), the Malay-dominated government adopted a New Economic Pro-gramme (NEP) designed to promote Malay ownership and control of the economy.

The NEP was constructed around two 'prongs': first, the eradication of poverty, regardless of race; second, the restructuring of Malaysian society in order to 'reduce and eventually eliminate the identification of race with economic function' (Jomo 1988:256). This included a programme of preferential recruitment for Malays and an accompanying drive to rectify the inter-racial imbalance in the ownership and control of wealth by achieving at least 30 per cent ownership and management of commercial and industrial activities by Malays and other indigenous groups by 1990.

By 1987, it was estimated that the absolute numbers of people living in poverty had fallen to 2.5 million from 4.6 million in 1973; the overall incidence of poverty had fallen to 15 per cent, and the incidence of rural poverty had been halved; and by 1990

the share of equity accruing to Bumiputra (indigenous people, i.e. mostly Malays), albeit in state as well as individual forms, was 20 per cent, which although short of the government's target represented a considerable transformation (Elmsley, 1996:33, 60-63). Such bare statistics require numerous qualifications. For instance, the reduction of poverty was achieved in the context of economic growth much helped by dramatic increases in commodity prices for rubber and tin (key products of the Malaysian economy) in the 1970s and 1980s, and shifts in the pattern of ownership have in the eyes of some been achieved at the severe cost of the promotion of 'crony capitalism'. Nonetheless, whatever the causality, the implementation of the NEP has been accompanied by a level of (inter-racial and other) redistribution *with* growth which has been the envy of many other states, including South Africa. Even if, as many argue, the quality of Malaysian democracy has been severely compromised by an authoritarian 'developmental state', the relevance of the comparison for South Africa is precisely that in a context where the urgency of rapid growth has been emphasised, it has been accompanied by the systematic combination of affirmative action with a concerted anti-poverty strategy.

Concluding Note

The virtue of ending this review of BEE with reference to Malaysia, where the redistribution with growth formula has been associated with overall political stability, is that it reminds us that the racial inequality that the ANC inherited in 1994 constituted an unviable basis for the consolidation of a new and fragile democracy. At that time, many believed that through the economic strategy outlined by the RDP, redistribution could be combined with growth and development. However, even from within the context of the more assertively capitalist policies pursued since 1996, there is a strong case for arguing that BEE (or some similar state-driven programme to correct racial imbalances) is a necessity if South Africa is to avoid the dismal fate of neighbouring Zimbabwe. Yet the key question posed is whether the ANC is doing enough to combine its empowerment strategies with delivering 'a better life for all'.

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Changing Concepts of Articulation: Political Stakes in South Africa Today

Gillian Hart

Intense struggles are currently underway within and between the African National Congress and its Alliance partners. In an effort to make sense of these struggles, this essay revisits earlier South African debates over race, class, and the national democratic revolution. Its focus is on multiple and changing concepts of articulation and their political stakes. The first part of the essay traces important shifts in the concept in Harold Wolpe's work, relating these shifts to struggles and conditions at the time, as well as to conceptual developments by Stuart Hall in a broader debate with Laclau's work on populism, and with Laclau and Mouffe who take the concept in a problematic post-marxist direction. I then put a specifically Gramscian concept of articulation to work to explore how the ruling bloc in the ANC has articulated shared meanings and memories of struggles for national liberation to its hegemonic project – and how a popular sense of betrayal is playing into support for Jacob Zuma.

The race-class debate in South Africa refuses to go away, Neville Alexander noted in his 2002 book *An Ordinary Country*. Since then race-class debates have amplified dramatically, along with intensified struggles over the meaning of the 'national democratic revolution' (NDR).[1] Key contours of these debates find clear expression in a special edition of *Bua Komanisi!* issued by the Central Committee of the South African Communist Party (SACP) in May 2006 (SACPa, 2006), and the furious response on 19 June from the African National Congress (ANC, 2006). In a rejoinder entitled 'Is the ANC leading a national democratic revolution or managing capitalism?', the SACP reiterates its accusation that the ANC has come to be dominated by 'the narrow self-interest of an emerging black capitalist stratum with close connections to established capital and to our movement,' that acts 'not in order to advance the NDR, but for personal self-accumulation purposes' (SACPb, 2006).

For many on the left, the hijacking of the NDR by a bourgeois class project is scarcely surprising. The very notion of the NDR derives, Alexander points out, from

> *the dual-economy, liberal-pluralist notion of 'colonialism of a special type', which was supposed to be the paradigm within which the SACP analysed South African society but which, in reality, simply abdicated any pretensions to political leadership of the mass movement and permitted the … aspiring black middle class leadership of the ANC to lead the mass struggle* (Alexander, 2002:25).

And lead they did, he went on to note, 'with single-minded clarity to the ends of the African nationalist struggle.' More generally, two-stage theory has long been the focus of intense critique in the context of South African race-class debates.

Yet precisely because the NDR remains a live and influential social category, it is insufficient simply to point to its analytical inconsistencies and political short-comings, and then set it aside. What needs to be grasped more fully is *how* meanings of the NDR have been redefined and articulated as part of the hegemonic project of the ruling bloc within the ANC, along with how and why these meanings have become an increasingly vociferous site of struggle and contestation within the ANC Alliance and in grassroots politics.

Deeply entangled with struggles over the meaning of the NDR is popular support for Jacob Zuma, who stands at the centre of the 'succession debate' that is producing massive upheavals within and between the ANC, SACP, and Cosatu (the Congress of South African Trade Unions). Part of what is going on, no doubt, is opportunistic jostling for position in provincial, national, and local political arenas between those labelled as Mbeki-ites and Zuma-ites. Yet the challenge to the ruling bloc within the ANC has been made possible by powerful currents of popular support for Zuma that even key leaders of the SACP admit are poorly understood – other than that they are in some broad sense a coming together of a politics of grievance and resentment.[2]

What, then, are the analytical tools that are likely to be most useful in grappling with the dangerous conjuncture in which we find ourselves? My central argument in this essay is that there is a great deal to be gained from going back to earlier race-class debates in South Africa, and focusing on the concept of articulation – or, more precisely, on the multiple and changing concepts of articulation that have figured prominently in these debates, and their political stakes.

The concept of articulation was first introduced to South African debates in 'Capitalism and Cheap Labour Power' (1972), Harold Wolpe's enormously influential contribution to race-class debates framed in terms of the articulation of modes of production. In *Race, Class and the Apartheid State* (1988), however, Wolpe deploys a radically different concept of articulation. A highly significant but little-recognised influence behind this shift is a piece by Stuart Hall (1980a) entitled 'Race, Articulation, and Societies Structured in Dominance'. Engaging explicitly with the race-class debate in South Africa and with Wolpe (1972), Hall moves the concept of articulation from the structural marxism of Althusser to the cultural marxism of Gramsci.

While Wolpe acknowledges Hall's influence and the far more supple and politically powerful analysis that it enables, this Gramscian conception of articulation has remained under-utilised, in South African debates as well as more generally. Part of what has happened, I suggest, is that Hall's concept of articulation has become conflated with a third – but again very different – notion of articulation set forth by Laclau and Mouffe (1985) as part of their project of renovating liberalism in the name of 'radical democracy' and post-marxism.

In addition to clarifying the analytical and political differences among these diverse concepts of articulation, I try in this essay to suggest how the concept might be adapted and used to grapple with the conditions in which we find ourselves today.

Wolpe's Re-Articulations of Race & Class

In his deeply influential intervention in the race-class debates that raged in the 1970s, Wolpe (1972; 1975) deployed the concept of articulation of modes of production derived from Althusser to call into question the claim that apartheid was

a continuation of segregation. [3] Wolpe used the concept to refute liberal (and indeed orthodox marxist) portrayals of the racial order in South Africa as an irrational hangover of Afrikanerdom that would melt away with the further development of capitalist market relations. Instead, Wolpe proposed that capitalism in South Africa had latched on to subsistence agriculture in the reserves which provided a subsidy in the form of cheap labour power. In other words, South African capitalism had developed in part through articulation – or joining with – the pre-existing non-capitalist mode of production. Political domination and legitimating practices had, as a consequence, assumed distinctively racial and ethnic forms.

By the middle of the century, Wolpe argued, the capacity of the reserves to sustain subsistence production had collapsed. Apartheid represented a new racial capitalist order with a panoply of repressive legislation and practices directed towards regulating and reconfiguring the conditions of reproduction of cheap labour power. Thus apartheid was not simply an extension of the earlier system of segregation, as some radical critics had argued. Instead, he maintained, racial ideology in South Africa – and the political practices in which it was reflected – sustained and reproduced capitalist relations of production, although in complex, reciprocal (but asymmetrical) relationships with changing social and economic conditions.

Wolpe also built on his revisionist analysis of cheap labour power to launch a critique of theories of internal colonialism – in particular, 'colonialism of a special type' (CST) that had become the theoretical cornerstone of the ANC/SACP alliance by the late 1960s. These theories are unable to explain the relationship between class and race or ethnic relations, he asserted. As a consequence, race and ethnic relations are once more treated as autonomous and in isolation from class relations (Wolpe, 1975).

With intensified political urgency driven by changing conditions since the Soweto uprisings, Wolpe returned to debates over the relationship between racial domination and the capitalist order in *Race, Class & the Apartheid State* (1988). The imperative to revisit old questions about race and class arose, he argued, from a new context – most notably, 'the relative decline in the need for cheap black labour, and the increasing costs of maintaining stability in the face of black opposition' (Wolpe, 1988:49). In responding to these conditions, 'certain white economic and political forces' were in the process of creating 'the political space in which the rationality of the free market system can operate, that is to say, to ensure the reproduction of capitalism under new conditions' (Ibid.).

In moving away from the cheap labour-power thesis, Wolpe underscored the imperative for a non-reductionist understanding of class in relation to race. The problem of reductionist marxism, he argued, is not its starting point – the general relation of exploitation – but 'the path it follows from the abstract to the concrete, a path which leads it to impose the abstract on the concrete as if they were homologous' (Wolpe, 1988:51). What is so problematic and limited about reductionist forms of understanding is that they fail to appreciate how, in specific concrete conditions, classes are likely to be internally *differentiated*:

> *Classes … are constituted not as unified social forces, but as patchworks or segments which are differentiated and divided on a variety of bases and by varied processes.* It is true that a more or less extensive unity may be brought about politically through articulation, within a common discourse, of specific interests which are linked to the common

property which defines classes. *But, and this is the fundamental point, that unity is not given by concepts of labour-power and capital, it is constituted concretely through practices, discourses and organisations. One might say that class unity, when it occurs, is a conjunctural phenomenon* (Wolpe, 1988:51, emphasis added).

In this crucially important move, Wolpe is making use of a concept of articulation that is significantly different from that embodied in the Althusserian notion of articulation of modes of production. As I argue more fully below, it derives most immediately from Stuart Hall's (1980a) engagement with the South African race-class debate, which builds on Wolpe's work, and which Wolpe explicitly acknowledges.

In the conjunctural moment with which he was grappling, this conceptual shift enabled Wolpe to call into question the assumption that opposition to white domination would *necessarily* function to unite all black classes against the regime. Pointing to the enormous expansion of a black petit bourgeoisie in the 1980s which was becoming increasingly organised, as well as to possible divisions within the black working class, he warned that political struggles to overthrow or sustain white domination in South Africa could not be read off structures of either class or race. Instead, they would depend on the specific conjuncture and forms of struggle.

Neville Alexander has recently observed that Wolpe's treatment of the relationship between race, class and capitalism in *Race, Class & the Apartheid State* potentially opens up conceptual and political space for more nuanced analysis and action. Yet, he argues, Wolpe ends up defending two-stage theory and helping to pave the way for 'the aspiring black middle class leadership of the ANC to lead the mass struggle' (Alexander, 2002:25).

There are indeed sections of Wolpe's text in which, while conceding that the struggle for national liberation could move in conservative or reformist or bourgeois directions, he vigorously defends the SACP's two-stage thesis from the accusation that it is likely to be hijacked by an emerging petite-bourgeoisie.[4] As Michael Burawoy (2006:15) has noted, Wolpe 'didn't see what Frantz Fanon saw: two very different, opposed projects that existed side by side, that vied with each other within the decolonisation struggle' – a point to which we shall return below. Burawoy also identifies a key shift in Wolpe's work in the late 1980s when, while still in exile, he embarked on a major new research project into education in a new South Africa.[5] This work, Burawoy argues, represents Wolpe's shift from a Leninist adherence to the SACP's view of the imperative to seize state power, to a Gramscian argument for a War of Position

> that would restructure civil society before winning state power, warning against a War of Movement (boycott education and liberation first) or succumbing to a War of Position from above (expanding and reform of education for upgrading the labor force) (Burawoy, 2006:18).

What is also distinctive about these writings, Burawoy maintains, is that they validated struggles outside the state, and intensified Wolpe's frustration with his confinement to a narrow policy terrain following his return to South Africa in 1990. In his final paper published shortly before his death in 1996, Wolpe launched a prescient and incisive critique of the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) *White Paper*, discussed more fully below. While Wolpe did not live to see the ANC's explicit embrace of neoliberal forms of capitalism and the re-articulations of race and class embodied in Black Economic Empowerment (BEE), the broader

questions he raised in his final paper remain powerfully salient. It is precisely in grappling with these questions that the revised conception of articulation holds out considerable promise. First, though, we need to delve more deeply into this concept and distinguish it from what I will argue is a distinctively different notion of articulation currently in circulation.

Rethinking 'Articulation': Analytical & Political Stakes

> *By the term, 'articulation', I mean a connection or link which is not necessarily given in all cases, as a law or fact of life, but which requires particular conditions of existence to appear at all, which has to be positively sustained by specific processes, which is not 'eternal' but has constantly to be renewed, which can under some circumstances disappear or be overthrown, leading to the old linkages being dissolved and new connections – re-articulations – being forged. It is also important that an articulation between different practices does not mean that they become identical or that one is dissolved into the other. However, once an articulation is made, the two practices can function together as 'distinctions within a unity'* (Hall, 1985:113-4).

Let me start with Stuart Hall's 'Race, Articulation, and Societies Structured in Dominance' (1980a).[6] Engaging with the South African race-class debate (although not the political freight attached to CST), Hall acknowledged Wolpe's deployment of the concept of articulation of modes of production – in particular, the advance it represented on liberal and neo-Weberian formulations of racially structured social formations – while also pointing to some of its structuralist limits. In the process, he reworked the conception of articulation to argue that the workings of race and forms of racism cannot be read off economic structures:

> *One must start … from the concrete historical 'work' which racism accomplishes under specific historical conditions – as a set of economic, political and ideological practices of a specific kind, concretely* articulated *with other practices in a social formation* (Hall, 1980a:338, emphasis added).

Thus, Hall went on to note, racialised practices are not necessary to the concrete functioning of all capitalisms. Nor does it make sense to extrapolate a common, universal structure to race and racism: there is no 'racism in general'. Instead, it needs to be shown *how* race comes to be inserted historically, and the relations and practices that have tended to erode and transform – or to preserve – these distinctions through time, not simply as residues or holdovers, but as active structuring principles of the present organisation of society and the forms of class relations:

> *Race is thus, also, the modality in which class is 'lived', the medium through which class relations are experienced, the form in which it is appropriated and 'fought through.' This has consequences for the whole class, not specifically for its 'racially defined' segment. It has consequences in terms of the internal fractioning and division within the working class which, among other ways, are articulated in part through race. This is no mere racist conspiracy from above. For racism is also one of the dominant means of ideological representation through which the white fractions of the class come to 'live' their relations to other fractions, and through them to capital itself* (Hall, 1980a:341).

As I have argued more fully elsewhere (Hart, 2002), there are important lacunae in this analysis – most notably attention to gender and sexuality. Yet what Hall accomplished was to open up new possibilities for non-reductionist understandings

that go far beyond notions of 'intersectionality' through which some feminists have sought to grapple with the neglect of race and ethnicity in earlier marxist-feminist formulations of gender and class.

To grasp the analytical and political stakes in Hall's revised conception of articulation it is useful to start with the concrete conditions with which he was grappling and his own positioning within them. Grant Farred (1996) has given us a wonderfully illuminating account of Hall's engagement as a diasporic Caribbean intellectual with race and class in post-war Britain. In the late 1950s and 1960s, Farred explains, Hall was caught between immigrant activism in context of escalating racism on the one hand, and his growing influence in 'New Left' circles on the other:

> *Hall was not only ideologically split between the two communities in which he was invested, he was separated by class from the one with which he shared a racial affinity. Hall could only give critical public voice to the tensions, stresses, and precariousness inscribed within that process retrospectively, once he had been able to resolve the issue of class* (Farred, 1996:6).

