

Perspectives

On Anarchist Theory

Volume 8, Number 1

Spring 2004

Reflections on Race and Anarchism in South Africa, 1904-2004

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By Lucien van der Walt

The development of an anti-authoritarian response to racial domination and white supremacy is among the most urgent tasks facing anarchists today. We must create of a much more expansive vision of what anarchism can be and also reevaluate the movement's past in light of this imperative.

The following article by IAS grant recipient Lucien van de Walt explores the encounter of South African anarchists with white supremacy.

The South African anarchist tradition provides an interesting case study of anarchist approaches to the question of racial inequality and oppression under capitalism. In modern South Africa, capitalist relations of exploitation were built upon colonial relations of domination. This complex articulation of race and class was a question that South African anarchists continually faced. This paper will examine how both the classical anarchist movement of the first two decades of the twentieth-century, and the contemporary movement of the 1990s, dealt with the racial question.

Racial Questions

From the start of industrialization in the 1880s—spurred by gold discoveries in the Witwatersrand region—until the reform period of the 1970s, South African capitalism was structured on racial lines. There were, in effect, two sharply differentiated sectors of the working class in South Africa.

African workers, roughly two thirds of the workforce, were concentrated in low wage employment, were typically unskilled, and were employed on contracts that amounted to indenture and in which strikes were criminalized. The typical African mine and industrial worker was a male migrant who worked on contract in urban areas before returning to the rural village in which his family resided and farmed. Urban amenities for Africans were minimal—before the 1950s, for example, urban schooling was conducted by churches—state policy neither permitted African workers to vote nor to permanently reside outside the tribal “homelands.” Partly in order to enforce this an internal passport system—the “pass laws”—was applied to African men.

White workers dominated higher paying jobs, were often skilled artisans, and were typically resident in (segregated) urban family housing. Enjoying basic political and civil rights, they were able to change employment fairly easily, to unionize, and the right to strike was grudgingly conceded in the 1920s. However, a large and unskilled “poor White” population (largely drawn from ruined Afrikaner peasant farmers) also existed well into the 1960s.

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Institute for Anarchist Studies Update

Welcome to spring 2004 issue of *Perspectives on Anarchist Theory*!

The last six months have been full of change and excitement for the IAS. We are pleased to announce that we reached our 2003 fundraising goal of \$23,000 US! This was no small task, but thanks to the generosity of over 100 individuals and organizations we met our goal. To all our supporters old and new, *thank you!*

In addition to this feat—which we are very proud of—the IAS has continued to grow as an organization. We are excited to report that the IAS adopted three exciting new programs at the last meeting of our Board of Directors.

One of these is the IAS's Latin American Archives Project. This is a collaborative effort between the IAS and two important Argentinian archives: the Biblioteca Archivo de Estudios Libertarios and the Biblioteca Popular José Ingenieros. This project, which is coordinated by IAS Board member Chuck Morse, will make available important documents from the history of Latin American anarchism by digitalizing them and posting them on the internet (see page 4).

We have also joined forces with the organizers of the annual Renewing the Anarchist Tradition (RAT) conference, Cindy Milstein and John Petrovato, who also are IAS Board members, with the hopes of helping further this important project. The RAT conference, now a project of the IAS, aims to provide a scholarly space in which to both reexamine and reinvigorate the social and political tradition of anarchism (see page 24).

Lastly, we have joined forces with another exciting project: *The New Formulation (TNF)*. For those who do not know *TNF*, it is a biannual journal containing comparative book reviews which examine the value of recent publications to the development of a contemporary anarchist theory and politics. It is the IAS's hope that by taking on *TNF* we will be able to help develop this important journal while pursuing our mission of supporting the development of anarchist theory.

In addition to the expansion of IAS programs, there has been some changes on the IAS Board of Directors as well. I am sad to say that Rebecca DeWitt and Paula Emery, both longtime Board members, have stepped down from the Board. Rebecca, who also served as IAS Director for 2 years, is moving on to focus

more of her energy within the artist community of North Adams, Massachusetts. Paula is stepping down in order to focus more of her energy into the Institute for Social Ecology where she serves as a Board member. Although Rebecca and Paula will no longer be members of the IAS Board, both remain strong allies of the organization. We all wish Rebecca and Paula the best of luck with their important work.

The IAS has also brought on a new Board member, Andréa Schmidt. Andréa, an organizer based in Montréal, Canada, has worked with several organizations including: La Convergence des luttes anti-capitalistes (Montréal's Anti-Capitalist Convergence); Montréal Direct Action Workshop; Action Committee for Non-Status Algerians; and was a founding member of Montréal's No One Is Illegal Campaign. Besides being a compulsive organizer, she is committed to engaging difficult theoretical issues from a movement-based, practical perspective. Currently, Andréa is in the midst of a three month stay in Iraq, where she is working on behalf of Iraq Solidarity Project, a Montréal-based initiative providing direct non-violent support to Iraqis struggling against the occupation. Andréa will also serve as a member of *The New Formulation's* Editorial Committee, with IAS Board member Chuck Morse and myself. The IAS is very happy to welcome Andréa aboard.

We were very excited to learn soon after we went to press with the previous issue that *Perspectives* was nominated for an Utne Independent Press Award in the category of General Excellence: Newsletters. Although we did not win the award, thank you to all our readers who voted for our publication.

This issue of *Perspectives* includes several articles which focus on how anarchism grapples with issues of race and racism. Included herein is an historical overview of how anarchists have struggled against racism into their work for a free South Africa; an account by Ashanti Alston of his political migration from the politics espoused by the Black Panther Party to anarchism; and finally an interview with four participants of the Anarchist People of Color Conference on the significance of this event and how APOC are organizing today. On a different track, we asked Chuck Morse and IAS grant recipient Marina Sitrin to reflect upon the health of the anti-globalization movement.

Enjoy!

Michael Caplan

Perspectives on anarchist theory

Spring 2004, Vol. 8, No. 1

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Layout and Design

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Subscriptions are free for IAS donors. USA and Canada: \$7 U.S. per year. \$9 U.S. per year all other countries. Institutions \$15 U.S. per year. Bulk copies are available at a discount.

Please make checks payable to:

Institute for Anarchist Studies

73 Canterbury,
D.D.O, Québec, Canada
H9B 2G5

Phone

1 (514) 421-0470

Email

info@anarchist-studies.org

Web

www.anarchist-studies.org

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Perspectives on Anarchist Theory
is published by the:

**Institute for
Anarchist Studies**

What's Happening: Books and Events

By Chuck Morse

The United States government's imperialist adventures are transforming the world in ways that will not be clear for years to come. We need to understand what forces are driving these actions, their likely consequences, and their place within the broader contradictions of global capitalism.

Although anarchists have never had much to say about imperialism—our opposition to all states has often blinded us to the important differences between them and the impact of their interrelation—several new books by non-anarchist authors should offer something to a genuinely anti-authoritarian, anti-imperialist project. In *The New Imperialism* noted marxist scholar David Harvey explores numerous questions relating to the recent war in Iraq: Is it a sign of strength or weakness that the US has suddenly shifted from a politics of consensus to one of coercion on the world stage? Was the war in Iraq all about oil or, if not, what was it about? What role has a sagging economy played in pushing the US into foreign adventurism? What is the relationship between US militarism abroad and domestic politics? (Oxford University Press, 2003, 264 pages). Chalmers Johnson's *The Sorrows Of Empire: Militarism, Secrecy, and the End of the Republic* also examines the escalating forces of militarism and imperialism within the United States. He argues that the Iraq war has fractured the Western democratic alliance, increased the likelihood of more terrorist attacks against the U.S., and further cemented the transfer of war powers from the legislative to the executive branch. He asserts that the ultimate outcome of this progressive build-up in military might is an increasing determination among smaller nations to challenge the U.S. through terrorist actions and the pursuit and possible use of nuclear weapons. Stephen Gill's *Power and Resistance in the New World Order* provides a broader perspective. He asserts that as the globalization of power intensifies, so too do globalized forms of resistance. He explains how the dialectic of power and resistance involves issues of governance, economy, and culture and is reflected in questions



of American supremacy, the power of capital, market civilization, and surveillance power. He also argues that new forms of political agency and collective action are emerging to challenge dominant powers (Palgrave Macmillan, 2003, 256 pages).

Recent developments on the international scene underscore the pressing need for North American anti-authoritarians to build principled alliances with oppressed peoples in the Middle East. Some of the difficulties and potentials of this venture are explored in *Peace Under Fire: Israel, Palestine and the International Solidarity Movement*. This work collects previously published news articles on the movement, accounts drawn from web-logs and diaries, and includes the last writings of the murdered American Rachel Corrie. It reveals the horror of life under occupation and describes the first signs of a new wave of international solidarity (Verso Books, June 2004, 240 pages). Similar material is available in *Live from Palestine:*

International and Palestinian Direct Action Against the Israeli Occupation (South End Press, 2003, 223 pages).

This book tells two stories: that of Palestinians—who have called on the world's citizens to join them in nonviolent resistance to the Israeli Occupation—and that of international activists who have responded by putting their lives on the line. From confrontations in olive groves to the siege of Bethlehem's Church of the Nativity, the essays in this book give incontrovertible evidence of the power of solidarity in the face of settler violence and state terror. This book includes an essay by IAS board member John Petrovato.

The search for an anti-authoritarian tradition becomes even more urgent in times of crisis. One aspect of this

2004 Winter Grants Awarded

Twice a year, the Institute for Anarchist Studies awards \$4125 U.S. in grants to radical writers from around the globe who are in need of financial support. We are pleased to announce the recipients of the summer 2003 IAS grant awards.

\$2500 to Robert Graham for *Anarchism: A Documentary History*. This two volume documentary history of anarchist ideas, organized in a chronological order and by theme, collects the definitive texts in the anarchist tradition up to 1939, with the second volume running to the present. In contrast to Guerin's *No Gods No Masters*, which focused on European and largely anarcho-syndicalist sources, this project will be more expansive including non-European material and important works never before translated into English.

