

DEVELOPING RESISTANCE, RESISTING 'DEVELOPMENT': REFLECTIONS FROM THE SOUTH AFRICAN STRUGGLE

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'Never before have so many political movements of the progressive left been so close to taking power,' Ruben Zamora, a leader of the Salvadoran left, recently remarked, 'but never before has power seemed to be so strongly predetermined by external forces adverse to the interests of the majority.'" The disappointments are profuse, not just from the left but from other movements which had rallied under the banner of colonial, racial or ethnic liberation, human rights, anti-corruption, and other forms of the much-heralded 'transition to democracy.' Consider merely some names of leaders of contemporary movements who, riding waves of insurrectionary 'people's power,' once easily bore the mantle of change – at least in decent general direction – and in some cases, adorned with messianic status: Aquino, Arafat, Aristide, Bhutto, Manley, Mugabe, Ortega, Perez, **Rawlings**, Walensa (and the list could be extended still further over a period of two or three decades). And then consider the depths to which most subsequently sunk – usually not by personal choice, to be sure – in their public acceptance and indeed advocacy of neoliberal politics ('low-intensity democracy') and economics (structural adjustment).

This is also the general fate of so many social democratic and labour parties in Western Europe, Canada and Australia. Even where **once-revolutionary** parties remain in control of the nation-state – China, Vietnam, Angola, and Mozambique, for instance (in the latter two cases, after contesting their first, recent, elections) – ideologies have sometimes wandered over to hard, raw capitalism. And even where leaders of genuinely progressive parties remain rather far from taking power for the foreseeable future, their transitions from mass opposition mobilizer to fiscally-responsible social democrat (Lula, Cardenas) or even aspirant neoliberal manager (Villalobos) gather pace and on the basis of this momentum one is compelled to worry about yet others (Adams, Kyi) whose political movements are rich with left currents but for whom enormous dangers of ideological **cooption** are evident.

Movement leadership drawn from the petty bourgeoisie is notoriously

and eternally unreliable, we would be quickly reminded in presenting this list. And there are, and always have been, exceptions (Castro, for instance, has kept up a left critique while forced **brutally** to the right; **Aristide**, we shall see, has relished a left flank in civil society). Moreover, the point of such a survey would certainly not be to highlight the problem of individual proclivities; it would instead assess the social base behind insurgent forces that were once considered natural allies by the international **left**.² Strategically, they all had or have one overriding objective: capture of the nation-state (no matter the balance of forces elsewhere). What appears universal about their experiences is that with world markets and geopolitics so inhospitable today, no amount of these state-centric movements' substantial power and vision at national-scale is sufficient to withstand global capitalism's homogenising and continually degrading leverage. It is in this very difficult context that 'There Is No Alternative' – TINA, as Margaret Thatcher remonstrated – becomes not only the final word of subjugation; in some cases it also has begun to enjoy endorsements from what were once proudly counter-hegemonic political-intellectual **leaderships**.

There is much to report from transitional South Africa in this **vein**,³ not least Nelson **Mandela's** prominence on our list of comrades. In the process of such a necessarily pessimistic account, it also becomes crucial to draw attention to means by which some militants, intellectuals and ordinary people are haltingly but inexorably coming to grips with this unanticipated dilemma: their movement holding the reigns of the state does not mean holdingpower (as it is often phrased in Pretoria). This is not an easy **realisation** for many particularly from the socialist and communist wings of the nationalist movement. But political discourses and policy options for South Africa are, after all, influenced by many of the same constraints and disintegrative processes currently evident everywhere.

Indeed, an important reason that **neoliberal** compromises characterise South Africa's transition is that there were so many selective justifications drawn from across the world. In most socio-economic sectors, ascendant African National Congress (ANC) policy-makers were inundated with 'market-oriented' propaganda, often in the course of all-expenses paid tours funded by international financial institutions and development agencies. The three words 'international experience shows' – the preferred preface in any number of didactic briefing sessions and reports sponsored by the US Agency for International Development, the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, the World Bank and the like – were typically followed by glowing praise for federalist constitutional frameworks (referencing the USA and Germany), export-led growth (Taiwan, South Korea), invitations to foreign financial investment (pre-crash Mexico), privatisation (Britain), low wages (China, Indonesia), high real interest rates and an independent (ie, oriented

to commercial banks) central bank (Germany, the USA), tariff-reduction (India), market-oriented affirmative action (ie, building a black petty bourgeoisie) (Malaysia), social contracts (Mexico), site-and-service schemes instead of housing (Chile), pensions based on individual savings (Chile), and more generally, the demise of **statism**/'socialism' (Eastern Europe, Africa).

This story, hence, is not merely about 'engaging' neoliberalism (to recall the euphemistic verb so often invoked in South Africa during the course of retreat), although the futility of doing so should continually be reemphasised. Nor is it crucial here to emphasize the need for the emergence of strong working-class parties that have more consistent political trajectories than those just alluded to. Instead, South Africa's most compelling lessons for the international left are, we believe, about building and maintaining a class-conscious civil society in oppressed communities, in the spheres of both production and reproduction, and more generally against the activities of the market-oriented 'development' industry (which we contrast with 'people-centred development' for purposes of semantic clarity). In reviewing some of these throughout the following pages, particularly with respect to the township-based 'civic associations' with which we are most familiar, it is important for us to highlight the organisational instruments of poor and working people. These we term 'working-class civil society' in order to distinguish them from bourgeois **non-governmental** institutions (as well as from government and firms) and hence from pervasive depoliticized notions of 'civil society' (the real goal of which boils down to reducing the scope of social services provided by Third World states).

Distinctions between and within social movements, **CBOs** (community-based organisations) and both indigenous and international **NGOs** (non-governmental organisations) of various ideological predispositions are becoming as crucial, we shall see, as the practical and political distinction between market-oriented development and people-centred development. The latter – which the South African National Civic Organisation (SANCO, made up of civic associations or 'civics') took as a motto at its 1992 launch, and lobbied for during the subsequent era – is, no doubt, vulnerable to manipulation by neoliberals and populist demagogues alike. But in its strongest, most organic form, the struggle for people-centred development highlights basic needs as entitlements, financed and delivered in a non-commodified form, through a 'strong but slim' state capable of capturing and redistributing the social surplus, complemented with additional resources for building the organisational capacity of non-profit, community-controlled **institutions**.⁴ To comprehend the meaning of this discourse may require a brief diversion into the politics of South Africa's progressive resistance.

South Africa: TINA or THEMBA?

The nationalist and class uprising within South Africa from 1973 (following a decade of defeats) to 1994 was perhaps the most **closely**-watched campaign for social and economic justice in history. The domestic and global anti-apartheid struggles and the African National Congress' (ANC) non-racial ideology reinforced each other symbiotically, as a **broad**-based internationalist movement took aim at local apartheid- and shopfloor-related grievances, at the world's financial links to Pretoria, and at many other targets inbetween. Upon growing to peak strength ten years after the **Soweto** uprising – through unprecedented grassroots and shopfloor protest emanating from the industrial heartland of Johannesburg and the ANC strongholds of the Eastern Cape region – the democratic movement managed to sustain the mass support of the black majority in the context of brutal repression and an enduring capital accumulation crisis.

By the time of the 1984–86 upsurge in protest, there appeared a real chance in South Africa for sustained insurgency? Polls regularly showed that more than half of the black population supported 'socialism' over capitalism, and through the 1980s it was not easy to find cadres of the trade union and leading anti-apartheid social movements – and even among the progressive intelligentsia – who did not identify themselves as women and men of the left, as traditional communists, independent socialists, followers of liberation theology and the like. Apartheid and capitalism seemed so inextricably intertwined that a substantial number of theorists assumed South Africa would not witness simply nationalist liberation but that the fabled 'second stage' (in the Communists' two-stage, 'Colonialism of a Special Type' theory) was intertwined with the first.

At **grassroots** level heady optimism characterised the months immediately after the February 1990 unbanning of political organisations, largely because as the ANC became a political party it was enthusiastic about and respectful of its 'Mass Democratic Movement' allies: the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU), the newly-unbanned SA Communist Party (SACP) (whose leaders also held extremely influential positions within the ANC), the civics, innumerable student and women's associations, progressive churches and so many other instruments of the black majority. The Mass Democratic Movement's finest hour in the **post**-1990 stage of struggle was undoubtedly the period immediately following the breakdown of multi-party negotiations in June 1992, when protests rocked the country for three months and forced the ruling white National Party (NP) to ditch its alliance with the Zulu-based **Inkatha** Freedom Party.

