

Introduction

A New Politics of the Poor Emerges from South Africa's Shantytowns

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Some people say that democracy means freeing everyone to do whatever they want, regardless of rule or controls, with no instructions or boundaries, no importance to whether what is done is wrong or right.

Some people say democracy is the power of the state to decide things, acting in the interests of those who hold state power, its behavior designed to suit their demands. In this vision, society is always in a position of compliance with orders from the state.

Some people say democracy is about rights. After the Freedom Charter was created, people came to know about their particular rights. The more they understood their rights, the freer they became. We never expected to be disappointed in turning these rights into reality. But we were.

Some people say democracy is for all of us – as society. They say it is a reason to improve and protect our lives. It is equality, whereby all should participate in building a better society and achieving a better life for all. (Philani Zungi, Deputy President, *Abahlali baseMjondolo, Democracy in My Experience*, 14 August 2007, Durban, South Africa)

According to the UN there are an estimated 1 billion squatters (living in what are often called informal settlements) in the world today, about one in every six humans on the planet. And the numbers continually rise. Within 25 years the number is expected to double, becoming a quarter of the earth's population. Massive shantytowns are beginning to dominate many of the world's fastest growing and largest cities, and 85 per cent of the developing world's urban population now lives in slums. The politics of shantytowns is therefore a cutting-edge global issue.

In Africa, South America and Asia the shantytowns, described as the 'gangrene ever present at the heart of colonialism' by Fanon (1968) continue to grow as local elites prosper like never before in increasingly segregated theme-park-style gated communities, office parks, campuses and shopping malls. India, for example, is booming, producing more millionaires than any other nation. But while its economic growth has earned it the status of an 'emerging giant', it is also developing in a highly unequal fashion. About a quarter of its population lives below the

poverty line and about a quarter of the world's poor live in India. With a metropolitan population of nearly 20 million and an estimated 7 million people living in slums, Bombay, home to the largest of the world's slums, presents a stark contrast between the beneficiaries of India's prosperity and the millions yet to see any rewards.

Likewise, according to UN-Habitat, Africa is the fastest urbanizing continent in the world, and yet it too has the dubious distinction of having the highest proportion of the urban population living in shack settlements (72%). Forty per cent of slum dwellers in Africa live in what the UN calls 'life-threatening' poverty, and while slum dwellers do not necessarily live in shacks, most people who live in shacks are poor and without sufficient access to basic amenities such as water, sanitation and electricity. In 2001, the South African government estimated that in South Africa 8 million people out of a population of 45 million were living in shack settlements across the country. In spite of a major housing program the number of shackdwellers rises each year.

Despite the varying political and economic conditions, the world's squatters have certain things in common: they often live in squalid conditions and receive few state services while also appropriating land, electricity and potable water in violation of the law. They also work in low-paying jobs in the 'formal', and more often 'informal', economies without rights and protections. But apart from these generalities and the objectifying statistics from the reports, the situations in each country and within each country are different. In Durban, South Africa, housing policy is now driven by an 'elimination of the slums' Bill,¹ which proposes to 'relocate' and remove the poor from urban centers and destroy the shantytowns. Brazil took a similar path in the 1970s with disastrous consequences (Perlman, 1979) but has now, argues Marie Huchzermeyer (2006: 3), 'embraced informal land occupation as a process that yields desirable results in terms of land utilization and land distribution' where cities are shaped by informal processes driven by the poor (see also Huchzermeyer, 2004).

The drawback of a comparative analysis based on government policy is twofold. First, taking the nation as the mode of analysis might elide significant local differences, and second, the standpoint of administrative policy tends to be removed from the real lived experiences and knowledge of those who live in shacks. One alternative obvious antidote is to begin from the ground up, grounding analysis in the conscious political demands coming from the poor to be included in decision making. Yet, even where the State has encouraged local participation in urban planning, such as in Brazil, the results have been mixed. One reason, argues Marcelo de Souza (quoted by Pithouse in this issue), is that grassroots organization, even when involved, plays a subservient role in terms of strategy and intellectual elaboration. This is one of the questions that concern this issue of the *Journal of Asian and African Studies*.