\$750 to Marta Kolárová for *Gender in the Czech Anarchist Movement*. This project, based on interviews with activists and a review of local anarchist literature, studies the Czech anarchist movement from a gendered perspective. As a former Soviet bloc country, the triumphs of second wave feminism have yet to fully articulate themselves within radical movements in the Czech Republic. In this study, issues of representation of men and women, gender based division of labor in movement organizations, and movement discourse on feminism and anarchism will be described and analyzed. The author will offer a reflection of the activities of the Czech movement, how it attempts to address oppression in the wider society, and how it reproduces certain inequalities in the movement. ✱

Continued on page 4

... *What's Happening*, from page 3

tradition is studied in Rob Knowles's *Political Economy from Below: Economic Thought in Communitarian Anarchism, 1840-1914* (Routledge, April 2004, 368 pages). Knowles argues that the nineteenth century communitarian anarchists developed and articulated a distinct tradition of economic thought. His study begins with the first major writing of French anarchist Pierre-Joseph Proudhon in 1840 and ends with the temporary decline in anarchist theorizing at the beginning of the First World War in 1914. In a similar vein, Brian Morris's *Kropotkin: The Politics of Community* affirms the contemporary relevance of Kropotkin as a political and moral philosopher. Morris analyzes Kropotkin's writings on anarchist communism, agrarian socialism, education, modern science and evolutionary theory, the French Revolution and the modern state, possessive individualism, and terrorism and war (Humanity Books, 2003, 314 pages). Also of interest is *Exquisite Rebel: The Essays of Voltairine de Cleyre-Anarchist, Feminist, Genius* (State University of New York Press, May 2004, 298 pages). This book brings de Cleyre's eloquent and incisive work out of undeserved obscurity. Twenty-one essays are printed here, including classic works such as "Anarchism and the American Tradition," "The Dominant Idea," and "Sex Slavery," as well as three biographical studies.

Movements from the south continued to deepen the revolutionary project. *To Inherit the Earth: The Landless Movement and the Struggle for a New Brazil* by Angus Lindsay Wright and Wendy Wolford investigates the history, accomplishments, and aspirations of the MST, Brazil's Landless Workers Movement. It details how the MST has successfully occupied unproductive land and forced the government to award more than 20 million acres to 350,000 MST families since the movement was founded in 1984. Temma Kaplan's *Taking Back the Streets: Women, Youth, and Direct Democracy* also focuses (primarily) on South America (University of California Press, 2004, 288 pages). This book explores the participation of Argentine, Chilean, and Spanish women and young people in the human rights movements and the radically democratic political culture they nurtured. Kaplan is the author *Anarchists of Andalusia 1868-1903* (Princeton University Press, 1977, 266 pages). Spanish readers will want to check out *La Protesta Social en Argentina (Social Protest in Argentina)* by Mirta Lobato and Juan Suriano. This book examines the new social movements that leap to visibility during Argentina's economic collapse in December 2001. It asks: Who are the new social actors? What are their demands? Who do they confront? What relations do they have with the state, the political parties, and other organizations? What are their historical roots? (Fondo de Cultura Económica, 2003, 159 pages). Juan Suriano is the author of *Anarquistas: Cultura y Política Libertaria en Buenos Aires 1890-1910 (Anarchists: Libertarian Culture and Politics in Buenos Aires, 1890-1910)*. The militant and tragically short

life a young Argentine anarchist, Soledad Rosas, has been fictionalized by Martín Caparrós in his Spanish language novel, *Amor y Anarquía: La vida urgente de Soledad Rosas, 1974-1998 (Love and Anarchy: The Urgent Life of Soledad Rosa, 1974-1998)*. Rosas committed suicide in an Italian prison, where she had incarcerated under changes of eco-terrorism.

Two new reference works on anarchist history are now available. John Patten's *Islands of Anarchy: Simian, Cienfuegos and Refract 1969-1987 An Annotated Bibliography* is a complete bibliographic resource on one of the most vigorous publishing ventures to emerge out of the anarchist resurgence in the United Kingdom in the 1960s. (Kate Sharpley Library, 2004, 77 pages). Italian readers will enjoy the 816 page *Dizionario Biografico Degli Anarchici Italiani Vol.1 (Biographical Dictionary of Italian Anarchists)* prepared under the dictation of Maurizio Antonioli (BFS edizioni, 2003)

The Institute for Social Ecology will continue to hold its acclaimed programs in radical social change and ecological reconstruction. Of special interest are Remaking Society: A Social Ecology Intensive (June 25 to July 24), Sustainable Design, Building, & Land Use (May 28 to June 18), and Theoretical Inquiries in the Age of Globalization (August 6 to August 15). IAS board members Cindy Milstein, Andrea Schmidt, and the author of this article will teach at this last program.

Anarchist bookfairs offer great opportunities for comrades to deepen old bond and forge new ones. The Madison Anarchist Bookfair will be held on May 7-9. For more information, call 608-262-9036 or e-mail circle_a_books@riseup.net. The 5th annual Montreal Anarchist Bookfair will be held on May 15 this year at 2515 rue Delisle (near metro Lionel-Groulx). For more information e-mail anarchistbookfair@taktic.org or call 514-859-9090.

ABC-No Rio, New York City's collectively-run center for art and activism, needs the support of comrades around the world. Those responsible for managing the center have recently been told that they can acquire full legal possession of the building that houses ABC-No Rio if they renovate it significantly. To make these renovations, ABC-No Rio must raise \$148,000 by January 2005. Please give generously to the effort and help it continue its support for radical politics and culture. For more information (and to donate on-line) please visit their website: www.abcnorio.org. You can also mail your donation to ABC-No Rio, 156 Rivington Street, NY, NY 10002. ✱

The Latin American Archives Project

The IAS recently initiated a new project entitled the Latin American Archives Project. This is a collaborative effort between the IAS and two important Argentinean archives: the Biblioteca Archivo de Estudios Libertarios and the Biblioteca Popular José Ingenieros. The project's goal is to encourage the study and appreciation of the rich history of Latin American anarchism. We will do this by digitalizing important historical documents held in these two archives and then make them available on-line in a searchable, multilingual website.

During the first phase of this project we anticipate that we will be able to make available roughly 20,000 document pages. Following the completion of the first phase, we intend to solicit additional funding to continue digitalizing and making available documents. We believe this will be an invaluable on-line resource for anyone interested in this understudied yet dynamic part of the history of the Americas. ✱

Grant Updates

Marta Kolárová has begun her study of *Gender in the Czech Anarchist Movement*. See "Grants Awarded" for more information. Kolárová has begun initial interviews with activists and her investigation of how feminism and feminist issues are portrayed in Czech anarchist literature. Kolárová was awarded \$750 in January 2004.

Robert Graham has begun his project *Anarchism: A Documentary History*. See "Grants Awarded" for more information. Graham has further developed the outline of the first volume of this project and has also obtained English translations of several Chinese, Korean, and Japanese material from the pre-World War II time period. Graham was awarded \$2500 in January 2004.

Andrés Pérez and **Felipe del Solar** are nearing completion of their book *Chile: Anarchist Practices Under Pinochet*. The first section of the book covers the 1970s, including anarcho-syndicalist activities, anarchist involvement in the student movement and counter-culture, and armed anarchist struggle. The second section deals with countercultural movements and the last section focuses on radical activism during the 90s. They are currently doing a last edit of the book and finalizing the introduction and conclusion. Pérez and del Solar were awarded \$2000 in January 2001.

Nate Holdren is proceeding well with his translation of *19 and 20: Notes for the New Social Protagonism* by the militant Argentine group Colectivo Situaciones. This translation will make available this influential book on the movements that exploded in Argentina on the 19th and 20th of December, 2001. Currently, there are quality drafts of the first three chapters (of eight), and chapters four through six are currently in the works. Holdren was awarded \$1000 in July 2003.

Kolya Abramsky is over half-way through his translation project *Global Finance Capital and the Permanent War: The Dollar, Wall Street and the War Against Iraq* by Ramón Fernández Durán. In this book, Durán shows how financial institutions, such as Wall Street and the IMF, force global capitalism into a permanent state of war in order to maintain its hegemonic control of international markets. Durán has added a new epilogue for the English edition which discusses the role of the European Union since September 11th. Abramsky was awarded \$1000 in July 2003.

Bill Weinberg has returned from his research trip to South America for his book *Pachamama Betrayed: Ecological Crime and Indigenous Resistance to the Andean Drug Wars*. This book deconstructs the Orwellian euphemism of the "War on Drugs" by revealing how U.S. military involvement in Latin America has not changed since the era of "gunboat diplomacy." Weinberg hopes to have the manuscript completed in the next few months. Reports from South America which will be incorporated into the book can be found on-line at ww3report.com. Weinberg was awarded \$1000 in July 2001.

Sandra Jeppison's project, *Anarchy Revolution Freedom*, is progressing rapidly. In this project, Jeppison looks at both mainstream and explicitly anarchist representations of revolution to try to come to an understanding of anarchist culture and to develop a means of theorizing it in a way that is significantly different from Marxian cultural studies. Jeppison has written most of the introduction which lays out the theoretical framework of the field of

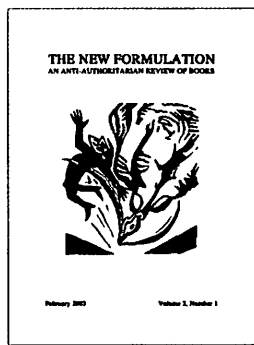
anarchist cultural production and the challenges it makes to the field of power. She has also written most of the section which examines CrimethInc.'s book *Days of War, Nights of Love* to develop a post-situationist theory of anarchist culture. An excerpt of her work on the circulation of anarchist ideas in the mainstream media using the *The Matrix* as a case study is forthcoming in the journal *Social Anarchism*. Jeppison was awarded \$800 in February 2003.

Fernando Gustavo López Trujillo has finished a draft of his historical study titled *The FACA and the Anarchist Movement in Argentina, 1930-1950*. López examines the growth of the Federación Anarquista Comunista Argentina (FACA) from 1935 and into the 1940's, a development that is exceptional given that the Argentine anarchist movement and its organizations were shrinking at this time (after being the largest anarchist movement in Latin America). López looks at the decline of the FACA in the 1940s and 1950s and the relationship of its decline to the rise of the Peronist movement. López is currently finishing the final chapter and preparing an appendix of related illustrations, documents, and biographies. López was awarded \$2200 in June of 1999.

