

THE EXPLOSIVE ALLIANCE¹

- Richard Pithouse

Now we know everything we got to rebel
- Bob Marley²

Introduction

It is only when grounded in the ubiquity of resistance that revolution becomes a possibility.
- John Holloway³

In his classic account of the Haitian revolution C.L.R. James railed against “The waste, the waste of all this bravery, devotion and noble feeling on the corrupt and rapacious bourgeoisie.”⁴ Two hundred years after that revolution South Africa confronts a similar waste. From Toussaint to Mandela subaltern nationalisms have carried elites into the repressive management of economies “still locked into a subordinate position within the world market”⁵ as the collective resistance that defeated colonialism “is individuated as rival class projects, among them the project of transforming the colony into the neo-colony through the judicious rearrangement of economic, political, and symbolic relations.”⁶ “The people”, Fanon wrote “stagnate deplorably in unbearable misery.”⁷ This is such an enduring story that it sometimes seems as if we have to respect its limits and make our lives and resistances within their constraints. Indeed, millennial capitalism⁸ has deviated so far from the teleological assumptions at the heart of one of its key legitimating ideologies, ‘development’, that Ato Sekyi-Otu can write that “structural adjustment programs and a new world economic ‘order’ came to free the people for depths of immiseration not even he [Fanon] could have imagined....”⁹ The staggering

¹ This is a reworked version of a paper written for the first meeting of the Caribbean Philosophical Association, Barbados, May 2004.

² Bob Marley ‘Babylon System’. *Survival* Island Records 1980

³ John Holloway *Change the World Without Taking Power* (London: Pluto, 2002), 175.

⁴ C. L. R. James, *The Black Jacobins* (New York: Vintage, 1989), 255.

⁵ Peter Green ‘The Passage from Imperialism to Empire’ *Historical Materialism* Vol. 10, No.1. (2002): 39.

⁶ Ato Sekyi-Otu *Fanon’s Dialectic of Experience* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1996), p. 106. Sekyi-Otu asks “what is our political situation?” and answers “An omnivorous capital that requires repressive local political agencies to discipline their populace into acquiescing to its draconian measures; a free market of material and cultural commodities whose necessary condition of existence is the authoritarian state; the incoherent nationalism of dominant elites who are in reality transmitters and enforcers of capital’s coercive universals: this is our historic situation. Under the circumstances, we are faced not with a choice between universalism and particularism but rather with the task of wresting *both* an authentic democratic universalism and an equally authentic democratic nativism from the collusion of transnational capitalist dictatorship and local privilege.” 20 – 21

⁷ *Ibid.*, 144.

⁸ Jean and John Comaroff explain their use of the phrase millennial capitalism as follows: “By this we mean not just capitalism at the millennium, but capitalism invested with salvific force; with intense faith in its capacity, if rightly harnessed, wholly to transform the universe of the marginalized and disempowered.” ‘Alien-Nation: Zombies, Immigrants, and Millennial Capitalism’ *South Atlantic Quarterly* Vol. 101, No. 4 (2004): 785.

⁹ Sekyi-Otu, 144.

scale of the tyranny of The Market, and the return to direct colonial rule in Haiti and Iraq has not incited a generation of intellectual militants to continue the work of Amilcar Cabral, Aimé Césaire, Frantz Fanon and C.L.R. James. On the contrary much contemporary putatively radical theory from the dominated world amounts to “intellectuals drowning in the incestuous dreams of psychoanalysis”¹⁰, fundamentally unwilling to connect philosophical ideas to popular resistances. In the language of C.L.R. James’ reading of *Moby Dick* “As Ahab is enclosed in the masoned walled-town of the exclusiveness of his authority, so Ishmael is enclosed in the solitude of his social and intellectual speculation.”¹¹

Aimé Césaire’s injunction to - in the face of “this attitude, this behaviour, this shackled life caught in the noose of shame and disaster” - “Start something! Start... The only thing in the world that’s worth the effort of starting: The end of the world, by God!”¹² is now routinely presented as dangerous or as a quaint relic of an expired age by intellectuals for whom radical injustice has been normalised as the circumstance within which historical agency must be exercised. But popular militancy continues to be exerted against injustice. And the people, the ordinary people without grand aspirations to ‘activism’, smashing water meters in Johannesburg¹³, fighting private security companies to prevent evictions in Cape Town¹⁴, illegally reconnecting electricity in Durban, resisting the exclusion of poor students from universities across South Africa¹⁵, opposing white power blocs and fighting for land in rural areas¹⁶, and waging similar struggles around the world,¹⁷ have forged new weapons from which much contemporary anti-colonial philosophy remains as alienated as Ishmael is alienated from the crew on the Pequod.

Along with its transformative poeticism Frantz Fanon’s writing provides some important analytic tools to better equip us to understand what has gone wrong and what is required of a praxis of engendering and developing resistances to contemporary neo-colonialism. This essay, which moves from the South African context, and which owes much to the activist and Africanist readings of Fanon by Ato Sekyi-Otu and Nigel Gibson, sketches the outline of an argument for an intellectual praxis of transformative dialogical engagement within nodes of militant resistance, which is to say within constituent power,

¹⁰ C.L.R. James *Mariners, Renegades and Castaways: The story of Herman Melville and the world we live in* (Hanover, New England: Dartmouth, 1978), 3.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 40.

¹² Cited in Frantz Fanon, *Black Skin White Masks* (New York: Grove Press, 1967), 96.

¹³ See Anti-Privatisation Forum (APF) & others (2004) ‘Nothing for Mahala’

The forced installation of prepaid water meters in Stretford, Extension 4, Orange Farm, Johannesburg – South Africa.’ *Centre for Civil Society Research Report 16*, (2004):1-30. <http://www.ukzn.ac.za/ccs>

¹⁴ See Ashwin Desai and Richard Pithouse ‘What Stank in the Past is the Present’s Perfume’

Dispossession, Resistance and Repression in Mandela Park’ *South Atlantic Quarterly* Vol. 103, No. 4. (2004): 841 – 875.

¹⁵ See Richard Pithouse (Ed.) *Asinamali: University struggles in post-apartheid South Africa* (forthcoming, African World Press: 2005)

¹⁶ See Stephen Greenberg *Post-Apartheid Development, Landlessness and the Reproduction of Exclusion in South Africa* Centre for Civil Society Research Report 17.

¹⁷ See Notes from Nowhere Collective *We Are Everywhere* (Verso: London, 2003)

which is to say within social spaces where counter sovereignties are asserted.¹⁸ This is not the same as the liberal idea of the intellectual as an expert within civil society. On the contrary the idea of civil society, in its official form as the ‘third sector’ after and ultimately subordinate to the state and the market, functions to contain resistances and to confirm the authority of constituted power by reducing resistance to the making of appeals to constituted power in its language and within its political limits.¹⁹ On the contrary it is, in its most common practice, about attacking constituted power by refusing to accept the ongoing commodification – a process often articulated to a racialized history of primitive accumulation – of even the most basic means to bare life – land, seed, water, housing, transport, education, medicine etc. Theorising the prospects for the growth and development of these refusals requires some sense of the dialectical mode of analysis that allows Fanon to talk of the “consciousness of the people” as “elementary and cloudy”²⁰ and to assert a few pages later that “the magic hands are finally only the magic hands of the people.”²¹ This essay seeks to, against both the defeatism of thinkers for whom the task is to accommodate ourselves to reality and the ahistorical and anti-dialectical Negrian radicalism that builds its entirely perverse optimism on a denial of reality, take seriously Fanon’s commitment to the dialectical overcoming of the reality of systemic dehumanization.

Whites were intelligent....

*A miscarriage / where a larval flow of possibility / degenerates into dead-end
putrescence*
- Lesego Rampolokeng²²

Fanon tells us that “The Colonial world is a world divided into compartments.” His description of what this means is prefaced with the observation that “we need not recall Apartheid in South Africa.” For Fanon apartheid is an exemplary incarnation of the colonial situation. What needs to be revealed, he argues, are the “lines of force”²³ that constitute that situation. He has a clear idea of what needs to be done: “To break up the colonial world does not mean that after the frontiers have been abolished lines of

¹⁸ Anthony Bogues makes a substantively similar point in his account of the political black intellectuals tradition: “any observation of black radical intellectual production would illustrate that the central figures of this tradition were explicitly *political*, seeking to organise, having the courage to stand by or break with organisations and programs while developing an intellectual praxis that made politics not a god but a practice for human good. Theirs was not just a practice of social criticism but oftentimes of organized efforts to intervene in social and political life.” *Black Heretics Black Prophets* (Routledge: London, 2003), p. 7.

¹⁹ Again Bogues provides, this time by way of Pierre Bourdieu, a useful formation: “the ideational formation of any social formation has limits. Within these limits, systems of classifications reproduce their own logic, and the nature of the social world appears as both logical and natural. Nothing is possible outside this constructed natural order. Therefore, underpinning social orders are theories of knowledge that in their symbolic power ‘impose the principles of the construction of reality – in particular social reality’. For Bourdieu, heresy occurs when the questioning of the *doxa* creates a new critical discourse.” (2003, 13.)

²⁰ Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth* (Penguin: London, 1976): 156.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 159.

²² Lesego Rampolokeng, *The Bavino Sermons* (Durban: Gecko Books, 1999), 53.