The shackdwellers movement in Durban, *Abahlali baseMjondolo* (AbM),² which now claims to represent over 30,000 shackdwellers in almost

40 settlements, emerged 11 years after the end of apartheid and has put into relief some of the re-housing and slum clearance schemes of the Government, especially in the Kwa-Zulu Natal region where the movement was born. For instance, since the end of apartheid, the government has built perhaps 1 million new houses – which on the face of it is an outstanding achievement – but these are cheaply built one-room houses which in some cases are already beginning to crack and fall apart.³ In addition, apart from the poor construction and bad plumbing, the houses have most often been built a distance from South Africa's urban areas, far from schools and other public services. Welbedacht, which is on the periphery of Chatsworth outside Durban, is such a place. Further out than the older apartheid flats at Chatsworth (see Desai, 2002), some live as three generations in one room under a leaky roof. Often coming from very poor and uncertain living situations, some residents, initially pleased to have a new roof over their heads, have quickly realized that these new settlements, peri-urban ghettos, offer them little opportunity for employment, education, not to mention access to medical and other services. With little or no 'public' transportation, and often with opportunities only for low-paying jobs in the city, many find it too expensive to pay for taxis to get to work. Over time residents, who had all-too-often been reluctantly 're-housed' from shacks in the city, have begun to feel that the 're-housing' and 'slum clearance' is nothing other than a warmed-over version of the old apartheid 'forced removals'. One resident of Park Gate, S. Msimango, summed up the feeling of many when he described how he felt about being moved from a shack in Canaan in Clare Estate, where he had lived and worked since 1991, to Park Gate in 2003, which is about 20 miles and a 10 Rand taxi fare from Durban: 'They moved us from Canaan to Egypt'. 'Here we just sit. There is nothing here. We have been in a bad position. We don't want the future of others to be in the same position' (see *Abahlali.org*, 2007a).

A New Movement among Shackdwellers in South Africa: *Abahlali baseMjondolo*

What has changed since the Durban shackdweller movement's beginnings was the subject of my discussion with the elected President of AbM, S'bu Zikode, who I was fortunate enough to meet at the Kennedy Road Development Committee Office on 9 August 2007.

The Kennedy Road settlement is squeezed between Clare Estate and the Bisasar Road garbage dump, the largest in South Africa. Trucks continually enter the dump, passing Electron Ave and other such named roads from a bygone age of technological innovation under apartheid 'development'. Along Kennedy Road the dump is ringed by a long concrete fence and for some distance, perfume rods on top of the fence spray out fumes in an attempt to mask the smell of the dump. People are constantly walking up and down the hill, to and from their work as

domestics in the houses on Clare Estate, or to pick through the dump for necessary materials to build and repair shacks. The dump, noxious and toxic, is officially prohibited to shackdwellers, but if one takes a walk alongside the concrete fence that abuts the shack settlements, one can see that every few yards the concrete panels have been removed for easy access.

On the brow of Kennedy Road near Reservoir Hills, there is a small turn-off where taxis (minibuses) pull in, and a space in front of the standpipes where women and children collect water in big plastic buckets and others wash clothes. In the morning kids are playing football on this small dirt area. The goal posts are a bottle and a rock. Later a couple of men set up a stall to sell a few oranges and apples. It is doubtful that there is enough business to eke out a livelihood, and yet those are the conditions with which they have to work. A short, slight man with a welcoming affect and warm smile, Zikode is both engaging and articulate, with a reflective and calm demeanor. A radical humanist, not a firebrand, a teacher and listener, Zikode has become a significant national public figure as the elected president of the Durban shackdweller's movement, *Abahlali baseMjondolo*.