By the mid-1970s, ongoing anti-immigrant racism embodied in 'Powellism' – and its reverberations in Thatcherism – propelled him into the work on race for which he is best known, *Policing the Crisis* (1978).

What, then, of Stuart Hall's lesser-known turn to South African race-class debates? Of great significance is his engagement with the British Anti-Apartheid Movement (AAM) since its founding in 1959. In his address to the 40 year 'Perspective' conference in 1999, Hall comments on how the AAM's founding coincided with large-scale Afro-Caribbean migration to Britain, and how impressed he was by the AAM's capacity to connect with ordinary 'unpolitical' people by permeating everyday life – especially the ways in which sport, consumer boycotts and sanctions formed wedges into political consciousness of race and racism.[7]

These political engagements with questions of race and class are important in grasping what is analytically distinctive about the concept of articulation that Hall and Wolpe (1988) are using. One key lies in Hall's 'reading' (1974 [2003]) of Marx's notes on method in the 1857 'Introduction' to the *Grundrisse* – which is also, as McGregor Wise (2003) points out, a reading of Althusser's appropriation of Marx. What this double reading makes clear is that Hall is using the concept of articulation as central to Marx's method – that of advancing from the abstract to the concrete, in the sense of concrete concepts that are adequate to the concrete in history:

> *Both the specificities and the connections – the complex unities of structures – have to be demonstrated by concrete analysis of concrete relations and conjunctions.* If relations are mutually articulated, but remain specified by their difference, this articulation, and the determinate conditions on which it rests, has to be demonstrated … *Differentiated unities are also therefore, in the marxian sense,* concrete. *The method thus retains the concrete empirical reference as a privileged and undissolved 'moment' within a theoretical analysis without thereby making it 'empiricist'; the concrete analysis of concrete situations* (Hall, 1974 [2003]:128, emphasis added).

While acknowledging the Althusserian concept of a social formation as a complex ensemble of relations structured in dominance, he also insists (contra Althusser) on a reading of Marx in terms of the 'mutual articulation of historical movement and theoretical reflection' (Hall, 1974 [2003]:137).[8]

In focusing on what he calls 'the combined and uneven relations between class and race' through his engagement with South African debates, Hall (1980a) also insists that the concept of articulation must be supplemented by a reading of Gramsci that is significantly different from Althusser's narrowly structuralist interpretation. At the time, Gramsci was seen as the pre-eminent theorist of Western marxism. On the contrary, Hall maintained, Gramsci's insistence that the problem of hegemony be viewed as a historically (and geographically) concrete articulation – along with his deep engagement with Italian history – made his work profoundly relevant for non-Western social formations:

> *The problem of the State, and the question of strategic alliances between the industrial proletariat and the peasantry, the 'play' of traditional and advanced ideologies, and the difficulties these provide in the formation of a 'national-popular' will all make his analysis of Italy specially relevant to colonial countries* (Hall, 1980a:333-4).[9]

The turn to Gramsci also enables extending the concept of articulation to encompass not only the joining together of diverse elements – the sense in which Althusser and indeed Wolpe (1972) used it – but also the second sense of articulation in English and French, namely 'to give expression to' or the production of meaning through language. In a related piece published at the same time, Hall (1980b) noted that

> *it is largely Gramsci who has provided us with a set of more refined terms through which to link the largely 'unconscious' and given cultural categories of 'common sense' with the formulation of more active and organic ideologies, which have the capacity to intervene in the ground of common sense and popular traditions and, through such interventions, to organize masses of men and women* (Hall, 1980b:69).[10]

It was in fact Laclau (1977) who first elaborated the double meaning of articulation in his analysis of populism, arguing that signifiers like 'freedom', 'equality', and 'the people', have no fixed, intrinsic meaning or class belonging. Rather, they can be reconvened as elements within very different discourses, positioning the popular classes in relation to a power bloc in quite different ways. Yet for all that it represented an important advance, Laclau's conception remained on a fairly narrow structuralist terrain – a point taken up more fully below.

There is yet another important shift in the concept of articulation between Laclau (1977) and Laclau and Mouffe's (1985) *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy* (1985), that is closely linked to their embrace of post-marxism and radical democracy in which they claim to extend the concept of hegemonic articulations 'far beyond Gramsci'. As part of their critique of class reductionism and economism, they effectively abandon *any* conception of determination while nominally holding on to revised notions of hegemony and articulation. This disabling move lies at the heart of their incapacity to engage with questions of capitalism.[11] It also produces a deeply impoverished concept of articulation – one that abstracts from the historically and geographically specific but interconnected processes, material conditions, forms of power, and processes of subject formation.

These distinctions are crucial in differentiating Hall's Gramscian conception of articulation from that of Laclau (1977), as well as from Laclau and Mouffe (1985) with which it is often incorrectly conflated.[12] Indeed, Hall has noted that in *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy:*

there is no reason why anything is or isn't potentially articulable with anything else. The critique of reductionism has apparently resulted in the notion of society as a totally open discursive field (Hall, [1986] 1996:146).

Elsewhere Hall (1988:157) comments on his effort 'carefully to demarcate the immensely fruitful things which I learned from Ernesto Laclau's [1977] *Politics and Ideology in Marxist Theory* from the dissolution of everything into discourse which, I believe mars the later volume, *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy*, despite its many insights.' He also qualifies carefully what he takes from Laclau (1977) – including the latter's tendency to pay too little attention to how the articulation of discourses with the practices of particular classes have often been secured over long periods.

The stakes in these different conceptions find vivid illustration in an analysis by Ari Sitas (1990) of the limits of understandings derived from Laclau (1977) to explain Zulu 'ethnic nationalism' and working class cultures in the vicious dying days of apartheid. Calling into question analyses of 'Zulu-ness' as the product of ideological interpellations from above, Sitas insisted that the black working class is not a *tabula rasa*, but bears its own traditions: '"Zulu-ness" must be viewed as a negotiated identity between ordinary people's attempts to create effective and reciprocal bonds (or functioning cultural formations) out of their social and material conditions of life *and* political ideologies that seek to mobilize them in non-class ways' (Sitas, 1990:266) – and each sets limits on the other.

In addition, he argued, while black workers in Natal understand that there is some 'social bond' knotting them together, there are different *modalities* (one could also say articulated combinations or articulations) of this 'Zulu-ness' – mediated through relationships to land, dispossession, and proletarianisation – which assume distinctively different forms in different parts of the province.[13] Gender and sexuality are undoubtedly also key elements in these articulations. In other words, such 'negotiations' are shaped and constrained by class in relation to other determinations, but these can only be grasped concretely.

The shift from Althusser to Gramsci is precisely what is at stake analytically in Sitas' critique of how Laclau (1977) was being used to explain Zulu ethnic nationalism, and in his insistence that official and popular articulations must be grasped in relation to one another. Significant political stakes attach to this alternative conception precisely because, as Sitas points out,

> *it is on such a local understanding and traditions that labour organisations can engage with 'social views and visions' to echo Hlatshwayo, in order to begin providing for a resonant alternative to Inkatha's myth complexes. In the process, the delicate relationship between chiefs and commoners, the unwritten record of the Congress movement in Natal, of religion, etc. will have to be explored. So far, most of the scholarship in and on Natal has boosted Inkatha's self-confidence as the logical heir of Zulu legacies; it is time that it boosted the self-confidence of ordinary people* (Sitas, 1990:273).

Hlatshwayo was at the time Cosatu's Cultural Co-ordinator and an oral poet whose analysis of the challenges he confronted as an organic intellectual bears powerful traces of Gramsci and Fanon. As he put it,

> *You have to start from where people are and go with them where they take you. I mean if you are thrust in this struggle then you have to engage in people's social views and visions* (cited by Sitas, 1990:263).

These considerations bear directly on the question of popular support for Jacob Zuma, and how it is fuelling the 'succession crisis.' The failure to attend carefully to the forces playing into support for Zuma is closely linked to another major hiatus in a great deal of critical analysis of the post-apartheid conjuncture – engagement with the National Democratic Revolution (NDR). Of necessity in very broad brushstrokes, I shall now try to put the Gramscian concept of articulation to work in outlining the processes through which the NDR has become a key site of contention. In concluding, I try to suggest in a very preliminary way how these processes are closely interconnected with the multiple currents feeding into the rise of popular support for Zuma.

Re-Articulating Race, Class & Nationalism after Apartheid

An essentially neo-liberal RDP strategy, which is what we are left with, may well generate some level of economic growth; should this happen, the existing mainly white and Indian bourgeoisie will be consolidated and strengthened; the black bourgeoisie will grow rapidly; a black middle class and some members of the black urban working class will become incorporated into the magic circle of insiders; but for the remaining 60-70 per cent of our society this growth path, we venture to predict, will deliver little or nothing for many years to come (Adelzadeh & Padayachee, 1994:16).

What is at stake in the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) for the ANC and its allies, Wolpe (1995:89) noted in his final paper, is the completion of the NDR:

That is to say, the establishment of a democratic electoral and parliamentary system and the electoral victory of the ANC are considered to provide the principal enabling condition and instrument for, in the words of the [RDP] White Paper, *a 'fundamental transformation' of the social and economic order.*

Yet, he noted, citing the prescient passage above from Adelzadeh and Padayachee (1994), the framing of the RDP and the White Paper submerged crucial political issues.[14] While operating on a deeply contested terrain, the RDP eradicated sources of contradiction and conflict by asserting harmony and a consensual model of society; and, on the basis of this premise, it conceptualizes the state as the unproblematic instrument of the RDP (Wolpe, 1995:91). Accordingly, he concluded, conceptions of 'fundamental transformation' central to the NDR were likely to become a major source of contestation in the future.

This more complex view of the RDP enables us to see how the unilateral declaration of GEAR the following year was more than just a shift from relatively benign neo-Keynesianism to harsh neoliberalism, as is often supposed.[15] GEAR was not simply a roll-back of the state; nor was it just the final victory of class over race apartheid. Instead, I suggest, GEAR represented a redefinition of the NDR in terms of a re-articulation of race, class and nationalism, along with the assertion of new technologies of rule. These include the consolidation of conservative forces bent on working in alliance with white corporate capital to create a black bourgeoisie nominally more responsive to 'development'; creating the conditions in which the state can hold not only its agencies but also non-state bodies to its principles; inciting not only the black bourgeoisie but the population more generally to become 'entrepreneurs of themselves'; and making social support conditional on the correct attitudes and aspirations.

These technologies of rule conform quite closely to what some might call neoliberal (or advanced liberal) governmentality.[16] Yet there are several reasons why this interpretation is at best very partial.

One is that the redefinition of the NDR also embodies a powerful drive to contain popular mobilisation. An initial manifesto of this broader state project was an ANC Discussion Document issued in 1996 entitled 'The State and Social Transformation', widely believed to have been authored by Thabo Mbeki. While not making explicit reference to the NDR, the manifesto asserts the imperative for containing 'the instinct towards "economism" on the part of the ordinary workers' in the following terms:

If the democratic movement allowed that the subjective approach to socio-economic development represented by 'economism' should overwhelm the scientific approach of the democratic movement towards such development, it could easily create the conditions for the possible counter-revolutionary defeat of the democratic revolution (paragraph 6.11).

From one perspective, then, GEAR can be seen as part of a vanguardist project to exercise a new *form* of activism defined in technocratic and hierarchical terms, and to assert the dominance of a transnationally-connected technocratic elite over mass mobilisation and action.[17] Yet this is not all there is to it. The redefinition of the NDR *also* works in and through new articulations of nationalism.

Considerable significance attaches to how we understand post-apartheid deployments of nationalism. The general tendency on the left has been to underscore the regressive bourgeois character of post-independence nationalism in southern Africa. A more nuanced analysis by Franco Barchiesi points to 'the extreme and peculiar flexibility of the ANC's nationalist discourse – in this very different from nationalist rhetoric fallen into disrepute elsewhere on the continent – and its remarkable capacity to adapt to changing global scenarios' (Barchiesi, 2006:224). He shows how the ANC's portrayal of 'the nation' and the policies needed to build it are cast in terms of a definition of what the 'real world' makes viable.

To grasp the hegemonic power of official articulations of nationalism as well as their limits, we also have to look carefully to how they work in and through ongoing invocations of the struggle for national liberation and the suffering for freedom that our people have endured. This is not just a cynical manipulation from above; it carries powerful moral weight and connects with specific histories, memories, and meanings of racial oppression, racialised dispossession, and struggles against apartheid. Precisely because official articulations of nationalism tap into popular understandings of freedom, justice, and liberation from apartheid racial oppression, they bolster the ANC state's hegemonic project in crucially important ways. Writing about the 1980s, Hein Marais (2001:262) has observed that the ANC became adept at articulating nationalism to its hegemonic project: 'it managed to deploy an array of ideological precepts and symbols, and to assert their pertinence to the lived realities of millions of South Africans.' In the immediate aftermath of the 2004 national government elections, Jeff Guy reiterated this point, stressing the ongoing importance of the ANC's capacity to articulate popular currents of nationalism:

This facility continues to this day, and it is nationalism which gives its political discourse both the strength and the flexibility to absorb changes, inconsistencies and failures in policy and postures by presenting a consistent nationally-grounded history and vision of the future …

South African nationhood is an imagined construct – but one with sufficient perceived authenticity and actual authority to provide the framework for an agreed nationalist discourse and political framework to ensure the participation and support of individuals and organisations representing a wide range of ideological positions (Guy, 2004:86).

Yet the deep grounding of popular understandings of nationalism and liberation is a razor blade that cuts both ways – a phrase often used by Alfred Duma, a resident of Ezakheni township who forged his own razor-sharp dialectical tools of analysis on Robben Island. Precisely because official articulations of nationalism are linked to histories, memories, and meanings of freedom struggles, redress for the wrongs of the past, and visions of a new nation, they are potentially vulnerable to the current counter-claims of betrayal.[18] Feeding into these charges of betrayal are, of course, the depradations of livelihood for the majority of black South Africans, and the obscene inequalities cutting across race lines that have intensified with the (further) unleashing of neoliberal forms of capitalism in the post-apartheid era.

There are, in other words, profound instabilities built into the ruling bloc's redefinition of the NDR, and the re-articulations of race, class, and nationalism through which it is working. Let me turn now to tracing in broad outline how these pressures and tensions have amplified since 1996.

The frequency and intensity of official invocations of the NDR provide revealing indicators. Between 1996 and 2001/2, official references to the NDR were either missing from key documents as noted above, or they were fairly bland and routine. A key turning point was the Bredell land occupation in early July 2001, which represented a profound crisis of the ANC's hegemonic project (Hart, 2002; 2006a). Thousands of desperately poor settlers paid nominal amounts of money to representatives of the Pan Africanist Congress for patches of privately-owned land between Johannesburg and Pretoria, and immediately started erecting ramshackle shelters. In response, the ANC government moved swiftly and brutally to evict the settlers. Anger provoked by Bredell fed directly into the rise of oppositional movements which made a dramatic appearance on the international stage at the World Conference Against Racism the following month. Precisely a year later, in August 2002, the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) provided an even more spectacular platform for oppositional movements, severely embarrassing the ANC government and the Alliance more generally.

It was in this context that we saw new and increasingly vociferous official deployments of the NDR as part of an arsenal to discipline the 'ultra-left'. Immediately following the WSSD, strategically-placed ANC figures sprang into action, excoriating the 'ultra-left anti-neoliberal coalition' and accusing it of acting in alliance with 'real neoliberals' (i.e. the predominantly white Democratic Alliance) and with foreign elements hostile to NDR. [19] Mbeki reiterated this theme in his address to an ANC policy conference in late September 2002, asserting that 'we have radically reduced the capacity of the opponents of the national democratic revolution to conduct a campaign of terror against the revolution,' while at the same time accusing 'Left sectarian factions' of occupying 'the same trench with the anti-socialist forces' in their joint efforts to impede the national liberation movement.[20] The 'Strategy and Tactics' document prepared for the December 2002 conference is replete with references to the NDR, describing the ANC as the 'leader of the national democratic struggle, a disciplined force of the Left, organised to conduct consistent struggle in the interests of the poor.'

