

RACE & CLASS

**JOHN BERGER,
A. SIVANANDAN**

ON

**30 YEARS OF
RACE & CLASS**

JERRY HARRIS

ON

**EMERGING THIRD
WORLD POWERS**

- **AMERICA'S NEW FRONTIERS**
- **CLASS AND 'RACE' IN R. L. STEVENSON**
- **BLACK WORKERS IN SWEDISH UNIONS**
- **DIVERSITY IN THE WORKPLACE - BOON OR BANE?**

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RACE & CLASS

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Race & Class – the future

Some thirty years ago, the Institute of Race Relations, after transforming itself to meet the challenge of a growing British racism, transformed its arid and elitist quarterly Race into Race & Class: a journal for Black and Third World liberation. It was a period of rapid, mass, social and political change; of major liberation struggles and the installation of popular governments and Race & Class opened its pages to the scholar activists of the Third and First worlds. Through them, it analysed, reported and reflected on some of the most significant developments of the last quarter of the twentieth century: the new postcolonial realities; the changing nature of racism; 'low intensity' wars across the globe; cultural imperialism and neo-colonial depredations; Palestine/Israel; and the political, economic and social impact of the technological revolution.

Now, under the impact of globalisation, many of those issues have taken on added urgency, have proliferated in unforeseen ways – and been given a vicious new twist by a 'war on terror' that has reinscribed American imperial dominance even more brutally on the world. To analyse these new challenges and dangers, to reach out to the new movements and constituencies seeking to counter them and to mark the achievements of those first thirty years, a Race & Class reception was held at the House of Commons on 9 September 2004, hosted by Jeremy Corbyn MP and IRR Chair Colin Prescod.

We publish below Founding Editor A. Sivanandan's vision for a new political analysis to meet those challenges, given at the event, and a prose poem from John Berger, who wrote this for the occasion.

Race & Class

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Race & Class – the next thirty years

The next thirty years is a metaphor. We live in such a vortex of change that it is impossible to predict the next thirty days, never mind the next thirty years. But that is precisely why we must try to catch history on the wing if we are to influence its direction. To do that, we need the courage to abandon old orthodoxies which bear us down, the honesty to turn our faces against intellectual fads and fetishes which turn us away from engagement, and the commitment to fight injustice wherever we find it – for that is what brings us all together here today in fellowship, not ideology but a common visceral hatred of injustice. We need, too, the type of political analysis that Owen and Godwin, Saint-Simon and Fourier, Marx and Engels did for their time in the maelstrom of the industrial revolution – an analysis immanent in which were the strategies that would inform the working-class struggles against capital – and out of that conflict elicit, if not socialism, at least the democratic rights and freedoms that have come down to us.

And it is those rights and freedoms that we are in danger of losing today. The working-class forces that won them for us have been disaggregated and dispersed by the technological revolution – even as that revolution concentrates wealth in the hands of giant corporations and sets them free to roam the world, with the nation-states of the West clearing capital's imperial way by setting up stooge governments for consenting Third World countries, and regime change for those who refuse to play imperial ball. National governments, which under industrial capitalism worked in the interests of their people, under information capital work in the interests of multinational corporations – and the welfare state cedes to the market state, where those who own the media 'own' the votes that elect the government, where the social fall-out is mediated through welfare sops and controlled through draconian legislation which corrodes the whole fabric of civil society.

Some of these processes were already there in the very nature of globalisation. The fall of Communism hastened them and made them universal. September 11 entrenched them, and the ensuing war on terror added a *military* dimension to the *economic* project, justified through a *politics* of prejudice and fear to create a *culture* of xenoracism and Islamophobia: the asylum seeker at the gate and the shadow Muslim within.

It is that symbiosis between racism and imperialism, and imperialism and globalisation that now defines *Race & Class's* remit. We cannot look at the one without looking at the others. Imperialism is the project, globalisation the process, culture the vehicle, and the nation-state the political and military agent. To look at racism as an isolate without considering its relationship to globalisation, and therefore

imperialism, is not only to descend into culturalism and ethnicism but to overlook the state racism that embeds institutional racism and gives a fillip to popular racism in the form of laws and edicts that starve and dehumanise asylum seekers whom globalisation has displaced and thrown up on the shores of Europe. That's a long circuitous sentence, but it reflects the circuits of imperialism. If you want it in one: we are here because you are there.

To look at globalisation without relating it to imperialism and therefore racism is not only to regard its penetration into Third World countries as an inevitable extension of trade and not as a precursor to the regime change that follows in its wake, but to overlook the racist discourse that accompanies it and, in turn, feeds into popular racism.

To look at imperialism without relating it to globalisation and racism is not just to accept the notion that regime change and pre-emptive strikes have no underlying economic motive but are a defensive strategy against 'the axis of evil' and the terrorists 'they' breed – ('post-modern imperialism', Robert Cooper, one-time adviser to our PM and now adviser to the EU, calls it). It is also to accept the hoary old myth of the white man's burden of bringing civilisation and enlightenment to the lesser breeds, of freeing them from tyranny, forcing them to be free if necessary, bombing them into freedom and democracy. Except that the underlying theme this time is not that of a superior race but of a superior civilisation. Hence the real war, not the phoney war, is not between civilisations, as Huntington would have it, but against the enforced hegemony of western civilisation.

I am reminded of a tale from Aesop, or one of those guys, in which a wolf and a sheep are drinking from the same stream (some distance apart) and the wolf, eyeing his next meal, accuses the sheep of polluting his water. 'How can that be', protests the sheep, 'I am down stream and you are up.' 'That doesn't matter', says the wolf, 'I am going to eat you all the same.'

Sorry about the digression. To get back to the argument. The point I am trying to make is that, under global capitalism, the relationship between the economic, political, cultural etc., is so organic that we can no longer think of society in terms of superstructure and base, with the economic base determining the political and cultural superstructure. That would have done for industrial capitalism. But information capitalism, electronic capitalism requires us to think in terms of circuits, not hierarchies. And the dynamo that drives those circuits is the free-market system.

And the market, as we are only too aware, dismantles the public sector, privatises the infrastructure and determines social need. It violates the earth, contaminates the air and silts up the rivers. It creates a two-thirds, one-third society of the have-everythings and the have-nothings, and keeps poverty from the public gaze. It reduces personal

relationships to a cash nexus (conducted in the language of the bazaar) even as it elevates consumerism to the heights of Cartesian philosophy: I consume, therefore I am.

In the process, it creates a political culture of self-aggrandisement and greed, of lies, smears and sleaze, spin and sycophancy, hypocrisy and humbug – arrayed before us in the conduct of government and of those who govern us – and sealed with the kiss of self-righteousness. The irony is that when our rulers ask us *sub-homines* to live up to British values, it is not the values they exhibit that they refer to, but those of the Enlightenment which they have betrayed. Whereas we, the *sub-homines* that is, in our very struggle for basic human rights not only hold up human values, but challenge Britain to return to them.

September 11 and the war on terror have given the British government the excuse to develop a new virulent strain of anti-Muslim racism to go hand in hand with the punitive laws against asylum seekers – till all of us Blacks and Asians are, at first sight, terrorists or illegals. We wear our passports on our faces.

But just as these attacks on the values of liberty and justice and basic human rights have grown more far-reaching and insidious, so too have new movements and new constituencies sprung up to challenge them – and, what's more, have come together in global alliances against globalisation, as attested by the mass demonstrations in Geneva, Seattle, Prague, Genoa and Cancun and the deliberations of the World Social Forum, from Porto Alegre in 2001 to Mumbai in January this year.

No doubt strengthened by these protests, and instigated by the Brazilian President Lula da Silva, China, India, South Africa and Brazil (and soon perhaps Venezuela now that the attempts to get rid of Chavez have failed) have recently entered into trade agreements with each other and a Bandung-style political alliance to withstand American economic domination.

And here in this very room we have a cross-section of the movements I have been speaking of: the Ilisu Dam Campaign, the UK Chagos Support Association, Justice for Colombia, the Hillsborough Justice Campaign, the Campaign Against Criminalising Communities, the anti-fascist movement and Kick Racism out of Football, the Asian Dub Foundation's Community Music, the World Association of Community Radio Broadcasters, the Palestine Solidarity Campaign and CND. (Forgive me if I have missed out some of you.)

These, then, are the constituencies, movements and struggles that *Race & Class* must speak to and from. Racism, Empire, Globalisation and their various avatars are the issues *Race & Class* must tackle. But in doing so, we need also to maintain the editorial policy we pledged ourselves to thirty years ago, summed up in the phrase: the function of knowledge is to liberate. A naïve motto you would think, but it is in

adherence to that simple principle that we were able to withstand the superficial attraction of intellectual fashion and fancies, such as structuralism and postmodernism, sectarian polemics and orthodoxies, top-down interpretation of Third World societies, personal diatribes, nationalism and culturalism. By the same token, we have given a welcome to insurgent academics who, in Nyerere's grand phrase, want to return their education to the people who gave it to them (some of whom are here today); to truth-speaking front-line journalists who, blinded as we are by disinformation, give us eyes to see with (some of whom are here today); to principled politicians who help us to keep our faith in politics (some of whom are here today); to minority voices that never get heard; to daring new thinkers; to writers and activists from the Third World who write out of raw experience but haven't the credentials or connections to get published in mainstream journals or journals of High Theory. Often these are writers for whom English is not the first language and we help to rewrite their contributions in readable English without altering their line of thought or violating their sensibilities. The only stipulation we make – to all our contributors – is that the writing be simple and straightforward and jargon-free, so that everyone can understand it and use it as a tool in the struggle. The people we are writing for should be the people we are fighting for.

The fact that we have lasted thirty years without compromising our integrity attests to the success of our policies. The fact that we have not paid a penny to our contributors in all those years attests to their commitment.

The next thirty years does not seem to be such a metaphor after all – and to that end, let's dedicate this evening.

Thank you.

A. SIVANANDAN

A mouth speaks out alone

A little text for the 30th birthday of *Race & Class*

Yes it's my mouth. Alone on the white page. Outside it's snowing. My two lips and, in the night between, a tongue. You can see it? You lip-read? You are so young. But you do lip-read.

The snow is falling everywhere. On lies and on what is true. The flakes make no distinction, they land gently on both. Did you notice I said 'on what is true', not 'on the truth'. The single truth is also a lie. This is something I have learnt since it began to snow.

The blizzards were forecast, but, like any winter, they took us by surprise. The President of the Republic addressed the nation. Don't ask me which nation, for, if I tell you, the paper on which I am drawn may be torn up. Here I only have the status of an emigrant. Perhaps you can see that by my lower lip. You can see a little home-sickness?

The President told the people they were living through a period of transition and that in his heart he was with every one of them. A transition towards what? one might ask. Perhaps a period of eternal snow? He didn't say. He himself was lost in a drift. He smiled and went on and on; the one thing which became clearer and clearer was that he was lying. At the end he was even able to turn words which mean nothing at all – words like *development* and *modernisation* – at the end, he was even able to transform these into lies. He was on the telly, immediately following the latest reports about the snow.

Whilst he was speaking, I watched his mouth. I don't claim to be an expert but a mouth is all I am, albeit a foreign mouth, so I watched with a certain interest. His is like a bladder-wrack blister. I refer to his mouth. This is the effect of thirty years of using words, speaking them, to distract attention from what is happening behind his listeners' backs. Most stooges, decoys and stool pigeons get bladder-wrack. It comes from the indifference of the lips to what they're pronouncing. Also called Pop-weed, belonging to the kelp family, in the class of *Phaeophyceae*! Did you see the tongue touching the back of the top teeth to make the c? Examine mouths carefully. Bladder-wrack comes from a contempt for words.