The hopes of left strategists then eroded steadily, as 'mass action' was instrumentally turned on and off **again** by the more moderate ANC leaders like the proverbial 'tap.' Throughout, radicals sensed that they could embark upon empowering strategies and tactics only up to a point, at which

not just apartheid but the bourgeois rule of property was threatened. **As** Mandela himself put it (in a September 1992 interview just after the infamous Bisho massacre), 'We are sitting on a time-bomb. The youths in the townships have had over the decades a visible enemy, the government. Now that enemy is no longer visible, because of the transformation taking place. Their enemy now is you and me, people who drive a car and have a house. It's order, anything that relates to order, and it is a very grave **situation**.'⁶ Rather than nurture the potentially insurrectionary forces, some ANC leaders separated themselves from the base, through negotiations with NP 'verligtes' (enlightened ones) near Johannesburg as well as in smoke-filled rooms at exclusive British, Swiss and South African lodges, culminating in the 'bosberaad' – bush-consultations – of early 1993 that set out the terms of the crucial interim **constitution**.⁷ The most striking surrenders occurred periodically on the economic policy front, as even the **ANC's** mild-mannered, Keynesian-oriented **MacroEconomic** Research Group inexorably lost influence. And the result of the often humiliating reversals on key principles is that, since April 1994, joined in the Government of National Unity by two conservative partners (the NP and Inkatha), the ANC has been largely stymied by bickering over policies, delivery systems, day-to-day governance and friction-ridden symbols of old and new.

Thus, the denouement of the **ANC/SACP** 'National Democratic Revolution' has left the impoverished majority frustrated and the left divided and confused? Even the **ANC's** 1994 progressive-populist campaign platform, a 150-page document – the Reconstruction and Development Programme, or RDP – which sought (quite successfully) to translate recent traditions of grassroots social struggles into social policy and programmes, has been a well-recognised failure in practice, notwithstanding its (largely rhetorical) endorsement by other partners in the Government of National Unity in the wake of the national election.

It has thus not been easy to sustain hope for social progress. **As** we write, eighteen months into the new order, delivery of goods and services has been negligible in most deprived **rural** and urban areas, and – perhaps most surprisingly – the left's hopes for transfers of resources and for shining performances from ministries once presumed friendly (Reconstruction and Development, Housing, Health, Education, Land, Water and Forestry, and Posts and Telecommunications) have been largely dashed. As the editor of a respected paper, *The Mail and Guardian*, noted a year after the 1994 elections, 'If you measure the success of the Government of National Unity in strictly numerical terms – the number of houses built, the number of people who have access to free health care or potable water – then it scores disturbingly low.'" How low? The late Joe Slovo had promised that in his first year as housing minister, 90,000

affordable houses would be built using a market-oriented financing system; the eight months he served plus the preceding four yielded fewer than 5,000. Failure to deliver, even at this extreme scale, was more the rule than the exception (though progress in some primary health and child nutrition services, as well as the upgrading of a handful of strife-torn communities, deserve mention).

This failure reflects a broader political problem: compromises of basic liberation movement principles have ensured an unfavourable balance of governing forces for at least the next five years. Saul's trepidation – expressed in these pages just prior to the 1994 election – was that 'the threatened foreclosure of any sense of socio-economic possibility beyond "liberal capitalist democracy" involves both a hollowing out of language and a beggaring of the historical imagination.'¹⁰ The language of the National Democratic Revolution has indeed hollowed, it has become clear, what with the ANC's historic demands for a one-person, one-vote unitary state blurring into negotiated federalism and electoral vote-trading." Crippling technical and political compromises of formal bourgeois democracy occurred at national, provincial and local scales:

- the Government of National Unity itself entails an ANC-led cabinet, but the state's economic levers remain in the hands of exceptionally conservative forces, and there are regular disruptions from the ANC's ruling partners and various degrees of sabotage by the overwhelmingly white, Afrikaner civil service (the vast majority of whose jobs are unchanged by virtue of a pre-election agreement);
- at the level of the nine provinces, similar power-sharing arrangements are in place, except that these have not worked in the crucial Inkatha-held KwaZulu-Natal province – which has not only been paralysed by ethnic nationalism but has also regularly witnessed several dozen politically-related murders on weekends – and in the Western Cape where crises have emerged over issues such as the NP provincial leadership's attempt to gerrymander the Cape Town municipality (there and in Kwazulu-Natal, the 1995 local elections had to be postponed due to unmanageable chaos); and
- at local level, though ANC-led municipalities are now nearly universal, the first democratic elections also entailed enforced power-sharing by virtue of constitutional compromises that gave whites far more municipal council representation than blacks per capita as well as – in many settings – formal veto power over redistributive budgets.

And in response, it is fair to ask this: what use is taking state 'power' under such conditions? But it is not only the extraordinary hold of the political **status** quo that 'beggars the historical imagination' of the South African left; it is the ascendance of neoliberal thinking in all aspects of development, a theme to which we will return again and again. For additional compromise constitutional provisions include a property rights clause which makes ordinary state rights of eminent domain impossible to invoke, a lock-out provision to help businesses stymie worker protest, and the insulation of the Reserve Bank from democratic input. In the sphere of social policy, the inept housing programme, for instance, is market-driven

not people-driven, is coordinated by bankers not civic movement cadre, and is, hence, less about housing than about 'toilets-in-the-veld' (in the bitter words of Slovo's successor as minister, Sankie **Mthembi-Nkondo**).¹² With the endorsement of big business, and before anyone on the left had grasped all of this, Slovo and his aides had achieved the official erasure of the legacy of grassroots 'affordable housing for all' campaigns and **policy-making sessions** going back more than a **decade**.¹³

Similarly, the land redistribution programme was designed by the World Bank and inspired by modernisation theory – with its emphasis on markets, non-subsidized credit and individual land titles – and appeared to be not only unpopular but also unworkable in a crisis-ridden agricultural economy. Few if any experiments got underway in the form of the *decommodified* goods and social services (cooperative housing, national health insurance, consumer cooperatives, land trusts, worker-owned enterprises, people's banks, etc) envisaged by many of the left **SACP/COSATU/SANCO** strategists.

More worrisome still, many of the leaders and organisational instruments of poor and working people have not entirely come to grips with why this is so and what can be done about it. Indeed most of the **organisational** forces once associated with the Mass Democratic Movement are stuck between understandably fierce loyalties to the ANC (with gratitude that most – though certainly not all – official displays of racial repression have ended) and a grim recognition that not much has changed, or will, in socio-economic terms (aside from losing cadreship to the 'gravey train' of high-paid government work). The result is a growing tendency to 'corporatism' (by which we mean tripartite – big business, big government, big **labour/community** – elite deal-making, serving the respective constituency's elite fractions), sometimes misleadingly characterised as 'social contracts.'

As a result, it seems harder than ever for many organs of civil society to rearticulate the goals of an expansive welfare state, an egalitarian society and a dramatic shift in social power that were embodied in the 1955 Freedom Charter. (The Charter's more radical positions – such as nationalising the mines, banks and 'monopoly corporations' – were jettisoned by ANC leaders in 1990.) Building mass unity and maintaining the progressive vision in the course of fighting the power of a repressive state was easy, in retrospect, while fighting the power of money is intrinsically more difficult, far more divisive.

This has been the case in part for logistical reasons. Foreign donors had supported anti-apartheid organisations through the 1980s and early 1990s, and because of this many hundreds of reputable NGOs emerged, many oppositional cultural fora flourished, many excellent progressive media initiatives were undertaken, many intellectuals were given resources for

progressive policy-formulation ventures, and many projects were launched that might well have established new local-level relations of production and consumption. Most of these became dependent upon external financial lubrication, however, and faced crisis when in 1995 \$50 million in funding was withdrawn (reportedly leading to a 66% budget deficit in the NGO sector as a whole), and also as countless leaders and movement functionaries migrated into government. With free financial flows ebbing and government funding pledges delayed in the bureaucracy (particularly the ministry responsible for 'constitutional affairs' and local government, which was run by a key NP leader), NGOs, CBOs and social movements had to scramble desperately for crumbs. The former generally came out ahead – often on condition they adopted a rather more neoliberal character (replacing collective and politically-self-conscious decision-making with internal hierarchy and 'strategic management,' imposing cost-recovery for services, repudiating radical policy ambitions, etc.) – and even SANCO has sometimes been reduced to menial roles in partnerships with businesses and corporate-oriented service agencies (both local and foreign), merely for the sake of paying the rent and salary bill.

And yet the hunger on the ground for radical change could not – and cannot – be quenched. The confidence of oppressed people leapt to new heights in April 1994, and the subsequent period was characterised by an upsurge of often spontaneous demonstrations, marches, boycotts, highway blockades, wildcat strikes, land invasions, inner-city building squats, sit-ins and occupations of factories and government offices, disruptions of neo-apartheid education, protests against (and by) public service providers (including kidnappings), mutinies by ANC cadres in the integrated defence and police forces, and on and on. With increased crime added to the boiling pot, social tensions bubbled up to the point that Mandela (in his opening speech to the 1995 session of parliament) sternly threatened a clamp-down: 'The battle against the forces of anarchy and chaos has been joined, and no one should say they have not been warned.' Mass action 'of any kind,' he cautioned, 'would only serve to subvert the capacity of government to serve the people.'⁴

Not all (or even most) of the grassroots challenges have been progressive in content – some were the result of Inkatha turf expansion, ethnic mobilisations (for example, by 'coloured' nationalists), and internecine or personal rivalries – but many did indeed reflect the capture of democratic space opened up by the liberation process and left vacant within civil society by the rush of Mass Democratic Movement leaders into the state. Moreover, sensing the grassroots **rumble** has been crucial for keeping the movement's organisations attuned to the larger vision, anxious to – at minimum – maintain their own traditions of populist rhetoric and proudly take up their own hard-won space: advocacy-within the variety of

policy-making fora to which they at last have been given access. It is here, of course, that they run the substantial risk of allowing their ties to the base fade, and that they are sometimes even drawn into unpopular or ineffectual official **initiatives**.¹⁵ On the other hand, most of these organisations' political traditions were not merely anti-apartheid in nature but also embodied a class (and sometimes gender) content, so it is natural for citizens with workplace or local-level or even household grievances to continue to seek out the organisations that served their interests consistently over the preceding fifteen or twenty years.