The ruling bloc's aggressive disciplining of the 'ultra-Left' was accompanied by new assertions of the ANC as a developmental state, as well as a further redefinition of the NDR in terms of a First and Second Economy. Mbeki inaugurated this redefinition in a media briefing following the Cabinet Lekgotla on 29 July 2003:

> *Now, this is, as it were, the modern part of South Africa, with your aeroplanes and your computers and the people sitting around this room, who read and write and so on. We, all of us, we are this modern sector … So, you then have this large part of South Africa, which is relatively uneducated. It is unskilled. It is not required in terms of modern society. I am saying 'required' in the sense of employability. So, we have recognised this from the beginning, that large numbers of our people are poor and are in this condition. You can make the interventions we make about modernisation of the economy and so on, but it wouldn't necessarily have an impact on them, because of that degree of marginalisation. Therefore, you needed to make different sorts of intervention.*[21]

The First/Second Economy figured prominently in the ANC's 'Ten Year Review' later in 2003, its manifesto for the 2004 election, Mbeki's State of the Nation address in February 2004, his opening address to parliament in May 2004, and a slew of statements by lesser luminaries.[22] Later in 2004 a series of articles entitled 'Approaches to Poverty Eradication and Economic Development' appeared on the ANC Today website, asserting

> *the critical need for the state to be involved in the transformation of the Second Economy. This state intervention must entail detailed planning and implementation of comprehensive development programmes, fully accepting the concept of a developmental state.*[23]

At the same time, leading ANC figures were quick to make clear that planned intervention in the Second Economy did not in any way reduce official commitment to rapid capital accumulation driven by market forces.

As I have discussed more fully elsewhere (Hart 2006b), First/Second Economy discourses can be seen as part of an effort to contain the challenges from oppositional movements that reached their zenith at the time of the WSSD and render them subject to government intervention. What is significant about this discourse is the way it defines a segment of society that is superfluous to the 'modern' economy, and in need of paternal guidance – those falling within this category are citizens, but second class. As such they are deserving of a modicum of social security, but on tightly disciplined and conditional terms.

Strategies to identify and treat a 'backward' segment of society go a long way towards explaining the vehemence with which powerful figures in the ANC dismissed proposals for a modest Basic Income Grant (BIG). The reason why the ANC government rejects the BIG, I suggest, is precisely *because* it is a universal grant – and therefore lacks points of leverage for instilling in its recipients the 'correct' attitudes and aspirations.

Yet it is one thing to identify the depoliticising thrust of discourses of a Second Economy and the disciplinary practices that accompany them, and quite another to presume that such effects are necessarily secured in practice. It is indeed the case that several of the more militant oppositional movements that emerged in the early 2000s are in a state of disarray. The decline of these movements was, however, accompanied by a massive upsurge of angry protests all over the country. In October 2005, the Minister of Safety and Security announced that his department had

recorded 881 illegal protests during the 2004-05 financial year – during which period there were reported to have been 5,085 legal protests.[24] Many of these uprisings were directed at local government officials and councillors, and framed in terms of failure to deliver basic services and housing, but encompassing as well a range of other grievances – including official moves to displace people from areas defined as urban 'squatter settlements' to rural peripheries.

The upsurge in popular anger extends well beyond specific local grievances, however. These broader and deeper tensions burst into open view in the middle of 2005, when two explosive issues fed into one another at the ANC's National General Council (NGC) conference in June 2005.

First was a discussion paper on bridging the divide between the First and Second Economy entitled 'Development and Underdevelopment' prepared by Jabu Moloketi, a conservative figure close to Mbeki. The central thrust of the paper is that 'An increase in investment is only likely to result in an increase in employment if the cost of labour is reduced relative to capital' (ANC, 2005:8). The paper then proposes a dual labour market strategy in which minimum wage and other collective bargaining agreements are waived in the lower segment of the labour market. The document unleashed fierce condemnation by the ANC's Alliance partners, the SACP and Cosatu, who saw the Moloketi proposals as undermining the few concessions to organised labour in the neoliberal turn of the 1990s. In addition, it provoked a barrage of angry critique of the elitism of the ANC's Black Economic Empowerment (BEE) measures, making clear how BEE sits uneasily astride the discursive divide between the First and Second Economies, and serving to underscore the deeply conservative character of post-apartheid race-class articulations.

The NGC meeting was also a key conjunctural moment in which the anger provoked by 'Development and Underdevelopment' fed into and amplified the fury unleashed by Mbeki's firing of Zuma as deputy president of the country less than two weeks earlier, following Zuma's implication in the corruption trial of his financial advisor, Schabir Sheik. It was at precisely this moment that popular support for Zuma crystallised into a major force. This support was reflected most immediately in the NGC's refusing to accept Zuma's withdrawal from party structures, and insisting that he be reinstated as deputy president of the ANC.

The NGC became, in effect, the crucible in which Wolpe's (1995) prophecy that the meaning of the NDR would become a key site of struggle was fully realised. The explosive anger that erupted at the NGC also underscores the double-edged character of articulations of nationalism as liberation – how they are key elements of the post-colonial hegemonic project, while at the same time deeply vulnerable to charges of betrayal. In short, the NGC was the moment when the ruling bloc within the ANC lost its grip on articulations of the nation and liberation.

Part of what Zuma represents is a move to seize the mantle of the liberation struggle and present himself as its rightful heir.[25] Positioning himself as the hero of national liberation is the key to Zuma's capacity – at least for the time being – to articulate multiple, often contradictory meanings into a complex unity that appeals powerfully to 'common sense' across a broad spectrum. They include his asserting himself as a man of the left (much to the chagrin of many on the left who point to his support for GEAR, as well as his links to certain fractions of capital); as a traditionalist who dons leopard skins on key occasions (and as one who brought peace to KwaZulu-

Natal, helping to end the violent civil war of the early 1990s); and as an anti-elitist (his regular reference to himself as 'not educated' – but, by implication, extremely smart – is a direct attack on the technocratic elite surrounding Mbeki often portrayed by Zuma supporters as arrogant and self-serving, and as not having served in the trenches of the revolutionary struggle). These rearticulations of race, class, and nationalism are also shot through with gender and sexuality.

Yet these are not simply interpellations from above. The figure of Zuma operates in many ways as a point of condensation for multiple, pre-existing tensions, angers, and discontents that until recently were contained within the hegemonic project of the ruling bloc in the ANC, and have now been diverted into newly opened fields of conflict. How this popular anger will be inflected remains a wide open question. S'bu Zikode, leader of the Durban shackdweller's movement (*Abahlali base mjondolo*) put it succinctly at a public lecture on 29 June 2006, when he urged the audience to understand that 'Our desperation and anger can go in many directions.'

Towards a Conclusion

This partial and very preliminary effort to grapple with the rise of Zuma and the struggle within the ANC Alliance owes a great deal to Laclau's (1977) analysis of populism, from which we still have much to learn – especially in terms of his insistence on non-reductionist understandings of populism. It was in this piece that Laclau extended the concept of articulation in seeking to come to grips with Peronism in Argentina, and from which Hall (1980a) drew inspiration in engaging Wolpe (1972) and the South African race-class debate.

Yet we have also seen how earlier South African debates highlight the limits of Laclau's structural analysis, and the imperative for a more fully Gramscian understanding. In the current moment of danger, what is at stake is whether and how the left engages with popular discontents and forms of common sense – including those that take the form of popular support for Jacob Zuma.

In reworking of the concept of articulation along Gramscian lines, Hall has provided an invaluable analytical tool – as well as a means for attending to Gramsci's injunction about what is entailed in superseding existing forms of common sense:

> *it is not a question of introducing from scratch a scientific form of thought into everyone's individual life, but of renovating and making 'critical' an already existing activity* (Gramsci, 1971:330-1).

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Endnotes

1. The NDR refers to the first stage in a two-stage theory of revolution adopted by the South African Communist Party (SACP) in 1962 and subsequently by the ANC, in which the overthrow of the apartheid state would inaugurate a phase of national democracy that would pave the way for the second-stage socialist revolution.

2. This point became clear at the launch of the SACP's Discussion Document at University of KwaZulu-Natal, 30 June 2006.

3. Foster-Carter (1978) notes that neither Althusser nor Balibar use the term 'articulation of modes of production', and claims it was Pierre-Philippe Rey who introduced it in a widely-distributed mimeographed paper entitled 'Sur l'articulation des modes du production' (1969).

4. '[W]hat is absolutely clear in the contemporary period is that no section of the national liberation movement is committed to or struggles for, what may be termed a bourgeois national democratic revolution. Even the conception of the "left/workerist" contention that the national liberation movement is bourgeois in character, has nothing in common with the vision of corporate capital or, say, the bantustan sections of the black petite-bourgeoisie for a de-racialised capitalist South Africa. The two-stage revolution does not envisage a transformation based merely on a degree of redistribution of wealth and political power in favour of black people; it envisages the first stage as merely a stage in which the conditions are established which will permit the inauguration of a process of further social transformation' (Wolpe, 1988:33-34).

5. 'Against both boycott and reform he defends the ongoing struggle for "people's education" – a schooling that would eliminate ignorance and illiteracy, cultivate an understanding of apartheid and all its oppression and inequalities, that would counter competitive individualism with collective organization, that would equip people with the capacity to realize their potential' (Burawoy, 2006:17).

6. This piece has been republished in radically shortened form in Essed and Goldberg (2002). What is lost in this shortened version, though, is much of the engagement with South African debates which is, in my view, precisely what makes this intervention so compelling.

7. He also acknowledges his close relationship with Wolpe: 'I met Harold Wolpe shortly after his sensational escape from prison and we used to talk long into the night about South African affairs, about the ANC, about the work which Harold was doing around education and so on.'

8. In a subsequent piece Hall (1985) further distinguishes his position from that of Althusser, as well as from the post-structuralists – those like Foucault who broke with structuralist theory by insisting on radical contingency, while retaining elements of structuralism.

9. Although Hall makes no mention of Fanon, the parallels between this reading of Gramsci and Fanon are very close.

10. His larger project in this piece is transcend the structuralist/culturalist division to combine 'the best elements in structuralist and culturalist enterprises, by way of Gramsci's work', going on to note that they pose, together, 'the problems consequent on trying to think both the specificity of different practices and the forms of articulated unity they constitute' (Hall, 1980b:72).

11. Wendy Brown makes a related point: 'It is interesting … that the optimism of radical (social) democratic vision is fueled by that dimension of liberalism which presumes social and political forms to have relative autonomy from economic ones to be that which can be tinkered with independently of developments in the forces of capitalism. Indeed, it is here that the radical democrats become vulnerable to the charge of "idealism", where idealism marks the promulgation of select political ideals de-linked from historical configurations of social powers and institutions …' (Brown, 1995:12).

12. For example Braun and Disch (2002) and Fischman and McLaren (2005).

13. My research in the 1990s in two areas of northwestern KwaZulu-Natal provide strong support for this argument (Hart, 2002).

14. See Bond (2000) for an argument about how the RDP White Paper effectively evacuated the progressive elements in the original framing of the RDP.

15. GEAR is an acronym for Growth, Employment and Redistribution, an extremely conservative package of macro-economic policies that the ANC government presented to the South African public as a fait accompli in June 1996.

16. Elsewhere (Hart, 2007) I discuss more fully the uses and limits of the concept of governmentality.

17. Johnson (2003) argues that Mbeki and his followers have found the reorganisation of the state along conventional (neo)liberal lines quite compatible with their Leninist understanding of the primacy of vanguard party leadership over mass action.

18. The 'land question' – along with histories, memories, and meanings of racialised dispossession and the imperatives of redress – are also part of this complex (Hart, 2002; 2006a; 2006c).

19. In September 2002, the Political Education Unit of the ANC issued a revealing document entitled 'Contribution to the NEC/NWC Response to the "Cronin Interviews" on the Issue of Neoliberalism'; see also Makhaye (2002) and Moleketi and Jele (2002) along with the sharp response by Masondo (2002).

20. Article in *City Press*, 29 September 2002, p. 8 entitled 'Ultra-left transposes DA agenda on the ANC'.

21. http://www.info.gov.za/speeches/2003/03080511461001.htm; accessed 30 June 2004.

22. For documentation, see the references provided by the South African Regional Poverty Network: http://www.sarpn.org.za/documents/d0000830/index.php; accessed 30 June 2004.

23. http://www.anc.org.za/ancdocs/anctoday/2004/text/at47.txt ; accessed 19 December 2004.

24. These figures are contained in an article entitled '66 cops injured in illegal service delivery protests', *Cape Argus,* 13 October 2005.

25. I develop this and related arguments more fully in Hart (2006c).

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The Radicalised State: Zimbabwe's Interrupted Revolution

Sam Moyo & Paris Yeros

This article conceptualises the revolutionary situation that gripped Zimbabwe from the late 1990s. That was the moment in which the two political questions that historically have galvanized peripheral capitalism – the agrarian and the national – were returned to the forefront of political life. We argue that the revolutionary situation resulted neither in a revolution, nor in mediocre reformism, nor in restoration. It resulted in an interrupted revolution, marked by a radical agrarian reform and a radicalised state – the first on the continent since the end of the Cold War.

Most left-wing critics of the land reform have failed to notice, or acknowledge, the revolutionary situation in Zimbabwe in the 1990s (Moore, 2004; Raftopoulos & Phimister, 2004; Bernstein, 2005; Cousins, 2006). We have argued elsewhere that their analyses have been subject to eurocentric and/or populist influences, whose result has been the rendering of the whole process as an instance of 'crisis, chaos and tyranny' – a seemingly incurable African pathology (Moyo & Yeros, 2005 and forthcoming). Under such 'irrational' circumstances, there has been little felt need to understand the social basis and contradictions of the situation; these have routinely been obscured and detached from politics. A further result has been to maintain a silence about, or to support explicitly, the imposition of imperialist sanctions against Zimbabwe, in the interest of 'regime change'.

In our view, the political economy of Zimbabwe cannot be understood on the basis of an idealised model of a bourgeois democracy– one which is located in the centre of the capitalist system, which historically has resolved the national and agrarian questions, and which enjoys the capacity to export its social contradictions beyond its borders in the interest of domestic 'social peace'. Under imperialism, peripheral capitalism, in Zimbabwe and elsewhere, has been unable to resolve the national and agrarian questions and thus exhibits recurrent economic, social, and political crises; these, in turn, have the capacity to escalate to a revolutionary situation. This has been the case in Zimbabwe in the late 1990s. And in this case, like so many others, the revolutionary situation has *not* resulted in a revolution. Neither did it result in a mediocre reformism or restoration. It has resulted in an *interrupted* revolution, marked by a radical agrarian reform and a radicalised state. The revolutionary situation has been the first on the continent since the end of the Cold War, and has resulted in the first radicalised state, which in turn has its counterparts in other parts of the world, most prominently in Venezuela and Bolivia.

We begin by clarifying the notion of *crisis* and distinguishing it from *chaos*. This is important because crisis is indeed at the heart of the matter. Crisis is of three types: economic, social, and political. Economic crisis refers to the falling rate of profit

which results generally from the over-accumulation of capital. There is no dispute that, in Zimbabwe, over-accumulation characterised the transition to independence in 1980, that from 1990 structural adjustment induced a rapid deterioration of the economy, and that from 1997 this deterioration intensified. Social crisis, on the other hand, refers to the inability of the labour force to reproduce itself. Peripheral capitalism is in a chronic state of social crisis, evident in the statistics of high infant mortality, chronic malnutrition, vulnerability to preventable disease, low life expectancy, and high illiteracy. There is no dispute that under structural adjustment, social crisis intensified in Zimbabwe and has persisted up to now.

However, there is a dispute concerning political crisis. Political crisis refers to a crisis of legitimacy, and it dovetails with economic and social crisis. As we have argued, legitimacy – in the Gramscian sense of hegemony – is generally found wanting in the periphery, rendering political crisis as endemic as economic and social crisis. But it is also clear that in some cases, as in Zimbabwe in the late 1990s, an open political conflict emerged, while in others, where dissent remains unorganised, the conflict does not escalate. We may thus distinguish between 'low intensity' and 'high intensity' political crises, the latter including cases of mass mobilisation, violent clashes with the state, civil conflict, or civil war. In this light, what is specific to the case of Zimbabwe is the degree of political mobilisation that the country experienced in the late 1990s, both outside and inside the ruling party, which ultimately raised the prospect of removal of the ruling party from control of the state. What does not follow is a dichotomy between the 'social' and the 'political'. Such a dichotomy is highly ideological, and in Zimbabwe it has served to divert political attention towards a superficial 'regime change' politics, rather than focus on the social origins of the land reform and the social transformation underway.