For example, the President of the Republic argued that if we all consumed more, there would be fewer unemployed. When I heard this I thought of my old friend, the Arse, and I made one of his noises.

The snow flakes now are as large as goose feathers. You can't see across the road. In Europe there are 30 million unemployed. I, too, taste their bitterness. Each of them speaks and not one is heard. They speak to their fear in the night. To each I'd like to whisper in the dark: may I kiss you? And then do it.

JOHN BERGER

Emerging Third World powers: China, India and Brazil

JERRY HARRIS

Abstract: China, India and Brazil have become world economic powers; they are attempting to harness the forces of globalisation so as to strengthen their international standing in multilateral institutions like the WTO. Theirs is not a surrender to imperialism, but an attempt to build a bulwark against it, from which they can implement their own national strategies for development – strategies that are qualitatively different from those followed by the non-aligned movement after Bandung. While each country is pursuing a somewhat different path, their collective might within the G-20 is already forcing concessions on trade, agriculture and subsidies from the US and EU. But do such growing South-South economic linkages have the potential to transform the global balance of power?

Keywords: Bandung, Beijing Consensus, Doha, FDI, G-8, G-20, globalisation, non-aligned movement, transnationals, WTO

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China, Brazil and India have emerged as important global powers, creating political waves across Europe and the US. Not only are they becoming more assertive in transnational institutions like the World Trade Organisation (WTO), but their economic weight is felt throughout the world. As the *Financial Times* has pointed out, the rise of China and India 'heralds a transformation of the global economic and political order as significant as that brought about by the industrial revolution or by the subsequent rise of the US'.¹

The global integration of China, India and Brazil reflects their emergence as powerful modern economies. But this transformation creates tension between nation-centric class interests and the newly created relationships linked to transnationalised accumulation. This shift and its resulting contradictions constitute the dominant process in the world today. The struggle is both global and internal, as each national economy is remoulded to fit into the emerging global mode of production. This conflict pits descending forms of national production against rising forms of globalised capital. The old international system that arose with industrial capitalism rooted itself in building national markets, exporting abroad, using the state for economic development, creating a social contract with the working class and projecting power into the Third World for its own national monopolies. The globalist accumulation model is based on cross-border mergers, foreign direct investment, transnationalised assembly lines, global labour stratification, the free flow of capital and multilateral institutions developing common rules on trade, finance and investments. This regime is based on the revolution in information technology that has transformed the tools of production and made possible the reorganisation of capitalism on a qualitatively more integrated level.

The remoulding of each national economy creates an array of contradictions between the old and new forms of accumulation. As each country transforms its social relations and institutions, it enters a process conditioned by its own history and culture. Thus, uneven development determines the pace and nature of local insertion into the global economy. This process is occurring in China, Brazil and India, with ramifications for their internal class struggles as well as their place in the global order. Each of these countries now sees its national development in terms of globalisation. Although they all share similar political origins in socialist ideology or state-led economies, they no longer pursue the strategy of import substitution and developing large state-protected enterprises so common in the Third World from the Bandung era and throughout the 1970s. Although their nationalist histories affect their transformation today, state-directed development is now geared to global production chains linked to transnational capital.

This is not a comprador surrender to imperialism, but a developmental strategy promoted by the new political and economic elite of

the transnational capitalist class. Within their particular political and historic contexts, the aim of China, India and Brazil is, in each case, to enlarge the middle class, create jobs for the poor, develop a technologically advanced economy and increase its political power in the international arena. But does global capitalism have the social capacity, political will and environmental flexibility to move millions of working poor towards decent living standards and higher income levels? Globalisation is driven by a race to the bottom in which transnationals seek out the lowest wages and most exploitative conditions. Any reversal of this accumulation strategy is highly doubtful without a revolution from below and a radical shift in thinking and power. Yet can economic growth and modernisation increase the organisational and political capacity of the working masses to the point where they can independently transform society to create a more democratic and just world? And, if so, what level of support should working-class organisations and popular social movements extend to Third World globalists? Such strategic questions of transitional reforms and revolutionary change, framed in the context of globalisation, are key concerns as the process of development unfolds.

China

China's national history is deeply affected by its struggle against imperialism and its communist revolution that led to state-directed economic development. Even under the current globalist regime, Chinese leaders have been careful to retain control of their economy. So far, they have avoided the pitfalls of financial speculation and the loss of capital controls that placed other countries under IMF-dictated structural adjustment programmes. Chinese leaders intend to insert themselves into the global economy as fully respected and integrated members of the transnationalised capitalist class, not as indebted junior partners. They have used their control of the government and their statist experience to remould local economic institutions and jettison their communist past without losing their power. In fact, the state-owned sector still produces 68 per cent of GDP and employs hundreds of millions of people. Unlike their Russian cousins, who lost any sense of national purpose in a chaotic surrender to the new oligarchy, Chinese communists have transformed their socialist ideology into a new national project that defines modernisation in globalist terms. But their heritage of national independence, shorn of its Maoist egalitarianism and radical impulse, helps to determine their insertion into the globalist structure.

Although *Newsweek* complains that 'lingering absurdities of Chinese communism continue to foil the multinational dream of huge profits', many of these 'absurdities' are realistic concerns over national

development and uncover the contradictory process of Chinese globalisation.² This nationalist/globalist dialectic is revealed in an interview with Samsung's CEO Yun Yong. When asked what it was like working with Beijing, Yong replied, 'Chinese officials are perhaps the most accommodating in the world to foreign investors, because their job performance is evaluated on the amount of foreign capital they attract. There are unions in China, but they don't pose serious problems.' Yet Yong also explained, 'You cannot survive in China without becoming a Chinese company. That includes local technology development, product design, procurement, manufacturing and sales.'³ For Chinese capitalism, the road to national development runs parallel to globalisation. In fact, China's stock of foreign direct investment to GDP was 36 per cent compared to 1.5 per cent for Japan and 5 per cent for India.

The massive expansion of the Chinese economy is being driven by the huge movement of the rural population to the cities, plus an industrial revolution that is transforming China into the centre of world production. Eight hundred million people still live in rural China, but it is predicted that, over the next fifteen years, 250 million will move to urban centres. That is nearly equivalent to the population of the United States. The implications for building the infrastructure necessary to accommodate such a move over such a short period of time are almost incomprehensible. The need for housing, sewerage, energy and transport is akin to creating an entire nation from the ground up. This internal transformation will create a massive need for steel, coal, oil, cement and all other basic commodities and could fuel an explosive economy well into the future. Some Chinese cities already approach the size of some countries. Shanghai has a GDP of US\$80 billion, putting it on a par with Hungary, Chile and Pakistan. Tianjin, a port city close to Beijing, has attracted 3,678 companies to its economic zone, including many top transnationals such as Coca-Cola, Motorola, Nestlé and Samsung.

Higher urban wages are pulling many into the cities, with approximately 150 million former peasants roaming from job to job. Yet many new urban workers toil for less than the minimum wage, lack social benefits and suffer unpaid overtime. Nevertheless, incomes in the countryside are 65 per cent below the average urban wage, a larger difference than existed under the Maoist farm collectives. Life in the city may be hard, but urban workers still manage to send money home. Remittances contribute 40 per cent of peasant incomes, helping families to buy consumer goods like televisions and washing machines.

Apart from urban construction jobs, China is moulding its future to the global economy as the world's best export platform and internal commodities market. Almost every transnational in the world wants to produce and sell in China, making it the world's third largest

importer and third largest exporter. Although the US and Germany sell more goods abroad, China accounted for 60 per cent of the world's export growth last year. Overtaking Japan as an exporting power, China is more deeply integrated in the global production chain, with 50 per cent of its foreign sales and 29 per cent of its industrial output generated by transnational corporations.⁴ China has also outstripped the US as the world's primary destination for foreign direct investment, pulling in US\$52.7 billion in 2003 and US\$480 billion since 1990. As Sumner Redstone, chief executive of Viacom, says: 'There is no such thing as a global strategy without China.'⁵

China's production chains are now the focal point around which the Asian regional economy spins. Replacing both Japan and the US, China has become the largest manufacturer and trading partner in an interregional market that hit US\$722.2 billion in 2001 and had the fastest rate of growth in the world since 1985. Recently, intraregional trade accounted for the majority of Asia's export growth, with much of the increase flowing to China. China is now both Japan's and South Korea's largest trading partner. In fact, much of Japan's growing recovery depends on goods going to China. Previously idle capacity in construction machinery, steel and shipbuilding is now running at full stretch. Over the last year, Japan's exports to China have grown by 33.8 per cent while exports to the US have fallen by 5.4 per cent.⁶ Japan has also made huge investments in Chinese cities. In the Shanghai region, Japan is involved in 4,600 joint ventures, with investments approaching US\$9 billion while, in Dalian, another 2,500 Japanese companies have arrived, pouring in US\$5.6 billion.

From a global perspective, China's impact is truly staggering. In 2002, it accounted for 28 per cent of the world's traded iron ore, 24 per cent of its zinc, 23 per cent of its stainless steel, 21 per cent of its aluminium and 17 per cent of its copper.⁷ China's industrial drive has also made it the largest importer of tin, platinum and chemicals, the third largest importer of nickel and the largest producer of cotton. When it comes to coal, China is the world's largest producer and consumer and the second largest exporter. Its enormous use of raw materials has reduced worldwide metal inventories and stimulated a surge in commodity prices that have jumped by anything between 40 per cent to 200 per cent. This has created a mining boom in Japan, Australia, Canada and Brazil, with transnationals like Nippon Steel, BHP Billiton and Rio Tinto riding the wave. Yet another effect is the rise in bulk shipping, with a 600 per cent jump in rates and new orders for shipbuilders. In addition, China is now the world's third largest market for cars; GM, Ford, Honda, Toyota, Hyundai and Daimler-Chrysler all produce inside the country, most often in partnership with local firms. Volkswagen is the leading foreign player, with 30 per cent of the market.

Key to this industrial revolution is steel. Now the largest producer and consumer of steel, China pours 220 million tons, more than Japan and the US combined. Capacity for another 230 million tons is currently under construction or being planned. Such rapid growth has global repercussions, large and small. The world's largest steel producer, Arcelor of Luxembourg, the world's second largest producer, LNM of the Netherlands, German giant ThyssenKrupp and the South Korean steel conglomerate Posco all have substantial investments in China. 'LNM is a global company but we cannot be properly global if we do not have a plant in China', notes its Indian owner Lakshmi Mittal.⁸ The Germans seem to agree; ThyssenKrupp is dismantling its Dortmund integrated mill and shipping it lock, stock and barrel (250,000 tons' worth) to be reassembled and operated in China. Consuming 26 per cent of the world's steel, China's appetite has even filtered down to the alleys of Chicago. Junkmen picking up discarded appliances have seen a jump from \$20 a load to \$80 as scrap metal yards ship almost everything they can get to the Chinese mainland for double the price per ton.