²³ Fanon., 1976, 29.

communication will be set up between the two zones. The destruction of the colonial world is no more or less than the abolition of one zone.”²⁴

Writing shortly after Nelson Mandela assumed the Presidency of South Africa Ato Sekyi-Otu asked of what he called “the second signal event in contemporary African history”:

Is this event, for all its particularities, the iridescent light that truly relieves the oppressive monotony of the encircling African gloom? Or is it but another cruel prelude to what Armah, threnodist of the postcolonial condition, saw as the ineluctable miscarriage of “the beauty of the first days”?²⁵

For Sekyi-Otu the first among the signal facts of contemporary Africa is “the economic, political, and utter moral bankruptcy of postcolonial regimes, with their unending train of rapacious and murderous tyrants, chieftans, and cliques.”²⁶ But, crucially, the condition which Sekyi-Otu hoped the end of apartheid might challenge was not limited to brutal authoritarianism:

Under internal and external pressure these leaders are now busy refashioning their despotic regimes into simulacra of democracy. And confessing despair and impotence before the enormity of the accumulated morass, they have entrusted the work of repair to international overlords bent on administering plans that, at least in the foreseeable future, will spell even more devastation for the vast majority of citizens.²⁷

In 1996, the same year in which Sekyi-Otu posed his question, the African National Congress (ANC) became the first African government to ever voluntarily impose a structural adjustment programme on its people.²⁸ It has had the some consequences as every other structural adjustment programme. Capital and the rich have flourished as never before while the poor, the majority, confront ‘even more devastation.’ In the context of South Africa’s highly racialised economy this has meant that, although the white poor have become poorer and there is a steady deracialisation of the elite, in general terms whites have become richer and blacks have become poorer.²⁹ The United Nations reports that South Africa’s human development index has steadily declined since 1995 and is now at 1975 levels, leaving South Africa ranked below occupied Palestine and Equatorial Guinea.³⁰ Moreover the South African government, functioning as the local agent of global capital, is now determinedly seeking to impose similar policies on the rest

²⁴ Ibid., 41.

²⁵ Sekyi-Otu, 12.

²⁶ Ibid., 12.

²⁷ Ibid., 12.

²⁸ See Patrick Bond *Elite Transition* (Pietermaritzburg: University of Natal Press, 2000), Hein Marais *South Africa Limits to Change* (Cape Town: UCT Press, 2001) and Sampie Terreblanche *A History of Inequality in South Africa* (Cape Town: UCT Press, 2002)

²⁹ See Desai & Pithouse, 2004.

³⁰ *This Day* 16 July 2004 ‘Shock UN ranking of SA below Palestine’, 3.

of the continent by presenting them, in the language of Pan-Africanism, as an African inspired initiative for Renaissance.³¹

We need to ask Fanon's question: What lines of force need to be revealed here?

The possibilities for radical outcomes in post-apartheid South Africa have been significantly limited by global power relations. We have to be mindful of Haitian history from the moment when Toussaint la'Ouverture agreed to meet Brunet until now.³² It is absolutely necessary to tell that story. But to only tell that part of the story is to occlude internal complicities and power relations. As Sekyi-Otu warns: "the recognition of local relations of accumulation and exploitation as autonomous objects of political contestation" requires an overcoming of "the plea of constraining dependency – always the enemy of critical introspection and the ally of repressive unanimism."³³ And, indeed, there are multiple clear instances, such as tacit support for the dictatorship in Zimbabwe, in which the ANC has risked offending transnational capital in favour of the material interests of local elites and many more in which effective steps have been taken to repress dissent or to enable local capital's attacks on the poor while health care, education, despotic 'traditional' and white power in rural areas, the prison system, and so on, sink further into grim misanthropy.³⁴

Speaking in an unpublished interview in 1972, five years before he was murdered by the apartheid state, Steve Biko warned, prophetically, that

this is one country where it would be possible to create a capitalist black society, if whites were intelligent, if the nationalists were intelligent. And that capitalist black society, black middle class would be very effective... South Africa could succeed in putting across to the world a pretty convincing, integrated picture, with still 70 percent of the population being underdogs.³⁵

With the active and serious support of American imperialism local white elites turned out to be intelligent. William Robinson makes a convincing case, substantiated with rigorous empirical evidence, that:

in US foreign policy... "democracy" is the most effective means of assuring stability... This is in contrast to prior periods in US foreign-policy history – and correlatedly, to the historic norm in centre-periphery relations predicated on coercive modes of social control, such as the colonial era – when military dictatorships or authoritarian client regimes

³¹ See Patrick Bond *Fanon's Warning* (New Jersey: African World Press, 2004) and Patrick Bond *Talk Left Walk Right* (Pietermaritzburg: University of KwaZulu-Natal Press, 2004)

³² See Paul Farmer 'Who removed Aristide?' *London Review of Books* Vol . 26. No 8. 15 April 2004: 28 - 30.

³³ Sekyi-Otu, 27.

³⁴ For one example of a highly repressive response to a just struggle from below see Desai & Pithouse, 2004.

³⁵ Transcript of unpublished interview in author's possession (1972)

(and before them, colonial states) were seen as the best guarantors of social control and stability. The intent behind promoting polyarchy is to relieve domestic pressure on the state from sub-ordinate classes for more fundamental change in emergent global society. Military regimes and highly unpopular dictatorships, such as Somoza in Nicaragua, the Shah in Iran, Marcos in the Philippines, the Duvaliers in Haiti, and Pinochet in Chile, defended local elite interests. *But they also engendered mass-based opposition movements that sought [like the Sandinistas] outcomes, beyond the mere removal of dictatorships, of popular democratization.* These movements became transnational in their significance as globalization proceeded and threatened core and local elite interests. The old authoritarian arrangements were no longer guarantors of social control and stability³⁶

So popular resistance has

inverted the positive correlation between the investment climate and authoritarianism. Now a country's investment climate is positively related to the maintenance of a "democratic" order, and the "imperial state" promotes polyarchy in place of authoritarianism. But this shift required a corresponding reconceptualization of the principal target in intervened countries, from political to civil society, as the site of social control.³⁷

Robinson explains that in the period after the Second World War, and especially through the 60s, 70s and 80s, successive US administrations developed strategic alliances with the settler regimes in Southern Africa which included "low-key military assistance, political and diplomatic support, and intelligence information to white minority regimes"³⁸. The State Department labelled the liberation movements as 'terrorist'. But he also shows that after the 1976 uprising the US and European powers began to push for some kind of transition and by the mid 1980s had shifted from supporting apartheid to 'promoting democracy'. For Robinson

US 'democracy promotion,' as it actually functions, sets about not just to secure and stabilize elite-based polyarchic systems but to have United States and local elites thoroughly penetrate civil society, and from therein assure control over popular mobilization and mass movements.³⁹

Millions of dollars were committed to a programme designed to support moderate black leadership and marginalise radical black leadership and, in the words of a key USAID document, "broaden understanding of the free market system and prepare black business owners, managers, and employees for success in a postapartheid South Africa"⁴⁰.

³⁶ William Robinson *Polyarchy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 67-68 my emphasis

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 68.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, 327.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 69.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 30.

Robinson summarises the goals of the various co-ordinated democracy promotion projects as follows:

1. identify and support an emergent black middle class of professionals who could be incorporated into a post-apartheid hegemonic bloc;
2. develop a nationwide network of grassroots community leaders amongst the black population that could win leadership positions in diverse organs in civil society and compete with more radical leadership;
3. cultivate a black business class among small and mid-level black-run, or mixed level or mixed enterprises that would have a stake in stable South African capitalism, develop economic power, and view the white transnationalized fraction of South African capital as allies and leaders.⁴¹

Hein Marais⁴² and Patrick Bond⁴³ offer evidence of the similar role played by white South African capital and the World Bank. In the current global context the World Bank has become a key agent driving the co-option of popular movements strategic moves towards becoming a 'knowledge bank' and to 'harmonising' and seeking further 'coherence' between its policies and those of the IMF, the WTO and donors which means the seduction of massive funding, scholarships, consultancies, and endless NGO organised workshops and conferences, all with the direct aim of using "the market penetration strategies of the private sector"⁴⁴ to capture extant movements of the poor and create others under the guise of 'strengthening civil society'. For example, Julie Hearn cites convincing evidence to show that in Mozambique "Aid is being deliberately directed to assist in the construction of new social groups committed to the market economy"⁴⁵ She quotes a USAID reports which openly states that, in Ghana:

[P]olitical risks include growing polarization within the Ghanaian polity and perhaps an associated risk that a legally sanctioned change of government could have totally opposing development views and reverse long-term policies. USAID assistance to civic organizations that develop and debate public policy, and US support for consultation on government policies have been useful in shaping a vision for Ghana's future which is developing broad, bipartisan support.⁴⁶

In Zimbabwe Hopewell Gumbo writes that the Movement for Democratic Change started out opposing both the Mugabe dictatorship and neo-liberalism but that "Massive funding was poured in to the civic movement, mainly from the West" with the result that

⁴¹ Ibid., 31.

⁴² Hein Marais *South Africa Limits to Change* (Cape Town: UCT Press, 2001), 126-138.

⁴³ Patrick Bond *Elite Transition* (Pietermaritzburg: University of Natal Press, 2000)

⁴⁴ Deepa Narayan with Raj Patel, Kai Schafft, Anne Rademacher & Sarah Koch-Schulte *Voices of the Poor: Can Anyone Hear Us?* (New York: Oxford University Press/World Bank, 2000), p. 279.