To cite the example we know best, SANCO affiliates (approximately 2,000 urban and rural community-based civics) have retained a strong community presence relative to other organisations and to local political parties, as well as a role in progressive advocacy at other scales. Within townships, civics continued to outnumber and outorganise even the ANC, whose branches withered quickly after April 1994. Predictions abounded that the death of the civic movement would follow the departure of thousands of leading cadres in the wake of the November 1995 local government elections, and it remains to be seen how many civics can quickly transfer leadership to the next layer of activists. But such losses would not intimidate the movement from further developing a fairly radical policy agenda, from continuing to campaign vigorously for socio-economic rights and local democracy (running into opposition from not only entrenched white interests but also, in many rural areas, from traditional tribal elders), and from joining other progressive forces in coalition around issues ranging from township ecology to international economic **relations**.¹⁶

Also on the positive side, the 1.4 million member COSATU trade union federation has shaken out some (not all) of the early 1990s devotion to corporatism which had been associated with many of its former bureaucratic staff and some leaders who have mainly since gone into government. **COSATU's** rhetoric remains tough, its strikes and demonstrations as militant as ever, its seriousness as a voice for all poor and working people unquestioned by even its opponents, its organisational coherence and democratic spirit still quite strong, and its international solidarity work more progressive than ever.

Elsewhere in the democratic movement, the women's struggle continues not only in decentralized settings, but in a controversial and extremely important – also unique on the African continent – national grassroots-based effort to bring to culmination the **ANC's** much-contested campaign promise for reproductive rights. Elsewhere there continue to be vibrant reminders of Mass Democratic Movement mobilisation in various sectors (primary health, education, church, sports, language), and although many of the alternative media went bankrupt during the recent funding

crisis, there are plenty of other progressive arts and cultural groups engaged in organising, advocacy, aesthetic debate, performance and criticism. Impressive environmental activism is evolving surely and rapidly from a white middle-class base into the rest of society. Likewise gays and lesbians are racially diversifying what is already an important movement. And in addition to SANCO at least two other networks of radical community-based groups – the Trust for Christian Outreach and Education (inspired by liberation theology) and People's Dialogue (linking housing savings schemes run by township women) – are not only maintaining their grassroots base but are also thinking globally and engaging in processes of policy critique and advocacy. It is in such **organisations**, which are in many ways classic urban (though not entirely so) social movements and whose grassroots cadres are largely women and youth (though men do tend to dominate leadership positions), that the class-splitting forces of neoliberalism may meet their match. For it is the Mass Democratic Movement's urban and community components which are typically most insistent that the unity of poor ('outsider,'-in local lingo) and working-class('insider') interests is inviolable.

But even with strong traditions of social justice, recent memories of insurgent politics, and comrades in government offices, there is too little talk of concrete socialist principles, policies, programmes or projects in the strategic sessions of either movement activists or leftist policy-wonks. This is particularly disappointing in that the main vehicle for explicitly socialist mobilisation, the SACP, has improved immeasurably from Stalinist days past. Township branches continue to grow, total membership is in excess of 70,000 (earning the self-characterisation 'fairly mass party'), publications are consistently compelling, and most SACP leadership and cadres recognise the folly of the ANC's official turn to neoliberalism (while a few others – notably, two deputy ministers responsible for finance and defence – publicly defend and advance the new government's more backward policies). Nevertheless, even for the most committed SACP activists, **winning** immediate demands remains the overwhelming priority (even when these are swallowed wholesale into a market-driven policy framework). The coming period will be regenerative for the SACP only if its activists – some holding municipal office – revisit ideological debates and restore a sense of socialist purpose, begin to develop an independent working-class programme (that will often conflict with government policy), reconnect with their social base in the townships and rural areas, and confront capital and the capitalist state on a regular and sustained basis. Many hopeful signs of such directions are already appearing.

With or without ideological support from the SACP, the fragments of South Africa's left forces in civil society are beginning to come to grips with low-intensity democracy and neoliberal economics. There are the

occasional moments when 'TINA,' uttered by facile bureaucrats (from both Old and New SA), is answered by a resounding cry from these social movements: 'THEMBA!' (Zulu, for hope), 'There Must Be an Alternative!' Not only in South Africa, of course, but under far less amenable conditions in many other settings, does one sense a durable passion for exploring beyond the commodification of everyday life. Frank and Fuentes have made the broader case:

In seeking and organising to change society in smaller, immediate but doable steps, which did not require state power, the utopian socialists were perhaps much more realistic than the scientific ones – and they were more akin then to the social movements of our time than the 'scientific' socialists of the intervening century. What is more, many utopian socialists proposed and pursued social changes and particularly different gender relations, which were subsequently increasingly abandoned or forgotten by scientific socialists... The real transition to a 'socialist' alternative to the present world economy, society, and polity, much more in the hands of the social movements. Not only must they intervene for the sake of survival to save as many people as possible from any threatening abyss. We must also look to the social movements as the most active agents to forge new links, which can transform the world in new directions."

If there is anything to this sentiment, South Africa has got to be one of the better sites to investigate, at both political and intellectual levels. For not only, during this extremely painful but also portentous transition process, will working-class civil society have to learn to contest the hegemony of macroeconomic neoliberalism, political low-intensity democracy, and market-oriented microeconomic development principles at home. In addition, there are a host of international lessons to digest and transcend. To do so will require both breaking through the 'impasse' that has apparently paralysed so many intellectuals in the field of international development studies, and making common cause with many other efforts – particularly arising from impoverished communities in the world's largest cities – to counter neoliberalism with diverse forms of popular resistance. These are the subjects of the rest of this chapter.

The impasse of development theory?

'The current crisis in development thought,' notes Sklar, 'requires, in addition to political theories of development, political theories for **development**.'¹⁸ An obvious reason is that, as Moore puts it, traditional oppositional analysis advanced by 'counter-hegemonic movements' has been 'too easily co-opted into the dominant discourse,' to the extent that 'new delineations of terms and new strategies are required.'" This is the case with respect to the full range of concepts – development, democracy, community, sustainability, equity, participation, empowerment, decentralization, etc. – deployed within such movements, which are now banded about just as earnestly by neoliberal theorists as by socialists. Indeed it is

precisely the easy, populist appropriation of such terms which makes it all the more crucial to locate their proponents' divergent political economic philosophies, to deconstruct particular development strategies, to explain strategic and tactical overlaps, and then to move the struggle to a higher plane.²⁰

Thus while 'concern with the "impasse" of development theory is largely a concern of what used to be known as the "development industry,"' according to **Munck**,²¹ it is nevertheless also true that the discursive impasse appears just as great to social movements in search of a theory of purposive collective action that is tough enough to withstand the co-option process. In our own research into contemporary international urban social movements, including extensive discussions with representative organisations and intellectuals of movements across the world, we have encountered a debilitating ideological vacuum when it comes to generating a breakthrough development theory and linking it to a **grass-**roots, people centred development practice (and this would also seem to be the case in other situations beyond the city limits). None of the main postwar intellectual choices – modernisation theory, dependency theory (and the world systems approach), a version of neo-Marxism focused on expanding the forces of production (and hence disturbingly consistent with modernisation theory), more formal neoliberal economic analysis, and 'post-Marxism' – seems adequate for explaining the combination of local and global (and all scales inbetween) socio-economic crisis conditions which radical social movements face today.

Nevertheless, the argument we would want to make is that international (and some South African) neo-Marxist development theories popular during the 1970s but out of favour today do offer perspectives very much worth revisiting – but we want to do so cognizant of some of the better post-structuralist contributions to the politics of development **struggles**,²² as well through drawing heavily upon both classical and more recent Marxist theoretical insights and practical political lessons. To establish a baseline within the 'absolute general law of capitalist accumulation,' recall **Marx's** argument that uneven development is a necessary process of capitalism,

..that in the same relations in which wealth is produced, poverty is produced also; that in the same relations in which there is a development of the forces of production, there is also the development of a repressive force; that these relations produce bourgeois wealth, i.e. the wealth of the bourgeois class, only by continually annihilating the wealth of the individual members of this class and by producing an ever growing proletariat.²³

Hence at the international scale we would reiterate a good deal of the dependency argument, whose essence is perhaps best captured in Frank's phrase 'the development of underdevelopment' and whose inspiration for Third World (especially African) anti-imperialist thought and activism

persists." Where dependency theory was allegedly most flawed, in considering the relationship of a national economy to the world capitalist system as the factor most responsible for systematic underdevelopment, empirical evidence nevertheless builds in the theory's favour, though it more broadly seems to fit our understanding of 'uneven development.'²⁷

We might add as friendly amendments three arguments. First, in the contemporary context of neoliberal hegemony, the exceptional breakouts from dependency – the old generation of export-oriented Newly Industrialised Countries that did succeed in at least partially establishing internal articulations – appear thoroughly anachronistic to neoliberalism, what with their aggressive state industrial policy, prohibitions on the activities of foreign capital, subsidized and directed credit through a highly-regulated financial system, and thorough-going land reform (not to mention all the particularities of **local/regional** accumulation and unevenness on the East Asian rim).²⁸ The lack of space in today's world economy for potential new NICs does not bode well for turning the nation-state towards export-led growth (as is the South African elite's agenda)?