The Chinese industrial revolution has created a tremendous need for energy and accounts for 40 per cent of the world's demand for more oil. The government's 'Go Out' policy has turned China into the world's fifth largest direct foreign investor and is evident in its search for energy. State-owned oil companies hunting for oil and gas resources have made nearly thirty overseas investments totalling more than US\$5 billion dollars. China National Petroleum Corporation has made large acquisitions, including a US\$1.2 billion dollar deal in Sudan, a US\$320 million deal in Kazakhstan and a US\$1.2 billion dollar project now on hold in Iraq. In order to make long-term supply contracts, China National Offshore Oil Corporation (CNOOC) has been involved in equity deals with Australia's North-West Shelf gas project and Indonesian Tangguh, whose majority owner is British Petroleum.

Another area in which transnational integration is evident is the petrochemical industry. Shell has joined CNOOC in a US\$4.3 billion deal to create the largest joint venture on the mainland. The petrochemical complex will produce 2.3 million tons, with expected sales of US\$1.7 billion. Although the project will employ about 100 subcontractors, 70 per cent of the goods and services will come from China. Meanwhile, the UK's BP and Germany's BASF have linked up with China's largest petrochemical group, Sinopec, to build similar complexes to satisfy the growing need for industrial chemicals.⁹

Any analysis of China would be incomplete without a look at its growing information technology sector. About 20 per cent of Chinese exports are considered high tech; of these, 61 per cent come from wholly foreign-owned enterprises. Among China's top exporters are Dell, Logitech and Motorola. But China is pursuing the development

of national champions as well as integration with foreign transnationals. Huawei Technologies, the Chinese telecommunications giant, employs 10,000 researchers, has sales in forty countries and joint ventures with NEC, 3COM and Matsushita. State-owned China Netcom, another telecommunications company, is competing with Motorola and Nokia for the largest home mobile phone market in the world.¹⁰ When it comes to television sets, the state-owned company TCL merged with Thomson from France to become the world's largest producer; Chinese electronic enterprises BOE Technology and SVA have both entered the liquid crystal display market and are expanding abroad.

One of the most rapid areas of expansion is semiconductor and chip production, and China has the third largest and fastest growing market in the world. Semiconductors are the second largest US export to China and are expected to hit US\$47 billion in 2005. Although Shanghai has been the base for the emerging chip industry, recent expansion to Beijing reflects its rapid rise. For example, South Korea's LMNT is building a US\$1.4 billion memory chip fabrication plant in Beijing's microelectronic industrial park. The venture will raise funds globally and include South Koreans, Taiwanese, Americans, Europeans and Japanese on its management teams. The US semiconductor company SPS is also entering Beijing with a US\$800 million plant that will also include global funds and an international management team. Not to be left behind, Shanghai-based Semiconductor Manufacturing International is staging an initial public offering (IPO) in Hong Kong and New York to raise funds for its US\$1.25 billion plant, also scheduled for Beijing.¹¹ Other recent deals include one by Hynix, which is planning a US\$1.2 billion project that includes the Chinese government, Europe's largest chipmaker STMicroelectronics and GSMC of Taiwan. GSMC's owner, Winston Wong, is partnered with Neil Bush, brother of President Bush, and Jiang Mianheng, son of China's recently retired president.

China's semiconductor industry is integrated into the global production chain doing back-end assembly and testing while more sophisticated work remains in foreign hands. To attract transnationals, the government offers cheap land, low taxes and, when necessary, seven-day work weeks. But Chinese officials see this as part of a long-term strategy to higher-value and indigenous-based production. One example of higher-end work is Microsoft's research lab in Beijing, which employs 150 of the best programmers in China. The lab has already developed more than seventy technologies that are used in Microsoft products and two of the lab's previous directors are now vice-presidents at Microsoft's headquarters in Seattle.¹²

China's strategy to advance its own economic base through globalization can be seen in its relationship to the global computer industry.

The US semiconductor industry was one of China's strongest supporters for entry into the WTO. But the Chinese also impose a value-added tax of 17 per cent on imported semiconductors that is reduced to 3 per cent for local producers. This resulted in a WTO complaint being lodged by Washington. As noted by Rhett Dawson, president of the Information Technology Industry Council: 'They are fairly unabashedly trying to grow their own industry on the technology we've developed. They have a deliberate policy.'¹³

On the financial side, we need to look at both banking and the stock market. Mainland companies are now regularly listed on the Hong Kong and New York exchanges. Among the top Hong Kong performers of 2003 were Aluminium Corporation of China, growing by 391 per cent, Maanshan Iron and Steel, up by 357 per cent, and Jiangxi Cooper, up 292 per cent. Chinese fortunes were also rising in New York, with investors pouring money into telecom, airline, petrochemical and coal mining stocks. From July 2003 to March 2004, mainland companies raised over US\$15 billion in equity deals with Chinese IPOs as the driving force of a hot year in Asian stocks. China's growth is also pivotal to emerging markets and any slowdown would hit commodity prices affecting Russia, South Africa, Indonesia and Brazil. Branching out to the London Stock Exchange, one of China's largest infrastructure, water and sewer conglomerates, Capital One, hopes to raise US\$2.8 billion. Making water a commodity asset is one of the hot new markets for transnational capitalists. As a leading Chinese manager complained, water costs were too low because of communist-era controls: 'One ton of tap water costs one renminbi. That is less than a small bottle of mineral water.'¹⁴ With the current changes, higher returns will certainly flow to Capital One's new global investors.

Global investment banks are also looking towards internal Chinese stock markets, which are expected to become the second or third largest in the world by 2010, with a capitalisation of US\$2 trillion. Foreign firms need to partner with local investment banks, but are limited to 33 per cent ownership and no more than 49 per cent in the future. Morgan Stanley, JP Morgan, UBS, Credit Suisse First Boston and Deutsche Bank are among the major players today. Although most investment banks would prefer to operate on their own without domestic partners, a Chinese investment banker notes: 'Some of our competitors believe they can outsmart the regulators and circumvent the rules, but they have no chance of succeeding because regulators want to breed a domestic investment banking industry, not facilitate a smash-and-grab raid by the foreigners.'¹⁵ Again, Chinese strategic plans are in evidence – for partnership, not subservience, through a careful mixing of national development with globalist practices.

One of the biggest changes in China is the transformation of its banking system with the help of global financiers. A foreign advisory

council was formed to help the banking ministry draw up its plans. It includes Sir Edward George, former governor of the Bank of England; Gerry Corrigan, former president of the New York Federal Reserve; Andrew Crockett, former general manager of the Bank of International Settlements; David Carse, former deputy chief executive of the Hong Kong Monetary Authority; and Sir Howard Davies, former head of the UK's Financial Services Authority. With a focus on China's biggest state banks, the intent is to clean up bad debt, overhaul management systems, impose strict corporate governance standards and then sell stakes to strategic investors, including some listing on stock exchanges. The four biggest banks hold 70 per cent of China's banking assets. Morgan Stanley is expected to do the initial public offering for China Construction Bank; Goldman Sachs and UBS for the Bank of China; and Credit Suisse First Boston is expected to list the Industrial and Commercial Bank of China. Among the major cross-border investors in the Chinese banking sector are HSBC, Citigroup, BNP Paribas, Credit Lyonnais and International Finance Corporation, the private sector arm of the World Bank.

China's rapid economic growth also has political dimensions. China has a central role in the Asian Pacific Economic Council and the UN Security Council and growing influence in the WTO. For decades, China has promoted a polycentric view of world power that depends more on its soft power than on military might. This was evident during Prime Minister Wen Jiabao's trip to Europe, when French president Jacques Chirac formally agreed with China to 'foster the march towards multipolarity' in order to 'oppose any attempt at domination in international affairs' – a clear reference to the US.¹⁶ During China's Maoist period, the emphasis was on promoting independence for the Third World and the political influence of Chinese Marxism. Today, China's economic ties make it a major stakeholder in international institutions and its industrial growth is a model for developing countries.

The Chinese insertion into the global economy is, in many ways, a rejection of the Washington Consensus that dominated thinking in the 1990s and is still prevalent at the IMF and World Bank. Wen Jiabao's new policies, developed out of think-tanks after the 1997 Asian crash, amount to what Joshua Cooper Ramo has termed the 'Beijing Consensus'. This strategy takes a cautious approach to privatisation, free trade and capital markets – all hallmarks of neo-liberal globalisation. Instead, China is seeking co-ordinated development that attempts sustained growth, political independence and a new social contract with an emerging middle class. As Ramo notes, 'it is the power of a model for global development that is attracting adherents at almost the same speed as the US model is repelling them'.¹⁷

But China's modernisation is defined within global accumulation and production. The emergence of the Chinese transnational capitalist

class is built on foreign integration at home and abroad. Chinese specialist Yasheng Huang points out that 'China has chosen to rely on foreign investment more heavily than on nurturing domestic private companies as a source of development and trade . . . Through FDI China runs a huge processing operation for the world on behalf of multinational corporations.'¹⁸ Nevertheless, many of these corporations operate through joint ventures, helping to create the basis for the Chinese to integrate into the transnational capitalist class.

This strategy adheres to the foundation of Third World independence developed out of the Chinese revolution, but has recast it as a model for insertion into the global economy. It is a model highly attractive to other Third World globalists seeking full partnership in the transnational economy. Even US globalists have contrasted the Chinese path to the unilateralist and protectionist policies growing in America. Commenting on Bush's policies that label China a 'strategic competitor', former Reagan trade negotiator Clyde Prestowitz wrote that 'China appears to be winning the competition with its good global citizenship, while the US is increasingly a candidate for the "rogue nation" label'.¹⁹ Worried about 'xenophobic American Congressmen', Stephen Roach, chief economist for Morgan Stanley, noted: 'No one said globalization would be easy. But in the end, it sure beats the alternatives. Thank you, China, for showing the way.'²⁰ Such is the recognition among transnational capitalists of China's importance to globalisation.

India

For decades, India followed the statist developmental model established by Jawaharlal Nehru and the Congress Party. This resulted in a large civil service employment base, with state-sponsored industries following a strategy of import substitution that was backed by a non-aligned foreign policy. This policy was also generally supported by two large electoral reformist Marxist organisations, the Communist Party of India (CPI) and the Communist Party of India (Marxist) (CPI (M)). To encourage national cohesion, Indian identity was cultivated as a composite of many faiths co-existing under a secular state.

But this nationalist model of development was challenged by the rise of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) under the leadership of Atal Behari Vajpayee. The BJP combines Hindu ethnic nationalism with neo-liberal economics – a mixture of narrow nationalism with a globalist economic outlook that is particular to India. The BJP arose out of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), an extremist Hindu organisation modelled on the Italian fascist movement. It was a member of the RSS who assassinated Mahatma Gandhi, an act celebrated in the streets by Hindu nationalists.

Vajpayee has urged the BJP towards less extremist policies, but, nevertheless, under his government, widespread and violent attacks against Muslim and Christian communities were carried out by BJP members. Yet, on the international stage, Vajpayee moved to relax tensions with Pakistan and deepen economic ties with China; he also joined the Brazilian leadership in a robust promotion of Third World economic concerns to the WTO. At home, the BJP set out to privatise India's large state-owned industries and cut the federal bureaucracy in typical neo-liberal fashion. But the BJP's global strategy undercut some of its nationalist appeal. The focus on the advanced urban economy and the small emerging IT middle class meant that agricultural reforms that would benefit India's great rural poor majority were ignored.