Our analysis of radicalisation develops three issues. The first of these is what we identify as the revolutionary situation, between 2000-03, during which the radicalisation of the state reached its climax; second, state-society relations in the countryside during this period which, contrary to chaos theories, were transformed by means of a significantly structured process; and third, the process of normalisation from 2003 onwards which remains incomplete, contradictory, polarised, and coercive, and which includes the mass urban evictions of May to July 2005.

The Revolutionary Situation

If independence bequeathed a neo-colonial state in Zimbabwe, the late nineties saw a rebellion against neo-colonialism. There was an incipient radicalisation of the state from 1997 onwards marked by its interventionist role in the economy, the suspension of structural adjustment, and the listing of 1,471 farms for expropriation. The basis of this radicalisation is to be found in the economic, social, and, ultimately, political crisis of the late 1990s, a robust crisis which was organically driven by social forces within and without the ruling party. The extent and direction of this radicalisation was unpredictable at the time and remained subject to both internal and external contradictions in the form of a hostile and subversive reaction by imperialist forces, namely Western states, the International Financial Institutions (IFIs), and their domestic allies. The state was compelled to respond and manage these contradictions without a clear plan of its own while its incremental radicalisation occurred dialectically, *through* these contradictions.

By 2000, the crisis had reached a political precipice. With the onset of mass land occupations on the one hand, and urban mobilisation by the opposition on the other, the bureaucracy was confronted with a situation in which violence was unavoidable: either against the land occupations, or against the opposition; either against neo-colonialism, or in its service. This predicament is poorly understood by most left-wing critics, whose analyses resort to a 'human rights' moralism. The respect for human rights requires a secure economic, social, and political context. Human rights cannot be detached from their context and propounded moralistically. And they certainly cannot be detached from the deeply contradictory context of Zimbabwe in 2000 which amounted to no less than a revolutionary situation.

Let us be clear of what we mean by revolutionary situation. This is a situation in which society is highly mobilised and in conflict, both among its socio-political formations and between them and the state. Moreover, it is a situation in which bourgeois institutions come under fundamental threat, *in a progressive way*. In this context, property rights and formal democratic political norms and procedures (human rights) are either threatened or abrogated and basic bureaucratic structures and hierarchies are themselves threatened or suspended. This does not necessarily mean that a revolutionary rupture with the capitalist system is on the cards. The latter would require disciplined and durable working class organisation, revolutionary leadership, and not least the implosion of the state apparatus, either through war and/or through the dissent/disintegration of the armed forces – none of which occurred in Zimbabwe. However, the course of a revolutionary situation is never predetermined: it contains the potential of revolutionary rupture through the escalation of contradictions and the implementation of deep structural changes without interruption (permanent revolution); or it may stall after a first set of radical reforms, or even degenerate into a restoration of the *status quo ante* (Löwy, 1981; Amin, 1983).

A revolutionary situation differs from a bourgeois dictatorship (or 'authoritarian regime'), where democratic norms and procedures are suspended, but property rights are maintained, where bureaucratic hierarchies are bolstered, and which has *no progressive potential*. It also differs from a 'failed state', where procedures and institutions are abrogated, the central state collapses, and property rights come under threat but, again, whose social contradictions have no progressive potential. In the late 1990s, Zimbabwe made a rapid (three-year) transition from a neo-colonial situation – what we have called a 'half-way house' between authoritarianism and democracy – to a revolutionary situation, in which socio-political conflict escalated, formal democratic norms and procedures were partially suspended, agrarian property rights were abrogated in a *fundamentally progressive way*, and bureaucratic hierarchy itself was suspended in the countryside. The result has been neither revolution nor restoration, but a radical reform of agrarian relations, together with a radicalisation of nationalism – in effect, a radical populism. Politically, this process has necessarily entailed a protracted confrontation with imperialism, both internally and externally.

The revolutionary situation in Zimbabwe has given rise *not* to a revolutionary state but a *radicalised* state; this is a peripheral state which has rebelled against neo-colonialism. There is certainly much to be criticised in this process of radicalisation, as we have made clear in our own work: especially, the 'single-issue' nature of the land occupation movement, the ideological and strategic shortcomings of its war-veteran leadership, and the fact that the rural-urban working-class divide was not

bridged in the process of mobilisation (Moyo & Yeros, 2005). Ultimately, the land occupation movement was both adopted *and* co-opted by the ruling party, while large sections of the proletariat, including farmworkers and urban workers, were not incorporated into the movement, either ideologically or materially; the opposite in fact occurred. These excluded sections of the population that were mobilised by the opposition on an increasingly reactionary agenda in alliance with imperialist forces. In turn, this opposition has come to constitute a debilitating internal contradiction, which, together with the strategic and essentially petty-bourgeois shortcomings of the ruling party, has hampered the struggle against imperialism. To this complex contradiction is also owed the persistent coercion employed by the ruling party.

Nonetheless, we must recognise the fundamentally progressive nature of this radicalisation and persist with a critical engagement with radical nationalism. Above all, we must reject the reactionary logic of imperialist sanctions. This remains an imperative in the post-2003 period as well, the period in which the ruling party has veered towards a policy of 'normalisation' with international capital. Normalisation has entailed an attempt to 'restore order' politically and economically, a policy which culminated in the mass urban evictions of May-July 2005. We will discuss this in more detail in a later section, but suffice it to note here that normalisation has been incomplete and has remained subject to internal and external contradictions. Normalisation has not meant a full return to neo-colonialism; Zimbabwe remains a radicalised state.

The government continues to reject neoliberal orthodoxy and has pursued a heterodox economic plan. This plan has emerged dialectically in conflict with imperialist sanctions, whose key conditionality has been regime change; sanctions, in this sense, have imposed the need for economic heterodoxy. The heterodox plan is a mixture of crisis management and strategic planning, whose main thrust is the following: In *monetary policy*, the government has controlled prices, interest rates, and foreign exchange, with the aim of supporting essential imports and exports; at the same time, it has effectively defaulted on foreign debt and only recently (in 2005) resumed payments on arrears with the IMF in the interest of normalisation. In *fiscal policy*, it has subsidised commodities, such as basic foods and petrol, for the intended benefit mainly of urban areas, as well as public services, such as electricity, which also benefits agriculture. In *investment policy*, it has heavily regulated banks and sought to direct credit to agriculture and mining; the latter has been promoted to a strategic export sector, while the state has been moving towards acquiring a controlling stake (51%) of all foreign-owned mines. In *trade policy*, the government has imposed import and export controls focused on essential commodities, reinforced marketing parastatals to regulate trade, and sought to diversify trading partners to the East; moreover, it has rejected genetically modified (GMO) maize which the US government attempted to introduce into the country via 'food aid'. In terms of intellectual property rights, it has implemented compulsory licensing of anti-retroviral drugs (ARVs) in confrontation with transnational pharmaceutical firms within a generalised campaign against HIV/AIDS. In *land policy*, at the same time as it has 'de-radicalised' the urban land question in the interest of normalisation, it has moved ahead with a constitutional amendment to nationalise all agricultural land. In *foreign policy*, the government has actively opposed the liberalisation agenda of the WTO and the opportunistic attempts to reform the United Nations, in both cases playing a leading global role; it has single-handedly undermined NEPAD; and has repeatedly confronted US imperialism and South

Africa sub-imperialism, not least in the DRC, at great cost to itself. Moreover, the government has implemented a 'Look East' policy in search for new alliances, especially with China, with the aim of diversifying financial and technological dependence away from the West.

Overall, the emerging strategic plan, insofar as it can be discerned, has consisted of the following elements:

• To reposition Zimbabwe, economically and politically, in what may well be an emerging 'bi-polar' (inter-imperialist) world order between China and the US-led Western alliance, by which Zimbabwe would gain a larger measure of bargaining power;

• To restructure the export sector by giving more emphasis to energy and minerals, including platinum, uranium, coal, methane gas, gold, and diamonds;

• To revive agriculture on the basis of a broader and more rationalised structure which would re-instate the large-farm/small-farm policy bifurcation (on a relatively less inequitable land ownership basis), with a dominant emphasis on extroverted accumulation and a subordinate emphasis on production for domestic consumption;

• To increase the control of the state over the above two strategic sectors (mining and agriculture), by nationalising all agricultural land and leasing it out on a long-term basis, and by gaining a controlling stake on mines;

• To direct credit to the strategic sectors by heavily regulating the banking sector; and

• To regulate internal and external trade, so as to rationalise the allocation of resources in accordance with the requirements of the heterodox development plan.

The above model remains hampered by weaknesses in capacity and vision, as well as contradictions on the ground. First, the planning capacities of state bureaucracies have been inadequate for the task, and this has hampered the response to the sanctions regime. On the one hand, there is a lack of skills for effective planning which is compounded as much by the emigration of skilled professionals as by the deterioration of tertiary education. On the other hand, many of the planning institutions and instruments of the early independence period were liquidated under structural adjustment and are only now being resurrected. Second, planning *against* sanctions and *for* development has been seriously hampered by the failure of the ruling party to broaden its social base and gain popular support, especially urban popular support towards an alternative strategy of development. It has become clear that planning cannot deliver unless the people are taken into account and empowered in the planning process. In this sense, the fate of radicalisation continues to depend on its class character and vision.

The struggle for democracy and development must begin on the basis of the above nationalist proposal of 'delinking' (Amin, 1990) in confrontation with imperialism, and not on the basis of a capitulation to the international law of value – the model which the 'opposition' advocates. The persistence of coercion in the radicalised state should not detain us from struggling for the democratisation of nationalism:

the further radicalisation of nationalism. Opting for a mere 'human rights' discourse in this context is inadequate: it obscures the fact that full normalisation with international capital, whether under ZANU-PF or MDC leadership, will itself be a fundamentally coercive and reactionary process.

The Suspension of Bureaucracy

The central feature of the revolutionary situation described above was the temporary suspension of bureaucratic hierarchy in the countryside. Critics of the land reform rushed to a different conclusion on the matter, depicting fast-track land reform as 'chaotic', and the suspension of bureaucracy as an irrational 'destruction' of the state (Hammar, Raftopoulos & Jensen, 2003). Our present purpose is to add to our previous and ongoing analyses by explaining the manner in which the land reform gained structure as the state moved to adopt and co-opt the land occupations movement (Moyo & Yeros, 2005; Moyo, 2005 and forthcoming). Key to this process was the establishment of 'land committees' at the local level, by which bureaucratic hierarchy was suspended. We will also highlight the role of traditional authorities and war veterans in and around the land committees.

Following independence, a complex system of local government evolved at provincial and district levels under the highly centralised control of policy and budgets by national government ministries and parastatals. Local staff and resources came to be coordinated at the lower tiers by the Ministry of Local Government through District Administrators, while district level structures became the pivot of rural policy implementation. The coordination process at district level included the District Administrator (an unelected officer) and various committees involving local representatives of various ministries and the security organs, plus elected councillors and an elaborate (unelected) traditional leadership structure, including chiefs, headmen and village heads. Alongside these structures, relatively well-organised ruling party structures have tended to oversee and often to influence the local administration process.

This system of local government generally experienced declining operational capacity during structural adjustment. That was due to the diminishing fiscal capacity of the state to cover administrative, logistical, and other implementation costs. The fast-track land reform gave new impetus to local structures at a relatively low direct budgetary cost. Payment for land was no longer a constraint to local authorities as only rudimentary support services and infrastructures were being provided by the state to new settlers. Furthermore, various government 'task forces', comprising mainly security organs, were established to monitor the land reform process as intense conflicts emerged on the ground.

These structures were transformed during fast-track land reform, mainly through district 'land committees', which had been introduced in 1996 but were restructured around a 'command centre' in 2000. Land committees came to engage almost all of the local ministry officials and traditional leaders, plus the ruling party, the security organs, and war veterans. These district land committees involved 15 to 30 people. They reported to similarly constituted provincial land committees, coordinated by provincial governors, which in turn reported to the central government Ministry of Land. Moreover, for at least three years (2000-02), the authority of local state structures tended to be subordinated to the war veterans' structures which influenced the identification of land for acquisition, using the list of 1,471

designated farms and a beneficiary selection process (using communal area 'waiting lists' and war veterans' lists) which had been drawn up in 1997. War veterans who had established 'base camps' for the land occupations were also incorporated into local resettlement farms in 'committees of seven', which served to coordinate new settlers, war veterans and others, and to oversee farmworkers, new occupiers, and criminals. In all, the land committees, as structures representing diverse rural interests, but especially petty elites and richer peasants, were perhaps the most influential local institutions to bring structure to the implementation process.

The capacity of the land committees remained limited due to resource constraints, as well as by conflicting authority between local and central government structures, such that the reform process was prolonged from the expected four years to six years. These new structures managed the following processes, to various degrees of effectiveness: they mobilised, monitored, and regulated the land occupations; identified land to be expropriated by the state; selected beneficiaries from 'waiting lists' and other applicants; defined the allocation and demarcation of land to 'social' (A1) and 'commercial' (A2) schemes; negotiated the downsizing of former farm holdings; monitored land use and environmental management; resolved conflicts, preventing criminality and securing the land reform process; managed the use of infrastructure and equipment which remained on the farms; and coordinated the distribution of subsidised agricultural inputs and machinery for tillage and harvesting. In undertaking these numerous tasks, line ministries led the implementation of specific tasks under the supervision of the land committees.

Interference in land acquisition and allocations from influential central state officials and ruling party members was common, especially during the initial mid-2000 to 2002 period, as two land audits revealed (Buka Report, 2002; PLRC, 2003). These land audits were undertaken precisely because of the controversies that had emerged, and led to the restructuring of the Ministry of Land into a separate authority as well as the initiation of a land reform 'correction' process in late 2003. Corrections included the following, again to various degrees of effectiveness: the rationalisation of the records on acquired land and beneficiaries; the repossession of multiple and oversized (consolidated) land allocations; the reversal of fraudulent land allocations; the re-planning of land allocations and land-use requirements to cater for specialist enterprises (forestry, wildlife, dairy, and irrigation); the streamlining of the administrative procedures of land committees and central government interventions; the resolution of land boundary disputes; the building of legal and administrative capacities to complete the formal acquisition of land, including administrative court hearings and 'compensation' processes; and the allocation of enforceable land tenure documents ('permits' and long leases).

Structure and consistency in the land reform process did not emerge quickly. But by 2003, the institutions responsible for implementation appeared to have stabilised around an approach of incrementally completing given procedures. These included, for example, court confirmations of acquisition and tenure certificates offer and compensation and support services. These built on the rudimentary process of land allocations, while relegating to the longer term some of the costly implementation processes like the surveying of land subdivision and infrastructural investments. The first 18 months of the fast-track process therefore entailed two parallel actions: the coordinated and uncoordinated land occupations on about 20 per cent of the large farmers' land; and the state-led expropriation of 80 per cent of the large

farmers' land, comprising occupied and unoccupied land, and the formal allocation of land to selected beneficiaries. Both processes entailed elements of 'chaos' or 'anarchy' at the beginning, given the numerous incidents of confrontation and violence on the farms. These elements gradually receded, however, as the state administrative and legal structures gained greater country-wide control of the process from late 2000, in a process mediated by the district land committees and monitored through technical audits and monitoring task-forces led by security organs. Only sporadic invasions and violence on farms persisted into 2003.

It is important to take a closer scrutiny of the role of customary authorities. Customary authority is based on kinship, has various tiers going down to the village level (chiefs, headmen, and village heads), and is supported by religious leadership structures (spirit mediums). It has a pervasive influence over peasant organisation and land politics, including the control of critical levers of local power which it shares with local state structures (e.g. traditional courts), and formal and informal powers of land allocation, land use, and natural resource management. Traditional leaders had important but contradictory influence in the shaping of fast-track land policy.