Perhaps, thus, semi-autarchy is a viable strategy for a robust nation-state to consider, notwithstanding the problem that today, even in **Amin's** mild formulation,²⁸ **there** appear no real takers among nationalist or left movements (even leaders of the admirable experiment in **Eritrea**, who rebuff imperialist aid, apparently harbour fantasies of a Singapore-type commercial role). As a non-starter in recent South African debates (what with all that 'engaging' of neoliberalism underway), autarchy makes sense as a strategy only when a political movement can take state power in a more decisive manner, at a time the international system is far weaker, than the ANC experienced in 1994.

Second, a several decades-long period of global overproduction and generalised capital overaccumulation overlays the structural relationship of domination between the First and Third **Worlds**.²⁹ This has at least two potential implications: first, that we are still likely to encounter a more rigorous process of devaluation of capital (taking forms including depression, financial crashes, inflation, the continuing collapse of the global social wage **and/or** war); and second, that limits to the success global economic managers have had to date in displacing **overaccumulation** crisis both through time (using credit and other financial instruments) and across space (for example, onto a Third World now apparently squeezed nearly dry) may be approaching.

Politically this could be extremely important, for it means that as contradictions intensify and ruptures appear, new counterchallenges may be feasible. These would emerge not through creatively managing the nation-state or national economies out of their crises. Instead, as **Arrighi**, Hopkins and Wallerstein argue, the most serious challenge occurs when

'popular movements join forces across borders (and continents) to have their respective state officials abrogate those relations of the interstate system through which the pressure is conveyed.'³⁰ The January 1, 1994 Zapatista attack on NAFTA and all that it implied, is instructive and inspiring. Even more so, in Haiti, the anti-privatisation campaign by the leading popular organisations begun in August 1995 – implicitly encouraged by Aristide – rose to such heights as to drive out the neoliberal prime minister by October and force a healthy confrontation with the international financial agencies. In South Africa, similarly, the capacity of democratic social forces to think globally and act locally, and in doing so to locate the vulnerabilities of the international system and develop political strategies accordingly, was conclusively demonstrated by the successful 1980s anti-apartheid sanctions campaign and by ongoing solidarity labour actions with trade unions in Europe and North America.

Third, we are concerned that *institutions* of underdevelopment (particularly corporations) remain the focus of inquiry and praxis on the left," potentially leaving the *process* – 'the internationalisation of capital, not just TNCs,' as Bryan puts it – submerged. The difference here, Bryan continues, is between a) solely focusing on capital as a social relation between capital and labour (or worse, perceiving capital merely as a 'thing'), and b) highlighting 'Marx's conception of the social relation of *value in movement*. The processes which determine value accumulation involve the interactive relation of money, production and commodities to which the class relations of capitalism give rise – their interdependence and their contradictory *relations*.'" Hence, globalisation becomes an aspect of the spatial movement of value through various circuits and spaces (particularly, we argue momentarily, in an attempt to increase the productivity of capital in the urban setting).

Thus if it is true in broad-brush terms that the social surplus of the Third World has shrunk dramatically since the 1970s due to structural shifts in demand for raw materials, the rise in the interest bill on the debt, and – more generally – the terribly uneven nature of the devaluation of global capital, it is important to augment this in local terms through *intermediate-level* analysis of 'articulations of modes of production' and other concrete processes of capital accumulation, class formation (and class struggle), and crisis. It should, in other words, be possible to apply the immutable 'laws of motion of capitalism' identified by Marx in order to gauge the dynamics of combined and uneven development in each setting under consideration. No doubt, nuances in historical materialist analysis are required, appraisals of gender, ethnicity and environment must be unequivocally drawn aboard, and reformulations of political action – especially expanding alliances beyond the point of production – are required. But the general goals and objectives, and the analysis that undergirds much of what historical *materi-*

alism has stood for, continues to have enormous integrity. In sum, getting 'beyond the impasse' perhaps means reclaiming much of the substance of the various 'political economy of. . .' articles that were once so prolific in left journals. And perhaps it also means considering whether, in this apparently globalised world of material and information flows, our theoretical conception of uneven development can move easily from the global to the national to the local scales and back again (as do capital and, increasingly we shall see, popular resistance).

At the national scale South Africa is again instructive, for successive generations of neo-Marxist development theorists also reached their own impasse, following successive commitments to the theory of 'Colonialism of a Special Type' (CST), articulations of modes of production (still in defence of the communist broad front strategy), typologising fractions of capital in the spirit of Poulantzas, the conceptualisation of 'racial capitalism,' and regulation theory?' By the late 1980s, there was not only an overall retreat from theory underway in key sections of the left intelligentsia, but a distinct drift *rightwards*.³⁴ Myriad newly-empowered progressive policy wonks subsequently failed (or feared) to more firmly advocate socialist-oriented policy options ('non-reformist reforms') consistent with what was, from the base, an ongoing praxis against neoliberal development. (Those options would have covered a wide field of decommodified, destratified policies and projects – in public health, beginning with national health insurance; housing, with an emphasis on cooperatives and socialised subsidies; local economic development, under worker and community control; education; pensions; and so forth – the embryos of which were to be found in the RDP.) Yet the intellectual hiatus – a diminishing dedication to revitalising socialist theory – was nevertheless overwhelming and disempowering; grassroots cries of THEMBA! often were neglected by the progressive intelligentsia; and there was, subsequently, a demise of left opportunities for, and within, the ANC.

It is not as if there were not some good reasons for progressive theorists to keep moving. Intellectuals of various stripes rejected the earlier theories one by one: CST in the 1970s because it described internal colonialism while SA was dominated by capitalist relations; articulations of modes of production in the 1980s because of chronological flaws in the assertion that homeland reserves were necessary for assuring industrial labour supplies; Poulantzianism in the late 1970s because of the centralisation of all fractions of capital under the hegemony of the mining finance houses and insurance companies, and the blurring of traditional white ethnic divisions; racial capitalism in the late 1980s because capital was, in fact, finally delinking from formal apartheid; and, ultimately, regulation theory in the early 1990s because of strained metaphors and questionable policy implication ~. ~. ~

Nevertheless, there was much there of great value to retain for new rounds of intermediate theorizing about the process of uneven development, particularly during times of capitalist crisis. However, that theorizing remains largely still to be done (instead, far too much reformist policy analysis has occupied the progressive intelligentsia— to some effect, perhaps, in the drafting of the **ANC's** RDP campaigning platform, although left policy positions which were won in late 1993 and early 1994 quickly lost ground a few months later when it came time for implementation). By **all** accounts, South Africa has had too few theoretical debates, Marxist reading circles and book clubs, discussion groups and left publications, with the result a generalised failure to rigorously interrogate and contest political strategies. Will there be an opportunity to restore the dramatic left cultural and intellectual advances of the 1970s and 1980s? Will sustained popular protest lend credence to reassertions of left intellectual commitments? If so, then perhaps it is in the urban sphere that we can turn for examples, beginning with critiques of uneven urban development.

Resisting uneven urban capitalist development

The contestation of urbanisation is a central component of the global struggle against capitalist **development**.³⁶ That struggle is becoming increasingly difficult for people of Third World cities as a result of what seems to be a shift in the scalar strategy of international capital and aid agencies. In contrast to traditional modernisationists (like Pye) who argued for, 'above all else, acceptance in the political realm of belief that the prime unit of the polity should be the **nation-state**,³⁷ it appears now that the mega-city is becoming a new unit of analysis, control and implementation for the purpose of more efficiently imposing structural adjustment policies (especially in the wake of the destruction of many nation-state capacities). To illustrate, one senior advisor to the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements, Shlomo Angel, argues that the 1996 Habitat conference in Istanbul should be about 'creating a level playing field for competition among cities, particularly across national borders; on understanding how cities get ahead in this competition; on global capital transfers, the new economic order and the weakening of the nation state. . . .' This is only one of the more vulgar articulations of an increasingly familiar theme (as expressed again by Angel): 'The city is not a community, but a conglomerate of firms, institutions, organisations and individuals with contractual agreements among them.'"