⁴⁵ Julie Hearn 'Foreign Aid, Democratisation and Civil Society in Africa: A Study of South Africa, Ghana and Uganda' *Institute for Development Studies*, Discussion Paper 368, 2000, p. 19.

<http://www.ukzn.ac.za/ccs/default.asp?3,28,11,241>

⁴⁶ Ibid., 20.

the intellectuals now largely subscribe to the neo-liberal agenda and grass roots activists, many of whom have suffered as a direct consequence of neo-liberalism, are just bought in to toyi-toyi [protest dance] when numbers and credibility are needed. The middle class MDC leadership, together with the labour bureaucrats and big white bosses believe that giving actual power to grass roots activists would bring ‘instability’ into the movement.⁴⁷

In contemporary South Africa the massive civil society projects of agencies like the World Bank and USAID exist alongside parallel civil society projects by the ANC⁴⁸. These projects take on a variety of tasks but generally function to co-opt the expression and inhibit the development of social antagonism by encouraging various forms of (always unequal) ‘partnership’ that produce various anti-political corporatist arrangements for managing conflict (e.g. lobbying, consultation, public participation, etc.) on the terrain of constituted power and within the limits of what it chooses to prescribe as reasonable and negotiable. Often there is lucrative encouragement to shift from large membership driven organisations (‘social movements’) to small, professionalised NGOs or the mediation of NGOs. When political issues are taken up they are rapidly technicized, often via reduction to questions of policy or via reduction to research that is dehumanizingly and alienatingly quantitative or dumbed down⁴⁹ to the crudely propagandistic level of the work of World Bank and its academic entrepreneurs (many of whom sell their services and credibility for private profit from a base in public institutions). Resistances that cannot or refuse to be co-opted through the mediation of civil society and which assert counter-power rather than making appeals to constituted power are stigmatised as anti-national and destructive and treated as criminal. This is the most generative space for radical intellectual praxis.

A theory of the history of how the people came to be re-expelled from history

-look how mi dream/come just get blown to smidahreen/ inna di miggie a di dream/before di really crucial scene/di really crucial scene is/when di people dem come in...
- Linton Kwesi Johnson⁵⁰

In two important papers published in 2001 Nigel Gibson made the first serious attempt to develop a Fanonian understanding of the failures of the transition from apartheid to neo-liberalism. Gibson doesn’t deny that the transition was influenced by domestic capital and the transnational institutions of economic imperialism. However he argues that the depoliticizing elite transition was not determined by these forces in any mechanistic sense and was also shaped by key choices within the liberation movements “including an

⁴⁷ Hopewell Gumbo ‘Zimbabwean Civil Society: a report from the front lines’ *Special Report for the CCS Website* 2002, p. 4. <http://www.ukzn.ac.za/ccs>

⁴⁸ For a brief discussion of this see Desai & Pithouse, 2004.

⁴⁹ For a useful attack on an idea which currently has enormous currency in these circles see John Harris’ critique of the World Bank’s purile ‘social capital’ discourse *Depoliticizing Development: The World Bank and Social Capital* (Anthem Press: London, 2002).

⁵⁰ Linton Kwesi Johnson, ‘Mi Revalueshanary Fren’ *Selected Poems* (London: Penguin, 2002): 48-49.

ideological capitulation to neoliberal policies and a marginalisation of more radical projects advanced by the South African left.”⁵¹

Fanon’s thinking about the potential pitfalls of anti-colonial struggles is most widely understood in terms of the failure to develop nationalism into humanism⁵² with the result that the ideas and practices that once animated and legitimated resistances become ‘empty shells’ legitimating the co-option and plunder of the national bourgeoisie. Gibson’s analysis frames this in terms of Fanon’s critique of the “absence of ideology” and his insistence on the “need to fill that void with a humanist project that begins from the lived experience and needs of people.”⁵³ Gibson diagnoses “an anti-intellectualism that pervaded the anti-apartheid movement, including its intellectuals”.⁵⁴ He shows that when democratic intellectuality did develop in workerist and black consciousness movements in the 70’s it was stigmatised, marginalised and repressed and constrained by its internal failure to keep developing liberatory ideology in relations of mutually transformative mutuality between intellectuals and grass roots militants. In Gibson’s estimation “This ideological pitfall was exploited by the ANC which was able to capture these narratives and celebrate the idea of “people’s power” while remaining the self appointed future negotiators.”⁵⁵

The assumption of a representative role by the elite within the ANC allowed an elite pact which required, in Fanon’s metaphor, that the people be sent back to their caves in order that politics could be technicized, which is to say depoliticised, to the point where it “becomes the domain of the professionals.”⁵⁶ For Gibson “The South African case highlights what happens when the theorizations of spontaneity do not happen, when there is no dialectical relationship between spontaneity and organization.”⁵⁷ Gibson goes on to argue, citing Fanon’s warning that without theorisation people engaged in a strategy of pure spontaneity can succumb to the “mirage” of their “muscles’ own immediacy” and degenerate into “a strategy of immediacy that is both radical and totalitarian”,⁵⁸ that the ANC’s strategy of ‘making the townships ungovernable’ turned ordinary people into cannon fodder, encouraged a counter brutality and, with slogans like ‘liberation before education’, left the people waging the most dangerous and damaging end of the struggle unable to contribute to its theorisation or to share in the concessions it eventually won. Later, when people were asked to give up those practices of direct democracy that had survived state repression and the internal authoritarianism of the ANC in favour of

⁵¹ Nigel Gibson ‘Transition from Apartheid’ *Journal of Asian and African Studies* 1, (2001): 65. Vishnu Padayachee’s excellent insider account of how progressive social scientists formerly aligned with the trade union movement shifted their allegiance to the emerging state during the transition with the result that their policy recommendations shifted dramatically rightward lends solid empirical support to Gibson’s theorisation. Vishnu Padayachee “Progressive Academic Economists and the Challenge of Development in South Africa’s Decade of Liberation” *Inaugural Address*, University of Natal, (1997): 1-28.

⁵² For a discussion of Fanon’s humanism see Richard Pithouse ‘That the tool never possesses the man’ Taking Fanon’s Humanism Seriously *Politikon* Vol. 3, No. 2, (2003): 107-132.

⁵³ Gibson, 66.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 67.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 72.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 71.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 72.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 73.

parliamentary representation and elite driven technocratic anti-politics, there was an inability to contest the battle of ideas. In Gibson's view the outcomes may have been different had the liberation movements followed Fanon's injunction to radically democratise – which means to encourage “the self-activity and the self-direction of the masses” and to take seriously political education – a collective and democratic “fundamental questioning.”⁵⁹

Gibson also lays particular stress on Fanon's emphasis on the need for a dialectically and mutually transformative interchange between theory and the practice of resistance. In Fanon's view new subjectivities and practices emerge in struggle (“it is the essence of the fight which explodes old truths and reveals unexpected facets”⁶⁰) and so rigidly sticking to or reinscribing the Manichean categories of colonial domination is disloyal to the experience of struggle – which is to say disloyal to the experience of subaltern agency. For Gibson a key consequence of this Manicheanism in the anti-apartheid struggles was that it produced an uncritically celebratory affirmation of ‘the struggle’ and so failed to see its internal contradictions.⁶¹

Seize the time

one must begin somewhere
- Aimé Césaire⁶²

In his new introduction to *The Wretched of the Earth*⁶³ Homi Bhabha asks “Is Fanon Still Relevant?” For Bhabha the question centres around what he terms Fanon's “political ethic of violence”. Of course Bhabha's bad misreading of Fanon's descriptions as prescriptions (and against Ato Sekyi-Otu's arguments for a contrary reading which are vastly more attentive to Fanon's actual writing) needs to be challenged. But there is one aspect of Fanon's work against which Bhabha's question does require an answer. Fanon often writes as though it is inevitable that set backs in the anti-colonial struggles will be overcome. On occasion there is a sense, perhaps a faith, that time is redemptive. In this Fanon's vision is very much in tune with other radicals of his time – Amílcar Cabral, Che Guevara and so on. *Chile: The other September 11*⁶⁴, a recently published anthology of writing on the U.S. backed fascist coup that deposed Salvador Allende's elected government in 1973, concludes with Allende's optimistic defiance: “It is possible they will smash us, but tomorrow belongs to the people!”⁶⁵ The accounts in this anthology of the early experiments in neoliberal economics designed in the Economics Department at the University of Chicago and implemented, via the mediation of Washington, at gun point in Santiago sound eerily familiar in all kinds of ways but Allende's defiant

⁵⁹ Nigel Gibson, ‘The Pitfalls of South Africa's ‘Liberation’⁵⁹ *New Political Science*, vol. 23, no. 3, (2001). p. 376.

⁶⁰ Fanon, cited in Gibson, 2001b., 384.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 384.

⁶² Aimé Césaire ‘Notebook of a Return to the Native Land’ *The Collected Poetry* (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1983), 55

⁶³ Homi Bhabha ‘Is Frantz Fanon Still Relevant?’ *Chronicle of Higher Education*, March 18, 2005

⁶⁴ *Chile: The other September 11* (New Delhi: Leftword Books, 2004)

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 85.

optimism seems anachronistic. In other words the old problems remain current but the old optimism about inevitable redemption seems exhausted. And we can understand why. Latin America's veins are still open. There is no good reason to assume that each passing day brings us closer to a polity that can redeem the living – let alone the suffering of the dead. On the contrary.