The result was that millions of poor and working-class Indians gave a surprise victory to the Congress Party in the 2004 elections. But the Congress Party is also committed to bringing India into the transnational economy. For, commented Wipro's vice-chairman Vivek Paul: 'Let's remember that Congress was the architect of reforms a decade ago and the first to turn away from the old centralist system. That is a great comfort.'²¹ The appointments of Manmohan Singh as prime minister and Palaniappan Chidambaram as finance minister have reassured transnational capitalists that India will continue on its path towards global integration. As finance minister in the previous Congress government, the Oxford-educated Singh was the first to push neo-liberal reforms. Chidambaram is a Harvard-educated economist who, as a lawyer, represented some of the largest transnational corporations operating in India.

But the Congress Party has positioned itself as neo-Keynesian globalist in orientation rather than neo-liberal. This has committed the party to a more cautious approach to privatisation while it promises to help the rural economy by building new roads and irrigation projects. This would bring India closer to the 'Beijing Consensus', particularly with the strong electoral showing for the CPI (M) and other Marxist parties that are critical of the IMF and the selling of profitable state-owned companies. Singh has already abolished the Ministry of Privatisation and has ruled out the sale of some major state-owned companies in the oil, gas and energy sectors. The central government still owns 240 state companies and foreign direct investment only accounts for 0.7 per cent of GDP, compared to 4.2 per cent for China and 3.2 per cent for Brazil.

Communist influence worries global investors, who complain that India's labour laws are too restrictive and fear that the new government will fail to make it easier to fire workers and hire temporary labour. In 2003, transnationals contributed only US\$4 billion dollars in foreign direct investment compared to US\$50 billion in China. 'We can forget labour reform for the time being', declared Subir Gokarn,

chief economist of Crisil, India's largest domestic credit rating agency. But global capitalists should not be overly concerned. The CPI (M) has governed West Bengal for over twenty years; IBM is one of that state's largest investors. As Jon Thorn, manager of the India Capital Fund of Hong Kong, stated: 'If Bengal is good enough for IBM then the rest of India should be okay for equivocating foreign investors.'²²

It was the millions of rural poor who put the Congress Party back into power. But reforming the agricultural sector to fit the global economy would cause widespread displacement of the small farmers who dominate the countryside. India has subsidised local food production to ensure supplies for its population, and about 58 per cent of the national workforce is still on the land. Only 40 per cent of India's farmland is irrigated, with little mechanisation and few large-scale farms; the World Bank estimates that India accounts for 40 per cent of the world's poor living on less than \$1 per day. Increasing agricultural productivity would eventually mean larger farms, more machinery and diversification of crops to serve the international food market. Such reforms would throw millions off the land and into the cities. But the industrial sector and infrastructure simply do not have the ability to absorb such a massive structural shift. Unless the Congress Party and its Left allies can devise a different strategy, it is doubtful whether they will be able to avoid future political upheavals by the rural masses.

India's main insertion into the global economy comes from its rapid advance in information technologies and pharmaceuticals. It's a high-end strategy that has attracted much attention, particularly as India became the choice for offshoring IT jobs from the US. This model is the opposite of China's massive integration based on low-wage manufacturing. In fact, India's industrial base lags far behind China's, offering fewer opportunities for foreign direct investment. While India's factory wages are low, they are still above Chinese standards. China has 100 million workers in its manufacturing sector, compared to just 9 million in India. This gap shows up in the export figures; in 2003, exports accounted for US\$318 billion for China, but just US\$60 billion for India. China's strategy, however, has created a greater urban economy that attracts millions caught in rural poverty and is more effective in developing a wider consumer base. For example, China sells 35 million televisions per year compared to 6 million in India and its internal market is three to four times larger than India's.²³

Where India shines is in its outstanding world-class education system in information technology and business. It is estimated that India's middle class has grown to 150 million people. Although, currently, the IT sector only employs 1 million workers, future growth projections predict a rapid rise. US studies show that, within four years, IT outsourcing will be an industry worth US\$57 billion per year, employing 4 million people and responsible for 7 per cent of India's

GDP. In 2003, India had 52 per cent of the global revenues from outsourced IT work and 46 per cent of the employment. Currently, 442 foreign companies outsource contracts greater than US\$1 million dollars to India. In the US, IT employment may lose from 25 per cent to 47 per cent of jobs to India, including software development and maintenance, IT documentation, software re-engineering and systems management.²⁴ India's lead over China is also apparent in its US\$10 billion of IT exports, compared to US\$1.5 billion from its northern neighbour. Moreover, fifteen Indian technology companies accounted for 40 per cent of China's IT exports. In return, China is investing in India, with the Huawei corporation building a US\$100 million plant in Bangalore.

US transnationals have also entered India. Some of the biggest investors include General Electric, Intel, Cisco, IBM and Dell. Although outsourcing to India has caused a political uproar in the US, most corporations see this as a temporary outcry stirred up by the presidential contest. In the midst of the controversy, IBM acquired Daksh e-Services, the third largest call centre in India. The deal was concluded just two weeks after IBM had scored a ten-year contract to manage the technology needs of Bharti Tele-Ventures, one of India's biggest telecommunications groups. In 2003, there were thirty-seven cross-border mergers in India's business-process outsourcing sector, worth US\$289 million, and the pace of acquisitions continued in 2004. In turn, some of India's biggest IT firms such as Wipro, Infosys and Tata are making acquisitions inside the US, Mexico, Australia and the Philippines.

Outsourcing has become an important part of global production chains and allows transnationals to cut their costs and increase their profits. As S. Gopalakrishnan, the chief operating officer of Infosys, points out, outsourcing 'is one form of globalisation that enables companies to get high quality resources at lower prices'.²⁵ That point is driven home in Washington by the lobbying efforts of the National Association of Software and Services Companies, a New Delhi trade group that includes both US and Indian IT corporations. In the opinion of its vice-chairman Jerry Rao, outsourcing is to services 'what Henry Ford [was] to manufacturing'.²⁶

Another area of rapid growth is that of auto components and engineering. India is expected to join China, Brazil and Mexico as a major global sourcing centre for manufactured components, although most production, such as forging and casting, is based in the lower skill range. These companies are linked to a global supply chain locked into corporations such as Maruti. Majority-owned by Suzuki of Japan, Maruti is India's largest manufacturer and has approximately 300 sub-contractors churning out parts. The world's largest component manufacturers, Visteon and Delphi, have also set up operations sourcing to

Ford, Volvo and GM. But the best Indian companies have become global competitors, even expanding abroad through numerous acquisitions. Tata AutoComp Systems has twelve joint ventures with Europe, Japan and the US and is opening a plant in Germany to make parts for France. Bharat Forge, the world's largest maker of front truck axles, has two operations in Europe and generates 75 per cent of its sales from overseas.

All this economic growth has attracted foreign portfolio investment, with inflows growing to US\$7 billion in 2003, up from just US\$739 million the year before. The Bombay Stock Exchange and the National Stock Exchange are among Asia's best performers, with investments spreading out beyond the technology sector to consumer goods, energy, banking and commodities. The danger for India is that US\$1.5 billion are in short-term funds that can quickly be taken out if investors get nervous about left-wing influence in the government or if profitable opportunities appear elsewhere.

India's global links are also reflected in its integration into the Asian hub. Interregional trade is growing faster than in NAFTA (North American Free Trade Agreement) or the European Union; electronics and computers are the key components of this activity. Transnationals outsource different stages of work to various Asian countries in a production chain in which high-end work is done in Singapore, South Korea and India and assembly in China. But although the Asian economy is surging forward, it does not act as a regional economic bloc with a pan-Asian institutional and political framework. Rather, it is part of a global economy fused with transnational corporations that are deeply integrated into regional trade flows. Jonathan Anderson, chief Asia economist for UBS, pointed this out: 'It's integration in the production chain; it's not integration of Asian domestic economies.'²⁷ With intraregional trade at US\$722.2 billion and trade with NAFTA and the EU at US\$728.2 billion, Asia and the West have built an integrated economy with co-dependence and partnership welded into the system.

Brazil

The Workers' Party (PT) offered a new road forward in Brazil and was a model for much of the Latin American Left. A broad-based political party with solid roots in the working class, it was intent on winning electoral state power while staying connected to mass democratic struggles. Furthermore, it remained firmly socialist in its orientation and its leader, Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva, seemed to embody working-class aspirations.

Winning the presidency on his third try, Lula has surprised many by following an orthodox economic policy that has made the IMF and

international investors unexpectedly happy and prevented the rapid withdrawal of capital. As in China and India, PT leaders see Brazil's best hope for development as its becoming an integral part of the transnational economy. There is no hint of the nationalist development policies of the 1960s, nor radical changes to empower workers. Rather, the new government has maintained steady but cautious programmes to help the poor while applying its most innovative strategies to expand Brazil's place in the global economy. Lula's strategy is to increase the bargaining power of developing countries so that they may become stronger and perhaps equal partners with the industrialised North. As Brazil gains greater leverage within the transnationalised economy, the hope is for a downward distribution of economic benefits to improve the life of the working class and poor. Rather than resembling a neo-liberal model of globalisation, this would be similar to the 'Beijing Consensus' or neo-Keynesian strategy.

Since winning the presidency, Lula has been the most active Third World leader in attempting to readjust globalisation by developing a power bloc of developing nations. He has put together an alliance known as the Group of 20 (G-20) which has Brazil, India, China and South Africa at its core. This alliance demanded a host of concessions on agricultural and governance issues at the WTO meeting at Cancun; failure to meet them eventually led to a collapse of negotiations. Since then, a lot of hard bargaining has ensued. Taking on the hotly contested issue of agricultural subsidies, Brazil challenged the US in a WTO case over cotton growers. The US hands out \$3 billion dollars to just 25,000 cotton farmers, depressing world prices somewhere from 12 to 25 per cent. This harms not only Brazil but also some of the poorest countries in Africa. The WTO gave Brazil the victory by ruling that US subsidies caused 'serious prejudice' to producers; another Brazilian victory followed when the WTO ruled against EU sugar subsidies.

The *Financial Times* called the cotton programme 'one of the most offensive agricultural subsidy programmes in the world' and noted that the ruling

serves as a useful reminder that multilateralism, which looks more than a little forlorn in other contexts, is still alive and kicking in international trade. That the US is forced to confront the egregious effects of its domestic agricultural policies by an international agreement is remarkable and welcome.²⁸

Clearly, transnational capitalists are applauding Brazil's effort to curtail nationalist US economic policy and see it as a counterbalance to US military policy.