Justin Jackson has begun primary research at several archives for his project *Black Roses, Black Masks: The American Anarchist Movement and Its Media in the Vietnam Years*. This project will compile an edited collection of writing, poetry, art, and images from the anarchist press in the United States between 1945 to 1980, with a focus on the 1960s and 1970s. Jackson recently conducted a week of research in primary materials at the Labadie Collection at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor. He is currently re-reading and editing primary material that will be included in this collection. His research into secondary materials is ongoing. Jackson was awarded \$1000 in February 2003. ★

The New Formulation

An Anti-Authoritarian Review of Books

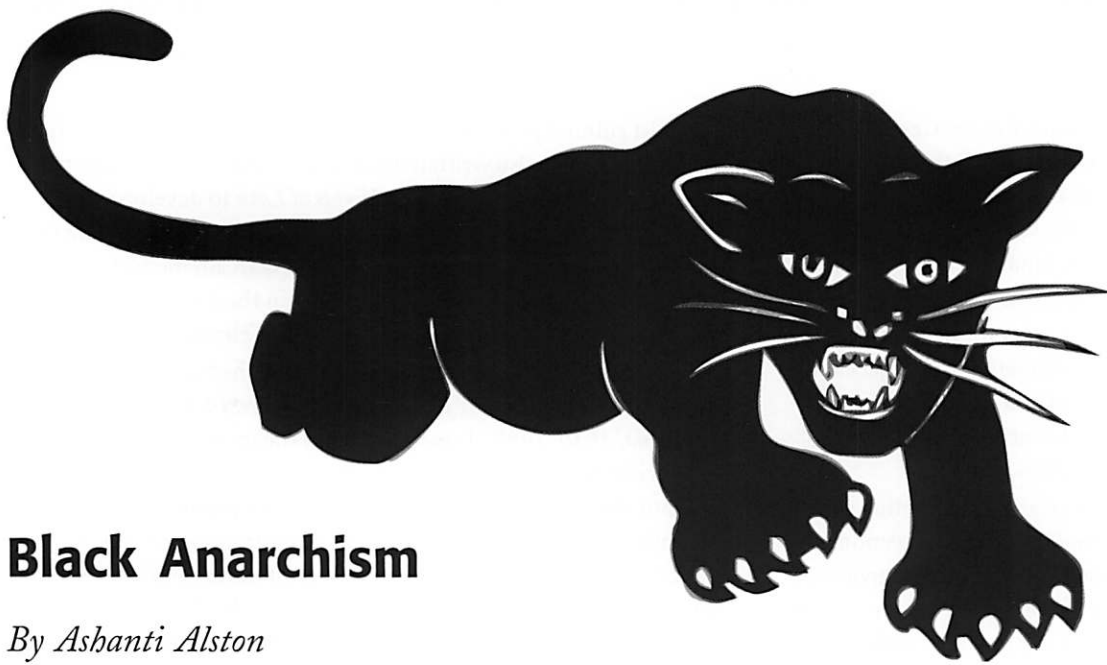


The New Formulation, a project of the Institute for Anarchist Studies, is a bi-annual journal containing comparative book reviews that examine the value of recent publications to the development of a contemporary anarchist theory and politics. *The New Formulation* aims to help clarify the distinctness of an anarchist approach to social affairs and to provide a forum for the integration of new works and insights into the anarchist

project. This journal gives authors struggling to redefine the tradition a setting in which to share their research and reflections.

Donors giving \$50 U.S. or more to the IAS during our annual fundraising campaign will receive an one year subscription to *The New Formulation*. General annual subscriptions are available at \$7 U.S. for U.S. subscriptions, and \$10 for international subscriptions.

www.newformulation.org



Black Anarchism

By Ashanti Alston

Many classical anarchists regarded anarchism as a body of elemental truths that merely needed to be revealed to the world and believed people would become anarchists once exposed to the irresistible logic of *the idea*. This is one of the reasons they tended to be didactic.

Fortunately the lived practice of the anarchist movement is much richer than that. Few “convert” in such a way: it is much more common for people to embrace anarchism slowly, as they discover that it is relevant to their lived experience and amenable to their own insights and concerns.

The richness of the anarchist tradition lay precisely in the long history of encounters between non-anarchist dissidents and the anarchist framework that we inherited from the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Anarchism has grown through such encounters and now confronts social contradictions that were previously marginal to the movement. For example, a century ago the struggle against patriarchy was a relatively minor concern for most anarchists and yet it is now widely accepted as an integral part of our struggle against domination.

It is only within the last 10 or 15 years that anarchists in North America have begun to seriously explore what it means to develop an anarchism that can both fight white supremacy and articulate a positive vision of cultural diversity and cultural exchange. Comrades are working hard to identify the historical referents of such a task, how our movement must change to embrace it, and what a truly anti-racist anarchism might look like.

The following piece by IAS board member Ashanti Alston explores some of these questions. Alston, who was a member of the Black Panther Party and the Black Liberation Army, describes his encounter(s) with anarchism (which began while he was incarcerated for activities related to the Black Liberation Army). He touches upon some of the limitations of older visions of anarchism, the contemporary relevance of anarchism to black people, and some of the principles necessary to build a new revolutionary movement.

This is an edited transcript of a talk given by Alston on October 24th, 2003 at Hunter College in New York City. This event was organized by the Institute for Anarchist Studies and co-sponsored by the Student Liberation Action Movement of the City University of New York.

Chuck Morse

Although the Black Panther Party was very hierarchical, I learned a lot from my experience in the organization. Above all, the Panthers impressed upon me the need to learn from other peoples’ struggles. I think I have done that and that is one of the reasons why I am an anarchist today. After all, when old strategies don’t work, you need to look for other ways of doing things to see if you can get yourself unstuck and move forward again. In the Panthers we drew a lot from nationalists, Marxist-Leninists, and others like them, but their approaches to social change had significant problems and I delved into anarchism to see if there are other ways to think about making a revolution.

I learned about anarchism from letters and literature sent to me while in various prisons around the country. At first I didn’t want to read any of the material I received—it seemed like anarchism was just

about chaos and everybody doing their own thing—and for the longest time I just ignored it. But there were times—when I was in segregation—that I didn’t have anything else to read and, out of boredom, finally dug in (despite everything I had heard about anarchism up to the time). I was actually quite surprised to find analyses of peoples’ struggles, peoples’ cultures, and peoples’ organizational formations—that made a lot of sense to me.

These analyses helped me see important things about my experience in the Panthers that had not been clear to me before. For example, I realized that there was a problem with my love for people like Huey P. Newton, Bobby Seal, and Eldridge Cleaver and the fact that I had put them on a pedestal. After all, what does it say about you, if you allow someone to set themselves up as your leader and make all your decisions for you? What anarchism

helped me see was that you, as an individual, should be respected and that no one is important enough to do your thinking for you. Even if we thought of Huey P. Newton or Eldridge Cleaver as the baddest revolutionaries in the world, I should see myself as the baddest revolutionary, just like them. Even if I am young, I have a brain. I can think. I can make decisions.

I thought about all this while in prison and found myself saying, “Man, we really set ourselves up in a way that was bound to create problems and produce schisms. We were bound to follow programs without thinking.” The history of the Black Panther Party, as great as it is, has those skeletons. The smallest person on the totem pole was supposed to be a worker and the one on the top was the one with the brains. But in prison I learned that I could have made some of these decisions myself and that people around me could have made these decisions themselves. Although I appreciated everything that the leaders of the Black Panther Party did, I began to see that we can do things differently and thus draw more fully on our own potentials and move even further towards real self-determination. Although it wasn’t easy at first, I stuck with the anarchist material and found that I couldn’t put it down once it started giving me insights. I wrote to people in Detroit and Canada who had been sending me literature and asked them to send more.

However, none of what I received dealt with Black folks or Latinos. Maybe there were occasional discussions of the Mexican revolution, but nothing dealt with us, here, in the United States. There was an overwhelming emphasis on those who became the anarchist founding fathers—Bakunin, Kropotkin, and some others—but these European figures, who were addressing European struggles, didn’t really speak to me.

I tried to figure out how this applies to me. I began to look at Black history again, at African history, and at the histories and struggles of other people of color. I found many examples of anarchist practices in non-European societies, from the most ancient times to the present. This was very important to me: I needed to know that it is not just European people who can function in an anti-authoritarian way, but that we all can.

I was encouraged by things I found in Africa—not so much by the ancient forms that we call tribes—but by modern struggles that occurred in Zimbabwe, Angola, Mozambique, and Guinea-Bissau. Even though they were led by vanguardist organizations, I saw that people were building radical, democratic communities on the ground. For the first time, in these colonial situations, African peoples were creating what was the Angolans called “popular power.” This popular power took a very anti-authoritarian form: people were not only conducting their lives, but also transforming them while fighting whatever foreign power was oppressing them. However, in every one of these liberation struggles new repressive structures were imposed as soon as people got close to liberation: the leadership was obsessed with ideas of government, of raising a standing army, of controlling the people when the oppressors were expelled. Once the so-called victory was accomplished, the people—who had fought for years against their oppressors—were disarmed and instead of having real popular power, a new party was installed at the helm of the state. So, there were no real revolutions or true liberation in Angola, Guinea-

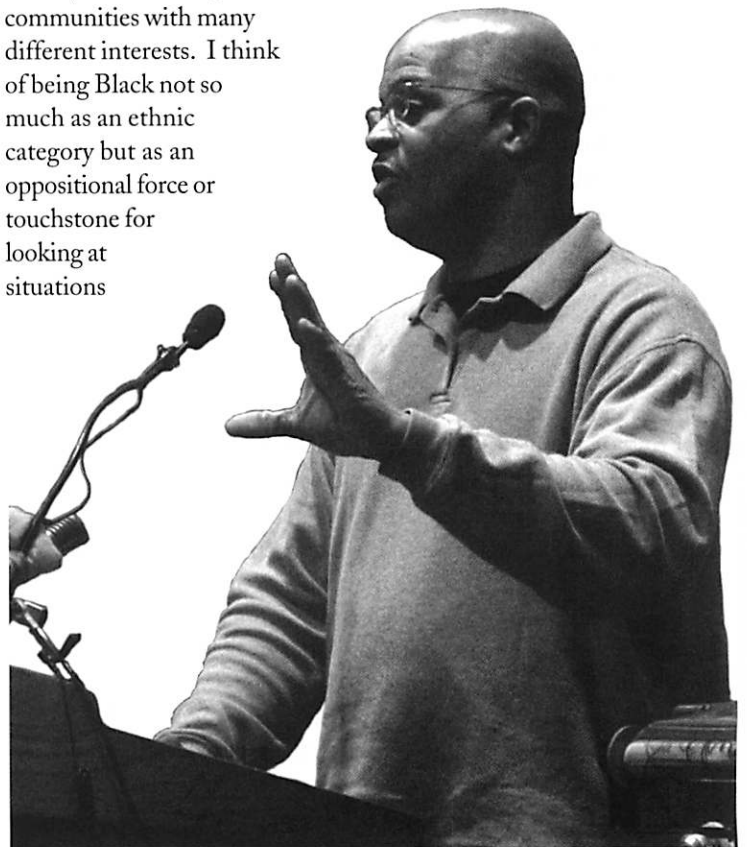
Bissau, Mozambique, and Zimbabwe because they simply replaced a foreign oppressor with an indigenous oppressor.

So, here I am, in the United States fighting for Black liberation, and wondering: how can we avoid situations like that? Anarchism gave me a way to respond to this question by insisting that we put into place, as we struggle now, structures of decision-making and doing things that continually bring more people into the process, and not just let the most “enlightened” folks make decisions for everyone else. The people themselves have to create structures in which they articulate their own voice and make their own decisions. I didn’t get that from other ideologies: I got that from anarchism.