Neil Lazarus observes that in Ayi Kwei Armah's account of the betrayal of the great hopes of revolutionary anti-colonial nationalism in *The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born* "time has ceased to be the repository of political hope; it had once been so, during the colonizing years, but now, in independence, it has become empty, barren, homogenous."⁶⁶ So what is to be done in times like these – times when "the horses have vanished/Heroes hop around like toads"⁶⁷ Is it still, as Fanon argued at a moment when time seemed fertile, "our historic mission is to sanction all revolts, all desperate actions"⁶⁸ Could it still be, as it was for Guevara, potentially the case that "It is not necessary to wait until all conditions for making revolution exist; the insurrection can create them"⁶⁹ The answers to these questions depend on the degree to which current reality is conceptualized as a crisis. If that degree is small then the risk of opening time to unknown trajectories may be great but if that degree is large then the risks must be proportionately smaller. Hence for Slavoj Zizek "We simply *have to accept the risk* that a blind violent outburst will be followed by its proper politicization – there is no short cut here, and no guarantee of a successful outcome either."⁷⁰ Elsewhere he argues that

in a truly radical political act, the opposition between a 'crazy' destructive gesture and a strategic decision breaks down. This is why it is theoretically and politically wrong to oppose strategic political acts...to...gestures of pure self-destructive ethical insistence with, apparently, no political goal. The point is not simply that, once we are thoroughly engaged in a political project, we are ready to risk everything for it, inclusive of our lives, but, more precisely, that only such an 'impossible gesture' of pure expenditure can change the very coordinates of what is strategically possible within a given historical constellation.⁷¹

Zizek attacks the pseudo-politics of the cult of the victim and advocates a return to the politics of the act under taken in the face of the existential void and without external legitimation. He argues⁷² that, since Kant, there has been an entrenched philosophical suspicion that such acts are really driven by some unconscious pathology but that in reality it is an act in-itself and for-itself that creates so much trauma that it must

⁶⁶ Neil Lazarus 'The South African Ideology: The Myth of Exceptionalism, the Idea of Renaissance' *The South Atlantic Quarterly* 103(4), 2004, p. 609.

⁶⁷ Mark Eisner (Ed.) 'Right, Comrade, It's the Hour of the Garden' *The Essential Neruda* (San Francisco: City Lights Books, 2004), 189.

⁶⁸ Fanon., 1976, p. 166.

⁶⁹ Eugene Gogol *The Concept of the Other in Latin American Liberation: Fusing Emancipatory Philosophic Thought and Social Revolt* (Lanham: Lexington Books, 2002) 344

⁷⁰ Slavoj Zizek *Revolution at the Gates* (London: Verso, 2002), p. 225.

⁷¹ Slavoj Zizek *Conversations with Zizek* (Cambridge, UK: Polity, 2004), p. 204-205.

⁷² *Ibid.*

immediately be contained in symbolic terms. The value of this line of argument is that it begins to offer a partial explanation for why a thinker like Fanon, and the more militant social movements and the increasingly frequent spontaneous local revolts in post-apartheid South Africa, attract such caricatured stigmatization from fractions of the left unwilling to connect theory to action. The fear of commitment to the actual is taken up by Hegel via his famous criticism of the conscience for which “Anything that exists *an sich* is demoted to a mere moment”⁷³ with the result that

Consciousness, the relation of mind to something objective, has vanished into empty self-consciousness, and what we have is really the untruth of the moral consciousness rather than its truth. What emerges out of this emptying of morality is the beautiful soul, which is too fine to commit itself to anything. It lacks force to externalize itself and endure existence. It does not want to stain the radiance of its pure conscience by deciding to do anything particular. It keeps its heart pure by fleeing from contact with actuality and preserving its impotence. Its activity consists in yearning, and it is like a shapeless vapour fading into nothingness.⁷⁴

The commitment to action requires us to reject the attractions of a sentimentality abstracted from actual struggle and helps us to better understand Adorno’s statement that “There is tenderness only in the coarsest of demands” (Eagleton 2003: 174). For Hegel spirit is a bone so, from the *Phenomenology* to Fallujah. Arundhati Roy insists that:

The Iraqi resistance is fighting on the frontlines of the battle against Empire. And therefore that battle is our battle. Like most resistance movements, it combines a motley range of assorted factions. Former Baathists, liberals, Islamists, fed-up collaborationists, communists etc. Of course it is riddled with opportunism, local rivalry, demagoguery, and criminality. But if we are only going to support pristine movements, then no resistance will be worthy of our purity.... This is not to say that we should never criticize resistance movements. Many of them suffer from a lack of democracy, from the iconization of their “leaders,” a lack of transparency, a lack of vision and direction. But most of all they suffer from vilification, repression, and a lack of resources.⁷⁵

On the 5th of September 2004 the following article appeared in the *City Press* newspaper:

Harrismith video

Sunday 5th September 2004.

⁷³ G. W. F. Hegel *Phenomenology of Spirit* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977), p. 574.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 575-576.

⁷⁵ Arundhati Roy *Public Power in the Age of Empire* (New York: Seven Stories Press, 2004), p.33.

From The City Press (South Africa) Shocking video on Harrismith STAFF REPORTERS

EXCLUSIVE but shocking video footage in City Press's possession shows how Harrismith police opened fire indiscriminately on demonstrators as they slowly crossed the N3 highway last week and then continued firing at them as they fled for cover.

This move led to the tragic death of 17- year-old Teboho Mkhonza.

The video shows how the toyi-toying group slowly started crossing the highway. The demonstrators were not throwing stones, as some reports claimed, and their numbers were nowhere near the reported 4 500 claimed by police earlier this week.

Before the demonstrators were halfway across the road, police opened fire without any warning. The demonstrators turned and ran for cover.

Police, however, continued to fire at their backs. They also continued shooting as people fell to the ground. The video clearly identifies three police officers firing at the fleeing demonstrators, although more were involved in the shooting. The footage then shows at least four police officers grappling with a demonstrator and forcibly pushing him into the back of a police van.

In extremely disturbing footage, one then sees a badly injured and bleeding Mkhonza lying on the floor of a police van. Fellow demonstrators locked in the van are visibly upset by police inaction to call an ambulance. Mkhonza wailed in pain and battled to breathe with what looked like a chest wound.

This short article was only noteworthy because it was such an isolated effort at taking Mkhonza's murder seriously. The following day the *Independent on Saturday*, in a tiny article on page 3, reported that Thabo Mbeki, speaking in response to the death of Teboho Mkhonza, had

sent out a clear message that the government will act decisively against communities that use violent means to protest against lack of service delivery...Mbeki said...his government would not tolerate the destruction of public property and anyone who broke the law would be arrested by the police.⁷⁶

The words and phrases in Mbeki's discourse are loaded to fall against the poor. For example the rebellions that are breaking out around the country with increasing frequency⁷⁷ are almost always fuelled by the exclusion of poor communities from services that they already have and not the failure of the government to 'deliver' fast enough. The view, pervasive in elite publics, that people must wait patiently while the

⁷⁶ 'Mbeki Warns: no violence' *Independent on Saturday*, 6 November, 2004. p. 3.

⁷⁷ As I make the final changes to this paper 14 young people from the Bisasser Road Informal Settlement in Durban are in prison having being refused bail on charges of public violence after 850 people blockaded a road in protest against the against the local government selling off state owned land which had been promised to the Bisasser Road community to a brick factory without consulting or even informing the community. Two days after the arrests of the 14 12000 people marched on the police station demanding the release of the 14 or that everyone be arrested because "if we are also the public then we are not criminals and they must let the 14 people go. If we are not the public, if only the rich are the public, then we are all criminals and must all be arrested." (Interview, S'bu Zikode, Bisasser Road Informal Settlement, 22 March 2005

state ‘delivers’ is pure ideology in a situation where the rich are getting richer and the poor are getting poorer amidst a raging orgy of dispossession and enrichment by primitive accumulation. Furthermore the process of excluding people from services and confiscating their goods to pay off debt is very often violent while occupying a road in protest is hardly violent. In 1649 John Warr observed that “what freedom we have by the law is the price of much hazard and blood”.⁷⁸ Centuries of struggle have not changed the fact that the law remains a terrain on which the rich easily out manoeuvre the poor. Most people can smash a water meter. Very few can win an urgent interdict let alone an audience with the Constitutional Court. Nevertheless it remains a fact that the Constitution commits the South African government to the progressive realisation of socio-economic rights and so, even within the legal logic of the system that consecrates Mbeki’s rule, the police and the state are in violation of its spirit when they exclude the poor from basic services. Shooting peaceful protestors dead is in direct violation of criminal law. So Mbeki is, as protest songs with new words and old tunes often observe, a liar. This is unsurprising. The scandal is that there is no scandal. The police murder of Teboho Mkhonza, like the police murder of Michael Makhabane in a student protest in 2001⁷⁹ and the police murder of Marcel King in an attempt to reason with the men disconnecting his mother’s electricity in early 2004⁸⁰, and the de facto endorsement of these murders by elites is just another ordinary day in neo-liberal South Africa. Liberation is for the rich. For most participants in elite publics neo-liberalism is common sense and politics has collapsed into technicism to the point where the only political questions that remain are about advancing factional agendas. Knowledge of the small rebellions that are constantly breaking out around the country is, even when they manage to link up with other rebellions, to sustain themselves and to generate mass mobilizations, generally just repressed. But sporadic rebellions continue to break out in defiance of the elite common sense that cannot accept their rationality. Hence Ashwin Desai argues that, while Nietzsche recommended that we philosophise with a hammer, in neo-liberal South Africa, where people, and even whole schools and clinics, are regularly disconnected from water by the state and radical social movements ‘illegally’ reconnect people it is necessary to ‘philosophise with a pair of pliers’.⁸¹

But while the great danger of a failure to act is the endurance of the status quo – which in South Africa means local domination⁸² under and in league with global fascism⁸³ – active militancy carries its own dangers. Fanon issues two crucial warnings in this regard:

The first warning concerns strategy and speaks to the dangers of taking on the immediacy that comes from the intensity of struggle:

⁷⁸ John Warr *A Spark in the Ashes* (London: Verson, 1992), p.102.