Zikode is aware that the local council does not have the millions needed to upgrade the shacks. They don't expect that, he says. What they insist on, instead, is for the council to come to the shackdwellers' meeting and see for themselves the living conditions of the people here and then talk with them about possible ideas for 'development'. Rather than vague promises about upgrades in the future, what is important is that the idea of development is brought back to the community, and that the council is talking with them rather than about them. This simple, and I might add reasonable, credo has created tensions not only with government departments but also with NGOs, including left NGOs, and other groups that lobby the Government on behalf of the shackdwellers, for 'service delivery'. *Abahlali* has consistently refused this discourse of 'service delivery'; they insist instead that their demands are about 'being human'. 'It is not only about physical infrastructure', says Zikode, 'we have shifted our thinking'; from the beginning 'the struggle is the human being, the conditions that we live in which translates into demands for housing and land'. Through *Abahlali*, he adds, 'people are starting to remember that they are human beings'; even the police. Often harassed and criminalized, with leaders (including Zikode) imprisoned and beaten up in Sydenham police station, the shackdwellers have suffered at the hands of the police. But after sustained mobilization, there has been a major shift in police behavior. *Abahlali* is determined to continue this trend.

There is a moralism to 'the culture of abahlalalism', a deeply rooted humanism where everyone shares everyday suffering, the pain, as well as the laughter. Reflected in the democratic openness and respectfulness with which they conduct their meetings, abahlalalism is a culture of sharing that is rooted in the ideas of community and reciprocity found in many South African cultures and in the long struggles against apartheid. 'We fought and died for this government',

Zikode says, 'so that we could be free and have decent lives', but 'this government does not treat us like people who can speak and think for ourselves'. Thus life is as much about a struggle for decent living conditions as it is about a mental liberation from the years of subservience and lack of self-confidence that has been drummed into the heads of the poor during both the apartheid and the post-apartheid periods. One of the major goals of *Abahlali* therefore is a kind of moral revolution, the creation of a society where the poor will be treated as human beings with minds of their own. 'We are poor in life, not in mind', Zikode likes to say. Yet at every turn Zikode is reminded that poor people in post-apartheid South Africa are not valued as much as others, and while *Abahlali* has successfully forced itself onto government institutions and into 'civil society', there is a constant struggle to keep these spaces open. Each 'development', each small gain for the shackdwellers, continues to be contested.

The shackdwellers' movement emerged out of the broken promises of the ANC whose project of post-apartheid 'nation building' has become synonymous with a neoliberal economic project that only 'empowers' a thin layer of African and Indian elites and a nationalist political project that is rapidly making authoritarian spaces such as the state media, universities and the party itself. Indeed there are two distinct worlds in post-apartheid South Africa that exist almost as absolutes. Conspicuous consumption among the elites gives credence to the idea that modern South Africa is Manichean: the shacks and one-room buildings of the poor are in direct contrast to gleaming citadels of malls and plazas in the gated communities. Demands to satisfy the basic needs of the poor masses are seen as a direct threat, a zero-sum game with direct consequences for the wealthy of the nation, who have become synonymous with the wealth of the nation. But *Abahlali* has also gained prominence because it has also struck a nerve in post-apartheid society and among groups between the rich and poor who, if they have not become cynical and exhausted by politics, still consider the struggle against apartheid a question of socio-economic redistribution and ethical revaluation (see, for example, Terreblanche, 2003). Thus, the poor are once again becoming a concern for some church leaders and others for whom the lives of the shackdwellers express both the *raison d'être* of the anti-apartheid struggle and also its greatest pitfalls: the failure to address the material reality of the mass of the people and to include them in day-to-day decision making. Indeed, after a recent shack fire in the Kennedy Road settlement, the Catholic arch diocese attended, for the first time, an *Abahlali* meeting and said, as Christians, they had 'sinned' against the poor by assuming that the ANC government would take on their struggle for decent housing. A number of people are now arguing that *Abahlali* has become the major prophetic voice in the churches that is reorienting them toward a social gospel.