From such foundations, an entire neoliberal edifice is being constructed. The World Bank's efforts to do so have spanned two decades but have taken on far greater energy since the 1986 launch of the New Urban Management **Programme**, which was further articulated in an important

1991 policy paper?" Meanwhile, the UN's Development Programme and Habitat housing division have also been thoroughly co-opted, and the US Agency for International Development, British ODA, Canadian CIDA, the Japanese and other official donor agencies now strictly reinforce urban neoliberalism through cross-conditionality on grants and loans. The overall orientation is nearly identical to the austerity policies at the macro-economic scale,⁴⁰) with US AID consultants spelling out the

..important change in policy thinking in the developing world closely linked to the acceptance of market-oriented economies: the growing acceptance of rapid urbanization.. . An emphasis on national economic growth and export-led development will usually mean that new investment **resources** must be directed to already successful regions and cities. . . Governments have considerable control over the entire cost structure of urban areas. Public policy should be directed to lowering these **costs**.⁴¹

This, perhaps, comes closest to the point. Lowering these costs – especially by lowering the social wage – is integral to a more direct insertion of 'competitive' cities into the world economy. The focus here is not merely on limiting public financing of social services to those deemed to add value (though this is one of the more obvious effects of structural adjustment, and the catalyst for many an IMF riot). Just as importantly, the New Urban Management Programme also highlights the **productivity** of urban capital as it flows through urban land markets (now enhanced by titles and registration), through housing finance systems (featuring solely private sector delivery and an end to state subsidies), through the much-celebrated (but extremely exploitative) informal economy, through (often **newly-privatized**) urban services such as transport, sewage, water and even primary health care services (via intensified cost-recovery), and the like.

Likewise, however, it is here that urban unevenness spawned by the **rule** of capital and the intensification of commodification is most vigorously contested by popular movements, which are agitating both around conjunctural social policy decisions (typically, cutbacks in subsidies for food, transport or other services) and also against the structural conditions through which the political life of cities is reproduced. The movements have, in the process, begun to transcend the traditional dichotomy between an inward-looking territorial identity and the rhetoric of a broader emancipation." They have begun exploring a broader set of urban class practices, which in the Latin American case – according to Petras and Morley – entail new alliances that traverse the spheres of production and collective consumption, under conditions of persistent capitalist crisis:

The power of these new social movements comes from the fact that they draw on the vast heterogeneous labour force that populates the main thoroughfares and the alleyways; the marketplaces and street corners; the interstices of the economy and the nerve centres of production; the exchange and finance centres; the university plazas, railway stations and the wharves – all are brought together in complex localized structures which feed into tumultuous homogenizing national movements."

The main structural factor forging the unity of the urban poor and the formal working-class, Petras and Morley continue, is the capitalist crisis itself. 'The great flows of capital disintegrate the immobile isolated household units, driving millions into the vortex of production and circulation of commodities; this moment of wrenching dislocation and relocation is silently, individually experienced by the mass of people, who struggle to find their place, disciplined by the struggle for basic needs and by the absolute reign of ascending capital.' Under such conditions, the social base for urban movements is continually recreated at the point that the limits to both commodity production and consumption become evident.

With respect to production, Petras and Morley on the one hand view the rise of militant urban social movements as a consequence of the sudden increase in mass unemployment since the 1980s debt crisis began, which 'lifted the control and discipline of capital over labour – making the latter available for, and receptive to, a new kind of discipline: that associated with the structure and action of mass social movements.' On the other hand, a complementary explanation – not grounded in the formal sector labour market (unemployment) – also presents itself. 'It comes down to this. Capital transformed an inert mass of atomized producers into a concentrated army; and the market that it created could not sustain it. The impersonal ties – the cash nexus – are the only link in that anonymous urban labor market. The rupture of that tie sets the stage for the eruption of uprooted people.'"

By considering unevenness in both production and consumption, particularly in so many contexts characterised by market failure, this stylized theory breaks free of many of the constraints associated with previous **neo-Marxist** approaches to development and **underdevelopment**.⁴⁵ It also highlights the scope for alliance-formation between oppressed classes, and across borders. And it brings us back to the self-identity of social movements as a theoretically-relevant factor for ultimately moving beyond uneven urban capitalist development.

It is not always feasible to specify the construction of social movement identity in urban settings, where conjunctural features are legion but where overt market processes have torn asunder land relations, **rural** ties, indigenous culture, and many forms of pre-existing authority and social control. The identity of social movements can be traced, at least to some extent, through their implicit or explicit strategic orientations in contesting uneven capitalist development. From experiences with urban movements in Santiago, Tironi conceptualised two fields of strategic polarization: between a sense of exploitation or exclusion, and between the goals of participation within or breaking from the wider political, economic and cultural system. Four categories – **and** prototypical modes of political organisation – result across this matrix of characteristics (Table 1).⁴⁶

Table I: Identities of Social Movement Constituents

status, objectives	excluded	exploited
participation	1	2
revolution	4	3

First, those who feel excluded and are anxious to participate more are often supporters of traditional populism (pobladores). Second, those who felt both exploited and anxious to participate more in the system included traditional trade unionists. Third, those who feel exploited by the system and who are interested in its formal rupture include traditional revolutionaries. Fourth, there are those alienated social forces which are excluded from the system and which also desire its rupture – and which are also, in many cases, engaged in collective subsistence activities that aim towards the construction of an alternative life-style based, at least to some extent, on the economy of solidarity. It is in this latter category that most progress seems to be occurring by way of mass mobilising and sustained challenges to neoliberal **policies**.

If we accept such typologies, South African civics and their cadre can be seen to have multiple identities. They include both insiders (exploited) and outsiders (excluded), as well as revolutionaries and reformers. Civics may have had a primary identity as traditional anti-apartheid revolutionaries at one stage (Category Three). But at other times, and depending upon local conditions, there are also civics and community structures which represent a profoundly alienated social force (Four); some place today's black youth and some youth-led civics here (often out of malice).'' In other categories, some civics and their leaderships are today vulnerable to being captured and denuded via corporatist social contracts (Two). And a **good many** outsiders who feel **excluded** are anxious to gain access to state resources, even on essentially neoliberal terms dictated by foreign (and some local) development agencies (One).

Yet at other times – particularly the mid-1980s in places like Alexandra township – the combination of advancing national anti-apartheid politics (Two) and constructing local-level 'dual power' (Three) was extraordinarily successful. Not only was the apartheid system shaken and the international progressive community conscientised and mobilised through the urban uprisings of 1984–86. In addition, local people's courts, advice offices, local media, clinics and other institutions were established. Some have compared this experience to the Paris Commune (though the lessons are **tenuous**),⁴⁸ and after all, as Marx understood, it was the process of **self-emancipation** from the dictates of capital, not the outcome, that was most important:

The working class did not expect miracles from the Commune. They have no ready-made

utopias to introduce par *decret du peuple*. They know that in order to work out their own emancipation, and along with it that higher form to which present society is irresistibly tending by its own economical agencies, they will have to pass through long struggles, through a series of historic processes, transforming circumstances and men. They have no ideals to realise, but to set free the elements of the new society with which old collapsing bourgeois society itself is pregnant."

In this spirit, we might next consider the more formal challenge of **characterising** popular resistance to uneven, neoliberal development.

Developing resistance, resisting demobilisation

Much recent resistance to uneven urban development has been defensive, ephemeral, even destructive. Peru, Bolivia, Brazil and Argentina each witnessed a dozen major anti-austerity urban protests during the 1980s; repeated uprisings were experienced in the cities of Chile, Ecuador, the Philippines, Zaire, Jamaica, Morocco, Sudan, and the Dominican Republic; in Venezuela in 1989, security forces killed more than 600 people involved in a single IMF riot; and there were isolated incidents in dozens of other countries. In the 1990s, these countries were joined by India, Albania, Nepal, Iran, Ivory Coast, Niger and Zimbabwe, where large-scale IMF riots broke out. Do or can these uprisings reflect – or perhaps stimulate – the existence of more visionary, creative, and empowering urban social movements? Are they irredeemably populist in nature? And can they avoid being captured by neoliberal conceptions of civil society, the informal economy, self-help and the like?

The leading scholars of the IMF riot, Walton and Seddon, have contemplated the transition from the chaos intrinsic in most urban uprisings to the more durable mobilisations required for movement-scale attempts at democratic transformation. Given that the most decisive factor in the reproduction of everyday life in many Third World urban settings is the shrinkage of the state under conditions of structural adjustment, 'the broader trend is toward the decline of clientism and, conversely, the growing autonomy of urban low-income groups.'¹⁴ As states lose their patronage capacity to channel social surpluses to supporters, social movements can cast off the worst influences of corporatism and corruption associated with urban civil society under populist regimes. As this becomes a more **generalised** political process, the urban poor consequently transcend spontaneous and unsustainable reactions to economic crisis such as the classic IMF riot.

But for this to be the case, it would seem, the form of urban **organisation**, the style of mobilisation, and the durability of the democratic process within the movement **must** all be carefully considered. We recognise that some Marxist theorists and socialist **organisers** express discomfort with either a celebratory class analysis of social movements (in

the spirit of Petras and Morley) or advocacy of new relations of production and reproduction (along the lines of Frank and Fuentes) at the scale of the urban 'community.' Hirsch, for instance, has questioned the scope of urban movements' 'individual concrete demands and goals. These must remain limited no matter what, and they are repeatedly called into question by the socio-economic restructuring processes.'⁵¹ And in a seminal Marxist study of urban politics, Cockburn argued that "'Community" belongs to capital' because 'Community action points not to deficiencies in the mode of production but in the products' and because of its 'populist formulation, open to all classes, groups and interests.'⁵² Marx's own rejection of utopianism serves as an important precursor to such debates.