⁷⁹ Richard Pithouse “Student’s Murder an Outrageous Assault on Democracy” *Daily News*, 2001 <http://www.nu.ac.za/ccs/default.asp?3,28,11,26>

⁸⁰ Brandon Pillay “Local Youth Dies a Community Hero” *Centre for CivilSociety website* 2004 <http://www.nu.ac.za/ccs/default.asp?3,28,11,1429>

⁸¹ Ashwin Desai *Neoliberalism and its Discontents* 2002 <http://www.ukzn.ac.za/ccs>

⁸² See Patrick Bond *Talk Left, Walk Right* (Pietermaritzburg: University of KwaZulu-Natal Press, 2004)

⁸³ Raj Patel and Philip McMichael “Third Worldism and the lineages of global fascism: the regrouping of the global South in the neoliberal era” *Third World Quarterly* 25(1), 2004: 231-254.

The group faces a local attack as if it were a decisive test. It behaves as if the fate of the whole country was literally at stake, here and now. But we should make it quite clear that this spontaneous impetuosity which is determined to settle the fact of the colonial system immediately is condemned, in so far as it is a doctrine of instantaneity, to self-repudiation. The hard lesson of facts, the bodies mown down by machine-guns: these call forth a complete re-interpretation of events. The simple instinct to survive engenders a less rigid, more mobile attitude.⁸⁴

At times the immediacy of struggle – the stress, lack of sleep, day to day confrontation with joy and terror - leads to a state of mind analogous to mania⁸⁵ with all the hubris that description implies. But Fanon's warning is that the battles are not the war and that there are no easy structural victories. Careful thinking about strategy and tactics is vital.

Fanon's second warning speaks to the purpose of struggle:

The militant who faces the colonialist war machine with the bare minimum of arms realized that while he is breaking down colonial oppression he is building up automatically yet another system of exploitation. This discovery is unpleasant, bitter and sickening: and yet everything seemed to be so simple before: the bad people were on one side, and the good on the other. The clear, unreal, idyllic light of the beginning is followed by a semi-darkness that bewilders the senses.⁸⁶

Although this warning also has consequences for strategy it is primarily a concern about the ethical character of the struggle. So it appears that with regard to both strategies for realizing a project and the ethical questions about the nature of the project militancy – aggression, war and so on – is not enough. It is also necessary to be scrupulous – meticulous, troubled by conscience and so on. Which comes first – militancy or scrupulousness? The ideal answer is to say that they go together and that if their registers are too different for them to be fused then they should at least be in permanent dialogue from the moment that a struggle begins. Fanon's answer, because he is interested in thinking through the dialectic of experience rather than in generating principles in idealist abstraction from the lived experience of struggle, is that engaged scrupulousness emerges from militancy and that there must then be a struggle within the struggle to subordinate militancy to scrupulousness. In other words the project of militant revolt produces, through its defeats and failings, an opportunity to struggle for a praxis of reflection and dialogue which can then become the project to which militancy has the relation of a tool to consciousness. It would do Fanon's immanent spirit an injustice to reify his reflective experience into some kind of formula. Alain Badiou is right about the primacy of the situation:

⁸⁴ Fanon., 1976. p. 106 – 107.

⁸⁵ I am indebted to Raj Patel for this insight.

⁸⁶ Fanon, 1976., p. 115 – 116.

A political situation is always singular; it is never repeated. Therefore political writings – directives or commands – are justified inasmuch as they inscribe not a repetition but, on the contrary, the unrepeatable. When the content of a political statement is a repetition the statement is rhetorical and empty. It does not form part of thinking. On this basis one can distinguish between *true political activists* and *politicians*. . . *True political activists* think a singular situation; politicians do not think.⁸⁷

But, still, Fanon’s account of the Algeria Revolution does teach us that it would be a huge mistake to demand the immediate practice of scrupulousness as the grounds for dialogical solidarity or to assume that struggle has an inevitable and inevitably progressive trajectory. Fanon’s work also makes clear the need to work for the development of scrupulousness and its priority over militancy as quickly and effectively as possible. We should sanction all revolts but always look for opportunities to participate in the dialogical production and development of scrupulousness from militancy. But the latter should not only not be used against the former but should also not be separated from the former. In Fanon’s words “it is the essence of the fight which explodes old truths and reveals unexpected facets.”⁸⁸ Similarly for Rosa Luxemburg: “A high degree of political education, of class consciousness and organisation. . . cannot be fulfilled by pamphlets and leaflets, but only by the living political school, by the fight and in the fight.”⁸⁹ For Fanon the praxis of mutually transformative reflection and action is dialectical. The suspicion of dialectical thinking is very understandable in South Africa where the South African Communist Party advances a dogmatic dialectical theory of a two stage revolution which demands that its cadres defend the ‘National Democratic Revolution’ from ‘ultra-left’ critics on the grounds that it is the first stage of the transition to socialism. Of course the nature and trajectory of the former is entrenching relations of domination and thus making the possibilities of the latter progressively more remote. But thinking of the dialectic is not exhausted by its Stalinist articulations. For Fanon the dialectic is not an inhuman force driving history towards a pre-established goal. It is rather the “unstable, critical and creative moment of negativity. . . (that produces) *movement* through absolute, irreconcilable contradictions.”⁹⁰

Inventing souls in the new struggles

There’s a fresh light that follows the storm
- Derek Walcott⁹¹

Fanon famously concludes *The Wretched of the Earth* with an injunction to “Leave this Europe where they are never done talking of Man, yet murder men everywhere they find

⁸⁷ Alain Badiou *Ethics* (London: Verso, 2003), p. 82. (emphasis original)

⁸⁸ Cited in Nigel Gibson “The Pitfalls of South Africa’s “Liberation”” *New Political Science*, Vol. 23, No.3: 384.

⁸⁹ Cited in Anthony Bogues *Caliban’s Freedom* (London: Pluto, 1997), p. 122.

⁹⁰ Nigel Gibson ‘Beyond manicheism: dialectics in the thought of Frantz Fanon’ *Journal of Political Ideologies* Vol. 4, No. 3, p. 340. (emphasis in the original)

⁹¹ Derek Walcott *Selected Poetry* (Johannesburg: Heinemann, 1993), p. 90.

them.”⁹² He is not recommending that an idea of Africa be counter-posed to Europe via the romantic fantasy of a return to tradition. On the contrary, earlier in the same book he launches a scathing attack on the bad faith of intellectuals who compensate for their alienation from the people with a “banal search for exoticism.”⁹³ Fanon’s commitment to “recognise...the open door of every consciousness”⁹⁴ leads him to insist that “The desire to attach oneself to tradition or bring abandoned traditions to life again does not only mean going against the current of history but also opposing one’s own people.”⁹⁵ Against this he recommends turning away from “a knowledge which has been stabilized once for all” and going on until one “has found the seething pot out of which the learning of the future will emerge.”⁹⁶ For Fanon “you do not show proof of your nation from its culture...you substantiate its existence in the fight which people wage against the forces of occupation.”⁹⁷ Outside of the context of a totalising anti-colonial war it is necessary to recognise that, even in the context of an economic catastrophe, being makes itself in a much wider range of social spaces than just overtly political struggles. But Fanon’s broader point stands:

It is not enough to try and get back to the people in that past out of which they have already emerged; rather we must join them in that fluctuating movement which they are just giving shape to, and which, as soon as it has started, will be the signal for everything to be called into question. Let there be no mistake about it; it is to this zone of occult instability where the people dwell that we must come; and it is here that our souls are crystallized and our perceptions transfused with light.⁹⁸

Fanon is addressing himself to intellectuals, often members of the national bourgeoisie, with the suggestion that they should participate in the sites of popular struggle – sites of constituent power or counter sovereignty – where ideas opposed to those of ‘Europe’ can be forged. (Of course the legitimating ideology of ‘Europe’ is now often presented as a set of very particular interlinking conceptions of development, democracy, human rights, good governance, civil society and the market which are presented as universal in their value but as best understood, respected and practiced by the broader white West.)

Fanon begins *The Wretched of the Earth* with a spatial account of oppression which takes the form of a description of the two opposed racial zones into which colonialism divided humanity. “Apartheid”, he says, “is simply one form of the division into compartments in the colonial world.”⁹⁹ Sekyi-Otu describes this condition as “an anti-dialectic of absolute difference” and observes that “this structure and the perverse intercourse of its protagonists invite a vengeful form of insurrectionary action cast in the mode of

⁹² Fanon., 1976, 251.

⁹³ Ibid., 178.

⁹⁴ Fanon, 1967., 232.

⁹⁵ 1976, 180.

⁹⁶ 1976, 181.

⁹⁷ Ibid., 181.

⁹⁸ Ibid., 182-183.