I also began to see, in practice, that anarchistic structures of decision-making are possible. For example, at the protests against the Republican National Convention in August 2000 I saw normally excluded groups—people of color, women, and queers—participate actively in every aspect of the mobilization. We did not allow small groups to make decisions for others and although people had differences, they were seen as good and beneficial. It was new for me, after my experience in the Panthers, to be in a situation where people are not trying to be on the same page and truly embraced the attempt to work out our sometimes conflicting interests. This gave me some ideas about how anarchism can be applied.

It also made me wonder: if it can be applied to the diverse groups at the convention protest, could I, as a Black activist, apply these things in the Black community?

Some of our ideas about who we are as a people hamper our struggles. For example, the Black community is often considered a monolithic group, but it is actually a community of communities with many different interests. I think of being Black not so much as an ethnic category but as an oppositional force or touchstone for looking at situations



differently. Black culture has always been oppositional and is all about finding ways to creatively resist oppression here, in the most racist country in the world. So, when I speak of a Black anarchism, it is not so tied to the color of my skin but who I am as a person, as someone who can resist, who can see differently when I am stuck, and thus live differently.

What is important to me about anarchism is its insistence that you should never be stuck in old, obsolete approaches and always try to find new ways of looking at things, feeling, and organizing. In my case, I first applied anarchism in the early 1990s in a collective we created to put out the Black Panther newspaper again. I was still a closet anarchist at this point. I wasn't ready yet to come out and declare myself an *anarchist*, because I already knew what folks were going to say and how they were going to look at me. Who would they see when I say *anarchist*? They would see the white anarchists, with all the funny hair etc, and say "how the heck are you going to hook up with *that*?"

There was a divide in this collective: on the one side there were older comrades who were trying to reinvent the wheel and, on the other, myself and a few others who were saying, "Let's see what we can learn from the Panther experience and build upon and improve it. We can't do things the same way." We emphasized the importance of an anti-sexist perspective—an old issue within the Panthers—but the other side was like, "I don't want to hear all that feminist stuff." And we said, "That's fine if you don't want to hear it, but we want the young folks to hear it, so they know about some of the things that did not work in the Panthers, so they know that we had some internal contradictions that we could not overcome." We tried to press the issue, but it became a battle and the discussions got so difficult that a split occurred. As this point, I left the collective and began working with anarchist and anti-authoritarian groups, who have really been the only ones to consistently try to deal with these dynamics thus far.

One of the most important lessons I also learned from anarchism is that you need to look for the radical things that we already do and try to encourage them. This is why I think there is so much potential for anarchism in the Black community: so much of what we already do is anarchistic and doesn't involve the state, the police, or the politicians. We look out for each other, we care for each other's kids, we go to the store for each other, we find ways to protect our communities. Even churches still do things in a very communal way to some extent. I learned that there are ways to be radical without always passing out literature and telling people, "Here is the picture, if you read this you will automatically follow our organization and join the revolution." For example, participation is a very important theme for anarchism and it is also very important in the Black community. Consider jazz: it is one of the best illustrations of an existing radical practice because it assumes a participatory connection between the individual and the collective and allows for the expression of who you are, within a collective setting, based on the enjoyment and pleasure of the music itself. Our communities can be the same way. We can bring together all kinds of diverse perspectives to make music, to make revolution.

How can we nurture every act of freedom? Whether it is with people on the job or the folks that hang out on the corner, how can we

plan and work together? We need to learn from the different struggles around the world that are not based on vanguards. There are examples in Bolivia. There are the Zapatistas. There are groups in Senegal building social centers. You really have to look at people who are trying to live and not necessarily trying to come up with the most advanced ideas. We need to de-emphasize the abstract and focus what is happening on the ground.

How can we bring all these different strands together? How can we bring in the Rastas? How can we bring in the people on the west coast who are still fighting the government strip-mining of indigenous land? How can we bring together all of these peoples to begin to create a vision of America that is for all of us?

Oppositional thinking and oppositional risks are necessary. I think that is very important right now and one of the reasons why I think anarchism has so much potential to help us move forward. It is not asking of us to dogmatically adhere to the founders of the tradition, but to be open to whatever increases our democratic participation, our creativity, and our happiness.

We just had an Anarchist People of Color conference in Detroit on October 3rd to the 5th. One hundred thirty people came from all over the country. It was great to just see ourselves and the interest of people of color from around the United States in finding ways of thinking outside of the norm. We saw that we could become that voice in our communities that says, "Wait, maybe we don't need to organize like that. Wait, the way that you are treating people within the organization is oppressive. Wait, what is your vision? Would you like to hear mine?" There is a need for those kinds of voices within our different communities. Not just our communities of color, but in every community there is a need to stop advancing ready-made plans and to trust that people can collectively figure out what to do with this world. I think we have the opportunity to put aside what we thought would be the answer and fight together to explore different visions of the future. We can work on that. And there is no one answer: we've got to work it out as we go.

Although we want to struggle, it is going to be very difficult because of the problems that we have inherited from this empire. For example, I saw some very hard, emotional struggles at the protests against the Republican National Convention. But people stuck to it, even if they broke down crying in the process. We are not going to get through some of our internal dynamics that have kept us divided unless we are willing to go through some really tough struggles. This is one of the other reasons why I say there is no answer: we've just got to go through this.

Our struggles here in the United States affect everybody in the world. People on the bottom are going to play a key role and the way we relate to people on the bottom is going to be very important. Many of us are privileged enough to be able to avoid some of the most difficult challenges and we will need to give up some of this privilege in order to build a new movement. The potential is there. We can still win—and redefine what it means to win—but we have the opportunity to advance a richer vision of freedom than we have ever had before. We have to be willing to try.

As a Panther, and as someone who went underground as an urban guerrilla, I have put my life on the line. I have watched my comrades die and spent most of my adult life in prison. But I still

believe that we can win. Struggle is very tough and when you cross that line, you risk going to jail, getting seriously hurt, killed, and watching your comrades getting seriously hurt and killed. That is not a pretty picture, but that is what happens when you fight an entrenched oppressor. We are struggling and will make it rough for them, but struggle is also going to be rough for us too.

This is why we have to find ways to love and support each other through tough times. It is more than just believing that we can win: we need to have structures in place that can carry us through when we feel like we cannot go another step. I think we can move again if we can figure out some of those things. This system has got to come down. It hurts us every day and we can't give up. We have to get there. We have to find new ways.

Anarchism, if it means anything, means being open to whatever it takes in thinking, living, and in our relationships—to live fully and win. In some ways, I think they are both the same: living to the fullest is to win. Of course we will and must clash with our oppressors and we need to find good ways of doing it. Remember those on the bottom who are most impacted by this. They might have different perspectives on how this fight is supposed to go. If we can't find ways for meeting face-to-face to work that stuff out, old ghosts will re-appear and we will be back in the same old situation that we have been in before.

You all can do this. You have the vision. You have the creativity. Do not allow anyone to lock that down. ✱

IAS On the Web

As reported in our last newsletter, we continue to be very busy publishing material to our new website. In addition to our monthly web column "Theory & Politics," we have begun building an on-line library of works that the IAS has supported through its granting program. New material now available in our on-line library (<http://www.anarchist-studies.org/library>) include:

Three articles by Lucien van der Walt including *In This Struggle, Only the Workers and Peasants will Go All the Way to the End: Towards a History of Anarchist Anti-Imperialism* (<http://www.anarchist-studies.org/article/articleview/48/1/7/>), *Fight for Africa, Which you Deserve: The Industrial Workers of Africa in South Africa, 1917-1921* (<http://www.anarchist-studies.org/article/articleview/47/1/7/>), and *A History of the IWW in South Africa* (<http://www.anarchist-studies.org/article/articleview/52/1/7/>). All three articles draw from van der Walt's IAS supported study of *Anarchism and Revolutionary Syndicalism in South Africa, 1904-1921*.

Peter Lamborn Wilson's complete final project *Brand: An Italian Anarchist and His Dream* (<http://www.anarchist-studies.org/article/articleview/46/1/7/>) is now available. In this piece, Wilson pays tribute to the life of Stirnerite anarchist Frank Brand.

In *Where Does Anarchist Theory Come From?* (<http://www.anarchist-studies.org/article/articleview/51/1/7/>), Sandra Jeppesen uses Ann Hansen's book *Direct Action* to explore where anarchist theory emerges from, and the relationship between anarchist theory and practice. This essay is drawn from Jeppesen's larger IAS supported study of anarchist culture titled *Anarchy, Revolution, Freedom: Towards Anarchist Cultural Theory*.

"Theory & Politics," the IAS's semi-regular web column (http://www.anarchist-studies.org/publications/theory_politics), features the following new articles:

In *Post-Left Anarchy: Leaving the Left Behind* (<http://www.anarchist-studies.org/article/articleview/43/1/1/>), Jason

McQuinn of *Anarchy Magazine* offers an overview of post-left anarchism and why anarchists should embrace it as a platform for moving anarchism. In response to McQuinn, and post-leftism in general, Peter Staudenmaier of the Institute for Social Ecology counters the post-leftist argument in *Anarchists in Wonderland: The Topsy-Turvy World of Post-Left Anarchy* (<http://www.anarchist-studies.org/article/articleview/45/1/1/>). Following Staudenmaier's critique, several exchanges between McQuinn and Staudenmaier ensued, including *The Incredible Lameness of Left-Anarchism* (<http://www.anarchist-studies.org/article/articleview/49/1/1/>), *Challenge Accepted: Post-Leftism's Rejection of the Left as a Whole* (<http://www.anarchist-studies.org/article/articleview/50/1/1/>), and *Worthwhile Debate Requires Communication: Evasion and Denial Don't Cut It* (<http://www.anarchist-studies.org/article/articleview/56/1/1/>).

In *Anarchism's Promise for Anti-Capitalist Resistance* (<http://www.anarchist-studies.org/article/articleview/53/1/1/>), IAS Board Member Cindy Milstein explains how anarchism has been a defining force within the development of contemporary anti-capitalist struggle.

Inspired by the debates surrounding contemporary anarchist theory and post-anarchism, including articles run in "Theory and Politics" on this subject, IAS grant recipient Sandra Jeppesen offers an overview of the issues she believes a contemporary anarchism needs to engage in *Seeing Past the Outpost of Post-Anarchism. Anarchy: Axiomatic* (<http://www.anarchist-studies.org/article/articleview/55/1/1/>)

Lastly, many articles from the IAS's new publication, *The New Formulation: An Anti-Authoritarian Review of Books* (<http://www.newformulation.org>), are now available on-line, including a new review by Michael Glavin: *Power, Subjectivity, Resistance: Three Works on Postmodern Anarchism* (<http://www.newformulation.org/4glavin.htm>). ✱

Resistance, Community, and Renewal

The Anarchist People of Color Conference

On October 3-5, 2003 approximately 140 anarchists of color gathered in Detroit, Michigan to participate in the first ever Anarchist People of Color (APOC) Conference. We asked four conference participants to reflect on various aspects of this unprecedented event.