First, traditional leaders tended to compete among themselves in defence of their jurisdictions during the land reform, and competed as well with local government structures and 'outsiders' in order to settle as many of their land-short and 'congested' communal area 'subjects' on the finite amount of redistributable land. Some traditional leaders complained that their 'subjects' were being excluded, that their communal lands were not being adequately 'decongested', and that the land committees tended to marginalise them. This displeasure, which received wide media coverage, placed various pressures on the central state and local land committees. Consequently, the land targeted for acquisition was increased to meet the demand; landholding sizes allocated to the commercial (A2) scheme were downsized; and greater powers to identify beneficiaries were provided to chiefs. Their position on land committees was strengthened, although their capacity to overcome the influence of its other members is doubtful.

At times, these influences led to equity-inducing policy responses from the state. It highlighted the importance of this local structure as a key source of 'internal' critique of land policy and implementation which forced the state to shift. While the external critique, especially the media, seized the opportunity to expose grievances and to buttress its own critique of the fast-track process as a whole, such agitation by traditional authorities tended to strengthen state-society interaction, including its responsiveness to peasants.

Yet many of the chiefs also sought to gain access to larger pieces of prime land and homesteads of the former landowners, as did their elite counterparts in the state bureaucracy and private sectors. They supported the larger A2 landholdings which, in turn, they justified on grounds of respecting the *mambo* (chief). And eventually they were also allocated or gained access to electricity, vehicles, and farming inputs, purportedly to enhance their leadership role and capacities in the agrarian reform process. But only a few of their 'subjects' have received such benefits so far. This pattern suggests that chiefs are a special type of lower tier 'policy elite' which promoted both equity and inequity within a broad context of support for the land reform.

With respect to the Matabeleland provinces, field evidence showed that a minority of chiefs, dominated politically by the MDC, tended to be sceptical about land reform and had not cooperated either in encouraging land occupations (the 'informal' process) or in supplying 'waiting lists' of potential beneficiaries in the 'formal' process (interview with war veterans, chiefs, and new farmers in Matabeleland North and South, October 2004). In this way, some districts gained less access to new land, while in others (e.g., Midlands, Mashonaland West), where peasants, chiefs, and war veterans were hyper-supportive of the land reform, many more people gained land, including land from beyond their provinces where chiefs and other leaders were less active. Nonetheless, three years later, some of the chiefs who at first had resisted the process submitted waiting lists for consideration, when the policy structure and political events had stabilised.

The role of customary authorities has been contradictory. On the one hand, they have often played a catalytic role in land occupations, from the colonial period to the neo-colonial, including the high profile Svosve and Hwedza land occupations of 1998 (Moyo, 2001; Moyana, 2002; Shiku, 2002; Marongwe, 2003; Sadomba, 2006). On the other hand, customary authorities influenced land reform policy to more parochial and patriarchal ends. In the late 1990s, they opposed market-based land reform by encouraging a land acquisition approach which would extend communal boundaries to contiguous areas and also induced an allocation process in which mainly they (not district councils) would identify those in need of land within their jurisdiction. While this decentralised the beneficiary selection processes, it also enhanced local patronage activities by both chiefs and local administrators. During the fast-track process, the role of traditional leaders in beneficiary selection was often overridden by war veterans, but still chiefs did influence policy to the effect of extending their territorial control into contiguous resettlement areas. This form of influence, while logistically rational because it reduced the costs of resettling people, gave sustenance to increasing ethno-regional biases in land allocation. It also reinforced customary authority as a whole and its adverse consequences in terms of gender, age, and class relations.

The role of war veterans continues to require careful research. To date, most studies have had an in-built bias against radical nationalism, such as that of the war veterans at the end of the 1990s (Krieger, 2001; Moore, 2004). The entry of war veterans into political life crept in gradually since 1989 when it was founded as a registered welfare organisation to improve the lives of 55,000 war veterans. But the organisation took a sharp organisational and strategic turn in 1997. War veterans then held street marches, demanded state compensation for their looted pension fund, also demanded more aggressive land acquisition by the state, and a year later, coordinated a high-profile wave of land occupations in 30 sites around the country (Sadomba, 2006). From the beginning, the rebellion constituted an 'internal' critique of ZANU-PF and government.

The war veterans' association (ZNLWVA) represents about 200,000 people. They are dispersed geographically across the country and conduct their affairs through national, provincial, and district-level structures. The organisation represents war veterans of varied objective class origins, some employed and others not, some with key positions in the state, the security apparatus, and the private sector, some based in the countryside, others in the cities, some who have longer war veteran service, others lesser, and so forth. They tend to be identified mainly with the visible elite of

bureaucrats, political leaders, and businessmen, but in fact the majority is part of the rural and urban poor. Since independence, their 'demobilisation' and 'absorption' into social and political life has been highly differentiated, yielding a complex hierarchy. But their main power base is in the rural areas; this base was formed during the guerrilla war era and cultivated thereafter, either by social links or continued residence in the countryside.

Debate has tended to conflate the ZNLWVA membership, which is organically born from ZANU-PF membership, with ZANU-PF organs and strategies as a party. This has neglected the changing social and political relations of the two organisations, and the nuanced shifts in their alliance. At the national and provincial levels, i.e. the apex, the relationship has been in constant motion, oscillating between autonomy on the part of ZNLWVA and its co-optation by ZANU-PF and the state, but gravitating to the latter. This process has entailed a multiplicity of local independent actions, mostly by the middle class and poor war veterans who have confronted ZANU-PF structures and the local and central state. Contrary to the claims of critics, their confrontations have been *real*. It is they who have initiated key processes such as land expropriation, land and agrarian corruption exposure, and policies to enable agrarian equipment procurement and subsidies. This activism is combined with general loyalty towards ZANU-PF, as well as the tendency to be subordinated by ZANU-PF and the state shortly after 'rebelling'. While opportunistic, corrupt, and pugilistic elements also exist amongst them, as in most segments of society, such elements have served to undermine the fairness and consistency of the land reform. It is also true that war veteran activism has served to garner renewed rural electoral support for ZANU-PF. But the key point is that war veterans maintained unique organic links to the countryside which other 'civil society' organisations failed to develop after independence, and which enabled the war veterans to garner this support and to mobilise land demands into a national land occupation movement.

The ZNLWVA-ZANU-PF alliance exhibited significant disputes in terms of material objectives, tactics, and ideology. The process of land occupation and state expropriation was riddled by numerous internal conflicts and contradictions. Some sought the total restitution of all land and displacement of all white ('settler') farmers, while others sought negotiation and accommodation with them on downsized farms. Some promoted physical confrontation in the invasions but most did not, and sought instead the more effective use of the legal instrument of land expropriation. Some engaged in corrupt land-grabbing of large and multiple farms and equipment, but the majority did not, preferring to be formally allocated land and subsidised credit, according to policy. These competing currents took three years to harmonise, and in turn have been reflected to a certain extent in the political succession battles within ZANU-PF.

Finally, it is important to emphasise that the grounds for the possible suspension of bureaucracy in the 2000-03 period had been laid in the late 1990s with the mobilisation of the war veterans, the repudiation of structural adjustment, and the beginning of sanctions. Although the internal re-organisation of the liberation movement was not pre-determined, it was at this time that the leadership of the ruling party was incrementally forced to abandon the mentality of technocracy and the rule of law, and by 2000, to move radical legislation on land acquisition rapidly through parliament. The suspension of bureaucracy in the rural areas was the climax of the revolutionary situation.

It is also important to note that the suspension of bureaucracy has been followed by the re-centralisation and enlargement of bureaucracy – a common feature of previous revolutionary situations (Amin, 1981; Skocpol, 1979; Halliday, 1999). The emergence of a heterodox development plan under sanctions has obliged the state to extend its direct control over monetary, fiscal, pricing, trade, investment, and land policy, and to resurrect planning agencies and parastatals. This centralisation of power has both enabled the state to maintain its confrontational stance against sanctions *and* widened the gulf between state and society.

Normalisation & Coercion

A turning point in 2003 was marked by an incipient policy of 'normalisation' with capital. That policy has been contradictory and accompanied by ongoing coercion against the opposition (which has continued to seek 'regime change'), and has involved the passing of several repressive bills through parliament, which *inter alia* led to shutting down of the private daily newspaper, *The Daily News.* Ongoing coercion culminated in the mass evictions of irregular urban settlements in May-July 2005, in an operation codenamed 'Operation Restore Order/*Murambatsvina*'. Some degree of political concession was also evident in amendments to the electoral laws in the context of SADC norms-making; while levels of electoral violence were notably lower during the 2005 parliamentary election.

Recent analyses of this period have sought to understand normalisation through the lense of formal party politics, and particularly as a function of intra-ZANU-PF politics (LeBas, 2004; Kagwanja, 2005; Maroleng, 2005). Earlier analysis of radicalisation denied the existence of intra-ZANU-PF cleavages, especially class cleavages, and depicted fast-track land reform as a mere political response to the external MDC challenge. Recent analyses, however, have discovered intra-ZANU-PF politics but deny their class content. Intra-ZANU-PF politics are now understood as formally constituted, class-free, and mainly ethnic factions. The same analyses depict intra-MDC cleavages as mainly 'tactical' or procedural, effectively cleansing them of both their ethnic and class content (see also Raftopoulos, 2006).

Yet closer analysis reveals that the organic basis of normalisation was found in the consolidation of a new black agrarian bourgeoisie, linked to the ruling party, but sharing with other capitals the need for 'order' as a prerequisite for accumulation. The capitalist class as a whole may not have achieved organisational and strategic homogeneity in the post-fast-track period – some are committed liberals, others remain nationalist – but they do share the need for political and economic stability. For its part, the working class demands 'order' as well – most immediately against the rapid economic decline – but remains disunited, (re)subordinated to capital and the state, and incapable of projecting its own vision of 'order'. This array of socio-political demands is expressed through formally constituted lobbies, associations, and factions, as well as through less visible forms of politics, both within and without political parties. In this context, ethnic mobilisation and fragmentation is invariably a bourgeois/petty-bourgeois accumulation strategy: the expression of an advanced degeneration of inter-capitalist relations and of working class organisation and leadership. This is not a 'natural' phenomenon of African political parties – or of 'certain' political parties – and must always be explained rather than assumed.

The type and pace of normalisation has unfolded through the above contradictions and in conflict with the sanctions regime. The ruling party and its leadership, contrary to the ultimate sacrifice demanded of it, has remained in a position to influence and implement normalisation, which in turn has had two basic dimensions, one political and one economic.

Politically, there has been an ongoing attempt by the leadership of the ruling party to reign in radical elements within its ranks, and especially among lower-echelon war veterans. If, by 2003, co-optation of war veterans was more or less complete in the countryside, it remained an outstanding threat in the urban areas where war veterans had also spearheaded occupations of urban residential land during 2000-01. During this time urban land occupations had been tolerated by the government, not least due to its concern for its faltering urban vote, yet a formal policy framework on the urban land question had not been forthcoming. Thus, the radicalisation of the state against property rights was by and large a rural affair. Yet, urban land occupations proceeded to consolidate themselves into housing cooperatives and other associations, often under militant war veteran leadership; moreover, they proceeded to build residential sites and other small business structures outside the official urban planning framework. The organisational structure and militancy of these associations continued to pose a political challenge to the ruling party in the post-2003 period; this was as much an internal party affair as an external one, given that it raised the spectre of a broad-based urban social movement which could be co-opted by the MDC. Indeed, elements in the ruling party have admitted in hindsight that they feared an 'Orange' type revolution. At the same time, the expansion of residential sites placed new objective demands on public utilities (water, electricity, sewage), increasing the pressure on already strained urban authorities and resources. The stage was thus set for an urban showdown, either to re-radicalise the urban question or to restore political and municipal 'order'.

The economic dimension of normalisation has been no less critical. While all sectors of capital have demanded order in terms of security of property rights and the reduction/stabilisation of inflation, all capitals across sectors have also engaged in speculative activity and short-term profiteering through the informalisation of business activity and the creation of parallel markets (as opposed to black markets). A key development in this process has been the emergence of systematic linkages between large, formal businesses with the small, informal enterprises whose epicentre has been irregular urban growth points. Thus, banks 'externalised' their business activities both *outside* the country and outside the formal economy *inside* the country and by conducting foreign exchange transactions in parallel markets; the mining sector externalised trade through illegal exports and informal local trade; the export and import sectors (manufacturing, agriculture, and services) similarly engaged in the externalisation/informalisation of trade and especially foreign exchange while the same pattern occurred within the construction sector, which profited by irregular building activities, and within the state sector as well.

These activities have hampered the ability of the government to implement a coherent heterodox plan and undermined its key policy instruments: control of foreign exchange, imports, and exports, the regulation of interest rates, the targeting of credit to essential industries, and the subsidising of basic commodities and utilities. The informalisation of the economy thus created severe economic leakages which counteracted efforts to bring hyperinflation under control and undermined heterodox economic and political survival as a whole. It is important to note that the

creation of parallel markets has been pursued as much by black capital linked to ZANU-PF, as by other capitals. In sum, the political challenges of normalisation described above were compounded by severe economic leakages – mostly based in the urban areas. The National Economic Development Priorities Programme (NEDPP) of 2006 has suffered similar constraints.

The project of restoring political and economic order under the siege of sanctions culminated in mid-2005 in Operation Restore Order/*Murambatsvina*. This involved the surprise, military-style assault on irregular urban settlements, the destruction of residential and business structures, and mass evictions. By any standard, restoring order has been a humanitarian tragedy, with greatest impact on the well-being of the urban-based working class, and with adverse consequences for their rural kin as well. It has also severely compromised the image of the ruling party as an anti-imperialist and pan-Africanist movement.

At the same time, imperialist forces have not idly stood by. They have exploited the tragedy and renewed pressure on the ruling party and its leadership to step down. Specifically, they have magnified the tragedy, claiming, in a UN report, that some 700,000 persons were displaced (UNO, 2005). A more rigorous analysis would have placed the number of displaced at a much lower number, possibly between one-half and one-third the UN estimate. The UN team that conducted the inquiry employed a shoddy methodology, relying largely on the 'evidence' of unaccountable civil society organisations, rather than doing the more demanding research that was required. It is worth noting that early UN estimates, before the official inquiry, had placed the number at 350,000 (or 70,000 families); these numbers were also questionable. There was no differentiation between residential and small-business structures allowing for double-counting families with residential *and* small-business structures. Moreover, both the early estimates and the later report assumed that every family evicted consisted of five members. That ignored the fact that these settlements in all likelihood did not consist of entire families. They were temporary structures which typically reproduce the rural-urban, dual-home strategy of Zimbabwe's semi-proletarianised peasantry. In the event, instead of correcting the early estimates, the UN team simply *doubled* them, without explanation. Needless to say, this numbers game has masked the real economic and political contradictions and struggles facing Zimbabwe, and served to sustain superficial perspectives on its polarisation and 'governance' deficit.

The human costs of normalisation have been accompanied by formally constituted power struggles within the ruling party and the MDC. Within ZANU-PF, there has been a shift from a radical nationalist political unity, associated with the fast-track period, in which war veterans effectively challenged the class project of the elite, to the re-emergence of internal factionalism associated with the succession of President Mugabe. There have been three broad factions vying for succession, two comprising of the 'old guard' and the third of the so-called 'Young Turks'. The old guard has been split between the camps led by party stalwarts, Solomon Mujuru and Emmerson Mnangagwa who have generally, but not exclusively, mobilised around Zezuru and Karanga identities, respectively (both being ethnic Shona sub-groups), while the Mujuru camp specifically has also been in alliance with Ndebele/ZAPU stalwarts, John Nkomo and Dumiso Dabengwa. On the other hand, the 'Young Turks', whose most prominent figure was (until late-2004) Information and Publicity Minister Jonathan Moyo, opened a new fissure in the power politics of the party by mobilising around 'generational renewal'. President Mugabe has generally

remained aloof of factional politics, maintaining relations with all, intervening in crucial junctures to maintain inter-ethnic balance within the party.

Succession politics heated up in October 2003, after the death of Shona Vice-President Simon Muzenda, which raised once again the issue of ethnic balance. The matter was settled only in December 2004, when the Mnangagwa camp, which had previously sought clandestine dialogue with the MDC, forged a new alliance with the Moyo camp in a meeting in Tsholotsho. The aim of the meeting was not only to fill the Shona vacancy, but also to demand the retirement of the second (Ndebele) Vice-President Joseph Msika (from the older ZAPU). Besides constituting a new challenge to the President, they also jeopardised the 1987 Unity Agreement which had established balance within the party by the creation of two vice-presidents, one for each former liberation party. In the event, the Tsholotsho meeting was uncovered by ZANU-PF and its members reprimanded and dismissed from top government and party posts. The result has been to maintain ethnic balance by the appointment of respected cabinet minister and moderate Joyce Mujuru to the Shona vice-presidency, albeit on a gender card; and to reinforce the Zezuru camp by a disproportionate allocation of top jobs.