⁹⁹ Fanon, 1976, 40.

revolutionary catastrophism.”¹⁰⁰ Sekyi-Otu persuasively reads Fanon as arguing that the struggles ensuing from this anti-dialectic will face, in Sekyi-Otu’s translation of Fanon’s words, an “arduous path towards rational knowledge” which is to say an arduous path towards recognition that, although there are times when nationalism can be a road towards humanism it is not humanism. The material conditions that drive the failures of anti-colonial struggles become the new materiality that generate new struggles and prescribe more arduous paths for the new struggles.

Fanon is in no doubt that material want will dissolve nationalist mystification: “Once the hours of effusion and enthusiasm before the spectacle of the national flag have past, the people rediscovers the first dimension of its requirement: bread, clothing, shelter.”¹⁰¹ As Sekyi-Otu explains

for all the profound complications which the resurgent knowledge of class introduces into the reductive story of the racial divide...something of the inaugural plot of the colonial drama persists. That legacy consists in the fact that “class” would come to describe a spatial relation – a measure of proximity to or distance from colonial privilege.¹⁰²

So, again, revolutionary energies are a spontaneous response to a social structure that emerge from, in Marx’s terms, “a class in civil society but not of civil society...which lays claim to no particular right because the wrong it suffers is not a particular wrong but wrong in general; a sphere of society which can no longer lay claim to a historical title, but merely to a human one.”¹⁰³ For Fanon it is the poor – the rural peasantry and the urban lumpen proletariat – that, in Sekyi-Otu’s characteristically elegant phrasing “bear testimony to the limits of liberalizing a colonial-racial system of social closure.”¹⁰⁴ Fanon describes the “native’s decision to invade” the dominating zone as a “biological decision.”¹⁰⁵ In post-apartheid South Africa rebellions against attacks on the means to bare life by the state and corporate power – disconnections from water, evictions from homes etc, remain, in this sense, biological.

The authentic consciousness, Fanon argues, must recognize that “the unemployed man, the starving native do not lay a claim to the truth; they do not say that they represent the truth, for they are the truth.”¹⁰⁶ The marginalised, exploited and dispossessed have an ontological priority in that they incarnate the experience of domination and, potentially, liberation. And so the struggle should be “by the people and for the people, for the outcasts and by the outcasts.”¹⁰⁷ However this crucial recognition can manifest itself in an anti-dialectical immediacy that becomes pathological. For example Antonio Negri, who’s

¹⁰⁰ Sekyi-Otu, 25.

¹⁰¹ Fanon, 1976, 122.

¹⁰² Sekyi-Otu 159

¹⁰³ Karl Marx ‘Critique of Hegel’s Philosophy of Right. Introduction’ *Early Writings* (Penguin: London, 1992): 256

¹⁰⁴ Sekyi-Out, 159.

¹⁰⁵ Fanon, 1976, 104.

¹⁰⁶ Fanon, 1976, 38.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, 165.

thought has a powerful (and, tellingly, racialised) attraction to many left intellectuals in South Africa seeking to break with the Stalinism of the previous generation, argues that:

the multitude is ontological power. This means that the multitude embodies a mechanism that seeks to represent desire and to transform the world - more accurately: it wishes to recreate the world in its image and likeness, which is to say to make a broad horizon of subjectivities that freely express themselves and that constitute a community of free men.¹⁰⁸

Negri's illusion¹⁰⁹ about the uniform political purity of the desires of the 'multitude' functions in contemporary South African struggles to fetishize the spontaneity of the mass and reserve intellectualism for intellectuals. Very often this reinscribes a racialised division of labour. Moreover this illusion fails to acknowledge that desire is hardly always for communism¹¹⁰ or to take into account the simple logic of Zizek's point that desire follows fantasy and so, while the desire for survival will generate spontaneous rebellion amongst the excluded this only takes us so far, and, within the rebellion that it instigates, desire must be traversed¹¹¹ in order to avoid the collapse into fragmentation, messianic immediacy or counter brutality. For John Holloway the Negrian illusion fails to acknowledge the mutual "interpenetration of power and anti-power... Communism is not the struggle of the Pure Subject, but the struggle of the maimed and the schizophrenic."¹¹²

Holloway's point matters for many reasons. For example the cripplingly unreflective self-righteousness that accompanies the fetish of the pure subject pushes some movement intellectuals and militants into debilitating fundamentalisms and sectarianisms that are more indicative of a fundamental commitment to being radically ontologically superior than a fundamental will to resist domination. It's a curious and revealing fact that people who project fantasies of ontological purity onto the idea of multitude generally only assume the consequent lightness of being for actually existing human beings when they are part of the same or allied small, covertly vanguardist, middle class networks¹¹³ - the

¹⁰⁸ Antonio Negri, *Negri on Negri* (Routledge, New York, 2004): 112.

¹⁰⁹ For Freud an illusion is a belief elicited and maintained by unconsciousness desires irrespective of evidential support. Sigmund Freud *The Future of an Illusion* (W.W. Norton & Company: New York, 1989) Of course illusions can be enabling and constraining.

¹¹⁰ Consider, for example, Ralph Ginzburg's account of the popular and festive rebellion against constituted legal authority in Georgia on 21 June 1920 that took the form of the lynching of Phillip Gathers by a white mob. 'Huge Mob Tortures Negro to Avenge Brutal Slaying' *Cultural Resistance Reader* (Verso, London 2002): 132 -134.

¹¹¹ This is usefully discussed in by Kenneth MacKendrick and Christopher Craig Brittain in 'A Messiah for Marxism: Review of Zizek, *The Fragile Absolute*', *Radical Philosophy Review*, Vol. 6., No. 1, (2003): 51 - 58.

¹¹² John Holloway 'Going in the Wrong Direction; Or, Mephistopheles - Not Francis of Assisi' *Historical Materialism* Vol. 10. No 1. (2002): 88-89.

¹¹³ These networks don't only reproduce relations of class domination. They are often also gendered and racialized and exhibit a consistent failure to address racism and sexism with sufficient seriousness or to seriously consider what should be required of a radical anti-racism and anti-sexism. The qualifying adjective 'radical' matters. If we consider feminism as an example it is apparent that elite publics in South Africa abound with World Bank feminism which advances female academics/consultants and the projects they sell their skills to by stigmatising poor men; various forms of racist feminism that advance white

same networks that often mediate the relationships between movements. It is telling that there are certain cases where critiques of the middle class intellectual left sub-culture have generated paranoid and hysterical responses that issue counter-attacks infused with vastly more vigour than the responses of the same people to physical and ideological attacks on actually existing poor people.¹¹⁴

Furthermore the assumption of ontological privilege reinscribes anti-dialectical Manicheism and inhibits self reflective praxis and critical thought about everything aside from questions of short term strategy. And, crucially, Negrian discourse about the multitude which, in its ahistoricism, is the mirror image of the World Bank's discourse about 'the poor,'¹¹⁵ functions in movements to mask power relations, often racialised or gendered, between and within movements locally, nationally and transnationally.¹¹⁶ The Bank's discourses naturalize the poor through colonial tropes of passivity and ontological lack while Hardt and Negri naturalize the poor through Franciscan tropes of ontological abundance. But in both cases the poor simply are the poor because they are the poor hence poverty becomes an ontological rather than a historical condition. In the South African context this makes both the Bank and the Negrian discourses complicit with racism. As the anti-racist South African philosopher David Goldberg notes the tremendous radical energies of the various social movements against racism and colonialism were committed to "transforming the racial status quo, the prevailing set of stultifying and subjugating conditions of existence for those deemed not white"(Goldberg 2004:9). But he shows that these movements have been co-opted and made safe for extant power by being reduced to principles that are "primarily, principally, or completely to anti-racial commitment" (2004:1). Anti-racism, he argues, requires historical memory. And historical memory makes the idea of the multitude – which

women by stigmatising black men; and white and black articulations of liberal (bourgeois) feminism that when they appear, as they do, in or (much more often) in the name of movements of the poor can result in the legitimization of the subordination of these movements to the (left-chic) career interests of middle class women. However the radical feminist sensibilities of movement intellectuals like Amanda Alexander, Shereen Essof, Ann Eveleth, Mandisa Mbali, Raj Patel and others are beginning a promising conversation about the obligations and promise of a nascent radical feminism. (For discussions of some of these points see Richard Pithouse 'Producing the Poor: The World Bank's New Discourse of Domination' *African Sociological Review* Vol. 7, No. 2, 2003. pp. 118-148 and Ashwin Desai and Richard Pithouse 'Sanction All Revolts: A Reply to Rebecca Pointer' *Journal of Asian and African Studies* Vol. 39, No. 4, 2005. pp. 289-308.

¹¹⁴ This is not to suggest that there are never circumstances in which it is appropriate to contest these attacks. On the contrary the battle of ideas matters and matters enormously. The point is that as a new left elite solidifies, becomes professionalised and generates cultural capital through self-representation and glamorous international alliances some initiatives are, or become, much more invested in the pleasures and increasing material rewards of memberships of this elite than the project that brought it into being and which legitimates its existence. This results in movements being used to legitimate the left elite rather than, as it should be, the reverse. It is already clear that the South African left will pay a steeply escalating price for its wilful failure to take this up.

¹¹⁵ See Richard Pithouse 'Producing the Poor: The World Bank's New Discourse of Domination' *African Sociological Review* Vol. 7, No. 2, (2003): 118-148.