The legacies of apartheid and the anti-apartheid struggle are present in the very geography of the cities. The growth of shantytowns, which played a pivotal role in the crisis of apartheid, are now, according to city planners, the eyesore that prevents the South African cities from becoming 'world class'. Shackdwellers

thus remain outsiders, always having to force their presence onto the discussions of the future. They are always seen as the uncivil and dangerous elements by the elites who would repress or represent them, even if at the same time they have achieved unparalleled access to the media.⁴

The movement's demand for basic services and genuine local democracy was always in the context of a moral challenge to Government and academic and NGO activists to see the shackdwellers as humans and treat them with dignity and respect. S'bu Zikode's speech at the University of Kwa-Zulu Natal, given in March 2006, gives voice to a further understanding. He suggests that at the movement's every turn it is not only the local government officials and police who must be faced, but also the 'capitalist system' itself. In other words, whatever 'gains' are won for the right to basic services can also be taken away not only through the commercialization of water, schooling, electricity, transport and so on, but also through the increasing precariousness of much of the work to gain legitimacy. This is nowhere more evident than in the Slum Clearance Bill, which is being tested in Kwa-Zulu Natal as a prelude to national policy. It is intimately connected not only to real-estate interests but also to the Government's goal to clear the cities of shacks for the 2010 World Cup. AbM's response was self-education. They read the Bill closely in open meetings and asked that the officials come and speak with them about it. That officials have come to shacks and have included visits to other settlements in their plans is unprecedented and indicates a major change, suggesting, in a sense, the strength of the movement. As Zikode says, the legislature came to visit and had to abide by the procedures of *Abahlali*: 'We did not adhere to professional procedures, where we were forced to follow the program. Rather, we would be out of order than to be in order for something that is not progressive'. The same position has been taken with regard to left NGOs that assume a right to speak for the poor. *Abahlali*'s wish to effect government policy and to think and speak for themselves is not a pipedream but goes back to the birth of the movement in action and demonstration against what its members saw as a breach of promise.

However it is clear that while the government has finally conceded that it needs to talk to shackdwellers, it sees this as a tactical management of instability rather than as a genuine conversation with an open outcome. And yet, now organized, the shackdwellers are not going to go away. Though Zikode recognizes the power of the 'system', and, having been schooled in the long struggles against apartheid, he understands that capitalism confronts them at every turn, he remains optimistic. Anyone who has thought about the meaning of life, he suggests, wants 'greener pastures'. The question is how to get there.

A Day with the Shackdwellers

The ninth of August 2007: Women's Day, a national public holiday in South Africa. Fifty-one years earlier women under the leadership of the ANC marched

on Pretoria. In the official story this is the iconic event that gave birth to the slogan, 'You strike a woman and you strike a rock'. But in the shacks there are other claims to the slogan. It is said that the slogan emerged from the famous women's struggles in the Cato Manor settlement in Durban in the 1950s when thousands of women fought against apartheid and ANC patriarchs.⁵ Today Women's Day is mainly ceremonial, primarily a celebration of the new access to power for elite women.

Yet on this day in 2007, over 50 women from Pema Ridge shack settlement marched to Sydenham police station, *toyi-toyi* and chanting 'down with police oppression' (see Figure 1). The songs from the 1980s popular struggles against apartheid took on a new concreteness. The demonstration was loud but peaceful and presented no threat to the police. It was a performance, on which even the police quietly looked, until the infamous Glen Nyager – a policeman notorious for his brutality during the apartheid era, who had beaten up S'bu Zikode and Philani Zungu in his holding cells late last year – arrived in his police BMW. Suddenly the atmosphere changed. The van carrying the Deputy President of *Abahlali*, Philani Zungu, arrived and he was rushed around the back of the station. The women moved toward the gate, singing and shouting, and almost without warning, Nyager rallied the police. They pushed the women back and charged after them down the hill. Explosions were heard – the sound of tear gas canisters being shot. It was an enormous police overreaction against the women,