The Brazilian government followed the same line with the FTAA (Free Trade Area of the Americas) meeting in Miami as it had with

the WTO. The FTAA was an attempt by the US to extend NAFTA to the rest of Latin America, essentially opening up the continent to further economic integration in a manner benefiting northern transnational corporate powers. Once again, Brazil, along with Argentina, walked out of the meeting, refusing to sign an agreement. Although the US pressured other countries to join, its success was hollow because Brazil and Argentina represent two-thirds of South America's economic output. Lula continued to push his agenda and, at a later meeting with Argentine president Nestor Kirchner, both presidents demanded more room for national economies to balance growth with funding social needs. Pursuing this strategy further, Brazil signed a trade pact with India and South Africa to offset the domination of industrialised nations. Commenting on the importance of the agreement, Tarun Das, executive director of the Confederation of Indian Industry, stated: 'It's an important new dimension to India's repositioning in the world.'²⁹

In the face of growing resistance from Third World globalists, the US and EU have conceded some important points on agricultural subsidies in order to get the Doha round of the WTO talks operational. Negotiations were led by Brazil and the G-20, representing 22 per cent of world agricultural production and 70 per cent of rural workers. Brazil's foreign minister Celso Amorim described the breakthrough as a victory for multipolarity. As he put it: 'The Doha mandate had provided developing countries with a platform for associating trade liberalisation with social justice. The banner of free and fair trade was now being waved by the poor.' He added that no longer could 'pre-cooked deals between the two leading trading partners be accepted as the only possible basis for agreement' and noted that the 'politics of trade were undergoing a transformation'.³⁰

Lula and the Workers' Party have put forward the most articulate political position for Third World globalist economic and social policies. These new directions have come from their experience of the disastrous results of the Washington Consensus, which drove many countries to near ruin. Lula's view of a polycentric world based on fair and equitable trade is not a rejection of globalisation or transnational capitalism. In fact, many western globalists have long recognised the need to build a fully integrated political regime that gives fair room to transnational capitalists from the developing world. The superpower nationalism of the Bush administration has created deep divisions worldwide, and Lula has seized this as an opportunity to shift the politics of globalisation. Workers' Party president Jose Genoino has explained the strategy:

With the end of the cold war and a new US foreign policy, the world has acquired a unilateral nature, with the imposition of pre-

eminence of US interest. The discord . . . has created lines of force favoring the formation of a multilateral world. Brazil's ambition is aimed at consolidating blocs of forces, producing new significant actors on the continental level and in areas of global relations.³¹

The Workers' Party not only represents the Brazilian Left, it also includes cabinet ministers who come directly from industrial and agricultural corporations. Among them is Vice-President Jose Alencar, an industrialist from the Liberal Party. Unlike the old pro-US comprador capitalists, only 2 per cent of Brazil's business leaders give Bush a positive rating. Many of them see the strategy of the Workers' Party to increase Brazil's position in the global economy as allied to their own aims. This reflects the growth of the Brazilian transnational capitalist class as it expands its power and reach. 'Brazil has become a world-class competitor in several sectors – steel, mining, banking, aeronautics, as well as pulp and paper', says Marcelo Kayath, co-head of Latin American equities with Sao Paulo's investment bank CSFB.³²

This global presence is reflected in the growth of Brazil's most competitive corporations. Some of the biggest developments and mergers include the Belgian-owned AmBev and Interbrew merging to form the world's largest brewer; Petrobras, South America's largest company and one of the world's top ten oil transnationals expanding throughout Latin America, Africa and the Middle East and jointly exploring for oil in Asia, Ecuador and Iran with Sinopec from China; Embraer, the world's fourth largest aircraft manufacturer, entering into a joint venture with China Aviation Industry Corp and setting up operations in the US by obtaining Pentagon contracts; and the Gerdau steel corporation acquiring important assets in the US, Canada and Latin America.

Brazilian transnational relationships are rapidly developing. One of the most important joint ventures includes Companhia Vale do Rio Doce (CVRD), the world's largest iron ore company, China's biggest steel producer Baosteel and the world's largest steel company Arcelor from Luxembourg. Their joint venture will build an US\$8 billion steel plant to serve Brazil's car industry. In addition, CVRD has entered into agreement with two companies for coal production inside China, and Arcelor has bought majority ownership in Brazilian steel; it is now the largest producer in the country. Agricultural and animal exports to China have also surged forward at breakneck speed to include soybeans, milk, coffee, beef and chicken, while other areas of growth cover computer software, textiles and copper. Bilateral trade has quadrupled since 2000, with China becoming Brazil's third largest trading partner and importing US\$4.5 billion worth of goods. All this benefits the transnationals that are invested in Brazil, particularly in the

large soybean trade, among which are Cargill and Archer Midland Daniels from the US.

In return, Chinese capital is flooding into Brazil. As Edmar Cid Ferreira, president of Banco Santos, notes: 'The Chinese are looking for long-term suppliers of food and technology and we have both. They're coming to us to set up joint ventures.'³³ This was underscored by China's acceptance into the Inter-American Development Bank, a move that allowed Chinese companies better access to infrastructure contracts and cemented China's growing commercial influence. Both Brazil and Argentina were major backers of China's membership.

The growing economic and political relationship between the two countries was confirmed by Lula's visit to China, which included 450 Brazilian business representatives. Brazilian foreign minister Celso Amorim noted that the growing relationship could be part of a 'reconfiguration of the world's commercial and diplomatic geography'.³⁴ Fifteen value-added business sectors were targeted, including medical equipment, software, cars, meat and processed fruits. The attractions for Brazilian corporations are labour costs that run one-third lower than the average in Brazil and raw materials that are 20–30 per cent cheaper. As Jose Rubens de la Rosa, chief executive of Marcopolo, explained: 'It's almost an obligation for a Brazilian company that wants to be a global player to be in China.'³⁵ In addition, China and Brazil have agreed to US\$4 billion in joint investments for infrastructure improvements to expand Brazilian railways, roads and ports.

The trip took a political turn when Lula and Chinese premier Wen Jiabao appeared at the Shanghai Poverty Conference sponsored by the World Bank. Both leaders demanded better deals on trade and aid from rich nations. Lula had positioned his trip to China in strategic terms, stating: 'We want this relationship to be a paradigm for South–South relations.'³⁶ Subsequently, Lula pushed this idea even further, suggesting an alliance that would include China, Brazil, India, South Africa and Russia to balance US and EU influence. But this South–South strategy is different from that articulated in the 1960s when it was part of the non-aligned movement's attempt to free Third World countries from the stranglehold of imperialist relations. The new South–South paradigm is designed to carve out a stronger position for Third World countries within the global system, with access to foreign direct investments, transnational capital, global production chains, cross-border mergers and acquisitions, and greater political recognition. It is a development strategy that envisions a trickle-down effect, with wealth spreading to a larger middle class and eventually creating better conditions for workers and the poor.

Just how far this strategy can be pursued is an open question. As Lula continues courting transnational capital with conservative

monetary policies, hoping confidence will grow and investments will increase, the patience of Brazil's working class is diminishing. Although the government has passed progressive labour reforms and taken some initiative with land redistribution, most supporters have criticised the Workers' Party for moving too slowly and doing too little. Unemployment has actually increased, while the government's effort to create jobs has had minimal effect. If unrest grows, Lula may not have enough time to unfold his full strategy.

Conclusion


Third World globalists have developed a distinct vision of globalisation based on the appeal for greater equality and fairness. Yet class differences are widening, with gaps in wealth growing in China, Brazil and India. The middle class has expanded, but improvement in the social position of the masses lags far behind. To raise the standard of living for the working class and poor means undermining the very element that attracts global investments and makes Third World globalists competitive – large amounts of cheap labour. Although the strategy may include important advances in health care, education and meeting basic food requirements, when it comes to work, one of the most consistent demands of transnational capital is to weaken labour laws, undermine unions and lower wages in a competitive race to the bottom. This has always been a fundamental contradiction in the capitalist system; the need to expand the market while at the same time lowering the cost of labour. The answer is not just an anti-neoliberal agenda, although that may well do under the present political circumstances. Globalisation needs to be challenged at a more fundamental level of equality and justice. Such a challenge may indeed come from a better fed and educated working class. Thus, if the Beijing Consensus is a transition point towards a deeper social transformation, it will play an essentially progressive role. But if it is simply a strategy to integrate Third World capitalists into the new global economic order, it will ultimately be of limited use in the struggle for a new world.

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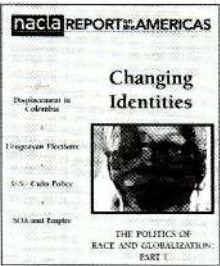
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The new frontiers of America

RUBEN ANDERSSON

Abstract: Through a mixture of oral testimony, analysis and personal encounter, the harsh and deadly penalties meted out to those attempting to travel across the Mexican border into the United States are evoked. Many have already suffered extensively at the hands of corrupt police and marauding paramilitary gangs as they travel into Mexico, even before risking their lives to go further north. Devastated economies, in hock to 'trade' agreements dictated by the US, render these journeys essential, for migrant remittances now outstrip oil and agriculture in many national economies. Yet failure – and many do fail – can entail robbery, rape, mutilation and murder.

Keywords: Central America, Guatemala, Mexico, migration, remittances, US border, wetbacks

Everybody talks about the North. In the forgotten and noisy Mexican town of Tapachula, close to the Guatemalan border, this is perhaps all there is to talk about. And especially so among the *transmigrants*. Transmigrants are those migrants who, unlike the 'immigrants' so hotly debated in Europe and North America, are 'not-yet-there'; they are people in perpetual transit. Like their African colleagues in

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Race & Class

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Morocco, across the Atlantic, the Central American transmigrants arriving in Mexico are reluctant visitors to a 'third country' turned buffer zone for international migration. These buffer zones are the new and neverending frontiers of despair, where hapless regional middlemen run errands for powerful northern neighbours. This is where the American dream, *el sueño americano*, most often ends, and transmigrants find themselves talking about an elusive North in wayward migrant shelters.

As I enter the migrant shelter of my choice to partake of some of this contemporary travel talk, I find people sitting and standing around everywhere, on the street, in the entrance hall, on the spacious patio. All waiting. The Central American transmigrants gathered here are the so-called *mojados* or 'wetbacks', referring to the ordeal of crossing the Rio Grande or the Suchiate River just around the corner: these are the two wet borders that have turned Mexico into a never-ending contemporary frontier, a social desert. Tapachula could, actually, just as well be another outpost on the trans-Saharan migration trail, and the oasis-like ambience of this outpost is immediately apparent. I have arrived at one of those humanitarian rarities, the *Casa del Migrante* or 'House of the Migrant', located on a sleepy back street at the city's edges. In this House, transmigrants without papers find a place to rest for a few days outside the reach of the long arm of Mexican law.

The House is a node in a network, being part of a series of migrant shelters across the region run by Scalabrinian missionaries with the help of volunteers. It is a paradox of a place. Though not legally recognised and in apparent contradiction to Mexican migration policies, it is nevertheless allowed to operate due, perhaps, to the goodwill generated by its previous social work on the US border and certainly due to the Christian nature of its humanitarian mission. It is a space strategically 'forgotten' by the authorities and thus left to care for the similarly forgotten global travellers of today in an increasingly tight global political climate. It is also, luckily, a space where a wayward European travelling south can meet his northbound counterparts without fear of police jumping on our conversation.

In the world of migrants, words are cheap and ever present. Government officials across the region spread sweet phrases around them wherever they go – about human rights, safe repatriations, legal openings and the like – without making any substantial changes for the better. Words are spent on endless documents, on getting the discourse right. All that the transmigrants are left with is words, and words they spend in the vacant moments of their tragic journeys. The House of the Migrant is such a vacant moment.

In the office, the receptionist from El Salvador is busy registering the multitude that has showed up this day at the House. It is a perfect context for pursuing some casual conversation on the topic of an

elusive North, or so I gather. Consequently, I sit down on the patio on an old leather stool, next to Hector from Guatemala. He is probably close to the age of my dad, with a kind and rounded face, a bit unshaven after many days on the road. Without much introduction or questions, words start pouring out. Hector has tried to go north four times already and has been deported each time. He talks about how migrants come back, mutilated from trying to cling on to the trains or from jumping when the military start to scream for them to get down at gunpoint as the train is moving. He talks about young men without legs, sent back to the border. And he talks about the *raison d'être* of his transmigrant existence: a salary of 300 quetzales (about £20) a week in Guatemala compared to \$200 in the States. To maintain his family, the former is not enough. 'It was much easier a few years back', he sighs.