¹¹⁶ For arguments in this regard see "'Independent Intavenshan' Frantz Fanon and the Dialectic of Solidarity" *Radical Philosophy Review* Vol. 4., No. 2., (2001): 173-192. and Richard Pithouse 'Solidarity, Co-option and Assimilation: The necessity, promises and pitfalls of global linkages for South African movements', 2005 (Forthcoming: *Journal of Asian and African Studies*)

would include a computer programmer in Seattle and someone scraping a living together in an *Umjondolo* [shack] in Durban – a ludicrous illusion.

Fanon's critique of spontaneity – the illusion of immediacy in time and place, the danger of brutality, the lack of liberatory ideology and so on – in anti-colonial struggles applies equally to resistances to liberalised colonialism and is a powerful corrective to Negri's ahistorical and anti-dialectical philosophy. At this point we do well to make use of Jean-Paul Sartre's framing of an important question in *The Critique of Dialectical Reason*: "class-being – as practico-inert – belongs to the domain of the anti-dialectic. How are we to grasp the intelligibility of a praxis which has been mortgaged by a passive constitution?" The question is not new. For Marx "The point is that revolutions need a passive element, a material basis. Theory is realised in a people only in so far as it is a realization of people's needs." He insists that "It is not enough that thought should strive to realize itself; reality must itself strive towards thought."¹¹⁷ Sartre suggests that we "reply to these theoretical questions like Diogenes, by walking."¹¹⁸ This is part of Fanon's answer. Sub-Commandante Insurgente Marcos proposes, as a slogan, "Walking we ask questions"¹¹⁹ and argues that that "Speaking and listening is how true men and women learn to walk."¹²⁰ This is also part of Fanon's answer. Marx, in a characteristically declarative flourish, asserts that "Just as philosophy finds its *material* weapons in the proletariat, so the proletariat finds its *intellectual* weapons in philosophy."¹²¹ This too is part of Fanon's answer.

For Fanon the paradox created by the fact that the conditions that produce a spontaneous will to rebel amongst the excluded are also the conditions that produce the limitations of this rebellion must be resolved dialectically via chosen acts of will that take the form of the reflective and dialogical praxis of struggle. It is in this project that the intellectuals will, for Fanon, succeed or fail in their confrontation with history. But of course intellectuals do not inhabit the social marginalisation that produces the "necessary representative conditions for the biophysical explosion of social revolt."¹²² Nevertheless although Fanon is acutely aware that "Neocolonialism... addresses itself essentially to the middle class and to the intellectuals of the country"¹²³ he anticipates a crucial role for "honest intellectuals... in the decisive battle that we mean to engage upon."¹²⁴

A generation has passed since Fanon observed that "The oil of Iraq has removed all prohibitions and made concrete the true problems" and railed against "The

¹¹⁷ Karl Marx, 'Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right. Introduction' *Early Writings* (Penguin: London, 1992): 252.

¹¹⁸ Jean-Paul Sartre *Critique of Dialectical Reason* (Verso: London, 2004). p. 806.

¹¹⁹ Subcommandante Insurgente Marcos. *Our Word is Our Weapon* (Seven Stories Press: New York, 2001): 267. Elsewhere in the same collection of articles Marcos insists that "Speaking and listening is how true men and women learn to walk." p., 76.

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*, 76.

¹²¹ Karl Marx 'Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right. Introduction' *Early Writings* (Penguin: London, 1992) 257

¹²² Sekyi-Out, 165.

¹²³ Frantz Fanon *Towards the African Revolution* (New York: Grove Press, 1967):122.

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*, 142.

Marines...who, periodically, are sent to re-establish “order” in Haiti...”¹²⁵ If we inhabit global coloniality - an economic-military-ideological order that subordinates regions, peoples and economies world wide” via a variety of strategies that include “heightened marginalisation and suppression of the knowledge and culture of subaltern groups”¹²⁶ then one key consequence follows: Rebellion is only real when it prioritises the flourishing of the agency and intelligence of the dominated. This means, as Jacques Depelchin writes in an essay arguing for fidelity to the tremendous world historical event of the Haitian revolution, “approaching politics as the realm of creativity in which all citizens, in conscience, participate, contribute their ideas from wherever they are, in order to change the situation in which we are.”¹²⁷

Edward Said noted that imperialism was open about its need to produce “an intellectual elite with which we can work...who would thus form a link between us and the mass of the natives...with a view towards preparing the way for agreements and treaties which would be the desirable form taken by our political future.”¹²⁸ In contemporary coloniality there is arguably a greater and more effective effort to co-opt Third World intellectuals to imperial projects. Greater because there are many more donor agencies, NGOs, scholarships, various opportunities for consultancies and ‘partnerships’ with all kinds of organisations including Universities from the dominating countries. More effective because all of these projects are, at least in their public faces, deracialised, and because they all speak the languages of democracy, development, good governance, public participation, civil society and all of the other discourses that seek to appear to be progressive as they function to bind manifest and potential rebellion into relations of subordination to constituted power to the point where rebellion can only make limited appeals rather than radical demands. The class position of the intellectuals inclines them towards compradorism and the risk of seduction is permanent. This risk increases dramatically with the professionalisation of the left, often under the rubric of civil society. But, as Sekyi-Otu notes, as a Sartrean Fanon gives the national bourgeoisie the freedom to choose to put their skills in the service of constitutive power, to become revolutionary intellectuals; but as a Marxist he realises that most will serve constituted power. Sekyi-Otu writes that “What distinguishes” revolutionary intellectuals “from the bourgeois nationalists, then, is not their class origins but their *epistemic and political project*.”¹²⁹

For Fanon the alliance between the revolutionary intellectuals and militants that have emerged from uncivil society is explosive. It produces “critical dialogue between avatars

¹²⁵ Ibid., 123.

¹²⁶ Arturo Escobar ‘Beyond the Third World: imperial globality, global coloniality and anti-globalisation social movements’ *Third World Quarterly* Vol. 25, No1. (2004):: 207. Global apartheid is also a useful characterisation of contemporary relationship between capitalism and imperialism. For arguments in this regard see Anthony Richmond *Global Apartheid* (Oxford University Press: Ontario, 1994); Patrick Bond *Against Global Apartheid* (University of Cape Town Press: Cape Town, 2001) and *Talk Left Walk Right* (University of KwaZulu-Natal Press: Pietermaritzburg, 2004); and William Robinson (*A Theory of Global Capitalism* Johns Hopkins University Press: Baltimore, 2004.): 153.

¹²⁷ Depelchin, 2004., p. 14.

¹²⁸ (Said 1995: 245).

¹²⁹ Sekyi-Otu, 175. Emphasis original.

of the differing life-worlds which inhabit the hybrid body of the nascent society”¹³⁰ that enables links between the rural and urban poor, better organisation, better reflection on strategy and tactics and the fashioning of “what Césaire called a ‘common sense’ out of differing languages of existence”¹³¹ which includes the need for “an idea of man and of the future of humanity”.¹³² Sekyi-Otu, writes that “In place of the anarchic particularisms of spontaneous revolts... The outcome which Fanon envisages for this meeting of interlocuters from different social spaces is a ‘mutual current of enlightenment and enrichment.’”¹³³

In our struggles against global coloniality there are a variety of reasons why our resistances should take their particular social and cultural spaces, in their extant and evolving hybridity, as primary organising principles of solidarity on the foundation of which wider alliances can be forged. The first is that particular extant culture has more accessible resources that can be used and developed to articulate and inspire resistances than abstract universal principle (or old traditions that only excite romantic and nationalist intellectuals). It puts agency and creativity within the immediate grasp of the marginalised and dominated. This is particularly well argued by Sub-commandante Insurgente Marcos and part of the project of making rebellion ordinary must be to locate it in the immediate life world of the dominated. Anything else quickly reduces the poor to the role of stage managed extras in their own struggles.¹³⁴ Moreover moving too quickly from local languages of struggle to allegedly ‘global’ languages can leave everyone but the militants and movement intellectuals (who often have a professional investment in ‘global’ languages of struggle) behind.¹³⁵

¹³⁰ Ibid., 172.

¹³¹ Sekyi-Otu, 177.

¹³² Fanon, 1976, 164.

¹³³ Sekyi-Otu., 179.

¹³⁴ Paulo Freire’s Fanonian inspired insistence on struggle as the over coming of objectification (i.e. struggle as humanisation) needs to be revisited: “The oppressed have been destroyed precisely because their situation has reduced them to things. In order to regain their humanity they must cease to be things and fight as men and women. This is a radical requirement. They cannot enter the subject as objects in order later to become human beings.” Consequently he concludes that “leaders who deny praxis [the opportunity for reflection and action] to the oppressed thereby invalidate their own praxis.” *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (Penguin: London, 1993) p. 50 & 107. If one sees the capture of state or other power as the central goal of struggle then two-stage thinking (‘obey now, critique can flourish after we have won’) makes some sense. But if we are with Fanon, or if we feel that Fanon is with us, then we do deny our praxis when we deny praxis to others. Ato Sekyi-Otu explains that for Fanon “the ultimate virtue of the revolution, the goal of historical action, is not the conquest of power but the resurrection of repressed questions and the disclosure of ‘unexpressed values.’” *Fanon and the Possibilities of Postcolonial Critical Imagination* Codesria Symposium on Canonical Works and Continuing Innovations in African Arts and Humanities, University of Ghana, 17-19 September, 2003 <http://www.codesria.org>

¹³⁵ This argument for the need to root politics in the lifeworlds of the people whom it seeks to defend and enable should not be misread as an argument for not acting until a majority has been won over. On the contrary in this instance we can profit from a return to Lenin. Lenin insists that “To make such a demand... is nothing but a cover to hide one’s own *flight* from reality.” ‘Letter to Comrades’ *Revolution at the Gates* (Ed. Zizek Verso: London, 2002) p. 145. Often it is the act – smashing the meter, reconnecting the water, smuggling the medicine, invading the rent office, burning down the repossessed house, occupying the vice-chancellor’s office, marching on the ambassador’s house, etc – that opens space for new praxis.