Given the history of the Left and the anarchist movement in the US, why was the APOC gathering significant? What were some of the conference's successes and what, if any, difficulties were encountered?

Ernesto Aguilar: Our biggest success is that we affirmed that we are not alone. We also encouraged real reflection about our identity as a group, which isn't terribly political in a conventional sense but is very important in a day-to-day way.

The conference has inspired local groups to come together and discuss how we work together and make a difference on the neighbourhood level. It also prompted one-on-one discussions about what anarchism means and how we can make it accessible and understandable to everybody. I think subcultures give people the privilege of taking for granted what it means, but we need to bring our ideas and struggles to the masses of people, not to mention our grandmothers and people who don't have a personal or emotional investment in being political or even liberal. Struggling on these fronts brought us together.

One of our biggest challenges coming out of the conference is differentiating ourselves, and understanding that we are not just an anarchist faction of brown people. We need to see ourselves as part of and allied with an oppressed peoples' freedom movement that prioritizes organizing and social structures in bottom-up ways.

To that end, there has been a debate since the conference, on occasion led by confused colored folks, over autonomous people of color spaces and why they are important and why our autonomy is necessary. My expectation is that people flipping for their "white allies" and fighting against autonomy will be rejected. Yet, this debate is healthy and needs to be had, because it speaks to our core values as a movement. Are we a faction of the white-dominated struggle because we call ourselves anarchists or is our primary alliance with Black people, Third World insurgencies, and all people of color because we are united in our struggles and are still willing to work with, and be challenged in, our politics? Do our politics shape our aspirations or do our aspirations shape our politics? We are still engaged in this important discussion.

I've heard criticism that there wasn't enough of a focus on anarchist politics at the conference. I share the concern that we need to avoid workshops on things that people can hear at other events. But for us to root up preconceptions and forge anarchist ideas that are successful, we need to pitch the old and start having a new, constructive conversation. However, a weakness of the conference and in our struggle is that we are replicating some white anarchist trends, and covering the same ground. The key is starting those new, constructive conversations. We can't talk about anti-war organizing, for example, before we talk about the war within ourselves, internalized oppression, white supremacy, and self-determination, not to mention national liberation and independence.

Heather Ajani: The APOC gathering was significant because the history of the left and the anarchist movement is so dominated by white people. I can't recall a time when anarchists of color have come together in a separate space as we did in Detroit last October. The fact that this conference happened at all, and that so many people came, is a huge success. What is most important is that the APOC conference created a space that hadn't been physically carved out within the current radical milieu: folks were able to come together and dialogue about their experiences as people of color and talk about how to gain empowerment and strength, not only among other activists but also as radicals in their own communities. Any difficulties that occurred were prior to the conference and had to do with our organizing efforts. That kind of stuff happens and it didn't overshadow the conference,

Ernesto Aguilar is the founder of the APOC list and website (www.illegalvoices.org/apoc/) and hosts the Latino-issues radio show *Sexto Sol* on Pacifica Radio KPFT. He lives in Houston, Texas.

Heather Ajani, recently from Phoenix, Arizona, is currently traveling and conducting interviews with various people of color for an upcoming anthology that will highlight resistance and radicalism in communities of color. For the past five years she has worked with Phoenix Copwatch and various other projects related to criminal justice.

Walidah Imarisha is editor of *AWOL Magazine: Revolutionary Artists Workshop*, a political hip hop magazine. She is also one half of the poetic duo Good Sista/Bad Sista with her partner Turiya Autry.

Angel González is a working class Puerto Rican/Spanish Revolutionary Anarchist currently involved with organizing in Portland, Oregon. He is involved with APOC organizing locally, the Federation of Northwest Anarcho-Communists, a forming male ally group, and worked until recently with the Portland Anti-Capitalist Action newspaper *Little Beirut*.

because people didn't let it. People realize that our movement is what we make it, that the conference wasn't centered around any one person, that it didn't represent a "changing of the guard" from older politicos to newer members of the radical people of color community. It was about people working together, learning from each other, listening, and taking the experience away with themselves. Even when there was a glitch with a workshop or a debate, folks were able to step back and immediately reflect on why things happened the way they did. I have never seen such open dialogue and immediate, on-site resolution of issues.

Walidah Imarsha: The history of the left and the anarchist movement in the US has been one very heavily dominated by white standards and ways of organizing. People of color have had to try to work within an overwhelmingly white movement that often acted with indifference or outright racism to their issues. The APOC gathering was momentous in that it helped to place APOC in a political context here in the US, helped us to see that we were not alone, and that there are many, many anti-authoritarian or anarchist folks of color.

It also helped us connect to our own history of anarchism. As various peoples of color, most of us have a culture of anti-authoritarianism, whether it was called communalism, tribalism, primitivism, or whatever other name given to it by European colonizers. Anarchism, to me, is a fancy name for what cultures of color have been practicing for millennia. The APOC conference gave us a foundation to realize this and to work toward rebuilding what has been stolen from us.

Angel González: Everyone I knew who participated in the conference was aware that something big was happening. What we are seeing is the emergence of a new movement, even a new identity. To myself, and many others, the conference was about building community and reconnecting with our identities in different ways.

As far as difficulties, there were rumors of a potential attack by white supremacists and internal disputes among organizers, but these were overshadowed by the overwhelmingly positive conference experience. There were, however, minor issues with fundraising for transportation. We had a lot of support but unfortunately we received the money too late for it to be of any use!



Clearly, anarchists need to continuously innovate and learn from thinkers outside of the anarchist tradition if anarchism is going to be relevant to the world. Can you identify some non-anarchist thinkers that are or could be especially relevant to anarchists of color? If so, why are they relevant?

AGUILAR: I mentioned various authors worth reading in an interview I did with *The Female Species* zine some time back and a lot of people took offense at the fact that I named figures like Che Guevara, for example. I'm glad you are asking that question, because I think this relates to another healthy debate that speaks to our core values.

It is not enough for anarchists to speak up against the state, uphold the necessity of anti-authoritarianism, and revolt. If previous rebellions have shown us anything, it's that our idealism and taking to the streets can only take this so far. We may feel righteous about our action, but we leave no legacy and the powers never change. In my opinion, we need to be more conscious of the world around us and its history. Knowledge of the past is essential for understanding the present and grasping what forces are at work: it gives us hints about future developments. We need to start examining what non- and even anti-anarchist thinkers of color have to say. Anyone who is open to learning should be willing to look beyond the tradition and see where we can grow.

There are some pretty obvious anti-colonial movements that should be required study material, if only because they did something that inspired so many by standing up to settlers and showing them the door. That's a beautiful thing, no matter how you slice it.

I always recommend J. Sakai's *Settlers* (Chicago: Morningstar Press, 1989) and Reies López Tijerina's autobiography *They Called Me "King Tiger"* (Houston, TX: Arte Publico Press, 2001). In addition, a compañera recently shared with me some powerful writings by academics (a category of writers I normally dismiss): Jared Sexton, Steve Martinot, and Tomas Almaguer have all written some fantastic works.

AJANI: There is a tendency among the anarchist community to cling to the sacred texts by folks such as Bakunin, Goldman, Berkman, etc. Though their ideas and vision are important as the foundations of anarchism, they failed to address race, which was problematic during the development of anarchism at the turn of the 20th century and remains a social problem today (as do class and gender). Off

the top of my head, I can name a number of authors/theorists/thinkers that people of color should read, such as W.E.B. DuBois, C.L.R. James, Reies López Tijerina, Gloria Anzaldúa, Assata Shakur, and Malcolm X. These authors are relevant because they not only address the way race functions but also look beyond traditional ways of thinking. I would also recommend looking at past resistance movements, especially within the American context, like as the Abolitionists, Civil Rights movement groups such as Student Non-violent Coordinating Committee, the Black Panthers, the Brown Berets, the feminist struggle, farm workers struggles in the southwest (César Chávez, etc.), and the resistance of black workers in Detroit's auto factories as spelled out in Dan Georgakas's book *Detroit, I Do Mind Dying* (Boston, MA: South End, 1998). I would also recommend Rodolfo Acuña's *Occupied America: A History of Chicanos* (Boston, MA: Pearson Longman, 2003) and works by J. Sakai and Noel Ignatiev.

González: I think it's important to read current writings. Anarchists have a tendency to get stuck in turn of the century authors and their views. Some current writers I would recommend include Arundati Roy, Ward Churchill, bell hooks, Angela Davis, Audrey Lorde, Gloria Anzaldúa, among many others. It's important to understand where people are coming from, to understand their struggles, and to understand what being an ally means. A lot of anarchists have a tendency to think that they really do know everything, which in itself proves them wrong.

I also feel it is important to look at anarchist history and read writings by anarchists from non-Western countries. It is a racist concept that all anarchists writings come from "whites" or Western countries. Anarchism has a rich history in Japan, Korea, China, and throughout Latin America. Anarchism is still strong and vibrant in many of these countries—which is continuously ignored—and still

generally seen as a Western identity, even though as an idea it has been applied to various peoples' struggles throughout the world.

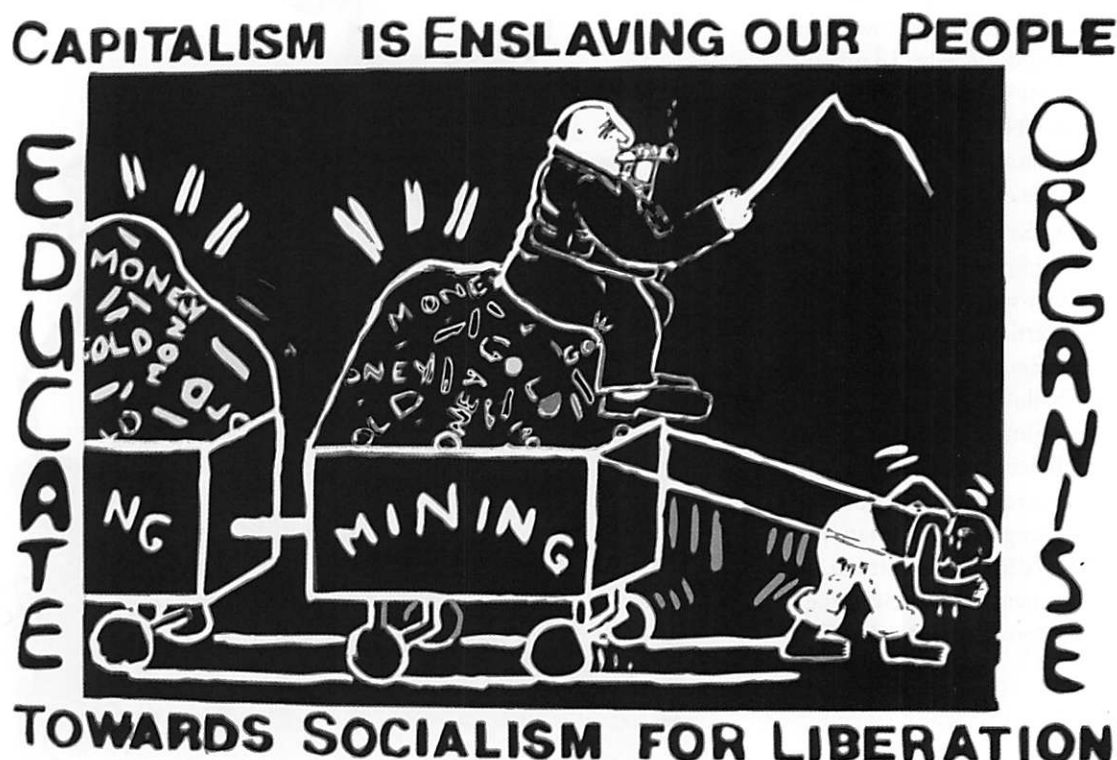
There was a lot of diversity among participants in the APOC conference: people of African-American, Arab, Asian, Latino, and indigenous descent were all present. Was there a strong sense of shared identity among the conference goers or was this diversity difficult to negotiate?