It is important to note that in this power struggle, ideological differences have been either non-existent or superficial and opportunistic (e.g., the 'radicalism' of some of those dismissed by ZANU-PF). *All* factions represent bourgeois interests, although ZANU-PF in general seeks to retain the peasantry as its main base, through partially supportive agrarian policies. Yet, it is also the case that, despite the ever-present ethnic factor, power politics have not degenerated into an ethno-chauvinist spiral; national unity has prevailed over the Shona-Ndebele cleavage. In this sense, the post-Tsholotsho period has seen the restoration of order within the ruling party as well. Moreover, given that moderate John Nkomo will be the likely (but contested) successor of Msika in the Ndebele vice-presidency, the stage is now set for two moderate nationalists (Nkomo and J. Mujuru) to succeed President Mugabe. Yet, this outcome could still be challenged by others within ZANU-PF.

Meanwhile, factionalism has indeed degenerated along ethnic lines within the MDC. While ethnic balance had been adhered to since the foundation of the party in late 1999, ethnicity has increasingly gained significance. This is revealed by the fact that the stronghold of the party became the urban areas of Mashonaland, plus Matabeleland as a whole. However, by late 2004, the ruling party had managed to make significant inroads into the urban strongholds of the MDC, thus shifting the balance within the MDC to its Matabeleland constituency. In this context, two factions emerged, one led by Morgan Tsvangirai (Shona) and the other by Welshman Ncube (Ndebele), the former camp having failed to gain parliamentary seats and advocating extra-parliamentary mass action, the latter maintaining its parliamentary position against ZANU-PF and advocating engagement with the electoral process. Thus, the two camps have not differed merely over tactics; tactical differences have acquired ethnic meaning. Intra-party factional differences escalated in the run-up to the Senate elections in late 2005 when Tsvangirai overruled the decision of the national executive council of the party to participate in the elections, thus seriously prejudicing the parliamentary position of the Matabaleland constituency. In the event, ZANU-PF swept the elections (albeit on a low turn-out) while the MDC could not avert its ethnic disintegration.

Ideological differences have been absent in this factional struggle as well. Both factions represent bourgeois interests, linked directly to imperialist forces, while

also retaining an alliance with the urban-based trade union movement (ZCTU). In this context, ethnic disintegration is not merely 'tactical' or procedural, but has its roots in the failure of the MDC to mobilise its constituency on a working-class platform (despite its trade-union origins), and in its rapid material and ideological co-optation by the West – to which its two wings remain accountable. It is notable that the Ncube wing of the MDC has more recently sought to overcome its status as an ethnic-minority party by appointing Arthur Mutambara, a former student leader and ethnic Shona, to its leadership. It is also notable that in his acceptance speech in February 2006, Mutambara sought to differentiate himself from the West and the puppet trajectory of the MDC. He admitted that 'there was need for a land revolution in Zimbabwe', called for a foreign policy that is 'informed by Pan-Africanist ideals' and proclaimed '[w]e are anti-imperialist and anti-colonialist' (Mutambara, 2006). Although this new rhetoric seems to vindicate the nationalist position, it is doubtful that the MDC, in its factions, can extricate itself from its imperialist patrons without radically transforming its relations with its social base, organisationally and ideologically.

Conclusion: Towards a 'New Left'

If the sources of nationalist re-radicalisation have been fundamentally social, these same sources continue to require a political force which would carry forward Zimbabwe's radical nationalist inheritance. A new political force must sink new roots in the working class; it must unify the proletariat and semi-proletariat across the rural-urban divide; and it must wrest itself from political parties, the state, and external interference. It must also obtain a new level of ideological clarity which never obtained in the liberation struggle, the land occupation movement, or the political opposition. The objective of this 'New Left' is to establish the organisational means to engage in sustained ideological confrontation with imperialism, both internally and externally, and to recommence an uninterrupted process of social transformation in Zimbabwe.

The political facts have been in transition since fast-tracking begun. On the one hand, the future of the nationalist alliance is by no means guaranteed, especially as the post-fast-track period is being won over by an extroverted accumulation strategy and as the chronic democratic deficit of the ruling party inhibits the emergence of a working class counter-strategy. On the other hand, the post-national alliance is itself in crisis, unable to reconcile its own contradictions, its naïve/opportunistic devotion to parliamentary politics, dependence on external aid and neglect of socio-economic issues. As the isolation and economic decline of the country persist, a likely scenario continues to be the realignment of all factions of the bourgeoisie, across party lines, behind a common extroverted policy stance, in effect a return to the principles of structural adjustment. Succession battles within the ruling party itself will continue to reflect these wider class struggles and alliances.

Whatever reconfiguration occurs within the capitalist class, it is imperative now that the working class, in all its fragments, withdraws from its fast-track alliances and establishes a united working-class platform. Some promising steps in this direction are being taken by some civic organisations, for example within the context of the Zimbabwe Social Forum. These organisations seek to create a new network whose intention is to remobilise various existing and potential social movements into a more radical alliance. Although this initiative includes the ZCTU, as well as other civics that have been embedded within the more purely 'political' movements

led by the MDC and ZANU-PF, the leading agents of this initiative (e.g. Munyaradzi Gwisayi and others) are explicitly seeking an alternative left course. To their credit, they appear to be seeking a new strategy and tactics for the working class that will transcend the narrow electoral politics which have been dominating Zimbabwe and are demanding both the reopening of civil space *and* the pursuit of a left strategy. In this sense, they also seem to be drawing on the positive elements, the strengths, of the 'Two Lefts'.

At the same time, the obstacles to this re-alignment of forces continue to be precisely the weaknesses of the 'Two Lefts'; namely, the contradictions of the existing civic organisations and the absence of a viable, democratic rural movement to succeed the land occupation movement. Ultimately, any 'New Left' political force will stand or fall on its ability to transcend the class contradictions of the civics and breath new life into the countryside which will require collaboration with the war veterans' association, or elements within it.

We can now provide our own answers to some of the recurrent political questions that a 'New Left' would have to confront.

• What political strategy and tactics are relevant to normalisation/neo-colonialism?

• What should be the relationship between social movements and political parties?

• What is a progressive politics for Africa's semi-proletarianised peasantry?

• What kind of nationalism is required? What kind of internationalism?

Any formulation of a strategy and tactics must take into account the authoritarianism that pervades peripheral capitalism. In the case of Zimbabwe today, civil space remains highly constrained and, should it re-open, will remain weak and conditional. This 'halfway house' between authoritarianism and democracy warrants neither the clandestine and conspiratorial operational tactics that Lenin, for example, outlined for Czarist Russia nor the social-democratic articulation of interests prevailing in western democracies which, based on established political parties and trade unions, view civil space as relatively secure and sufficient for political contestation. The articulation of working-class interests in the conditions of peripheral capitalism must adopt a consciously *instrumental* view of civil space employing it for two tasks: to build strong organisational roots that can withstand periodic assault, or 'decapitation' and to confront the state in pursuit of deep and uninterrupted structural reforms. In this sense, working-class organisation must operate on the 'edges' of constitutionality.

These goals require social movements that are democratic, accountable and autonomous. The immediate task is the organisation of a mass base and creation of operational structures that are both decentralised and unified. The empowerment of the membership for leadership roles on a wide basis (on the principle of 'every member an organiser') is crucial to this decentralisation, which in turn can persevere against persistent intimidation and repression. The political tasks are those of defending the economic interests of the working class, the building of alliances in society, and the articulation of a political strategy. In the past, it has been the role of political parties to coordinate such alliances at a national level, and while

this remains important today, it can be destructive of social movements if the latter are not mature enough to defend their integrity, or capable enough to withdraw from such alliances when they no longer serve their interests. It is also the case, however, that social movements are better able today to develop political alliances and articulate progressive strategies on their own behalf, both nationally and internationally, such that alliances with political parties do not have the urgency of the past. In the case of Zimbabwe, it is imperative now that social movements withdraw from political parties in order to begin anew the process of organisation and mobilisation on an autonomous basis. The assumption of power, whether constitutionally or not, is an empty accomplishment if power is not wielded *by* the working class, *for* the working class.

The role of the rural proletariat and semi-proletariat is fundamental in any post-fast-track reconfiguration of social forces. The countryside has for long been the matrix of militant politics in Zimbabwe yet politics has never obtained ideological clarity. The reasons for this contradiction have been many: the absence of autonomous rural movements; the obstacles of customary authority; the failure of trade unionism to commit to the countryside; the dominance of petty-bourgeois interests within peasant organisations; the subordination of rural organisations to political parties, etc. Consequently, whatever historical progress has been made, from independence to fast-track, has not set the organisational foundations for an uninterrupted process of social transformation. This legacy must now be broken. The post-fast-track situation requires new thinking on how to organise the countryside in a manner in which economic and political organisation is mutually reinforcing.

The central objective in the countryside must once again become the organisation of production cooperatives or producer associations. There is much to be learned from the past experiences and failures of cooperativism in Africa and elsewhere. There is much also to be learned from contemporary cooperativist experiments by land occupation movements, most importantly by the MST in Brazil (see Yeros, 2006) which has come to view cooperativism – including voluntary collectivisation – as the only way to safeguard the gains of land reform and to keep alive the flame of social transformation. Such cooperativism 'from below' has both economic and political goals. In economic terms, it not only unifies smallholders against a monopolistic market, but it also prepares the way for cooperation in production in the form of collective investments, division and specialisation of labour, development of agro-industrial enterprises, and worker self-management. In political terms, it establishes permanent structures from which to produce leaders on a perpetual basis, to cultivate working-class consciousness, promote youth and gender equity, and engage in systematic political activity, both nationally and internationally. Grassroots cooperativism, in this sense, becomes the 'rearguard' of class struggle.

The problem of customary authority, including the problem of social organisation on the basis of kinship rather than economic interest, continues to be an obstacle to this type of social movement. But the converse is also true; namely, that this type of co-operativist movement is the only means by which to erode customary authority from below and prepare the social basis for its eventual de-institutionalisation from above. We argue that a progressive politics for Zimbabwe and Africa's semi-proletarianised peasantry today is the dual objective of land and agrarian reform and grassroots cooperativism.

The new social facts in rural Zimbabwe also lend themselves to a new nationalism that is more clearly proletarian, free of bourgeois patronage and distortions. While in the past the aspiring black bourgeoisie could dress its own nationalism with a universal cloak, the expansion of black ownership in the countryside may now clarify the capital-labour contradiction among black Zimbabweans. The opportunity must therefore be seized by the working class to confront bourgeois nationalism and to claim the national liberation project for itself. A more popular nationalism must seek to construct a national economy in an incremental way by de-linking and where agriculture assumes the leading role and industry an auxiliary role in the modernisation of agriculture (Amin, 1983). This development contrasts the 'nation-building' of the 1980s, in which the reverse relationship held.

Finally, it must be understood that proletarian nationalism is not, in principle, antithetical to proletarian internationalism. We have argued that peripheral nationalism is not morally equivalent to imperialist 'nationalism' (i.e. chauvinism/racism); in fact, it is the corner-stone of proletarian internationalism. This type of anti-imperialist internationalism is sorely missing among contemporary internationals, including the World Social Forum (WSF) and especially the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU), a labour-imperialist institution par excellence. Nonetheless, working-class organisations in the periphery do not have the luxury to choose the ideal international arena in which to participate. But what they can do is to establish anti-imperialist principles of foreign policy and international solidarity and demand that 'comrades' recognise and respect them. This is something that the ZCTU never established in the late 1980s and early 1990s, with the result of allowing itself to be severely co-opted. For its part, the World Social Forum (WSF) in Zimbabwe and elsewhere is subject to the same 'civilising' pressures, the dominant currents within it being 'post-national' and 'social democratic'. Nonetheless, the WSF is also not to be easily written off. By virtue of its non-bureaucratic nature, it continues to provide the opportunity for alternative alliances among both rural and urban movements, towards the building of a 'New Left'. For this reason, the Zimbabwe Social Forum also emerges as a key forum for re-engagement and re-alignment of social forces at a crucial national and international juncture.

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The South African Communist Party (SACP) in the Post-apartheid Period

David P. Thomas

This article examines the SACP and its role in contesting the hegemonic project of neoliberalism in the post-apartheid period (1994-2004). I discuss the Party's written attacks on neoliberalism, support for the Congress of South African Trade Union's (Cosatu's) campaigns against privatisation, the formation of the Young Communist League (YCL), and the current campaigns surrounding cooperatives and financial sector reform. As the SACP is embedded within the ruling African National Congress (ANC), the Party's attempts to critique and fight neoliberalism have remained rhetorical and ineffective. Rather than directly confronting the neoliberal policies of the ANC, the SACP has instead cooperated with the ANC, hoping to pull it more to the 'left'. The SACP's dedication to influencing the ANC has come at the expense of building a mass base of support that opposes neoliberalism. This approach has ultimately resulted in an accommodation to neoliberalism, and exposes many difficult contradictions for the SACP.

The South African Communist Party (SACP) has historically been a formidable political force in South Africa. Its role in the anti-apartheid struggle is generally well respected, and many of the Party's past leaders are considered iconic heroes of the struggle. Based on its historical alliance with the African National Congress (ANC), the SACP found itself working closely with the ANC Government after the fall of apartheid. The two political formations are also partners with the Congress of South African Trade Unions (Cosatu) in what is known as the Tripartite Alliance. The SACP and Cosatu have supported the ANC through three election campaigns (1994, 1999, and 2004), all of which have resulted in overwhelming electoral victories for the ANC.

It is important to place the Party's post-apartheid political struggle within the context of its historical relationship to the ANC, and the struggle against white minority rule. Beginning with the Executive Committee of the Communist International's (ECCI's) 1928 'Independent Native Republic' mandate to the Communist Party of South Africa (CPSA), the Party has followed a path marked by cooperation and collaboration with the ANC. The two-stage theory of revolution (first national liberation, then socialism) has guided this strategy from its 1928 form to the Colonialism of a Special Type (CST) thesis of the 1950s, and ultimately to the Party's support for an overwhelming electoral victory of the ANC in 1994. In this sense, the class character of the struggle has always been subordinated to that of the national. In order to remain unified against the racist white minority regime, it was mutually advantageous for the two political formations to work closely together in exile, and within South Africa, throughout this period of oppression and resistance. This long

history of interconnectedness between the ANC and the SACP means that today almost every member of the SACP is also a member of the ANC. SACP members normally feel equal, or greater, affinity with the ANC, and are frequently active within both party structures.

The ANC's introduction of GEAR (Growth, Employment, and Redistribution) in 1996 presented an enormous challenge to the SACP (and Cosatu).[1] GEAR is a neoliberal macroeconomic policy framework designed to bring economic stability and growth to the country. Eight years after the implementation of GEAR, the results for the majority of South Africans were bleak. In 2004 the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) released a scathing report on the ANC's approach to economic development. Some highlights of the report include: a sustained downward trend in the Human Development Index since 1995; the gap between the rich and the poor increasing; and a rise in the number of households deprived of quality services. The report forcefully summarizes the ANC approach by stating: 'The current strategy and policies for achieving growth are objectively anti-poor' (*Sowetan*, 2004:1). South African scholars and activists have written extensively on both the manner in which GEAR was implemented, and the impact of neoliberalism on the majority of South Africans.[2]

Thus, the central question for the Party is: how does one reconcile the aims and objectives of the SACP, which include achieving socialism in South Africa, with its support of the ANC's neoliberal trajectory? In other words, the Party has had to find a way to criticize and/or attack the neoliberal agenda, while at the same time defending and supporting the ANC-led government. This article will explore four central aspects of the SACP's approach to challenging the current trajectory of the ANC's macroeconomic agenda: 1) the written, public attacks on the logic of neoliberalism; 2) the support for Cosatu's campaigns against privatisation; 3) the formation of the Young Communist League (YCL); and 4) the current campaigns surrounding cooperatives and financial sector reform. I will outline how the Party is currently failing to establish a viable counter-hegemonic force in South Africa by discussing the limitations of the four strategies mentioned above.[3] Overall, I will argue that the SACP's challenge to neoliberalism is rhetorical and ineffective. The SACP's unwavering allegiance to the ANC forces it to confront capitalism in a way that is 'safe', or perhaps 'acceptable' to the ANC. Essentially, the SACP's approach is based on the fundamental premise that the Party needs to work within the ANC in order to pull it to the 'left'. Hoping to influence the character and content of the ANC, the Party has neglected the task of building a mass base of support opposed to neoliberalism. As a political formation ostensibly dedicated to building socialism in South Africa, its alliance with the capitalist ANC creates a number of difficult contradictions for the Party to manage.