Figure 1

A different kind of Women's Day in post-apartheid South Africa. Women's march on Sydenham police station against the arrest of *Abahlali baseMjondolo's* Vice President, Philani Zungu



and Mnikelo Ndabankulu, the AbM's energetic and engaging young full-time (but unpaid) press officer from the Foreman Road settlement immediately got on the telephone to call a radio station. Within a few hours a press release was drafted and approved, and photos began appearing on the website.⁶

I learned of this arrest while discussing the issue of leadership with Zikode at Kennedy Road. Zikode had told me that he came to Kennedy Road from a small town. His mother was a domestic who worked for white people and only saw him one day a month. Zikode is known for a style of leadership that is all about facilitating democratic process rather than exercising personal authority. Women are famously strong in the movement.⁷ At a meeting Zikode will tenderly seek to encourage those who are least likely to speak – the very old, the very poor and the very young – to express their views. I asked Zikode about the responsibility the leadership has brought him, and he replied that they have had discussions about whether leaders are born or bred. He was lucky to grow up at all, he says:

In my early boyhood, I trained as a Scout. Scout's honor and the scout's code are always important to me. I didn't go to college. Instead, in standard 3, I learned outdoor activities, enjoyed to sleep under the stars, cooking without utensils. These skills have contributed to who I am. The Scout Code: On my honor I will do my best to do my duty to the best of my ability for God and country, to be trusted, loyal, and useful and a friend to all.

I wondered what Baden-Powell (the founder of the Scout movement who had fought the Zulus in South Africa and later admired Hitler) would have made of these skills being used to challenge authority, but the discussion was interrupted by a telephone call from the Pemary Ridge settlement: Philani Zungu had been arrested. Zikode immediately called Sydenham police station, but they had no information. After 10 minutes S'bu called again, but there was no news. Nobody knew why he had been arrested but it was suggested that it was connected to the building of new shacks on the settlement. Officially it is illegal to build new shacks,⁸ but Zungu had informed the city that they were building the shacks to accommodate people illegally evicted by the city from other settlements, as well as the natural growth of families in a settlement that had obeyed the 'no new shacks' rule for 16 years. An official in the housing department had given him verbal permission for the new shacks, and he had been able to make a strong legal case for them with support from the *pro bono* Legal Resources Centre. So we decided to go directly to the police station – euphemistically called the Community Service Centre in post-apartheid South Africa. Inside the station there was a list of the 'rights' of 'customers'⁹ but no news of Philani Zungu. By this point, it had been over an hour since he was arrested, and it was now feared that he might have been beaten up. Word about Philani's arrest quickly spread by SMS and cell phone, and soon we heard the women marching back up the hill toward the police station, chanting struggle songs from the apartheid struggle.

Philani Zungi was finally released, after being warned about obstructing the police, but not before two women were taken to the police station. It was a clear case of harassment – neither Philani nor the women had done anything to warrant arrests – and it seemed as if the shackdwellers were back to square one, once again objects of police harassment. What signaled otherwise was that Nyager had expressed his desire to talk with Zikode. In the face of the physically larger and more menacing man, gun on hip and stick in hand, not to mention his previous violent encounter with Nyager, Zikode remained remarkably calm. By the end of the conversation Nyager had agreed to contact Zikode if there were issues in the future. While Nyager's words may be a formality, perhaps to curb the media, the fact that the police had gone as far signaled a change. Philani and Zikode left the station unharmed, and of course, at the end of the day the shacks still stand on Pemary Ridge.