Imarisha: There was a strong sense of unity because we all knew we were there for a collective purpose. Most of us had never been in a space like this before, with so many other APOCs, and we were in awe. Everyone I talked to left feeling invigorated and rejuvenated after seeing the complex, multi-faceted, and determined face of APOC.

Ajani: I think it is safe to say we were able to feel a shared identity through our identities as people of color. Dialoging about those cultural differences, their histories and points of unity amongst radical/anarchist people of color is a natural step and one that hasn't been overlooked. The diversity at the conference didn't seem to me something that needed to be overcome: people were excited and inspired to see each other and to have a space in which we were not made to feel tokenized or left on the margins—that in itself was tremendous and empowering.

Aguilar: I caught two currents here. One was the vibe that all these other people of color were there and that we were thinking on another level. That was deep, because it speaks to the sense of humanity you can feel with people you've never met and the alienation many of us have experienced when in contact with white-led movements. The other current was one of curiosity, because some folks have never met, for instance, another Asian anarchist.

This page and previous page: Illustrations by two printmakers from the Community Arts Project (now renamed as the Arts and Media Access Centre), Cape Town, South Africa.



One of the most essential things is extending collective love and respect to the level of Black attendance at the conference. One of the things we don't acknowledge is that Black people carry a heavy load into this. Many other groupings clash with Black folks, and there's an unspoken prejudice that permeates the room anywhere. Everyone there seemed to have the good fortune of breaking away from the external tensions between ethnicities in many areas—Blacks and Latinos comes to mind—and bringing a really open spirit to the gathering. The level of trust was touching.

Proposals for the development of APOC organizations were dropped at the conference in favor of dialogue and more informal movement-building activities. Do you believe there is a need for APOC based organizations/networks and, if so, what form should such organizations take and what role would they play? What problems do you think such organizations might encounter?

Ajani: The proposals were dropped because a need was seen to first create a dialogue amongst people of color and figure out where we are, what kind of work we are doing, what we need, and why. Every group of people goes through this process in some capacity (or, if they don't, they should). As one of the co-authors of the first proposals for an APOC network, I see the need for APOC based organizations/networks and think that we should collectively decide how that group is structured and what our political points of unity are. But I was not surprised that people wanted to take a more organic approach in building APOC. I didn't expect to leave with an organization that people signed on to: I expected to leave with exactly what I left with, a starting point. In the future I think we will have to address how we intend to work together. An APOC organization could only mean a strong movement of people of color who are coming together to challenge their oppressions as marginalized peoples. For people of color, our struggle is not necessarily out of choice, but a refusal to assimilate into a system of complacency. There are potential problems in every organization, and the key is to have spaces for self-reflection, room for fluidity, and not to ignore history.

González: Currently there is a strong need and desire to redefine anarchism within the context of our experiences. "What does a people of

color Anarchism look like?" was a question discussed at the Detroit conference, and the dialogue is still happening around the country. Although I do believe organization is needed, and will likely form at some stage, right now the emphasis is on community building and consciousness raising. There are several APOC collectives forming around the country, so something is happening organically. Communications networks are also being created.

In regards to difficulties we might face, I would say the notable difficulty would be one we already face: police repression. I hope both APOC collectives and future, larger structures will organize with security in mind.

Imarisha: We always have to be careful when building institutions, because people of color are already trapped in institutions that smother us. APOC is so newly birthed and we are still figuring out this new and yet very old child of ours. As we grow together, as a movement and as individual organizers, and as the organizing work we're already doing grows, we will decide what shape our work will take. I have no doubt it will take many different shapes, molded by the powerful and insightful work already being done.

Aguilar: Looking back, one of the best things to come out of the conference was that no organization came out of it.

As I mentioned earlier, I think one of the biggest issues we face as a freedom movement is dealing with internalized issues such as self-hate, disunity, and lack of trust. Unfortunately, many political movements are not equipped to deal with these. Although a righteous sense of indignation makes us want to fight back, we're lost without a clear base of unity. Without an analysis and a willingness to fight the war on all fronts, including the war in ourselves and among our nations, our anger is ruling the work instead of our vision for the future.

Networks are coming together now, but our organization will spring forth in a way I don't think anyone has seen in many years. In unofficial ways, we already have an organization, meaning that we already have committees, local groups are forming, and so on. Our basis of unity is broad and, as the movement matures, clarifying it might be helpful. ✨

American APOC Resources

Anarchist People of Color Website: A clearing house of news, events, essays, and commentary. Also features the APOC email discussion list. <http://www.illegalvoices.org/apoc/>

APOC National Arts Festival 2004: A summer tour promoting local discourse around identity and anti-authoritarian ideals in communities of color while supporting local artists of color. <http://www.summertour2004.com/>

Anarchist Panther: On-line version of IAS Board member Ashanti Alston's zine, including various other essays and talks. <http://www.anarco-nyc.net/anarchistpanther.html>

NYC APOC: New York City based APOC group. <http://lists.riseup.net/www/info/apoc-nyc>

Chicago Anarchists of Color Tactically Unifying Struggles: CACTUS is a collective composed of and fighting for the struggles of people of color. <http://lists.riseup.net/www/info/cactus-announce>

Revolutionary Anarchist People of Color: Portland, Oregon based APOC group. rapoc@ziplip.com

Revolutionary Anti-authoritarians of Color: RACE is a west coast collective of people of color with revolutionary anti-authoritarian politics. race@riseup.net or <http://passionbomb.com/race/>

East Bay Uprising: An anti-authoritarian of color collective located on the west coast which focuses on police repression and the drug war.

APOC Regional Gathering: A Northern California gathering happening the weekend of April 16th-18th at Barrow Hall at UC Berkeley. <http://sfbayapoc.org/>

Reflections on Race and Anarchism in South Africa, 1904-2004



... Continued from page 1

Between these two main fractions were workers of the Colored ("mixed race") and Indian minorities. Like the Whites they were fully proletarianized. Largely urbanized by the 1930s, they enjoyed better public amenities than Africans and had basic trade union rights. Like the Africans, however, they were largely excluded from skilled trades, and, if not excluded, were not paid the going rate; their trading and residential areas and their amenities were also segregated.

Official State ideology centered on the notion of racial difference: at times constructed around notions of biological inequality, at times around notions of inherent cultural difference, and, specifically, of civilized Western versus barbaric African culture. This justification of the social order resonated with the White working class. Precisely because African labor was cheap and unfree, there were continual attempts by employers to expand its spheres of African employment: where skilled trades were deskilled by mechanization, attempts were made to replace White artisans with cheap semi-skilled Africans; where jobs were unskilled, the "poor Whites," with union rights and the vote, fared poorly in competition with the unfree Africans.

Fear of African replacement, an industrial "Black Peril," infused the early trade unions, which were established by Whites workers; this fear was an important theme in labor disputes into the 1980s. These unions generally adopted a "White Labourite" position: color

bars in membership, support for segregation, and demands for job reservation. The "poor Whites," concentrated in cheap but multi-racial urban slums before the 1940s, were in a contradictory situation: similar material conditions led to some social integration, and grave official concern about miscegenation; unemployment and competition for jobs generated bitter racial antagonism and sometimes flared into race riots. For their part, African workers regarded organized White labor with suspicion, and resented their own status. When trade unionism emerged amongst Africans in the late 1910s, it was generally racially exclusive and its demands were deeply colored by racial grievances.

The effect was the development of a bifurcated labor movement. White and African trade unions developed along separate lines: sometimes hostile, a sometimes allied, but almost never integrated prior to the 1990s. The Colored and Indian workers hovered between these two main worlds of labor: occasionally accepted into the White labor movement, albeit on unequal terms, these minorities were also forced downwards towards the African workers by racism. Their consciousness often reflected their status, with antagonism towards White labor often coupled with hostility towards Africans.

Early Anarchist Answers

The first anarchist active in South Africa was Henry Glasse, an Englishman who lived in the small coastal town of Port Elizabeth from 1881, from where he corresponded with London anarchist circles, translated works by Peter Kropotkin, wrote for Kropotkin's *Freedom*, and distributed anarchist pamphlets.

It was in Glasse's work that the first traces of an local anarchist approach to South Africa's racial question appear. The first step Glasse took was to reject a civilized / barbaric distinction; the second was explicit opposition to the oppression of Africans. In a November 1905 letter to *Freedom* he argued that "I would rather live amongst the Africans 'than amongst many who call themselves 'civilized,' for you can 'still find amongst them the principle of Communism—primitive Communism' and deep 'brotherly love.' Yet the Africans were brutally 'robbed and ill-treated':

They must not walk on the pavement, but in the middle of the road. They must not ride in cabs or tram, and in the trains there are separate compartments for them, just like cattle trucks. They must have passes a la Russia, and are allowed to live only in the 'location,' those Ghettos set aside for them. They are not allowed to be on the streets after 9 P.M., in the land that was once their own—their Fatherland!

Glasse soon took a third step: the application of anarchist internationalism to South African labor through the rejection of "White Labourism." In the *Voice of Labour*, the first socialist weekly in twentieth century South Africa (founded in 1908) he argued: "For a white worker in this South Africa to pretend he can successfully fight his battle independent of the colored wage slaves—the vast majority—is, to my mind, simply idiocy" (26/1/1912).

Color bars, for Glasse, undermined workers' common struggle against the class enemy. Such views were influential in the early radical left, including the revolutionary syndicalist current that emerged around the *Voice of Labour*: a De Leonite group, the Socialist Labour Party (SLP) and a section of the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) that was formed in 1910 were openly in favor of interracial unionism. These groups emerged soon after the South African tour of British syndicalist Tom Mann in early 1910. Sponsored by mainstream White trade unions, he annoyed his hosts with calls for workers' solidarity across race: "Whatever number there are, get at them all, and if there are another 170,000 available, white or black, get at them too" (Cope, 1940, *Comrade Bill*, p. 110).