Along comes Ulises who, as far as names go, is quite consistent with the myth. With a cheery grin, he recounts his travels, which range from crashed motorbikes along the roads of his native Guatemala to studying to be a well-paid mechanic in Mexico. There he worked until the jealousy of his Mexican colleagues got him into trouble with the law. Now he is on his way again, towards New York, for the fourth time. Last week he was robbed of everything in Tecún Uman, on the Guatemalan side of the border. Then, walking in outsize shoes donated by another migrant shelter, he followed the railway tracks to Mexico. 'The stones rub against your feet, especially the big ones', he says. The grin, again, in the midst of a transmigrant distress that looks nothing like his once quite easygoing existence. If he gets to the States, he will stay a couple of years and then go back to set up a business in Guatemala. Everything is planned, down to the smallest detail. The perils of the journey have been taken into account.

Ulises is a young man about my age. While I am heading south towards his native Guatemala, he goes north. I have the passport, he the empty pockets. When he tells me about shaky train trips through the Chiapan countryside, I realise nevertheless that we share the same desire for movement, the same transborder dreams. Could it be that every traveller ultimately dreams of being a migrant, somebody whose principal duty is to avoid pre-planned routes at all costs? 'Maybe I will just buy a bike and ride up along the coast, to the northern border', he throws out, with a smile that does not manage to hide an utter sincerity: he did it once before. The transmigrant and the traveller inhabit the same world of movement, but we both do what the other cannot. Ulises is my mirror and I am his.

* * *

Across the world, migrants are readily associated with crime, from the suggestive term 'illegal aliens' used in the US, to the constant references

to migrant crime in European populist nationalism. Meanwhile, Tapachula (where the popular imagination makes the same dubious associations) brings home an important point: migrants are today the principal victims of crime in the region. People are, literally speaking, stripped bare in Guatemala, and things get potentially worse across the border. Chiapas is now the stronghold of the infamous *maras*, bands of criminals based on the paramilitary structure of the Salvadoran Contrás, with roots in the *barrios* of Los Angeles. Their strategy is simple and, except for a small drugs and arms trade, consists of robbing defenceless undocumented migrants, who have no choice but to cling on to the moving trains. There are countless reports circulating about how band members, the *mareros*, kill, mutilate and rape their victims whenever their demands are not satisfied.

Meanwhile, the federal government is, as everywhere, tightening migration controls to the point of impossibility. Though the change has come gradually, the so-called *Plan Sur*, implemented by the Mexican federal government since 2001, has taken its toll. Its official purpose is, as everywhere, to safeguard the lives of endangered migrants. This official humanitarian discourse is, though, accompanied by a severe enforcement of migration controls. Like its US equivalent, Operation Gatekeeper, it has managed to push migration out of relatively safe, inhabited areas. In the North, this has meant a move towards the waterless deserts of Arizona, the fast waters of the Rio Grande and the vans of unscrupulous *polleros*, the human smugglers working across the country. The toll has been over 1,500 deaths since 1994, and counting. In the South, the change has meant that clutching on to a moving train is the only way to travel northward or contracting a business-wise *pollero* for \$1,000 fees. Though the *Plan Sur* is officially being dismantled, the same pattern persists under other names. Ironically, these manage to cover up the abuses suffered by transmigrants at the hands of authorities and criminals alike with the ubiquitous discourse of human rights. While the government is busy hunting migrants, the similarly transmigrating criminals who rob them are moving ahead, extending their networks of influence.

Since I arrived early in the morning, tired from the night bus from Mexico City, I haven't stopped listening and asking questions, wherever questions were necessary. At two o'clock, the House closes for migrants and we are all sent outside for a few hours. Nobody is really meant to feel at home here; the House is a resting point, a place to wash yourself and get a free meal, but nothing more. The heat outside the shady patio is unbearable, humid coastline heat on a Sunday afternoon. People once again wait and talk, standing around in small groups beneath the roadside trees, everybody exchanging warnings, sharing problems, listening. I notice a softness among the men and few women who have gathered here – broken, humble, friendly,

but supposedly 'illegal'. People from El Salvador, Honduras, Guatemala, Nicaragua, all with different social backgrounds, but sharing a space carved out of hostile territory. It is, though, a space for waiting only, waiting for the guns and machetes, the military and the *maras*, out there. What, then, makes people even try to embark on this epic journey?

Trying is, sadly, often better than staying behind. As I walk around the precinct, a young man, hardly more than twenty, catches my attention. Herman comes from Honduras, a country that now hardly sticks together, an old puzzle with too many pieces missing, violently glued back together. Herman is already married and has a little boy of three whom he wants to become a football star when he grows up. 'I tell him he should look like Ronaldo, but he only says "Betham, Betham" [Beckham]. Still can't pronounce his name.' Herman smiles, but it is the smile of somebody who is both a teenager and something else, a father and a boy who has seen too much.

His context is a Honduras divided between powerful gangs and increasingly brutal police and paramilitary forces. His friends are being killed: youngsters who look vaguely like gang members get brutally 'cleaned' off the streets. Police brutality is never reported, says Herman. He has himself been close to getting killed by a policeman. Honduras is on the brink of collapse, but that is nothing new. A few years back, hurricane Mitch devastated all the infrastructure there ever was in the country. Migrants' money transfers are by now the principal source of income for a country that, perhaps to trigger some goodwill from its northern friend, is willingly sending troops to Iraq. Herman's brother sends the family money from Chicago.

The differences between who counts as a 'refugee' and who counts as a 'migrant' are becoming increasingly tenuous and blurred. According to Padre Flor Maria, the energetic and charismatic head of the *Casa del Migrante* in Tapachula, it is by now a difference as fine as a razor's edge, something that perhaps makes it all the more cutting. On the one hand, there are persons protected under international law, however tenuously, and, on the other, *de facto* juridical non-persons. The low-intensity, many-faceted and dirty warfare of Honduras is simply filed under 'law and order', thus criminalising those escaping its horrors. So Hondurans are on the run, and run into more crime and more rightlessness along the railway towards the North.

Herman has travelled *mojado*, going migrant, twice already. Last time, police caught him in Veracruz on Mexico's east coast, where the railways transporting transatlantic goods and the ones carrying 'illegal' humans criss-cross each other. The police took all his money, stole his shoelaces and his belt and left him in desolate countryside, thus assured that he would now not be able to continue travelling in the heavy terrain surrounding him. Later, he was caught again and put back on a bus to the Honduran border.

As we keep talking about Swedish football, shootouts in Tegucigalpa and teenage pregnancy, night falls on us. A hot night, sticky, the forest around the House unquiet with noises. The bush starts to sing and the shelter door closes for the day. We sleep early, lights out at ten. Tomorrow is the day when the northbound cargo train passes.

* * *

I start to hear noise outside the half-secluded room I share with an Eritrean refugee very early in the morning. Six o'clock is wake up time and the migrants are asked to help in cleaning the House. I cannot make myself join in their tasks, tired as I am from yesterday's travels in my air-conditioned bus. Instead, I go downstairs at breakfast time. A brief prayer inaugurates my morning, mumbled as we sit on rickety wooden benches in the dining hall next to the patio. The female volunteer serving breakfast closes her eyes tight and calls upon Father and Son to help those present on their way today on the train. Everybody knows what is at stake, and a solemnity colours our bowls of cheap rice, plain tortillas and watery black beans.

As the day continues, we again find ourselves out on the street. An older man has showed up, apparently from El Salvador. Two children run around him, screaming 'Santa Claus! Santa Claus!'. His baggy, well-used pants and his weathered face, with its faint trace of a moustache, show, perhaps, little resemblance to Father Christmas. Nevertheless, Santa Claus chuckles and gives one of them a peso to buy some candy. Full of stories and cheery lies, he talks to everybody and nobody about working the disco circuit of Tijuana, fighting ferocious gangs on the Suchiate River and passing the US border. 'You just go "yes sir, my daughter is in New Mexico", and show them your passport with a straight face – that easy!' Nobody believes him.

Next to him, Herman's travelling partner, a quiet and soft-featured man, rests his feet on a stone. The skin of the soles is all peeled off, red flesh showing through. 'That never happens to me, I always make sure to take care of my feet and hands', Santa Claus reproaches. 'How far did you walk?' 'From the border', the other responds, 'on the rails'. It took him and Herman fifteen hours. 'I walk for fifteen hours no problem, and still fit for fight', asserts Santa Claus stubbornly, shadow-boxing to everybody's laughter.

By now, social lines have become blurred and people don't seem to know how to place me. 'Are you an *indocumentado* like us, a traveller without documents?' 'Are you going north as well?' 'How did you get here?' Am I actually going *mojado*, just another poor 'wetback' on the road?

Santa Claus punctures my fleeting dreams decisively. 'This dollface looks like *subcomandante* Marcos', he roars happily. He goes on: 'Let's make our own autonomous state here in Chiapas, *Mojados Unidos*

[United Wetbacks], no more Estados Unidos [United States]. You could be the leader!' Everybody laughs again. 'Yes, a place where everybody can enter, a place with work, work with documents.' There is sincerity behind his jokes, and the softness I have seen in all migrants until now shines through, albeit momentarily, in his otherwise so over-assertive, life-torn face. Santa Claus has been here and there for years, carrying torn papers in a plastic bag in his pocket, supposedly references from all his former jobs around Mexico and its two borders. If anybody would want a *Mojados Unidos*, it is him. Nevertheless, he soon undoes his own dreams just as he undid mine. With a stern face, he removes his wornout T-shirt. His back screams out El Salvador in big blue tattooed letters, like a lost lover of a distant but never forgotten youth.

As a footnote, let's just mention that El Salvador has lately been dollarised. The US currency is embarking on a conquest, replacing the national currency, the colon, bit by bit, slowly and informally. After years of brutal civil war, the relative peace experienced by the country has been turned into a remarkable monetary dependence upon the North. And, considering the fact that about one-quarter of the Salvadoran population now lives in the US and the country's income from foreign currency transfers amounts to almost US\$2 billion per year, this might be just as well.

Just before lunch, two women arrive. Quite well dressed, close to the noon of life and its usual promises of a comfortable middle age, they are icons of silent desperation. They are both Hondurans and both called Dilcya and they are on the run. I feel attached to one of the Dilcya straightaway, as to an old friend or relative. We talk the same language, as it were. 'Now that we made a decision, we should follow it through', she says and laughs, referring to the fact that they have been expelled from Mexico three times already and are bent on trying again, by now with no money. 'Our friends made it a few years back, so why can't we?' Her words, though, ring hollow when I think about all the tales of abuse and police controls I have heard after only a day here. The borders of a few years back are not the ones of today.

She soon confirms my doubts. Yesterday, the Dilcya were caught by the police. Having asked for the usual bribe or *mordida* ('bite') and not getting any, the officer started removing his pants. 'If his female companion had not got out of the car, he would have raped me', she exclaims indignantly.

More and more women are now travelling north, changing the face of international migration. Their cheap labour and relative defencelessness make them potentially 'competitive' in the US and along the two borders where they often, as in Tapachula, end up in prostitution or underpaid domestic service. Women are also easy victims on the road, with continual mass rapes on trains being perpetrated by criminal

gangs. Protection is certainly nothing the Dilcyas can have in excess: around their necks dangle little amulets of the Virgin Mary and a simple wooden crucifix. As we have lunch, they both laugh regularly and heartily. Laughter is, as it were, yet another amulet, a cry for normality in a world far exceeding their worst expectations.