JAAS, Cutting Edge and Basic Research

Scholarly journals, like Hegel's *Owl of Minerva*, often take flight at dusk. This is the result of the timing of publications (even in a post-modern cyber-world), coupled with the time lag between events and the scholar's reflections on them. Even for oft-published social science journals, current events are a misnomer. But more than that, scholars often work at a physical, and especially a conceptual, distance from the actual events and lived experiences of the peoples they are describing. Indeed, by 'lived', I mean the most concrete sense of real material conditions that are lived, shared and experienced. Rarely do the writers of journal articles engage on ground level with the ongoing social movements of the poor, and so this issue of the *Journal of Asian and African Studies* is an attempt to be a little different. The subject of this Special Issue is the politics of shantytowns, and we hope that it is only the beginning of an ongoing discussion of global significance. Our goal has been to develop a heterodox and multidisciplinary collection that would consider the 'politics of shantytowns' in a multidimensional way, in theory and practice, from above and below, from UN, government and non-government policy to the actual practices and implication of these policies at ground level, as well as the actions, organizations and response in and from the shantytowns themselves. This is potentially an enormous research project, and we encourage the submission of new research across the disciplines. One important ethical question this project in particular seeks to raise is the role of the intellectual. Among the articles gathered here, three focus on the new shackdwellers' movement in South Africa, *Abahlali baseMjondolo*, and take as their philosophic ground *Abahlali's* insistence that intellectuals and NGO activists speak to, rather than for, the poor. Though these three articles are written in English by intellectuals who do not live in the shacks, all of them have worked with and developed significant and ongoing relationships with *Abahlali baseMjondolo*. Patel and Pithouse have been part of the movement since its inception, and Bryant is an accepted and

welcome visitor. The three articles on the shackdwellers have in common the view that the shackdwellers can think for themselves and articulate this as a challenge to 'outside intellectuals' (understood here as those who have been formally educated and graduated from the elite universities), who want to write about the movement. 'Outside' intellectual is used as a contrast with those intellectuals who live in the shacks. Raymond Williams (1958: 308–9), for example, remarks of the 'delusion' of 'highly literate' people who 'fail to notice that there are other forms of skilled, intelligent, creative activity'. Critical of the intellectual who believes that one can know without understanding or feeling, Gramsci (1971), on the other hand writes of an 'engaged knowledge' whereas Dwight Conquergood (2004: 315) argues, 'proximity, not objectivity, becomes an epistemological point of departure and return'.¹⁰ In his lecture at the University of Kwa-Zulu Natal, Zikode notes that 'this is why we have the University of Kennedy Road, the University of Foreman Road and the University of *Abahlali baseMjondolo*. Some of the intellectuals understand that we think our struggle'. But speaking of the 'proximity of struggle', he adds, that the government can't hear them, they 'cannot understand isiZulu nor can they hear any English'. They can't hear because they are 'too high'. Thus his challenge to academics is to turn his 'lecture' into a 'meeting', namely, changing the geography of engagement so that a real discussion can begin. Both Pithouse's and Patel's work is grounded in the idea of the struggle as a school where the formally trained outside intellectual is seen as 'unschooled' in the elitist (and, in South Africa, often racist) values toward the poor that inhabits much of the attitudes of aid organizations and the NGO community.

The issue opens with Marie Huchzermeyer's study of the implications of market and profit-driven commercialization of shelter, water, refuse sanitation and sanitation on policy and initiatives toward slum upgrading. Her research shows that, in Nairobi, there is not only a lack of housing but a scarcity of resources including water and sanitation, which unleash 'intense competition' and a profound social-economic hierarchy expressed in the commercialization of basic services. Most of Kibera's¹¹ tenants, for example, pay rent to landlords to live in shacks considered 'illegal' by the State in fear that slum 'upgrading' will lead to their displacement. Landlords, often slum dwellers themselves, also fear the loss of shack-rental income that slum 'upgrading' might bring. Meanwhile much needed interventions and programs for public housing are further compromised by extreme levels of commercialization of basic needs such as water. The situation in Nairobi, which includes Kibera, offers an insight into what would happen to other settlements were they to follow its example along the path of commercialization. However, in South Africa, Huchzermeyer argues, stronger rights and ideas of entitlement, as well as notions of collective resources derived in part from the struggles against apartheid, make the commercialization of basic needs more difficult. But there are no guarantees, as Huchzermeyer's article makes clear. Jacob Bryant, in contrast, traces the development of *Abahlali*