1915 and the New Radicals

However, the local SLP and IWW did not make headway in breaking racial barriers: the SLP confined itself to abstract propaganda; the IWW was focussed on White transport workers in Johannesburg, Pretoria and possibly Durban. Both failed to take a crucial fourth step: combining opposition to racial oppression with trade unionism to *campaign* against racial oppression.

By the end of 1912, the SLP, IWW and *Voice of Labour* were disintegrating and thus did not play an organized role in the strike wave of June 1913 to February 1914, in which a minor dispute on a single mine exploded into a general strike across the Witwatersrand. Led by an unofficial strike committee, the strike ended with riots, the strikers in control of Johannesburg, and government humiliation. It did not, however, resolve grievances, and an attempt at a second strike was made in early 1914: the State was now better prepared and crushed the movement with martial law.

Two things are significant about the period. First, some strike leaders tried to draw African laborers into the strike movement in 1913, most notably George Mason of the strike committee, helping precipitate independent African strike action. Second, the drama and repression of 1913-1914 generated new radicals within the White labour movement. In the South African Labour Party (SALP), the party of the White unions that combined socialism with segregation, a radical faction emerged and was galvanized by a losing battle against SALP support for World War One. Their "War-on-War League" also attracted many SLP and IWW veterans.

Unions and Race

By September 1915 the "War-on-War League" broke all ties with the SALP, launching the International Socialist League (ISL). The ISL advocated an inter-racial unionism and revolutionary syndicalism. Its weekly, the *International*, called for a "new movement" across the "bounds of Craft and race and sex": "founded on the rock of the meanest proletarian who toils for a master" it would be "as wide as humanity" (3/12/1915). From this period, revolutionary syndicalism dominated the radical left, with the ISL the biggest group.

Like the revolutionary syndicalists of the *Voice of Labour* period, the ISL argued for the futility of "White Labourism"; unlike its predecessors, it added that active *struggle* against racial oppression was a crucial anti-capitalist struggle: "If the League deals resolutely in consonance with Socialist principles with the native question, it will

succeed in shaking South African capitalism to its foundations" (*International*, 1/10/1915). The ISL stressed that racial oppression not only divided the working class but was also functional to capital: "cheap, helpless and unorganized" African labour ensured "employers generally and particularly industrial employers, that most coveted plum of modern Imperialism, plentiful cheap labour" (*International*, 18/2/1916).

Finally, it stressed the role of direct action in destroying racial oppression, with particular emphasis on trade unionism. Mason stressed the need to help Africans unionize in order to repeal repressive legislation "by the strength of Trade Unionism" (*International*, 7/5/1916). For the ISL (*International*, 19/10/1917):

*Once organized, these workers can bust-up any tyrannical law.
Unorganized, these laws are iron bands. Organize
industrially, they become worth no more than the paper rags
they are written on.*

In July 1917, the ISL set up study groups for African workers in Johannesburg, where Andrew Dunbar, former IWW general secretary, played the key role. Police reports note that he spent the first meeting arguing that "the natives who are the working class of South Africa" had to be "organized" and "have rights" like any "white man." In September the study groups became a trade union, the Industrial Workers of Africa (IWA) and the African Trade Union in South Africa.

Other syndicalist unions were established, reflecting the fragmentation of the working class: in Durban, an Indian Workers



Left and right page and cover: "May Day is Ours!" series by a Community Arts Project (now renamed as the Arts and Media Access Centre) printmaker, Cape Town, South Africa.



Industrial Union in 1917; in Kimberly, a Clothing Workers Industrial Union and a Horse Driver's Union in 1918 amongst the mainly Colored population; in Cape Town that same year, the Industrial Socialist League (IndSL), an independent syndicalist group, organized (mainly) Colored factory workers into a Sweet and Jam Workers Industrial Union in 1918. In each union, workers of color played the key role, and from the ISL attracted key members such as T.W. Thibedi, Bernard Sigamoney and Johnny Gomas. The ISL and the IndSL also sought to radicalize the White trade unions, but with limited success.

In June 1918, the ISL, ANC and IWA cooperated in organizing an attempted African strike movement, the first of its kind. IWA members active in the ANC played a key role in pushing this moderate group to the left. Although the campaign fell through, eight people—two ISL, three IWA, and two ANC—were prosecuted for public disorder in South Africa's first multi-racial political trial, but acquitted.

In March 1919, the ANC launched a campaign against the pass laws on the Witwatersrand—with IWA members Reuben Cetiwe and Hamilton Kraai playing a key role—but it was called off by ANC moderates. Kraai and Cetiwe then moved to Cape Town, setting up the IWA on the docks and working with the Industrial and Commercial Workers Union (ICU). A restructured ICU, incorporating the IWA, would explode across southern Africa in the 1920s, combining endorsement of the IWW *Preamble* with serious levels of internal autocracy, corruption, and political chaos.

After Syndicalism

The Russian Revolution had tremendous effects on the local radical movement. Initially the ISL regarded the Revolution as a confirmation of its syndicalist views: the soviets were “the Russian form of the Industrial Union” (*International* 18/5/1917). Gradually a Leninist position was adopted. The ISL that played the key role in founding the official Communist Party of South Africa (CPSA) in 1921; the *International* became the CPSA organ.

Some revolutionary syndicalist tendencies remained in the early CPSA but the overall trend was towards acceptance of Communist International directives. Between 1921 and 1924 the CPSA mechanically applied V.I. Lenin's argument that British communists affiliate to the Labour Party in South Africa, by striving to join the SALP: the costs was abandonment of real work amongst workers of color. In 1924, the CPSA turned back to Africans, but in 1928 adopted the Communist International thesis that colonial and semi-colonial countries must pass through a national-democratic stage before socialism was possible. The “Black Republic” approach led the CPSA to focus on reforming the State, on de-racialising capitalism, and, from the 1940s, on building the ANC as the leading nationalist force. The ISL's link between anti-racist and anti-capitalist struggle was effectively broken.

From the 1970s, the State sought to remove the most odious features of apartheid: low-wage migrant labor was less economically important, popular struggles centered on African labour unionism and community and student struggles were in upsurge, and the economy was entering crisis. The reform project was overtaken by revolts, leading to the negotiation process that abolished apartheid

and left the ANC with the project of restructuring capitalism to restore profitability.

After Apartheid

In the late 1980s and early 1990s anarchism re-emerged in the mainly White and Indian punk scene, through fanzines such as *Social Blunder* and *Unrest*. The new anarchism was anti-racist, but vague and general: the ANC were distrusted as “new bosses” but no alternative analysis and strategy was presented. Matters changed after the 1994 elections, with the formation of study groups, the rise of a class struggle anarchist current in Durban and Johannesburg, and the formation of a national anarchist organization, the Workers Solidarity Federation's (WSF), with an explicit focus on the African working class.

The first issue of the WSF's *Workers Solidarity* argued that the defeat of legalized apartheid in the 1994 elections was a massive advance, but that a non-racial capitalism would incorporate the African elite without improving working class African conditions. A subsequent issue linked racism to “500 years” of capitalism, arguing that apartheid was primarily an expression of capital's need for cheap labour (*Workers Solidarity*, third quarter 1996). Rejecting the two-stage conception of change, it argued that “the fight against racism is a fight against capitalism and the State” and thus a class struggle.

The WSF was able to transform the racial composition of local anarchism, largely through involvement in student struggles and strike support: at its dissolution in 1999, it was a predominantly African organization. Its general approach to the race question continues to dominate local anarchism, but the WSF stress trade unionism has been largely superseded by interest in the new township movements against the ANC's austerity policies. The WSF's early recognition of the shift towards neoliberalism in post-apartheid South Africa helped provide an analytical bridge between the union and community foci.

Conclusion: In Red and Black

Several conclusions follow from the above discussion. First, the not-too-uncommon view that race is the historic blindspot of anarchism is indefensible. If, for example, within white dominion, within the British Empire, within colonial Africa, anarchists and revolutionary syndicalists could play a path-breaking role in organizing workers of color, in defending African labour, in civil rights activities, and do so on the basis of a class struggle and anti-capitalist analysis and strategy, there is much that to be learned from the anarchist past. Their analyses may be context-bound but represent a larger position on the race issue: Cuba, Mexico and Peru are other examples.

Secondly, whilst the anarchist tradition in South Africa has generally been anti-racist, it has best succeeded in incorporating people of color when anti-racist *principle* has become anti-racist *strategies* and activism. The bridge between the two was an *analysis* rooted in the architecture of classical anarchist theory: class struggle, internationalism, anti-statism, anti-capitalism, and opposition to hierarchy. Such tools bear use, if some sharpening; rather than leap to incorporate “whiteness studies,” postmodernism, nationalism and so on into anarchist analyses, the richness of classical anarchist theory rewards examination. ✱

The Life—or Death—of the Anti-Globalization Movement

The anti-globalization movement that erupted onto the scene in Seattle 1999 frightened elites and inspired activists around the world to fight the system in a utopian, anti-authoritarian way. However, this movement has occupied a much less significant place on the public stage since the terror attacks of September 11th, 2001. Is it over?

We asked Marina Sitrin (IAS grant recipient) and Chuck Morse (IAS board member) for their thoughts on this question.

Marina Sitrin

This question makes me immediately think of those who negate the autonomous social movements in Argentina, arguing that because they did not “take power” when the numbers in the streets might have allowed it, the movements must be over and dead. It is not an analysis based on movement history, nor is it one based on looking at things where they are, but rather is an analysis based on a future idea of what a movement should be, and then when that pre-conceived idea is not realized, the entire movement is negated. This is a misguided and unfortunate view of history.

I wonder, then, if the question of the life of the Global Justice Movement is meant to address what appears on first impression to be a decline in the numbers of people demonstrating in the street. Or maybe the question is directed at what we are currently doing, in that it appears that we are multi-focused. Regardless of the motivation behind the question, it opens a space for an important conversation. This is a very short dialogue, with the goal of bringing about more discussion and debate on the role and place of the movement, as well as a broader conversation on our overall goals as anti-capitalists. To place myself in this piece, I am an anti-capitalist, against all hierarchy, and believe in freedom and horizontalism.

The most important thing the movement has contributed to the politics and culture of the world is a new vision, a new way of imagining social relationships and a new way of placing ourselves as actors in the world. This is seen even in the name. There was a conscious decision by many in the movement to stop referring to the movement as anti-globalization, and use language that more clearly reflected the movement's desires: the creation of a new sense of justice worldwide. Social movements cannot be measured in the same way that many academic historians measure history, by counting numbers or gathering lists of demonstrations. The way in which we measure the life and

Chuck Morse

Revolutionary movements come and go. The classical anarchist movement, the black liberation movement, the ecology movement, and others pushed against the boundaries of the social order and then—when faced with challenges they could not confront—collapsed into history.