The left critiques we take seriously – but as a challenge to always expand the socio-economic demands (based on their feasibility) and to avoid potentially conservatising populism, not as a rationale to ditch the project of building working-class civil society. In South Africa, the tendency to exclude from any socialist project those social movements based in the sphere of extended reproduction (ie, not political parties drawing their cadres from struggles at the point of production) was briefly flirted with during the early 1980s within several trade unions (through 'workerist' syndicalism, as it was known). But it has very little purchase today, and residual calls for a distinct Workers' Party by even the powerful National Union of Metalworkers at a 1993 congress failed to resonate within the left as a whole, which instead cohered behind (working-class) civil society as watchdog on the new government.

In addition to the traditional Marxist critiques of utopianism, which require social movement strategists to continually reevaluate the conditions around which they struggle, it strikes us that there are other impediments to the maturation of urban social movements as forces for socialist transformation. Consider the trajectory of an urban movement which has its deepest origins in the form of community cooperation and networking via mutual aid systems (especially among women). As local grievances become the basis for political mobilisation, the group solidifies as a community-based organisation (with or more often without technical NGO involvement, though often taking up unfortunate patriarchal structures and styles). Along the way, it may consciously or subconsciously experiment with decommodified, destratified (and environmentally- and gender-sensitive) forms of people-centred development to meet basic needs. It experiences repeated conflicts with state bureaucrats over resources and local-level capitalists over investment decisions. And eventually it evolves as an important social force in contesting national economic policy, even linking up to discuss common strategies and tactics with similar forces in other societies.'

Impediments along the way are increasingly to be found embedded

within the neoliberal ideology of civil society, particularly the premise that the citizenry must not make demands for state-services as entitlements. In South Africa and across the world, therefore, it is now crucial to recognize the ideological lacunae and diversions represented within the many new development organisations that have emerged in response to the broader failure of capitalist modernisation and of the state. In dozens of wretched Third World cities (including now Los Angeles) where organisation and democratic traditions of struggle are simply lacking, matters quickly degenerate into desperate IMF riots. In many other situations, the opposite – petty-bourgeois professionalisation – has taken hold. Given the class groundings, the often patriarchal form and the occasionally imperialist sponsorship of some Third World (and many First World) organisations engaged in development work, it should not be surprising that upon closer examination their progressive rhetoric is merely rhetoric and their practices quite consistent with neoliberalism. Drawing out their relationships to establishment actors (foundations, aid agencies, development banks, consultants and lawyers, construction and civil engineering capital, etc.) becomes more and more important at levels of both micro-implementation and macro-policy advocacy.

The dangerous ideology of 'neoliberal populism,' as Vivian puts it, assumes 'that if diverse interest groups and social structures are able to compete within a strong and open social "market," efficient –and by implication equitable – social institutions will result.'³³ Across the world, thus, pliant NGOs are now considered to be an integral component of the modernisation process by virtue of their **efficiency** and flexibility, corresponding with the desire of the international agencies to shrink Third World states as part of the overall effort to lower the social wage.³⁴ Even indigenous NGOs and some CBOs have been drawn into the process, which highlights long-standing distinctions between technicist, apolitical development interventions and the people-centred strategies (and militant tactics) of either small-scale CBOs or mass-based social movements of the oppressed.

This dichotomy is amplified and complicated when we move to development advocacy at the international scale. On the one hand, some Northern – and a few notable Southern – NGOs are now serving enthusiastically as transmission belts for **neoliberalism**.³⁵ But, on the other, efforts are underway among diverse progressive forces to link up and amplify existing grassroots social movement challenges to GATT and the World Bank. In the latter struggle, an important obstacle has emerged in the form of surprisingly durable reformist (as opposed to non-reformist) reformism within the radical petty-bourgeois intelligentsia. This class (to which we also belong) has more than its share of dilettantes, is sometimes politically capricious, and often wavers at key junctures which can be crucial for

progress towards a broader internationalism. One significant result is that for reasons relating largely to its own 'insider' technocratic positionality, many intellectual and strategic campaigners within these international movements argue for reform, not defunding, of the World Bank. In contrast, increasing numbers of other organisations are coming to the conclusion that a vigorous and potentially decisive campaign to shut down the Bank – for example, through divestment (of Bank securities purchased by government, pension and university funds) in the North and popular boycotts in the South – is eminently *feasible*.⁵⁸

It remains to be seen whether in coming months and years, the '50 Years Is Enough' network comprising Northern groups and dozens of excellent grassroots social movements which have fought and sometimes won struggles against the Bank – from Costa Rica, Haiti, India, Mexico, Nepal, Nicaragua, Papua New Guinea, and the Philippines, to name a few sites of intense recent activism – can come up with a consensus and cohere as an international movement. If this does occur – if, in other words, those local and national social movements with a more explicitly anti-capitalist development ideology do begin thinking globally and acting globally – it will be, in part, because of opportunities such as the *Socialist Register* consistently provides to discuss and debate the roles and responsibilities of movements and of socialist political parties.

It will also be because of strong organisational commitments and efforts. From the South African experience, we believe that social movements are capable of being *tightly* networked, and that their immediate territorial base can be expanded regionally, nationally or even internationally. As this happens, movements cement their common norms, practices and collective strategies and tactics, in order to advance both local agendas and larger political campaigns. This experience is still ahead, of course, but not too far off if the World Bank remains such an inviting target. (In this, the international anti-apartheid movement provides inspiration, but also important lessons about the dangers of demobilisation.)

We may ultimately agree with Navarro and so many other traditional Marxists that 'The mass struggle carried out in its many different forms needs to be carried out in the area of representative politics as well as by instruments such as political parties which need to present and articulate the demands made by these *movements*.'⁵⁷ Indeed, in *Socialism for a Sceptical Age* Ralph Miliband conceptualised 'dual power' not only in the proto-revolutionary terms with which we are familiar from South Africa, but also as 'a partnership between socialist government on the one hand and a variety of grassroots agencies on the other.'⁵⁸ (Such is the conception currently being theorised by the **South African Communist Party**.)

But until the terrain is better prepared for representative politics to emerge at the world *scale*,⁵⁹ or until wider cracks open in the present

hegemony that neoliberal institutions maintain over nation-states, it is our sense that broad-based social movement activism grounded in struggles against both capitalist production and reproduction is where the most portentous political challenges to the international system lie. It is hence our personal hope and expectation that comrades around the world will gain most inspiration from the South African struggle, and will most effectively contribute to its deepening over the coming difficult period, by **recognising** the parallels through which urban (and so many other) social movements have contested uneven capitalist development.

If we can make progress in the intellectual sphere in this respect, it will be because the movements themselves begin to demand the global analysis which helps draw out the similar conditions and processes, and assess which strategies and tactics work. It will also be because the movements of working-class civil society we have come to know and respect continue to ward off any tendencies to sink into neoliberal conceptions of civil society by accepting TINA, and instead move towards THEMBA!: international **forms** of organisation that ardently resist capitalist development.

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NOTES

- 1 Ruben Zamora, 'Toward a Strategy of Resistance,' *NACLA Report on the Americas*, v.29, #1 (July-August 1995), p.8.
- 2 Boris Kagarlitsky, *The Mirage of Modernization* (New York, Monthly Review, 1995).
- 3 For more background on South Africa during the early 1990s from Marxist perspectives see Alex Callinicos, *Between Apartheid and Capitalism* (London, Bookmarks, 1992); Neville Alexander, *Sowing the Wind* (Cape Town, Buchu, 1993); John Saul, *Resistance and Recolonization in Southern Africa* (Lawrenceville, NJ, Africa World Press, 1993); Martin Murray, *The Revolution Deferred: The Painful Birth of Post-Apartheid South Africa* (London, Verso, 1994); and Mzwanele Mayekiso, *Township Politics: Civic Struggles for a New South Africa* (New York, Monthly Review, 1996).
- 4 See, e.g., Mayekiso, *Township Politics*, Chapters 13–15; and South African National Civic Organisation Commission on Development Finance, *Making People-Driven Development Work* (Johannesburg, 1994).
- 5 For Marxist perspectives on mid-1980s possibilities, see Martin Murray, *Time of Agony, Time of Destiny* (London, Verso, 1987) and Alex Callinicos, *Between Reform and Revolution* (London, Bookmarks, 1988).
- 6 *The Star*, 15 September, 1992.
- 7 For a breathless but revealing account see Alister Sparks, *Tomorrow is Another Country* (New York, Hill and Wang, 1995).
- 8 See, e.g., Phillip Dexter, 'The RDP,' *South African Labour Bulletin*, v.19, #4 (September 1995), and two articles – John Pape, 'South Africa's Year One,' and Dan Connell, 'What's Left of the South African Left?' – in *Against the Current* #58 (September/October 1995).
- 9 Anton Harber, 'The World's Longest Honeymoon,' *Mail and Guardian* (April 21–27,