baseMjondolo, the form that the movement has taken and the major issues that it has faced, based on a series of careful in-depth interviews and discussion with shackdwellers. While some may find his attention to the voices of the people he has spoken to at the expense of an attempt to link his findings to social science paradigms problematic, I think his approach is welcome in its context as one of the first academic projects on the movement. To this, Richard Pithouse adds a layer of historicization to the careful writing of AbM's own history. By placing AbM's history in the context of a Durban 'history from below', Pithouse situates the present shackdweller dialogues in the context of a tradition of (often subjugated) shackdweller resistance. The culture of *Abahlali* is new; there is no deference to leaders, and the politics of the poor is spoken in the language of the poor, which everyone can understand. Those so often silenced and considered out of order in discussion about the poor have now raised their voices, declaring their desire to be out of order precisely because their order is all-too-often taken, by left and right alike, to be their silence. Focusing on an *Abahlali* meeting as an 'event' in the terms theorized by Alain Badiou, Raj Patel then discusses the importance of the meeting to *Abahlali* culture as a democratic event that resonates with indigenous African ideas about democratic sovereignty that Patel contends are alternative politics and alternative idea of development to those of the 'development state'.

The three articles on AbM rightly recognize the self-organization of the shackdwellers and the creation of *Abahlali* as an exceptional development. One objective of the issue, which is a product of a back and forth discussion between the authors and *Abahlali* members over a period of time, is to open up debates and discussions and to challenge intellectuals who are interested in writing about the poor – it is a challenge highlighted by *Abahlali*'s elected President, S'bu Zikode's presentation in this issue. Thus while the articles are inescapably a snapshot, a moment passed, while 'thinking in communities' (as Zikode puts it) ceaselessly develops and changes under the pressure of new challenges cropping up almost every day, I believe the methodological challenge always applies, and it is in this spirit that we have worked to explore in this issue and look forward to confronting in forthcoming issues of the journal.

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Notes

1. The Bill was adopted into law in August 2007 and has been vigorously contested by organized shack dwellers who will soon be asking the Constitutional Court to dismiss it in its entirety.
2. *Abahlali baseMjondolo* means 'people who stay in shacks'. Theories on the roots of the word *Mjondolo* are multiple. One line of thought is that this colloquial word for shack comes from the crates for John Deere tractors that were used in shack construction in the 1970s.
3. The national government offers a subsidy to local and provincial house-building projects of 16,000 ZAR – just over US\$2000 – for the houses, which are called 'dog kennels' by some.
4. What has helped legitimate the movement is their early recognition of the importance of the media. It had its own press officers who quickly informed the media of ongoing events. From local press and radio to national TV, *Abahlali* has made it into the international press such as the *New York Times*, *The Times* (London) and *The Economist*.
5. For example, see abahlali.org (2007b) *Arnett Drive, Discussion about Forced Removals*, 4 August 2007, <http://abahlali.org/node/1755>
6. Though there is no Internet connection at the settlement, many AbM members have 'graduated' from a computer class taught by supporters and are now training other members. Public libraries usually have an Internet connection and have thus become very important to the movement. The problem is that these libraries do not exist in the rural ghettos to which the city aims to remove most shackdwellers, providing them with one more reason to resist relocation.
7. Some of the residents at Kennedy Road are in fact from urban backgrounds, and for some women who have escaped abusive relationships, the shacks offer a rudimentary autonomy.
8. After years of obedience to the 'no new shacks' rule new shacks are now being built and defended in AbM settlements across the city. Similarly after years of accepting the city's 2001 decision to no longer electrify shacks, thousands of people have been illegally connected to the electricity grid in AbM settlements. This action is justified as civil disobedience by the movement on the grounds that the withdrawal of electricity provision was resulting in regular catastrophic fires.
9. On the police station's website there is a comic strip-style photo essay of a raid on an African informal settlement which is contrasted with family pictures of middle-class Indian residents of the area. It is clear who is seen as the enemy and who are seen as the people to be protected.
10. The issue of the standpoint of the intellectual has of late been discussed in the field of anthropology. On Gramsci and anthropology see Crehan (2002).
11. Kibera is the largest 'slum' in Africa with over 600,000 people.

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