The anti-globalization movement has also come and gone. It leapt to world attention during the Seattle protests against the World Trade Organization and died with the February 2002 mobilizations against the World Economic Forum in New York City. Although struggles against capitalist globalization are ongoing, this particular movement is in need of an obituary.

Signs of its demise are everywhere. The movement is no longer capable of stirring fear among the ruling class or even generating significant media attention (despite the fact that the protests continue). Activist efforts to shape the movement have also diminished dramatically: books and documentaries on the movement now appear much less frequently than before, strategy summits are far less common, strategic innovations (like Indymedia) have ceased to emerge, and once vibrant internal debates have largely dried up.

These things indicate more than a temporary lull in activity: the anti-globalization movement is dead.

It died because it faltered when faced with a key opportunity to deepen its attack on the capitalist system. It bungled a historical moment and, as a result, lost its momentum as well as its significance for the public at large. Although activists may take up some of the movement's motifs in the future, these activists as well as the political context will be entirely different.

The anti-globalization movement was unique in three ways. First, its opposition to global capital was premised on a deeply moral critique of the reduction of people and nature to saleable objects, and in this



Illustration by Nico.

The Life—or Death—of the Anti-Globalization Movement

Marina Sitrin, con't

health of a movement is in the effect and affect it creates, not just in relation to power structures, but also in our relationships to one another, in what we are creating day to day with one another. I believe that the Global Justice Movement is alive and healthy and continues to generate new ideas, passions, and movements all over the world. This is seen most in the ways in which people are organizing globally, using horizontal visions while maintaining a clear anti-capitalist and anti-empire focus, as well as in how we listen and relate to our various movements around the globe, truly creating a movement of movements.

To think about the Global Justice Movement in the US, is to immediately think of Seattle in 1999. For me, participating in the shut down of the WTO, as well as the social creation that took place in the planning, signified a huge shift in my imagination. This shift was not because of the resistance in the streets, though it was beautiful, but rather the shift came from the way in which we resisted and continue to resist. This could be seen particularly with our parallel institutions, such as indymedia, legal and medical collectives, and the ways in which we made decisions. Seattle reflected a massive shift in the way that we relate to one another in every aspect of our organizing. Decisions were made directly democratically, each person listening to the other and striving for synthesis. Each person had a voice through the affinity group and spokes council model, a horizontal relationship based on the desire for freedom and not power-over or hierarchy. These models and ways of imagining relations were the most important thing to come out of Seattle, and have changed the ways in which activists relate to one another all over the country. In most student groups today, as well as in other groups and collectives, people use various forms of direct democracy and strive for horizontal structures. This is not merely a reflection of different decision-making structures, but is a broader reflection of shifting views on power. From the concept of power-over and taking power, to concepts of power-to, and the creation of other power, or anti-power.

The Global Justice Movement has changed over the past four years, as all living movements do. The movement is theoretically stronger, and seeks a deeper understanding and analysis of the world around us. The movement exploded with a definitive *no* to capitalism. This in itself, inseparably linked to horizontalism, was a huge step. Influenced by the Zapatistas, first there is a “NO” and then many yeses. The movement is creating new yeses each day. We

no longer focus solely on institutions of global capital, but also work against what many are calling “empire”. The anti-capitalism has gone beyond individual bad corporations or institutions to attempting to understand the role of the state, the military, and where they diverge and intersect with government and institutions of global capital.

As we are actively developing theoretically, our structures are in transition. While some of the direct action groups initiated after Seattle, such as the Direct Action Network, no longer exist, many others have since been created and have even deeper roots in communities and a broader theoretical perspective. Groups such as the Direct Action to Stop the War in San Francisco or the Wooster Global Action Network, and the New York City based Anarchist People of Color network, all horizontal in structure, anti-capitalist, and grounded in seeing the means of struggle as the ends. The effect of the movement has also been felt in some of the more traditional reformist or radical coalitions. For example, United for Peace and Justice in various cities uses forms of decision-making and sometimes even a spokes council model precisely because of the effects of those in the movement and from gathering lessons from the movement. I do not believe that there needs to be one organization, though various networks are of great importance if history is to be our guide at all. Globally there is the People's Global Action, that outside the US is still a very strong network that links horizontal anti-capitalist groups

from India to Argentina. Over the past few years in the US there have been hundreds of discussions, conferences, and documents attempting to spark more conversation around forming different types of anti-capitalist and anti-authoritarian networks or groups, and the past few months have witnessed a huge increase in these discussions. The groups in the US pre-Seattle were not in this place. Not only was there not a discussion of linking, but not in a horizontal way, nor so clearly anti-capitalist. We are in place much more advanced than that of the pre-Seattle period, and it is because of the global vision of horizontalism, anti-capitalism, and direct democracy. The movement is creating a new politic, based in many movements of the past, and I believe the movement of movements continues to get stronger and grow deeper roots.

The question of the life of the movement is an important one, and from there we need to get on with the continued visioning of the world we are creating. ✱



Poster about the anti-WTO demonstrations in Seattle, Nov. 1999, by Mike Flugennock.

Chuck Morse, con't

sense, it challenged the very premises of the market economy. Second, its emphasis on participatory direct action ensured that the movement was truly democratic and not divided between a cadre of professional organizers and a herd of passive followers. Finally, its focus on tactics but not politics allowed people with diverse and often contradictory convictions to work together and find some common ground.

The movement threw itself headlong into a conflict with the architects of the global economy, and the confrontation that ensued was enormously educational. The summit protests illustrated the deep contrast between the cruel, profit-driven world of the global capitalists and “another world” premised on the joyous affirmation of life. Everything—even the style with which each side presented its case—seemed to emphasize the divide. The violence that erupted at protest after protest was also very instructive: the police made our point about the barbarism of capital by savagely repressing dissidents, and the sight of city streets in flames punctuated the irreconcilable conflict between the two visions of the world in play.

The anti-globalization movement thus polarized the debate about the future of the world system and, by virtue of its success, confronted a question on which its fate would hang: if global capitalism must be abandoned, what is the alternative? What groups and institutions should structure economic activity? Nation-states? Associations of nation-states? Communities? Social movements?

The world waited for an answer, and unfortunately one was never produced. Although various proposals and schemes floated around activist circles, a reconstructive vision was neither seriously debated nor advanced. There were vigorous discussions of tactical issues (like the role of violence at protests) and moral issues (like the impact of privilege on activists), but the fundamental political questions remained unaddressed.

The movement not only failed to confront these questions but also developed a political culture that undermined attempts to do so. The constant affirmation of diversity, plurality, and openness—which are undoubtedly virtues, but vacuous outside a political context—discouraged people from seriously reflecting on the movement’s goals. Indeed, during its terminal stages, the movement seemed flooded with professors, grad students, and journalists who gravely warned us not to present an affirmative, coherent alternative.

Admittedly, the deferral of political questions had advantages. It allowed people to come together whose aims seemed deeply conflicted—lobbyists and anarchists, turtles and teamsters, Communists and Christians, etc.—and unexpectedly rich dialogues often resulted. Many discovered that they had more in common with one another than they previously supposed, and this helped the old

boundaries of the Left relax a bit.

But political questions cannot be avoided for long, especially by a movement that has captured the world’s attention. Indeed, people became increasingly impatient with the movement’s inability to define what it was *for*, as evidenced by the countless journalists who wrote countless articles trying to penetrate the movement’s aims. But the movement did not procure an answer, and more often than not, rejected the very legitimacy of the question.

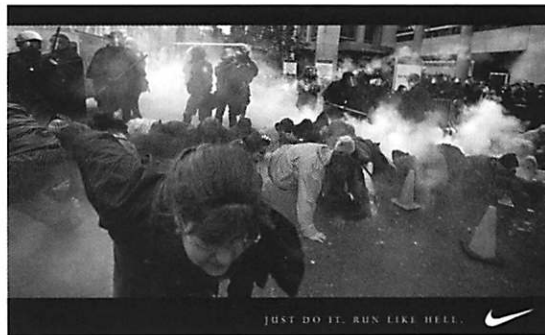
And then September 11th blew the movement off the stage. Although it reentered the debate in February 2002 in New York—valiantly asserting that opposition to globalization will not be silenced by terror—the movement lacked an anchor and thus could not regain its momentum amid the storms of war that began to sweep the world at the time.

It is tempting to argue that the anti-globalization movement lives on in the Zapatistas, the Argentine uprising of 2001, Brazil’s Landless Workers’ Movement, and other ongoing struggles in the “global south.” Although these

movements and the one that emerged in Seattle should be understood as parts of a broader, worldwide opposition to global capital, they are not continuous. The Mexican, Brazilian, and Argentine movements do not define themselves as participants in the anti-globalization movement and, more substantively, they do not focus *primarily* on the institutions of the world economy but rather on domestic political authorities and their national police. North American activists need to be attentive to these differences.

In a sense the movement—or at least the form in which we knew it—was destined to die. This is not because utopian aspirations are doomed to failure (they are not) or because struggles against capitalist globalization have ended (of course they haven’t). It is because revolutionary social movements aim to transform the circumstances from which they emerge and thus must always abandon old forms of struggle in order to adapt to new conditions (conditions that they have, in part, created). In a way, the most successful revolutionary movement will be one that renders the need for revolutionary struggle obsolete altogether.

What is more alarming than the death of the movement is the failure to reflect deeply on our inability to advance a coherent alternative when presented with the opportunity to do so. The anti-globalization movement did push beyond the boundaries of the present and helped us imagine “another world,” but its emancipatory aims were unrealized. We must embrace the chasm between our aspirations and our circumstances—between the “is” and the “ought”—and use it as an environment in which to forge an even more vigorous challenge to the world we have inherited. ✱



Protestors clashing with police during the Seattle anti-WTO demonstrations, Nov. 1999. Photo by Indymedia.

The IAS's 2004 Fundraising Campaign

Promoting Critical Scholarship on Social Domination and Radical Social Reconstruction

Since the IAS's inception in the spring of 1996 we have worked hard to support radical, anti-authoritarian scholarship on contemporary social contradictions and the possibilities of meaningful social transformation. Although the anti-authoritarian Left has become an increasingly important presence on the streets, radical theoretical work is just as important now as it was eight years ago. We need to clarify the anarchist alternative, deepen our critique of the present society, and study the victories and dilemmas of our movement if we are to build upon its accomplishments. The IAS is a means toward this goal.

Over these past eight years we have supported over forty projects by writers from around the world, including authors from South Africa, Nigeria, Argentina, Uruguay, Mexico, the United States, Canada, as well as other countries. We have funded movement research, translations, historical studies, and even a play. Many of these projects would not have been completed without our assistance.

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