- 1995).
- 10 John S. Saul, 'Globalism, Socialism and Democracy in the South **African** Transition,' in Ralph **Miliband** and Leo **Panitch** (Eds), *Socialist Register* 1994 (London, Merlin **Press**, 1994).
 - 11 This was most notable (and resented) in the **KwaZulu-Natal** province, but nationally the **ANC** leadership also decided to reduce its electoral margin from above two-thirds of the April 1994 vote to less than **63%**, thus requiring parliamentary alliances with firmly neoliberal parties for any constitutional changes. The well-publicised ballot-trading five days after the voting ended (two days before results were announced) was accepted as necessary by a wide range of elites; as Mandela himself put it, he was 'relieved' his party did not secure the two-thirds majority because of growing fears by whites and potential foreign investors that the ANC would 'write our own final constitution.' In the wake of extensive fraud, millions of lost ballots and extraordinary incompetence (and sabotage) by government officials administering the elections, the final tally (ANC, 63 percent; NP 20; Inkatha 11; others 6) was ratified by the discredited head of the electoral commission, Judge Johann **Kriegler**: 'We have never been asked to certify that the result is accurate. We have been asked to certify that the particular political process is substantially free and fair. . . You can't work in a brothel and remain chaste.' (News reports, early May, 1994.) Such was the birth of South Africa's version of low-intensity democracy.
 - 12 Indeed Slovo's policy appeared, one business journalist conceded (in a typically **arrogant** rebuttal to the new minister), 'remarkably like the discredited site and **service** schemes advocated during the apartheid era. . . But housing is a key ministry. It is arguably the one which will determine how the populace judges the government's performance. It requires at the helm a political heavy-weight [*i.e.*, not Mthembu-Nkondo] who has the support and ability to carry a controversial housing [*i.e.* toilets-in-the-veld] policy through to **fruition**.' (Robyn Chalmers, 'Housing Policy Founders in Mist of Uncertainty,' *Business Day*, 21 July, 1995, p.6.)
 - 13 Patrick Bond, 'Undermining the **RDP**,' *Southern Africa Report* v.10, #5 (July 1995), pp.23–29.
 - 14 From the same speech, in much the same spirit: 'Everything must be done to encourage a significant upward movement in the rate of investment to increase the productive capacity of the economy, to modernise and restructure the economy, to create jobs and to increase our international competitiveness. With regard to these economic issues, I would also like to emphasise our continuing commitment to fiscal discipline, including the reduction of the budget deficit, the reduction of the share of the national income that accrues to government and the reorientation of government expenditure away from **recurrent** disbursements towards investment.' (Address of President Nelson Mandela on the Occasion of the Opening of the Second Session of the Democratic Parliament, Cape Town, February 17, 1995.)
 - 15 'Operation Masakhane,' for instance, was the new government's attempt to reverse widespread rent boycotts in the black townships, and was endorsed by SANCO as part of its strategy for hastening improved social services and winning more democratic forms of transitional municipal government. After a momentary upsurge in payments – in some townships to levels of 80 percent of bills paid in early 1995 – the repayment rates quickly dropped back to pre-1994 levels of below 20 percent. No visible changes warranted payment, many believed; the economic recovery had not reached the townships; nor had chaotic transitional local governments found a means of billing more than about half of township customers. Moreover, the ministry responsible for the RDP had reneged on earlier pledges to finance SANCO organisational capacity-building to support Masakhane.
 - 16 There was, naturally, the occasional step' backwards along the way, particularly as businesses persuaded some SANCO leaders to support ill-considered joint ventures in township marketing, and as bourgeois **funders** (such as the German Social Democratic

- Party's Friedrich Ebert Stiftung) overlaid their own **neoliberal** bias upon **SANCO's** policy agenda. Nevertheless, cases of corruption by civic cadres were generally punished, and in spite of the US Agency for International Development's effusive support for civics – especially the national headquarters – a powerful critique of that agency emerged in **SANCO's** major pre-election policy report, *Making People-Driven Development Work*. A recounting of challenges facing the contemporary civic movement can be found in Mayekiso, *Township Politics*, Chapters 14 and 15.
- 17 Andre Gunder Frank and Marta Fuentes, 'Civil Democracy: Social Movements in Recent World History,' in Samir Amin, Giovanni Arrighi, Frank and Immanuel Wallerstein, *Transforming the Revolution: Social Movements and the World-System* (New York, Monthly Review, 1990), p.161.
 - 18 Richard Sklar, 'Development Democracy,' in *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, v.29, #4 (1987), p.708.
 - 19 David Moore, 'The Crisis in Development Discourse and the Concepts of Sustainability, Equity and Participation: A Way Out of the Impasse?,' in Moore and Gerald Schmitz (Eds), *Debating Development Discourses: Institutional and Popular Perspectives* (London, Macmillan, 1995), p.1.
 - 20 To illustrate the dilemma with a concrete example, the housing cooperative has been alternately a solid element of socialist practice or the preferred vehicle of **neoliberal** state managers for privatising public housing stock (and through which to encourage banks to provide group loans with lower administrative costs), whether in the United States, as pioneered by the 1989–92 Bush Administration housing secretary, Jack Kemp, or in more than 80 other countries where **USAID** and its consultants have promoted the concept.
 - 21 Ronaldo Munck, 'Political Programmes and Development: The Transformative Potential of Social Democracy,' in Franz Schuurman (Ed), *Beyond the Impasse* (London, Zed Press, 1993), p.120.
 - 22 In particular, some of the more materially-grounded discourse critiques – such as James Ferguson, *The Anti-Politics Machine: Development, Depoliticization and Bureaucratic Power in Lesotho* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1990) and much of Arturo Escobar's *Encountering Development: The Making and Unmaking of the Third World* (Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1995) – are welcome, indeed vital additions to the critique of **neoliberalism**. On the one hand, development theory has been infused with new discourses from psychoanalysis, feminism and the analysis of subjectivity and action. On the other, as David Booth acknowledges, this has 'tended to lead in practice to the abandonment of the terrain of "political economy"' ('Development Research: From Impasse to a New Agenda,' in Schuurman, *Beyond the Impasse*, p.60). Instead, Escobar and his allies – such as Vandana Shiva, Ashish Nandy, Shiv Visvanathan, Gustavo Esteva, and the journals *David y Goliath* and *Neueva Sociedad* – stress common *anti-modern* themes in exploring social movements which resist development, in part because their 'processes of identity construction were more flexible, modest, and mobile [than those of previous political strategies], relying on tactical articulations arising out of the conditions and practices of daily life. To this extent, these struggles were fundamentally cultural.' As for alternatives, 'Out of hybrid or minority cultural situations might emerge other ways of building economies, of dealing with basic needs, of coming together into social groups' (Escobar, *Encountering Development*, pp.216,225); the operative word is 'might.'
 - 23 Karl Marx, *Capital*, Volume III, various publishers, Chapter 27.
 - 24 Based largely on dependency perspectives, social movements and progressive intellectuals have made sporadic attempts to devise broader strategies for people-centred development, especially in Africa, where the intellectual influence of dependency theory lives on in the *African Alternative Framework to Structural Adjustment Programmes for Socio-Economic Recovery and Transformation*, the *African Charter for Popular Participation in Development and Transformation*, and *The Kampala Document: Towards a Conference on Security, Stability, Development and Cooperation in Africa*.

- 25 See, e.g., David Harvey, *The Limits to Capital* (Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1982) and Neil Smith, *Uneven Development* (Oxford, Basil Blackwell, 1990).
- 26 Michael Berry, 'Industrialisation, De-industrialisation and Uneven Development: The Case of the Pacific Rim,' in Michael Gottdiener and N. Komninos (Eds), *Capitalist Development and Crisis Theory: Accumulation, Regulation and Spatial Restructuring* (London, Macmillan, 1989); Walden Bello and Felicia Rosenfeld, *Dragons in Distress* (San Francisco, Food First, 1991); Martin Hart-Landsberg, *The Rush to Development* (New York, Monthly Review, 1993).
- 27 John Cavanagh and Robin Broad, 'No More NICs,' in Gerald Epstein, Juliet Schor and Jessica Nembhard (Eds), *Creating the World Economy* (Philadelphia, Temple University Press, 1993).
- 28 Samir Amin, *Delinking* (London, Zed, 1985).
- 29 There is evidence from the late 1960s of the generalised overaccumulation – the advance of the forces of production (reflected in a rising organic composition of capital) beyond the capacity of the system to consume; specifically, gluts of raw materials, consumer goods, capital goods, financial capital, even excess labour – that would plague the world economy for subsequent decades. The overaccumulation crisis has not yet been resolved, but rather temporarily but recurrently displaced through time and across space. See Simon Clarke, *Keynesianism, Monetarism and the Crisis of the State* (Aldershot, Edward Elgar, 1988), pp. 279–360; and David Harvey, *The Condition of Post-Modernity* (Oxford, Basil Blackwell, 1989), pp. 180–197.
- 30 Giovanni Arrighi, Terence Hopkins and Immanuel Wallerstein, *Anti-Systemic Movements* (London, Verso, 1989), p.74.
- 31 The authors of recent popular books on capitalist globalisation – Richard Korten, *When Corporations Rule the World* (West Hartford, Kumarian, 1995); Richard Barnett and John Cavanagh, *Global Dreams* (New York, Simon and Schuster, 1994); Bennett Harrison, *Lean and Mean: The Changing Landscape of Corporate Power in the Age of Flexibility* (New York, Basic Books, 1994); Jeremy Brecher and Tim Costello, *Global Wage or Global Pillage: Economic Reconstruction from the Bottom Up* (Boston, South End Press, 1994) – offer exemplary critiques. But they avoid explicit theoretical groundings and tend to let idiosyncratic or partial reforms (never revolution, nor even systematic social movement strategies) overwhelm their 'what is to be done' chapters. Likewise the intellectual popularity of 'regulation theory,' with its inordinate focus on the norms, practices and institutions associated with particular stages and spaces in global capitalist history – to the neglect of more durable processes of capital accumulation – has not led to any particularly impressive social strategies of resistance or revolution; indeed in South Africa it has served as the left intelligentsia's main theoretical basis for thus-far fruitless class compromise.
- 32 Dick Bryan, *The Chase Across the Globe: International Accumulation and the Contradictions for Nation States* (Boulder, Westview Press, 1995), p.32.
- 33 Respectively, (latest-edition) examples of CST, articulations, Poulantzian, racial capitalism, and regulation theories include South African Communist Party, *The Path to Power* (London, SACP, 1989); Harold Wolpe (Ed), *Articulations of Modes of Production* (London, Routledge, 1980); Rob Davies, Dan O'Meara and Siphon Dlamini, *The Struggle for South Africa* (London, Zed Press, 1986); John Saul and Stephen Gelb, *The Crisis in South Africa* (New York, Monthly Review, 1986); Stephen Gelb (Ed), *South Africa's Economic Crisis* (Cape Town, David Philip and London, Zed, 1991).
- 34 Here we refer to an extraordinary social phenomenon, based on what seemed to be ceaseless individual meanderings – all, we stress, by white males in their 40s and 50s – from mid-1980s grassroots to early 1990s 'class roots' politics: the lead Marxist critic of the Anglo American Corporation turned to advertising his consulting services (as a trade union insider) to Anglo and other firms; the two leading Marxist critics of the Urban Foundation (Anglo American's social policy think-tank) became two of its key strategists