After an otherwise quiet lunch, the truths of Monday afternoon dawn on the gathering. Everybody is tense now, waiting for the coming trek past police outposts, to take up positions around the railway well in time for the erratic train to arrive.

People soon start disappearing, silently, in groups of two. Those who have not yet been robbed carry little backpacks, others with only donated, outside shoes on their weary feet. First leaves Ulises with a companion. With yet another of those big grins, he stretches out his hand. No drawn-out goodbyes. As Ulises walks up the road on the hill, I ask Hector from Guatemala if he is afraid. 'The first time you're afraid to get on the train, and afraid of the *maras*', he says. It is certainly not the first time now that he tries. Then comes his turn and we say goodbye. The crowd starts to fall silent, the compulsive words of the previous day-and-a-half are overshadowed by the prospect of forests, trains, military and *maras*. A baby-faced couple, no older than sixteen, stand around smoking cigarette after cigarette. They are heading back, afraid to go further on the transmigrant tracks. Then goes Herman with a new companion, leaving his friend with wornout soles behind: time is too precious. I see him walk up the road, without turning around towards us. More people drop off as the evening heat abates, and soon we find ourselves an exclusive little group left around the House.

That night it rained. Rain without end, a beautiful tropical shower that beat upon our roof ceaselessly after we had lined up outside at nightfall, waiting for our names to be called. It rained upon the migrants in the forest, waiting for the train that did not show up until way past midnight. The *maras*, though, arrived punctually and stole everything from their human prey. Three women returned to the House, I was later told, raped (was it the one dressed in a long white skirt, Honduran I think, with those nervous-looking, twitching eyes? I don't know). Two men were killed, one from Honduras and one from El Salvador. Were they Herman, the boy with a son and football dreams, and Carlos, the young Salvadoran who nervously hid his last 300 pesos in his T-shirt? After the killing came the police, and the American dream was yet again intercepted. The travellers were by then truly *mojados*, 'wetbacks' without the faintest freedom of transit. Wet clothes, wet soles and with humiliation soaking their bodies through and through, their dreams turned into puddles along the silent railroad tracks.

* * *

Migration is, by now, a transnational business with multiple beneficiaries, a business in which the migrant is consumer, commodity and resource. Unscrupulous *polleros* share the migrant 'marketplace' with robbers, hustlers and mafias like the *maras*, who find treasure in poor migrants without documents and without the means to enforce their rights. Next in line are the various police and military forces operating throughout the region. In Guatemala, which Central Americans are legally allowed to travel through when carrying a regional permit, documents are regularly ripped apart by police officers who then demand money from thus 'undocumented' migrants on their territory. In Mexico, the federal judicial police are particularly famous for cases of extortion and the good old bribe or *mordida*, not to mention downright robbery. Police are also often involved in the smuggling of persons along the northern border.

The official gains are likewise plentiful. Mexican migrants' money transfers to those back home now amount to the major source of national income, surpassing both oil and tourism; the same is true in most Central American countries. Migrants' dollars have a further beneficiary: the huge multinational money transfer companies that are now spreading like wildfire across the globe, with earnings amounting to billions of dollars each year, thanks to a commission of 10–25 per cent per transfer and skewed exchange rates.

This money, needless to say, largely derives from underpaid work. The economic truth underlying migration is its necessity to a world in motion, where companies are often all too happy to employ undocumented migrants, preferably through a low-risk subcontracting system. States across the world, though, are bent on impeding the 'flow' of such low-priced commodities as undocumented migrants. Borders are now enforced and 'sealed' in a pattern displaced from north to south, from Canada all the way down to Guatemala and further beyond. As much of this strategic enforcement is done with the implicit or explicit goodwill and support of the United States, many countries end up even inhibiting the freedom of movement of their own citizens. Since the NAFTA free trade agreement in 1996 started favouring US agribusiness, this enforcement takes place on the back of a 'liberalisation' that has turned US agriculture into one of the principal allures for those left without work in the South. With new regional trade agreements in prospect, the trend is hardly about to change its course. The pattern of anti-migration enforcement follows the same route as the free trade agreements, moving south. On the horizon lies the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA), an American dream of mercantile freedom paradoxically accompanied by a severe closure of borders.

* * *

Next morning, still full of the painful words of the last two days, I head off after breakfast for the Guatemalan border: the northerner heads south, smoothly, shows his passport and goes his way. I wish the Dilcyas the best of luck and look upon the few people left in the Casa del Migrante. By tomorrow, when the next train leaves, the House will be full again.

A week later, I travel back up again, passing Tapachula. I return to meet Dilcy, now with only a faint, desolate smile on her face. Last week, the Dilcyas were deported three times. Their time is up in the hostel and they live on tortillas and salt begged from reluctant neighbours. By now, Dilcy tells me about her desperate love for her travelling companion and about the impossibility of going back, the impossibility of surrender. The Dilcyas are a couple. We depart with a hug.

As the taxi yet again cuts my ties to Tapachula, to these sun-bathed, desolate streets where humans sit around waiting for their personal abysses and dreams, I head north, documents in order. The principal axis of the new world order is, perhaps, merely up-down: going south is smooth; going north I pass four controls in a matter of hours. For brief instants, I am again the *mojado*, the unwanted visitor. On the Mexican border, I am asked whether I am a Pole: Polish people are now, apparently, heading the same way as their fellow Central American migrants, towards that shimmering north at the end of the tracks. What would happen there, at the US border, I hardly want to think about.

And then there are all the people I did not tell you about. Michel, the teenage gay from Nicaragua who, with fearful eyes, tells me how his female friend was raped on the way up through Guatemala. Melvin from Honduras, hardly older than twenty, who, with an enigmatic smile, embraces the road as an endless adventure. Then there are the migrants *de luxe*, like the former Honduran policeman who had had enough of earning 2,000 lempiras (around £65) a month easing riots in city prisons and is now trying to catch the bus up north. And Alfredo, who teamed up with Santa Claus and went rowdily about preparing his newly bought bicycle for a trek all the way up to Tijuana. And that lady friend of Michel's from El Salvador who walked around in plastic high-heeled shoes, self-consciously trying to look good in donated attire. They are all products of the same forces as I, the same ideas, commercials, possibilities, currencies. But now they are part of my memory and my computer, and who knows who of them is still alive. They are the real travellers of the twenty-first century, the intrepid ones, full of horrors and stories, defying every border: if the northerner wishes for adventure, here is his disavowed mirror, cracks and all.

Back up in Mexico City, I bump into Ulises in the migrant detention centre. I hardly recognise him at first – dirty, clothes worn out, but with the same death-defying smile on his face. He was caught going towards Monterrey, but had by then made it up on the train, found himself a girlfriend along the road and started working. He tells me about that rainy night on the cargo train, about the *mareros* who shot a man who refused to hand over his wallet and plundered him as he lay dying and then killed another who started to fidget nervously. It does not, however, seem like any of our friends from the House were killed. I sigh with relief, sadly enough. Ulises scribbles down his address for me before he is taken away for breakfast, in case we meet again. The address is in Mexico.

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Robert Louis Stevenson: class and 'race' in *The Amateur Emigrant*

LAWRENCE PHILLIPS

Abstract: In 1879, an impoverished Stevenson travelled from Scotland to California in conditions almost identical to those of working-class and poverty-stricken emigrants. His account, *The Amateur Emigrant*, shocked the class sensitivities of his family and friends, and was not published in full in his lifetime. The experience had a profound effect on Stevenson's personal sensibilities; his consciousness of his ambivalent position as a middle-class writer in the midst of his working-class contemporaries renders *The Amateur Emigrant* a remarkable revelation of the intermingled complexities of class, race and gender in late Victorian England.

Keywords: colonialism, gender, middle class, steerage, travel writing, Victorian

Lawrence Phillips is lecturer in English literature at Liverpool Hope University College and editor of the *Literary London Journal*. His most recent book is an edited collection entitled *The Swarming Streets: twentieth-century literary representations of London* (Rodopi, 2004).

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One of the most striking, and perhaps least remarked, travel narratives of the latter decades of the nineteenth century is Robert Louis Stevenson's account of his journey from Scotland to California in 1879, to all intents and purposes as a steerage passenger. The journey was far from planned. Stevenson had begun an intimate relationship with an American woman, Fanny Osbourne, who was estranged from her husband Samuel. Osbourne threatened to cease supporting his wife and children in 1878 following initiation by Fanny of divorce proceedings under the relatively liberal Californian divorce laws. Stevenson was frantically summoned to California to fill the breach. Unable to expect any financial support from his family for the pursuit of a married woman soon to be a divorcee, Stevenson was forced to undertake the journey with little money. From a journey pressed on him through necessity, Stevenson was to record this undertaking in a narrative that indicates a profound change in both his writing and his identity. Rather than respond to his propinquity with the working class by strongly reinforcing class distinctions through the narrative, Stevenson negotiates his rather confused status aboard ship with a complexity that took him some way beyond the conventional political and social sensibilities of his established readership. Indeed, an edition of the text based on the full manuscript of his journey from Scotland to California would not find its way into print until 1966,¹ 'respectable' Victorian sensibilities not being in tune with Stevenson's candid depiction of the crudities of the steerage quarters of a transatlantic steamer, still less those of an immigrant train. He recognised early that such subject matter would profoundly affect his personal sensibilities, but more importantly also his writing style, commenting that 'M. Zola would here find an inspiration for many pages' (23), even though Zola was an author whose frank subject matter and naturalistic technique in novels like *L'Assommoir* he abhorred at this stage in his career.² But it is just such a frankness and naturalism that inform *The Amateur Emigrant*, shocking family and literary friends.

Yet Stevenson's preoccupation with the material and social consequences of a dramatic alteration in class status would do more than influence his narrative style to the point of questioning and renegotiating his conception of self embedded in the narrative persona of the text. While, on one level, *The Amateur Emigrant* seems to reach out to his working-class shipmates, his social 'descent' engenders a metaphor that preserves the priority and superiority of his gaze and subjective distance. This textual strategy is comparable to that analysed by Mary Louise Pratt in the discursive strategies of colonial travel writing. Stevenson's account of his journey across class boundaries significantly shares a number of structural and ideological similarities with the travel writing discussed by Pratt, especially in the creation of a material and textual space where contact, interaction and understanding between

coloniser and colonised subject can take place, while official and more formal social codes demand the maintenance of a strict division between the two. Such contact takes place against the radical imbalances of power inherent in the relation between coloniser and colonised and this in turn establishes a subject position that enables a range of 'strategies of representation whereby European bourgeois subjects seek to secure their innocence in the same moment as they assert European hegemony'.³ Pratt's expression 'bourgeois subjects' alerts us to the fact that this is as much a class as it is a colonial stance and practice, which underlines its relevance to Stevenson's narrative strategy. Ania Loomba, drawing on the work of Robert Miles, emphasises how such a 'positional superiority' can regulate discursive relationships otherwise determined by racial and class difference:

The ideology of racial superiority translated easily into class terms. The superiority of the white races, one colonist argued, clearly implied that 'the black man must forever remain cheap labour and slaves'. Certain sections of people were thus racially identified as the natural working classes. The problem was now to organise the social world according to this belief, or force 'the population into its "natural" class position': in other words, reality had to be brought into line with that representation in order to ensure the material objective of production.⁴

This slippage between race and class is key to understanding *The Amateur Emigrant*.