It is also the case that while all struggles against capital have some common concerns and aims which they are more likely to achieve if they work together the fact remains that different struggles exist in different places shaped by particular histories and occupying different positions in the global economy and thus have some particular concerns and aims. Those who face particular challenges in a particular context have a particular interest in working together to develop understanding and contestation around their problems. It's no surprise that Aimé Césaire's famous letter of resignation to the French Communist Party stressed "The peculiarity of our place in the world. . . The peculiarities of our problems which aren't to be reduced to subordinate forms of any other problem."¹³⁶ This is hugely important in the African context where material realities are often radically different to those assumed by 'global' praxis in the metropole. For example neither digital technologies nor casual assumptions of secularism are equally democratic everywhere. Or, for a different kind of example, certain popular strands of autonomism assume that the problem is the control over access and management of social infrastructure and the solution is to beat the state back. This idea can quiet usefully be imported into urban areas that emerged from apartheid with basic infrastructure or into future communities based on newly won access to land. But it can't offer much to the destitute urban poor without social infrastructure or the HIV positive for whom the creation of a decent health care system remains an urgent necessity. And then there is the weight of history – a weight that demands reparation to balance the scales and which is, apparently, entirely disowned by the lightness of being (a white) communist in Europe and North America. If "The slave-trade and slavery were the economic basis of the French Revolution"¹³⁷ is it not possible that contemporary coloniality is the economic basis of the Northern revolts against market fundamentalism? If this is so we would do well to remember, using apartheid as a metaphor for global coloniality, both Biko's well placed scorn for white and black liberal-pseudo opposition¹³⁸ and his insistence that the oppressed can only achieve liberation through their own agency.

At this point Biko's critical distinction between assimilation and integration becomes important. Biko is for the integration of people who are economically, politically and culturally equal but firmly against "an assimilation and acceptance of blacks into an already established set of norms and code of behaviour set up and maintained by whites...I am against the superior-inferior white-black stratification that makes the white a perpetual teacher and the black a perpetual pupil."¹³⁹ In the apartheid context a central reason for Biko's rejection of assimilation is that it denied the opportunity to create a space autonomous of the factual distortions and pejorative projections of racism in which self-motivated and organised action could undo internalised inferiority and passivity. Moreover, because oppression operates by undermining the self respect of the oppressed real progress requires that respect to be won back in struggles by the oppressed.

¹³⁶ Steve Biko *I Write What I Like* (Johannesburg: Ravan, 1996), p.67.

¹³⁷ James, 1989, p.47.

¹³⁸ Biko's critique of white and black liberal pseudo-opposition is discussed most usefully by Lewis Gordon in his new introduction to *I Write What I Like* (University of Chicago Press: Chicago) 2002. pp. vii-xiii.

¹³⁹ Biko, 1995. p, 24.

This remains disturbingly relevant to contemporary South Africa's position in global power structures where dominant discourses are riddled with phrases like 'in line with international norms', 'international experience has shown' and 'international experts caution' which are clearly a coded way of saying that 'this is the Western way of doing things' which is in turn a coded way of valorising capitalist modes of social organisation. And the reference to the 'Western' way of doing things comes with the clear implication that the information to follow is beyond question. But oppositional discourses are very often just as dependent on the discourses of the metropolitan left. Sometimes both sides of our drama are played out in the languages developed for someone else's drama in another world whose wealth and status is built on the poverty and anonymity of our world. We have much to learn from other struggles, including struggles in the North. But what we learn must be taken into our struggles in accordance with our projects to take them forward more effectively and not imposed onto our struggles via the condescension of others or our own inferiority complexes - both of which can normalise the very structural inequalities against which we claim to be in revolt

It is also the case that movement intellectuals in South Africa are often attracted to fashionable postcolonial and other ostensibly radical theorists in the North - whose work generally assumes a different material reality and which, in some instances, is predicated on a simple contempt for the majority of humanity - at the expense of thinking that takes our situation more seriously. The material factors that encourage uncritical assimilation to metropolitan discourses in no way justify what is often, materially and psychologically, a simple case of selling out and buying in.¹⁴⁰

Fanon makes two crucial points¹⁴¹ about open ended and unstable social space in which liberatory praxis must occur. The first is that the intellectual must begin from an appreciation of her estrangement.¹⁴² This caution does not mean that radical intellectuals or middle class militants are unwelcome interlopers in movements. On the contrary, they often bring valuable capacities with regard to knowledge, resources, networking and advocacy for movements in elite publics. This is not necessarily co-opting or predatory. In fact it can be essential and widely enabling political work. As James noted "It is on colonial peoples without means of counter-publicity that imperialism practices its basest arts."¹⁴³ The point is simply that these capacities must be deployed within and in

¹⁴⁰ Of course I am not suggesting that all ideas which originate in the North carry a genetic defect. Progressive and reactionary ideas emerge everywhere and interweave everywhere. The point is that we should take on fashionable ideas from the metropole only insofar as they can be made to enable our engagement with our situation. Their currency in the academic, intellectual, and 'global activist' economies justifies nothing. We need to be militant about this.

¹⁴¹ Both are discussed very well by Ato Sekyi-Otu in *Fanon's Dialectic of Experience* and by Nigel Gibson in *Fanon, Marx and the New Reality of the Nation: Black Political Empowerment and the challenges of a new humanism in South Africa* The 3rd Annual Frantz Fanon Lecture. (Durban: unpublished, 2004)

¹⁴² Here he echoes Antonio Gramsci's view that: "The philosophy of praxis in consciousness full of contradictions in which the philosopher himself, understood both individually and as an entire social group, not merely grasps the contradictions but posits himself as an element of the contradictions and elevates this element to a principle of knowledge and therefore action." (Gibson 1999:359)

¹⁴³ James, 294.

constant dialogue with the movements that nourish the insurgence of subaltern agency. What Fanon's warning does mean is that the intellectual must neither legislate for the people or, in response to that error commit another and become a 'yes-man' for the people. He is advocating mutually transformative dialogue and learning.

However Fanon's case studies of the development of radical political solidarities across class and race all, unsurprisingly given the all-or-nothing context of the Algerian war, plot a uni-directional movement of progressive enlightenment. For example 'the doctor', formerly an agent of colonialism, becomes 'our doctor' – "Sleeping on the ground with the men and women of the *mecht*as, living the drama of the people, the Algerian doctor became a part of the Algerian body."¹⁴⁴ But dialectical overcoming is not achieved in permanence. On the contrary it must be permanently worked for in the vortex of the drama of lived experience. If the doctor survived the war he would find that pharmaceutical companies, Aid Agencies, NGOs, corporate media and the state would be interested in him in a very different way to the interest they would show to many of his former comrades. Mutualities - grounded in the lived experience of subjectivities changing in and consequent to struggles must be constantly worked for as a permanent mode of being. There is no permanent initiation into mutuality through some transcendent (due, ironically, to its pure immanence) event¹⁴⁵ like people with very different histories and futures coming together for a moment in a clash with the police or a victory celebration. The dialectic is a social space in which movement occurs in all directions and not, as it often seems when massive systems of domination begin to crumble, a teleological force.

The second point is the historic necessity for political education. Fanon recommends "a subjective attitude in organized contradiction with reality"¹⁴⁶ because this is necessary to facilitate the development of liberatory ideology in dialogue between intellectuals, militants and the broader base of social movements that can

counteract both the hollow rhetoric of both the nationalist middle class and the romanticising, and potentially retrograde, nativist ideology, with its appeal to traditions. The problem of a lack of liberatory ideology is expressed in the failure to convert the openings created by mass movements into a moment of change – a genuine revolutionary moment.¹⁴⁷

¹⁴⁴ Ibid., 142.

¹⁴⁵ These events are important and transformative and often have positive long term consequences. But the point is that, as with any carnival, we may have learnt some things and changed in ways we haven't properly understood and which will only reveal themselves to us in the future, but we go back to ordinary life. No experience, of collective joy or suffering, ever gives us permanent absolution from the commitment to work against all the structural inequalities (and the plural matters) *within* social zones that aspire to rebel.

¹⁴⁶ Fanon, 1976., 53.

¹⁴⁷ Ibid., 357.

As Gibson explains consciousness has to be enlightened as a permanently ongoing dialogical project “that encourages the people to reflect on their own experiences, to think for themselves”.¹⁴⁸

It is often the case that ‘ordinary’ grass roots participants in movements are far more ideologically conservative (in orthodox left terms) than militants and movement intellectuals but much more numerous and much better able to express their ideological militancy in popular registers. This means that a practice of mutually transformative dialogue may slow down ideological movement but speed up political movement. This result richly rewards the investments required to produce it. After all, as James told us, “It is force that counts, and chiefly the organised force of the masses...It is what they *think* that matters”.¹⁴⁹

¹⁴⁸ Ibid., p. 357. For a classic and Fanon inspired discussion of dialogical process see Paulo Freire *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (Penguin: London, 1993): 106-164.

¹⁴⁹ James., 286. My emphasis