(within a few months of viciously denigrating that **neoliberal**, neo-apartheid institute); numerous academic Marxists did top-secret consulting work for the Urban Foundation on land invasions (contemporary and historical) at precisely the time the **UF's** land speculation strategy was most threatened by the invasion tactic; the two leading Marxist critics of orthodox pension fund management became important exponents and practitioners of orthodox financial packaging through the big institutional investment firms; the lead Marxist critic of export-led growth strategy debuted in the *Financial Mail* by endorsing Taiwan as a model for post-apartheid SA; the most influential Marxist economist within the trade unions turned from advocating social democracy in the pages of the **SACP's African Communist** to free trade, fiscal discipline and high interest rates within the Finance Ministry; and last and certainly not least, South Africa's lead Marxist peasant scholar, who was jailed for his SACP ties during the 1960s and later (as dean of the **Sussex** Institute for Development Studies during the 1970s) supervised the doctoral theses of leading South African neo-Poulantzians, eventually became the strategist of 'homegrown' African structural adjustment at the World Bank (and presently serves as the Bank's London representative).

- 35 A review of the critiques is included in Patrick Bond, 'Urban Social Movements, the Housing Question and Development Discourse in South Africa,' in Moore and Schmitz, *Debating Development Discourses*.
- 36 Again, we defer to others for parallel Marxist theoretical innovations applicable to rural, workplace, environment, peace, gender, household, cultural and other movements and sites of struggle. Unfortunately, the literature on social movements in advanced capitalist as well as Third World settings is generally hostile to Marxist theoretical traditions, often because most studies are excessively oriented to practical, **organisational**, historical and **conjunctural** concerns, or, drawing on classical political theory, focus on state-civil society relations: see, e.g., Carl Boggs, *Social Movements and Political Power: Emerging Forms of Radicalism in the West* (Philadelphia, Temple University Press, 1986); Alberto Melucci, *Nomads of the Present: Social Movements and Individual Needs in Contemporary Society* (Philadelphia, Temple University Press, 1989); Sidney Tarrow, *Power in Movement: Social Movements, Collective Action and Politics* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1994). Empirical evidence of urban social movements is also covered by a wide range of literature, some of which draws on theories of urban class conflict and accumulation but much of which does not. Contemporary works on urban movements include Manuel Castells, *The City and the Grassroots: A Cross-Cultural Theory of Urban Social Movements* (Berkeley, University of California Press, 1983) and Franz Schuurman and Tom van Naerssen (Eds), *Urban Social Movements in the Third World* (London, Routledge, 1989).
- 37 L. Pye, *Aspects of Political Development* (Boston, Little, Brown, 1965), p.8.
- 38 Shlomo Angel, 'The Future Lies in a Global System of Competitive Cities,' *Countdown to Istanbul*, #1 (February 1995), p.4.
- 39 World Bank, *Urban Policy and Economic Development: An Agenda for the 1990s* (Washington, DC, World Bank, 1991). For a practical critique of this approach, see Gareth Jones and Peter Ward, 'The World Bank's "New" Urban Management Programme: Paradigm Shift or Policy Continuity?,' *Habitat International*, v.18, #3, 1994.
- 40 To reiterate the thrust of those policies, a Bank report specifies that 'the overall model chosen to integrate the economy into the international markets. . . should aim at avoiding the appropriation of rents by suppliers of nontradables and workers. That is, they should maintain the real wage low, so that excess profits come to capital. . . carrying out all these activities, a close alliance between Government and private agents must be developed.' (Manuel Hinds, *Outwards vs. Inwards Development Strategy: Implications for the Financial Sector* [Washington, DC, World Bank, 1990], pp.15-17.)
- 41 Urban Institute, *Urban Economies and National Development*, Report prepared for the US Agency for International Development, Washington, DC, 1990.

- 42 Franz Schuurman, 'Urban Social Movements: Between Regressive Utopia and Socialist Panacea,' in Schuurman and van Naerssen, *Urban Social Movements in the Third World*.
- 43 James Petras and Moms Morley, *US Hegemony Under Siege: Class, Politics and Development in Latin America* (London, Verso, 1990), p.53.
- 44 Petras and Morley, *US Hegemony Under Siege*, p.54.
- 45 No doubt, a number of other features – for example, within the reproduction process the evolving situation of women, of the young and aged, and the exploitation of the local environment – remain for more rigorous eco-feminist socialist theorizing (James O'Connor's journal *Capitalism, Nature, Socialism* being a key site).
- 46 Reported in Franz Schuurman, 'Modernity, Post-Modernity and the New Social Movements,' in Schuurman, *Beyond the Impasse*, pp.200- 201. See also, in Spanish, E. Tironi, 'Pobladores e Integración Social,' *Proposiciones #14*, 1987.
- 47 For more balanced treatments of black youth see Jeremy Seekings, *Heroes or Villains?* (Johannesburg, Ravan Press, 1993).
- 48 Charles Carter, 'Comrades and Community: Politics and the Construction of Hegemony in Alexandra Township, South Africa, 1984- 1987,' DPhil thesis, University of Oxford, Oxford, 1991. See Mayekiso, *Township Politics*, for context.
- 49 Karl Marx, *The Civil War in France*, various publishers.
- 50 John Walton and David Seddon, *Free Markets and Food Riots* (Oxford, Basil Blackwell, 1995), p.336.
- 51 Joachim Hirsch, 'The Apparatus of the State, the Reproduction of Capital and Urban Conflicts,' in Michael Dear and Alan Scott (Eds), *Urbanization and Urban Planning in Capitalist Society* (London, Methuen, 1981), p.606.
- 52 Cynthia Cockburn, *The Local State* (London, Pluto, 1977), pp.158, 161.
- 53 Jessica Vivian, 'Non-Governmental Organizations, Institutional Reform, and Rural Development: Findings from Zimbabwe,' Unpublished PhD Dissertation, Cornell University Planning Department (Ithaca, NY, 1993), p.29.
- 54 By the early 1990s, two out of five World Bank projects involved NGOs (including well over half in Africa), and in projects involving population, nutrition, primary health care and small enterprise, the ratio rose to more than four out of five. During the 1970s and 1980s, more than six per cent of Bank operations included some NGO participation, but Paul Nelson found that NGOs were 'primarily implementors of project components designed by World Bank and government officials.' Moreover, especially since an upsurge in such participation began in 1988, NGOs have often been used to 'deliver compensatory services to soften the effects of an adjustment plan'; in some cases the NGOs were not even pre-existing but were 'custom-built for projects' and hence could 'neither sustain themselves nor represent poor people's interests effectively.' (See Paul J. Nelson, *The World Bank and Non-Governmental Organizations: The Limits of Apolitical Development* [London, Macmillan, 1995].)
- 55 See David Sogge (Ed), *Just Trying to Help: Compassion and Calculation in Private Foreign Aid* (London, Pluto, 1996).
- 56 See Korten, *When Corporations Control the World*, for a justification of defunding the Bank; see also the popular education and campaigning materials from the San Francisco NGO Global Exchange (e-mail globalexch@igc.apc.org).
- 57 Vicente Navarro, 'The Nature of Democracy in the Core Capitalist Countries: Meanings and Implications for Class Struggle,' *The Insurgent Sociologist*, v.10, #1 (1980), p.12.
- 58 Cited in Hilary Wainwright, 'Once More Moving On: Social Movements, Political Representation and the Future of the Radical Left,' in Leo Panitch (Ed), *Socialist Register 1995* (London, Merlin Press, 1995), p.83.
- 59 Until, perhaps, the conditions for a 'World Party' can be seriously debated. See Warren W. Wagar, *A Short History of the Future* (Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1992).