Written, Public Attacks on the Logic of Neoliberalism

The SACP is well aware of the importance of ideas in shaping the political landscape of post-apartheid South Africa. Guiding Principle 4.5 of the SACP Constitution proclaims that the SACP will work 'To spread the widest possible understanding of our basic ideology and its application to South African conditions, particularly among the working class' (SACP, 2002a). In order to disseminate and propagate socialist ideas, the SACP has a quarterly journal called the *African Communist*; a monthly newspaper entitled *Umsebenzi*; and an information

bulletin produced by the Party's Central Committee called *Bua Komanisi*. It also issues regular press releases and articles for the public media.

When GEAR was first unveiled in 1996, the SACP leadership endorsed it. On 14 June 1996, SACP Headquarters issued a public statement on GEAR that began with the following remarks:

> *The South African Communist Party welcomes the government's Growth, Employment and Redistribution Macro-Economic Policy. We fully back the objectives of this macro-economic strategy …* (SACP, 1996).

By 1997 however, the public stance of the Party had shifted significantly. In September of 1997, Deputy National Chairperson Blade Nzimande (now General Secretary) had this to say:

> *On GEAR: the SACP's last central committee, after a year of reflection, discussion and debate, as well as interaction with Alliance partners, came out in opposition to GEAR. The Central Committee made the point that this kind of macro-economic framework is not conducive to the implementation of the RDP [Reconstruction and Development Programme]* (Nzimande, 1997).

Thus, after taking the time to further deliberate on the principles of GEAR, the Party began publicly criticizing this approach to macroeconomic reform. One can speculate that pressure from Cosatu, and rank-and-file SACP members, may have contributed to this sudden change in posture from the SACP leadership. Throughout the late 1990s and early 2000s, the SACP continued to publicly criticize aspects of GEAR. For example, the Declaration of the 10th SACP Congress in 1998 noted its ongoing '… belief that the overall thrust of GEAR is not the appropriate macroeconomic framework for our society', emphasising that '… this overall thrust must be rejected' (SACP, 1998). A Central Committee draft document prepared for that same Congress elaborates the point:

> *GEAR embodies, in its core fiscal and monetary policies, a neo-liberal approach that is at variance with our reconstruction and development objectives. Much of GEAR, and indeed much of government's evolving economic policy has shifted progressively away from ANC economic policy in the first half of the 1990s … More and more, there has been a shift towards the assumptions of an export-led growth, based on the myth that deregulation and liberalisation, more or less on their own, will make the South African economy 'globally competitive'* (SACP Central Committee, 1998).

This type of detailed and blunt critique of GEAR can be found throughout the Party's publications, press releases, documents, and speeches. Before critiquing the Party's public attacks on the logic of neoliberalism, an initial problem needs to be discussed. This problem concerns the fact that some members of the SACP have yet to even acknowledge that GEAR is a neoliberal macroeconomic framework. The current Minister in the Presidency and former Central Committee member of the SACP, Essop Pahad, is one of these members. When asked about the neoliberal logic of GEAR, Pahad reacted as follows:

> *Why do you keep on saying that it was a neoliberal policy? And say, OK, define neoliberalism, and say: what part of it was neoliberal? Because fiscal prudence isn't neoliberal, it's just common sense, it's common sense when you run your own house that you want to have fiscal prudence, because if you spend more money than you have, at some point you're going bankrupt* (2004).

This tactic of blatantly denying the ideology behind neoliberal policy is commonly deployed in the 'developed' world by neoliberal ideologues; however, for a former leader of a communist party to deny the ideological commitment of those responsible for implementing GEAR is quite revealing. How can the Party proceed with an effective and sustained critique of GEAR if former leaders of the Party such as Pahad have not yet recognised GEAR as a problem?[4]

The first problem with the Party's approach to publicly challenging neoliberalism is that any criticism of GEAR from the Party is almost always immediately followed by a disclaimer that this is in no way to be misconstrued as a criticism of the ANC or Tripartite Alliance. Tom Lodge describes the 'somewhat ritualistic quality' of this type of criticism and debate within the Alliance: 'Any criticism, however strongly worded, is always qualified by protestations of loyalty to the Alliance itself and recognition of the ANC's senior status within it' (Lodge, 2002:163). This phenomenon can be witnessed in nearly every critique of GEAR emanating from the Party. For example, The Declaration of the 10th SACP Congress 'Reaffirms its belief that the overall thrust of GEAR is not the appropriate macroeconomic framework for our society, and this overall thrust must be rejected' (SACP, 1998). Yet this statement is almost hidden between proclamations regarding 'Building the Alliance', working 'tirelessly as Communists to ensure an overwhelming ANC electoral victory', and defending the ANC-led, and ANC-defined, National Democratic Revolution (SACP, 1998). The Party's many written critiques of GEAR somehow become less piercing when they are persistently draped in apology and commitment to the ANC. It appears contradictory for the Party to unequivocally denounce key ANC policies on the one hand, yet proclaim absolute loyalty to the Alliance.

The major problem involves the Party's publications. This issue relates to more general difficulties faced by the Party in terms of disseminating information and ideas: lack of resources, and a reliance on English as the language of publication. The SACP consistently struggles with the issue of financial resources. They have a relatively small number of paid up members (roughly 20,000), and very few alternative sources of income or revenue. This severely hampers the Party's ability to propagate and disseminate ideas. Furthermore, the fact that the major publications of the Party are written in English restricts the potential readership to an elite group of cadres.

The *African Communist (AC)* and *Umsebenzi* are key components of the Party's strategy of disseminating ideas to the public. The *AC* is the Journal of the SACP, and according to the Party is 'Published quarterly as a forum for Marxist-Leninist thought.'[5] In recent years however, the Party has struggled to publish the required number of issues per year. The following is a list indicating the number of journals published per year from 2001 to 2004:

  2001: 3 Journals (First Quarter, Second Quarter, and Third/Fourth Quarter)

  2002: 3 Journals (First Quarter, Second/Third Quarter, and Fourth Quarter)

  2003: 2 Journals (First Quarter, Second/Third Quarter)

  2004: 1 Journal (First Quarter)

This sharp decline in issues during these years is normally attributed to a lack of financial resources within the Party.

The effectiveness of the *AC* as a forum for Marxist-Leninist debate is a controversial topic within the Party. Many SACP leaders insist that the journal is a productive and vibrant aspect of the Party's political endeavours. For example, former SACP Provincial Executive Council (PEC) member from Gauteng Zwelinzima Sizani had this to say about the Journal:

> *I think it [the* AC] *remains not only a symbol but a beacon to which most communists, not only in SA, but throughout the continent, look up to in terms of understanding politics, understanding theory, in terms of understanding discourses within SA … and it [the AC] has done a lot in terms of addressing and assisting in managing discussion and debate within the country … it gives about a vibrant discussion atmosphere throughout the country. I think it keeps us focused on issues* (2004).

Kay Moonsamy, current ANC Member of Parliament and SACP Central Committee Member, praised the *AC* by stating: 'I think it's playing a very vital role. Everybody looks forward to it, what's the *AC* going to say on this or that. So it's a very dynamic, revolutionary publication' (2004). This sentiment was echoed by many of the SACP leaders during my discussions with them on this topic.

A different picture emerges when speaking to lower ranking members of the Party on the impact of the *AC* and *Umsebenzi* on the broader Party membership, and also on the general public. In particular, those members of the Party who are slightly distanced from the major centres of information production – Johannesburg and Cape Town – have a drastically different understanding of the two publications. One YCL member from the Vaal District had this to say about the Party's publications:

> *I normally read the on-line one. That means you only have people with computers, not just computers but access to the internet to be able to read it, either at the workplace or at home. So the majority of people don't have access to those things. AC, it's a good thing, but it costs money. You must buy it, and to understand sometimes, English is not our first language. The language written in those documents, you must have reached a certain high level of political understanding to understand what's written there. Those are weaknesses within the publications of the Party* (Kunene, 2004).

A second comrade from this area of Gauteng Province, when asked about the effectiveness of the Party's publications, remarked that:

> *I'm not a mathematician, but if I'm to rate them … out of 10, I would give them two and a half. Precisely because even though the publications are there, it is rare that we as district members buy them in large numbers and distribute to branches. And even branch members, you'd find that circulation is amongst the top five, or at least amongst the office bearers. And it is rare for such publications to reach our members* (Radebe, 2004).

If the publications are not even reaching the vast majority of the Party's members, what then can we assume concerning the circulation amongst the broader public? Rank-and-file members of the Party consistently mention this issue of access to the publications. For example, Ronald Nyati from the Johannesburg Central Branch (JCB) commented, 'So as a Party of the poor, only people like myself who are working are able to buy a copy. So the debates are not stimulated to the extent to where we want it because it is only accrued by a limited number of comrades' (2004).

On the issue of English as the chosen language for both publications, Maria Lebona, SACP member from Sharpeville, asserts strongly, 'We need to have documents written in our own languages. I know it's going to take time, but we should try to really do it and try to emphasize it' (2004). It appears that the Party's publications are only accessible if one has access to both a computer and the internet, or the money to buy hard copies of the publications on a regular basis. Furthermore, one would also need a relatively advanced level of proficiency in the English language to make sense of these publications.

For the leadership of the Party, who are relatively privileged in terms of wealth and education, the Party's publications seem both accessible and effective as a means of engaging in debate and spreading ideas. On the other hand, for those members of the Party who do not have a university education and/or the financial means with which to acquire these publications, the picture looks dramatically different. It appears unlikely that the vast number of South Africans living below the poverty line would be able to access *AC* and *Umsebenzi*. This speaks directly to the issue of fostering a mass base of support to oppose neoliberalism within South Africa, and the failings of the Party on this front. The publications are accessible to only an elite segment of the population, effectively excluding the majority of South Africans. The Party's diminishing efforts to disseminate socialist ideas and information through its publications is indicative of an approach to political struggle that undervalues the importance of mass participation in resisting neoliberalism.

The SACP's Support for Cosatu's Campaigns Against Privatisation

In addition to the formal statements opposing GEAR, the SACP has also participated in a variety of mass actions directly or indirectly attacking the logic of neoliberalism. The general strike against privatisation, led by Cosatu, in 2001 provides a good example. The SACP put its full support behind the strike, and a public statement by the SACP in August of 2001 proclaimed, 'The SACP calls on all its members, leaders, supporters, workers, working class communities, the unemployed and all South Africans to support, and ensure that the general strike becomes an overwhelming success' (SACP, 2001). The Party's rationale for supporting the strike was to publicly demonstrate against the ANC's policies regarding the privatisation of state owned enterprises.

Barely a year later, the SACP participated once again in a Cosatu-led mass action. Cosatu called a second strike in October 2002, and the Party promptly asked '… all its members and structures to support the Cosatu-led protest actions on 1 and 2 October (SACP, 2002b). Again, in defiance of the ANC Government's neoliberal economic reforms, the Party publicly protested and called on workers to strike. While the impact of these actions may be questionable, the intent was to confront the hegemonic ideas contained in the ANC's approach to restructuring the economy.

However, the Party's support for the Cosatu-led campaigns against privatisation and deregulation has been laden with contradictions. First, in line with its written, public attacks on the logic of GEAR, the Party is quick to immediately point out that support for the campaigns does imply questioning the ANC, or the fundamentals behind the Alliance. For example, referring to the 2001 strike against privatisation, the Party maintained:

> *While the general strike is obviously political in character (it is about seeking to influence and change aspects of current policy), the Politburo understands that the strike is not about challenging or undermining the legitimacy of our ANC-led government …* (SACP, 2001).

Hence, the SACP intends to act politically in opposition to policies implemented by the ANC, but not to question the legitimacy of the ANC itself as the party designing these policies. Supporting the Cosatu-led campaigns awkwardly illustrates the conundrum faced by the SACP: although the ANC is intent on implementing anti-worker and anti-poor policies, the Party must continue to support the Alliance.

The second contradiction surrounding the SACP's support for these campaigns involves the complicity of several high-ranking leaders of the Party in the decisions that were being contested by Cosatu and the SACP. At the time of the major strikes and protests, there were several SACP members sitting in positions responsible for implementing the neoliberal policies. The following is a list of SACP members in the ANC Cabinet during the period 1999-2004:

Geraldine Fraser-Moleketi: Minister of Public Service and Administration

Jeff Radebe: Minister for Public Enterprises

Alec Erwin: Minister of Trade and Industry

Essop Pahad: Minister in the Presidency

Ronnie Kasrils: Minister for Water and Forestry

Sydney Mufamadi: Minister for Provincial and Local Government

Charles Nqakula: Minister for Safety and Security

The three SACP members who received the most criticism were Fraser-Moleketi, Radebe, and Erwin. Both Fraser-Moleketi and Radebe were also members of the SACP Central Committee at the time. Erwin, as Minister of Trade and Industry, has been commonly referred to as one of the architects of GEAR, the policy that the SACP ostensibly opposes. Radebe, as Minister for Public Enterprises, was responsible for privatising public enterprises. One member of the SACP put the contradiction in Radebe's actions succinctly: 'Jeff Radebe, he's right there privatising and as communists that's not how we believe' (Nyati, 2004). Finally, in 2002 at the height of the tension over Cosatu's strike action, Fraser-Moleketi 'appeal[ed] to public servants to seriously reconsider participating in the strike' (*Sunday Times*, 2002). The strike has always been a powerful and effective weapon for workers; yet Fraser-Moleketi would rather carry forward ANC policies than support workers who are striking in opposition.

The contradiction surrounding SACP leaders personally implementing policies opposed to the programme of the Party is glaring. Furthermore, it put the Party in an ambiguous position vis-à-vis the ANC policies, and certainly lessens the impact of their participation in these campaigns against the ANC's neoliberal agenda. This highlights one of the inherent problems with the SACP's approach to political struggle: in order to maintain influence within the ANC (and try to steer it to the left), SACP leaders are forced to implement policies that are contradictory to the aims of the Party.

The Formation of the Young Communist League (YCL)

In December 2003 the Party re-launched the Young Communist League (YCL). The YCL is the youth wing of the SACP, and was re-launched through a resolution at the SACP's 11th Congress in July of 2002. The YCL was dissolved in 1950 along with the Communist Party of South Africa (CPSA) and has now emerged with considerable momentum and hype. According to the Party, 'In the first year of its existence, the Young Communist League has signed on 10,000 young communists' (SACP, 2004b). While many of these 'new' YCL members were already members of the SACP (any member of the SACP under 35 is considered part of the YCL), this remains a significant accomplishment for the organisation. The purpose of re-launching the YCL was to develop and enhance socialist consciousness amongst the youth of South Africa, and as the YCL constitution states, '… turn our members into Communists' (YCL, 2003b). The formation of the YCL is cited as a major accomplishment by Party members throughout the organisation, and is a central element to the Party's strategy of building socialism in South Africa.

The formation of the YCL has created a certain amount of controversy within Alliance structures. This tension has a long history within the broader liberation movement, and can be traced back to interactions between the ANC Youth League and the Progressive Youth Council in the 1940s.[6] In the current context, however, this tension manifests itself by many within the ANC believing that the YCL is not necessary, as young people within the movement can simply join the ANC Youth League (ANCYL). As ANC MP Ben Turok explains,

> *if the Party begins to compete on the same terrain as an existing mass movement, whatever it might be, you create rivalry and tensions which are going to disrupt because you are seen as an entryist … The Communist Youth League are acting as entryists, fighting on a caucus platform for the advancement of their members in the elections. Very dangerous stuff, it's guaranteed to lead to a backlash, and it will lead to anti-communism within the ANCYL* (2004).

This potential conflict between the ANCYL and the YCL is described clearly by the National Chairperson of the YCL, David Masondo: 'You will naturally not expect them [the ANC] to be happy with the formation of the YCL because it means that the YCL is emerging to fight against their class interests' (2004). Relations are more or less cordial between the two organisations, despite the ideological differences that ostensibly exist between them. Many of the Young Communists appear to hint at a certain degree of unease between the two formations, but nonetheless are willing to work collaboratively. The YCL is using every opportunity to publicly promote itself. Masondo describes the YCL's strategy of disseminating ideas:

> *One, we do have our own newspaper, we use it to circulate our own ideas. We now have a website … we are also organizing in institutions of higher learning …We also go to public platforms. If there's a public meeting we're sure to go there to spread socialist ideas. When there are strikes we are sure that we go there, we will always be there disseminating pamphlets, solidarity, supporting them, showing how their problems are linked to the capitalist system … And even in public newspapers … We've been very, very consistent around newspapers* (2004).

Indeed, the YCL has been quite effective in making an immediate impact in the media. Several timely press releases immediately following the re-launch have

worked to raise the public profile of the YCL, and also to attract new members. Most SACP members appear enthusiastic regarding the potential of the YCL, and have promoted the organisation whenever possible.

Despite its radical proclamations, the YCL has tended to mimic the SACP's consistent and unwavering support for the ANC. In 2004, the YCL described the situation for young people in South Africa as follows: 'Like all South Africans, young people have an objective interest with an ANC government which continues to transform and change our country for the better' (YCL, 2004). Therefore, instead of working toward building socialism in South Africa by encouraging young people to learn about socialism, the YCL spent most of its efforts in the first half of 2004 campaigning on behalf of the ANC in order to ensure its overwhelming electoral victory.[7]

The YCL, however, openly recognizes the bourgeois character of the ANC. Thus, in 2004, David Masondo, the YCL National Chairperson, asserts:

> *The dominant orientation within the ANC, and given the class formation that is taking place within South Africa itself, is petty bourgeois. That's the dominant discourse, which is congealing around a re-interpretation of the National Democratic Revolution strategy. The issue is no longer about changing the capitalist structure, but is to reform it, to include some petty bourgeois and build it into some black bourgeoisie* (2004).

That being the case, the YCL also insists that this bourgeois orientation of the ANC could potentially change, and that the Party's participation within the Alliance is critical to ensuring that this occurs. Masondo does not think that the ANC 'is inherently bourgeois. It is determined by the class forces that are within it … and in different periods it changes character' (2004). Yet the question then surfaces: how long must one remain within, and attempt to change, a bourgeois organisation, before it becomes apparent that the strategy is not working? This is a difficult question for young communists to grapple with, and not easily resolved. The YCL's message for the youth of South Africa is that although the ANC is a bourgeois organisation, one should join it anyway, and eventually it *may* change. This 'faith' in the ANC and the Alliance is of paramount importance in the South African context. Recognising, once again, the long history of joint struggle within the two political formations is crucial to a critical analysis of the Party's behaviour.

The second issue regarding the YCL surrounds its independence vis-à-vis the SACP. The relationship between the YCL and the SACP is a complex one. On the one hand, the Party created the YCL as the youth wing of its organisation. Yet the YCL is also intended to have a certain degree of independence and autonomy to pursue its own agenda. As one YCL member articulated:

> *We have our own constitution, we have our own campaigns, basically all aspects of the YCL are independent from the SACP. We only sit in the SACP at the CC level, where we have our chairperson from the YCL sitting there as an ex-officio member. So we have our own programs, everything* (Thamaro, 2004).

Other YCL members were slightly more cautious concerning the independence of the YCL. YCL member Nkosiphendule Kolisile describes the relationship slightly differently:

> *We are a communist party with our own identity and so on, but our independence should always be under the guidance and the leadership of the SACP. We can't be absolutely far away from the communist party because we are founded by the SACP. The SACP built YCL, and they have obviously to look as to whether it is the structure that they wanted to build* (Kolisile, 2004).

Defining the parameters of its activities in relation to those of the Party is certainly an ongoing process for the YCL.

This issue of autonomy and independence from the Party is a sensitive topic for many members of the YCL. The YCL's first Congress in December 2003 offers a glimpse of how the SACP may be capable of undermining the autonomy of the YCL. It appeared to some, for example, that the leadership of the SACP (Blade Nzimande in particular) imposed a leader on the YCL against the will of many delegates in attendance. One YCL comrade, Jacob Dikgale, was planning to run for the position of Secretary until Nzimande kindly pulled him aside and told him otherwise. Apparently there are individuals that the SACP leadership will tolerate as Secretary of the YCL and others who they will not. One member of the YCL in attendance reacted as follows when I asked if she was comfortable talking about the events that transpired that day:

> *… it's not a matter of not being comfortable, it's a matter of telling the truth sometimes. What happened there, it was very uncalled for and it was very embarrassing for us as the Young Communist League of South Africa. We understand that they never wanted us to have a certain Secretary. Also if they could have told the strategies that they were going to use, at least we were going to understand. But they just came and introduced this new stuff to us, and it was like, are we really here? It was that of being imposed with leadership, you know* (Lebona, 2004).

In other conversations with members who attended the re-launch, a similar story unfolds: the SACP leadership effectively decided who was fit to run for certain positions. The problem with SACP leaders interfering in the selection of YCL leaders is that it could undermine the YCL's potential as a militant organisation. The most radical ideas within a political organisation such as the SACP tend to originate with the youth, and if the leadership of the Party can control the youth wing, this radical potential can be managed and/or stifled. The December 2003 Congress suggests that this may be occurring within the YCL.

Current SACP Campaigns: Financial Sector Reform & Cooperatives

Since 2000, the Party has concentrated a great deal of its effort on the Financial Sector Campaign and building cooperatives. While these are not the only two campaigns the Party has advanced since 2000, they appear to be both the most widely discussed by Party members, and also the most successful in terms of achieving tangible results. In addition, both of these initiatives have been long-term components of the SACP's strategy and tactics since 2000, and are inextricably linked to one another. The Financial Sector Campaign had its genesis in 1999. The campaign is multifaceted, but is directed mainly at making the banking sector more accessible to the working class and poor. This involves working with banks to ensure that poor

people are not entirely excluded from financial service provision, and also a more ambitious strategy of creating and supporting cooperative banking structures. The Party declares that some of the fundamental objectives of the campaign are:

- To struggle for community re-investment legislation and the transformation of the financial sector in favour of the poor and working people;

- To fight for the creation of a co-operative banking sector and other publicly owned financial institutions;

- To contribute to the evolution of a strategic approach around the restructuring of public development finance institutions like the Development Bank of Southern Africa in order to re-orient these towards infra-structural develop- ment initiatives aimed at realising overall development goals (SACP, 2005).

The Party has been successful in some of its objectives, and the leadership is quick to point this out. For example, in the 2004 *SACP End of Year Statement*, Nzimande claims that

> *The SACP-led financial sector campaign, involving over 50 other formations, has now built real momentum and is impacting on government policy and legislation, and even on the conduct of the private banks with the launch of the Mzansi account* (SACP, 2004b).

This final point regarding Mzansi accounts refers to a recent initiative by the four major banks in South Africa to make banking more accessible to the poor. The Party claims that its Financial Sector Reform Campaign was instrumental in initiating this action on behalf of the banks.[8]

The second major campaign that the Party is currently pursuing involves the cooperative movement. Reiterating one of the major goals of the Financial Sector Campaign, Nzimande asserts 'The SACP, at its 1999 Strategy Conference, also took a resolution to build a co-operative movement as part of the transformation of our economy to serve the needs of the working class and the poor' (1999). This is an area that the Party has focused on intensely during the past five years, and the Gauteng Provincial SACP has been particularly active.[9] The Party believes that cooperatives can be a useful venue for South Africans to learn the value of alternative methods of economic production. This would ostensibly lead to a greater awareness of non-capitalist economic organisation, and is an essential element of the Party's strategy of building socialism in South Africa.

One unique example of the Party's active participation in the cooperative movement was the launch of the Dora Tamana Credit and Savings Co-operative (DTSACCO) on 21 November 2004. In the words of the Party,

> *The Dora Tamana Credit Communist Stokvel is a Savings and Credit Cooperative of SACP members. SACP members, by signing up a membership form, agree to save their money together in DTSACCO and to make loans to each other at reasonable rates. The members are the owners and the members decide how their money will be used to best benefit each other* (SACP, 2004a).

In order to ensure a strong connection between theory and practice, the Party is encouraging all SACP members to participate in this cooperative banking venture.[10]

The Financial Sector Campaign and building cooperatives are not particularly problematic initiatives for a socialist organisation to be pursuing. Struggling for greater access to financial services and resources could potentially benefit a great number of South Africans, and most socialists would agree that struggling for reforms such as these is worthwhile. Moreover, it needs to be recognised that there is long tradition of South Africans organising collectively around financial issues. The *stokvel* is a perfect example of a cooperative savings project used extensively across South Africa.[11] However, a critical analysis of the Party's activities needs to be elucidated, as there are potential limitations to these campaigns. In particular, there are problems with: 1) the relative importance of these issues within the broader struggle against capitalism in South Africa, and 2) the lack of connectedness between these campaigns and other socialist ideas/objectives.

In light of the many socio-economic issues currently plaguing the country, there are concerns as to the appropriateness of prioritising financial sector reform and cooperatives as central to the strategy and tactics of the Party. The most salient issues for the working class and poor in South Africa are arguably housing, electricity, water, land reform, unemployment, and HIV/AIDS. Thus, it is striking that the lead campaigns of the Party would not be directly addressing any of these crucial issues. It is also noteworthy that the ANC Government has addressed the socio-economic issues mentioned above in a woefully inadequate manner, and in some cases the ANC's neoliberal policies have exacerbated already existing problems (such as unemployment). Yet instead of attacking the Government's role in implementing neoliberal macroeconomic reform, the Party has focused instead on those issues that will not disrupt relations with the ANC. The campaigns are therefore 'safe' for the Party leadership, as they do not directly confront the ANC Government and its policies (or the SACP leaders sitting in Government). Dale McKinley, scholar/activist and former SACP member, argues that the SACP's emphasis on the financial sector campaign

> is actually indicative of the ideological and political bankruptcy of the SACP, what it has become. It has become reduced to an organization that is unable to take up the most basic struggles with people on the ground around basic services. They have nothing to say about water, they have nothing to say about housing, electricity (2004).

Once again, this speaks to the Party's failure to successfully organize mass-based resistance to neoliberalism, and in particular, resistance organised around the most pressing and salient issues faced by the working class and the poor.

It could also be argued that the Party is not connecting these campaigns effectively to a broader anti-capitalist struggle. Pursued in relative isolation, the Financial Sector Campaign and building cooperatives do not provide a comprehensive agenda for mass mobilisation around an anti-capitalist political project. The Landless People's Movement (LPM) in Gauteng Province illustrates this point by commenting on the Party's producer cooperatives:

> While these may appear to offer an alternative mechanism for food production, their role is limited to providing food for sale in the market. Market-based distribution of food excludes those without enough money to buy. True food security requires the decommodification of food, and of the inputs needed to produce food including land, water and seed (Landless People's Movement, 2004).

Thus, without connecting cooperatives to larger issues such as land reform, and access to essential services, the Party's efforts may be limited. Making these connections, however, could jeopardize the SACP's comfortable relationship with the capitalist-oriented ANC, a move that the SACP leadership is currently unwilling to make.

Conclusion

The SACP has consistently prioritised the maintenance of the ANC-dominated Tripartite Alliance above all else. This has meant that the Party's efforts to contest political space in the post-apartheid era have been tempered and moderated by its unwavering commitment to the ANC. In particular, attention is consistently drawn away from mass mobilisation, to attempting to influence the ANC from within. Jeremy Cronin, Deputy General Secretary of the Party, summarizes the issue by stating: 'A huge problem is, apart from election period, as an Alliance we've not been mobilising our mass base, because of technocratic illusions, state-centric illusions that we can now deliver liberation' (2004). Working within (and helping to 'capture') the liberal democratic state, and subsequently failing to maintain mass-based resistance to capitalism, may therefore present a fundamental limitation to the Party's work since the end of apartheid.

Mobilising mass resistance to neoliberalism has hence become the terrain of the social movements in South Africa. As Nzimande points out,

> to be quite honest, these social movements are arising in areas that we ourselves have neglected. When I'm saying areas, I also mean issues that we have neglected (2004).

These issues include basic services provision, HIV/AIDS, and land reform. Organisations such as the Landless People's Movement (LPM), and various affiliates of the Anti-Privatization Forum (APF), such as the Soweto Electricity Crisis Committee (SECC), have been engaged with directly confronting the neoliberal policies of the ANC since the late 1990s. While the social movements are not without problems and/or contradictions, they *are* actively involved in organising around issues that directly impact on the working class and the poor. The LPM for example, which styles itself after the successful MST of Brazil, has been openly critical of the ANC's approach to land reform. When the SACP and LPM attempted to join in a united front around the issue of land reform in late 2004, the LPM criticised the SACP approach by asserting that it 'fails to look beyond the 'national democratic revolution', and does not attempt to transcend the capitalist foundations of the post-apartheid order' (Landless People's Movement). Yet in order to do so, the SACP would need to denounce openly the capitalist trajectory and policies of the ANC. Instead they have chosen to attack and challenge neoliberalism only rhetorically, without fundamentally questioning the ANC architects behind its implementation. This has produced contradictions for the Party leadership that are difficult to explain, and creates the impression that they are not committed to the socialist principles set forth in the program of the Party.

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Endnotes

1. Pressured to conform to the dominant Western paradigm of neoliberal economic reform, the ANC made a conscious and strategic decision to implement GEAR in 1996.

2. For excellent discussions of GEAR and the manner in which it was implemented, see Taylor (2001), Marais (2001), Bond (2000), and McKinley (2001). Rank-and-file members of the SACP and the trade union movement, and many activists within the social movements, have also contributed extensively to the ongoing critique of neoliberalism in South Africa.

3. I use a neo-Gramscian theoretical understanding of hegemony to analyse this concrete situation of hegemonic struggle in South Africa. Dan O'Meara explains: 'Hegemony … refers to a form of social consensus which legitimises and authorises a particular structure of economic, political, cultural and ideological power, winning for itself the approbation of "common sense" , as the only reasonable way of seeing things', in O'Meara (1996), p. 488.

4. It needs to be noted that Pahad was voted off the SACP Central Committee at the 11th Congress of the Party in 2002, largely for his reactionary tendencies on issues such as this. Yet Pahad is still a member of the SACP and is viewed as one of the Party's historic leaders.

5. As stated in each edition of the *African Communist* on the inside cover.

6. This can be witnessed in correspondence between the ANCYL and Ruth First, Secretary of the Progressive Youth Council, in 1945. Early signs of tension regarding the conflicting agendas and programs of the ANCYL and other progressive youth organisations are evident here. See Karis and Carter, From Protest to Challenge: A Documentary History of African Politics in South Africa, 1882-1964, Volume 2, Document 52. Stanford, California: Hoover Institution Press, 1973.

7. For example, see the SACP's Press Release 'Young Communist League (YCL) to hold Election Rally in support of the ANC', 19 March 2004, available online at http://www.sacp.org.za/pr/2004/pr0324a.html

8. For further information on the Mzansi Accounts, see the Banking Council of South Africa's various press releases on the initiative. For example, 'Mzansi will put full service banking with 15km of the vast majority of South Africans', 15 October 2004, available online at http://www.banking.org.za/documents/2004/OCTOBER/MzansiAccount.asp. For the Party's support of the initiative, see its press release entitled 'Mzansi Account: a victory for the poor, no bank charges for pensioners', 17 November 2004, available online at http://www.sacp.org.za/pr/2004/pr1117a.html

9. The Gauteng Provincial Secretary of the Party is Vishwas Satgar, who is the Executive Director of COPAC (Cooperative and Policy Alternative Centre). He is active in promoting the growth of the cooperative movement in that province, and across the country.

10. At the time of writing, it was impossible to assess the degree of success the DTSACCO is having; nonetheless, it has been a much anticipated event for many SACP members.

11. The *stokvel* has been used by South Africans for over 50 years, and is an informal mechanism for communities to participate in banking and savings activities. Participants normally contribute a fixed amount of money on a regular basis, and are then permitted to access funds on either a rotating basis, or when a particular need arises. Another common manifestation of collective financial services is the burial society (a form of self-insurance to cover costs of funerals).

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