* * *

The narrative persona that Stevenson creates for himself displays both sympathy and a willingness to intermingle with his new comrades, while preserving a subtle class distinction through a disarming self-deprecating humour over his decline in social status and a refusal to romanticise his fellow passengers:

Emigration, from a word of the most cheerful import, came to sound almost dismally in my ear. There is nothing more agreeable to picture and nothing more pathetic to behold. The abstract idea, as conceived at home, is hopeful and adventurous. A young man, you fancy, scorning restraints and helpers, issues forth into life, that great battle, to fight for his own land. The most pleasant stories of ambition, of difficulties overcome, and of ultimate success, are but as episodes to this great epic of self-help. The epic is composed of individual heroisms; it stands as the victorious war which subdued an empire stands to the personal act of bravery which spiked a single cannon and was adequately rewarded with a medal. For in emigration the young men enter direct and by the shipload on their heritage

of work; empty continents swarm, as at the Bo'sun's whistle, with industrious hands, and whole new empires are domesticated to the service of man. (10–11)

The warning that begins this passage alerts the reader that the 'heroic' ideal of emigration does not marry with the reality Stevenson witnesses. Indeed, the next paragraph reveals this perspective to be an idealisation largely composed of 'embellishments', since the emigrants he sees are older men with families. But note how Stevenson, as the observing subject, is able to oversee, reflect and interpret the situation of his fellow passengers who are reduced to silence and effective invisibility, except as the disappointing inversion of the heroic image they dismally fail to satisfy. They are also denied the status of imperial pioneers; not for them the epic 'civilising mission' of colonialism, for they are not heading for an empty continent from which 'new empires' can be carved.

As an *amateur* emigrant, Stevenson is careful not to be caught within the field of his own gaze. He reinscribes a middle-class identity by implying that it is not want that forces him to travel, but his own curiosity, much like the gentleman traveller/narrator of his earlier travel writing.⁵ Indeed, curiosity, rather than lack of funds, is the reason he advances for his presence among the steerage passengers: 'I was not in truth a steerage passenger. Although anxious to see the worst of emigrant life' (4). In doing so, he creates the impression of a detached and superior 'ethnographic' stance that systematically denies heroic status to his working-class shipmates without ostensibly claiming that role for himself.

In fact, Stevenson's narrative strategy is considerably more complex than it might first appear, as is most clearly apparent from his depiction of the working-class passengers. Although he was keen to deny them the more romantic associations of emigration, Stevenson was willing to undermine his own resolutely middle-class perspective by considering the causes for their less than heroic appearance. These were solid families forced out not by the draw of the individualistic freedom of the frontier, but by conditions at home: 'Labouring mankind had in the last few years, and throughout Great Britain, sustained a prolonged and crushing series of defeats. I had heard vaguely of these reverses . . . But I had never taken them home to me or represented these distresses livingly to my imagination' (11). This is strikingly different to the judgement of social imperialists like General William Booth of Salvation Army fame, who would propose in his book *Darkest England and the Way Out* (1890) – significantly echoing the title of the explorer Henry Stanley's *In Darkest Africa* (1890) and the earlier *Through the Dark Continent* (1878) – that the poor were at risk of degenerating into the equivalent of a distinctly inferior racial other. Booth's universal panacea for poverty was dispersion through the 'empty' lands of the

empire; in other words, the emigration that Stevenson seems to tacitly criticise in the passage above. Like many of his contemporaries among the middle classes, Booth was keen to deal with the consequences rather than underlying causes of the clear distress of the working class during the second half of the nineteenth century. Such thinking led to a division of the poor into two groups, the deserving and undeserving poor, with the latter all but abandoned to their fate much like a recalcitrant, uncivilised, colonised other, which led in turn to measures like the draconian Sanitary Acts whereby working-class dwellings could be condemned, but without any obligation to rehouse the people displaced. The result was the creation of a large, miserable, itinerant underclass whose situation in some ways resembled that of displaced and marginalised tribal people in the wider empire.

While Stevenson's equivocation towards the working class is hardly exceptional for a Victorian gentleman with liberal sympathies, his textual ambivalence directly draws the reader's attention to the choice of these steerage passengers to take the future into their own hands, confounding such class and racially derived stereotypes. Without a ready framework and given the failure of the emigrants to live up to the romantic stereotype of the imperial pioneer, Stevenson's narrative is impelled to briefly focus on the conditions that forced these people into such a desperate measure as emigration. However, Stevenson was certainly no political radical and intentionally removes the sting from this social comment through a particularly scathing interpretation of the characters of the steerage passengers, insisting they are congenital failures rather than economic and class victims: 'We were a company of the rejected; the drunken, the incompetent, the weak, the prodigal, all who had been unable to prevail against circumstances in the one land were now fleeing pitifully to another; and though one or two might still succeed, all had already failed. We were a shipload of failures, the broken men of England' (12). Stevenson will not allow himself to recognise without such a qualification that a measure like emigration for an established family is more likely to be a consequence of extreme pressure than fecklessness. Choosing to take their future into their own hands by emigrating, these steerage passengers deny their 'placing' in contemporary definitions of the poor and demonstrate an agency incompatible with the idea of a passive other with which Stevenson can feel wholly at ease.

Even more striking from this perspective is Stevenson's consistent use of the pronoun 'we', counting himself among the number of failed, rejected and prodigal, which is rather at odds with the careful maintenance of his middle-class narrative identity. Stevenson had written to his friend Sidney Colvin prior to his departure describing himself as a 'husk', 'detached from life' and unable to 'believe fully in my own experience', pointing to the crisis in his life that provoked his journey.

With such personal motivations absent from the published narrative, it is this subtext of a loss of confidence and self-worth that makes his observations about class distinctions so striking, especially when expressed by an author who had written for such an overtly middle-class readership up to this point in his career. What emerges is a narrative in which Stevenson makes light of his temporary fall in class status, but simultaneously seeks to displace his own anxieties about personal failure on to his fellow passengers, revealing in the process rather more about his own anxieties than his ostensible object. This is reflected in an acute sensitivity over class slights, expressed in the form of outrage for his fellow passengers, but equally expressive of his own anxiety lest his fall in class status prove to be permanent. This enables him to comprehend the petty, and sometimes more fundamental, injustices meted out solely on the basis of class. This sensitivity is apparent from some key early episodes. First, there is the wry humour attendant on official signs of his now ambivalent class status. While he had purchased a ticket for a second-class cabin so that he had a table to write on and, perhaps, to ensure that he did not become wholly of the steerage, this 'superior' accommodation consisted of little more than sectioned-off cabins in the steerage, with both the first-class passengers and crew making no distinction between the two passenger groups. Yet, as Stevenson points out:

This last particular in which the second cabin passengers remarkably stands ahead of his brother of the steerage is one altogether of sentiment. In the steerage there are males and females; in the second cabin ladies and gentlemen. For some time after I came aboard I thought I was only a male; but in the course of a voyage of discovery below decks, I came upon a brass plate, and learned that I was still a gentleman. Nobody knew it, of course. I was lost in the crowd of males and females, and rigorously confined to the same quarter of the deck . . . still, I was like one with a patent of nobility in a drawer at home; and when I felt out of spirits I could go down and refresh myself with a look at that brass plate. (5-6)

The final sentence confirms the humorous self-deprecation that Stevenson aims at his own class and social vanity, but shares the very same perspective that would see the steerage passengers as 'a crowd of males and females'. While he is prepared to laugh at the ineffectual official recognition of status in the form of the brass plate, he and his readers *know* he is entitled to that status which is essential to the 'positional superiority' established within the narrative. He is more than ready to respond heatedly to what he sees as a class-based slight when a party of first-class passengers comes to examine life in the steerage:

there came three cabin passengers, a gentleman and two young ladies, picking their way with little gracious titters of indulgence, and a lady bountiful air about nothing, which galled me to the quick. I have little of the radical in social questions, and have always nourished an idea that one person is as good as another. But I was troubled by this episode. It was astonishing what insults these people managed to convey by their presence. They seemed to throw their clothes in our faces. (28)

The suffix to this episode was not to appear in print until 1966 and continues: 'we had been made to feel ourselves a sort of comical lower animal' (28). Note how this passage dwells once more on the titles 'lady' and 'gentleman', referring the reader back to Stevenson's musings on the relation between class labelling and actualities of a few pages earlier. Once again, Stevenson's sensitivity and ire cut two ways: he is outraged at the slight to the entire company of which he is a member, but also embarrassed by the behaviour of his class.

The 'we' in this passage reflects a subtle slippage between sympathy and critique, even though Stevenson most clearly associates himself with the steerage passengers. The concluding comment, that under such highly charged scrutiny those observed feel reduced in status to little better than animals, hints subversively at that discourse which insists on racial regression among the working-class poor. This racial discourse saw little differentiation between 'savages' and animals and could easily be reformulated to describe the metropolitan poor. Indeed, this alignment between race and class is underscored here by the salon visitors' interest in tattered clothing as a sign of that regression, as if clothes in good repair would be in some way incongruous. While Stevenson might resist this stereotype, his narrative and social authority is never under threat; he is able to introduce a discourse that is progressively relative in social terms:

Some of our finest behaviour, though it appears well enough from the boxes, may seem even brutal to the gallery. We boast too often of manners that are parochial rather than universal; that, like a country wine, will not bear transportation for a hundred miles, nor from the parlour to the kitchen. To be a gentleman is to be one all the world over, and in every relation and grade of society . . . manners, like art, should be human and central. (78)

Stevenson goes to some length to emphasise that 'gentle behaviour' is a moral accomplishment rather than a class-based distinction and then extends this to interactions between different peoples and nationalities as well. In effect, he takes a pervasive discourse of otherness – both in terms of class and/or ethnicity – and inverts its moral polarity. Rather than assuming that the bourgeois European is inherently

superior because of material and social accomplishments, he suggests that worth is gauged by the treatment of others. Inevitably, such a position is still founded on the presumed superiority of middle-class/European culture that Stevenson is certainly not going to surrender, but it is a significant check on the inherent inequality of relationships 'usually involving conditions of coercion, radical inequality, and intractable conflict'.⁶ Stevenson is also concerned here with the quantifiable difference between superficial accomplishments versus material worth expressed through actual deeds; the social consequences of clothing and class categorisation exist on the same discursive continuum as that governing similar assumptions about relative levels of civilisation in a colonial context. A term like 'street arab', in common usage at the time in both Britain and the United States, nicely encapsulates this outlook by relating the ragged appearance and itinerancy of a child of the streets within a specific colonial framework of behavioural classification, at which other extreme stands the colonised North African nomad who is assumed to be 'childlike' in his cultural outlook.

* * *

For Stevenson, reclassification as one of the working class becomes a textual function reflecting a material condition that is involuntary, yet he introduces a note of adventure even as he becomes conscious of these new social restrictions: 'Travel is of two kinds; and this voyage of mine across the ocean combined both. "Out of my country and myself I go," sings the old poet; and I was not only travelling out of my country in longitude and latitude, but also out of myself in diet, associates and consideration' (72). In this passage he seems to acknowledge that experience and adventure are gained not only by physical removal to another country, but also by migration across social barriers. Despite the evident opportunity of broadening his intellectual and experiential horizons in this encounter, in the very next sentence Stevenson immediately restricts the potential of such experience to radically alter the self by reinstating his 'positional superiority': 'Part of the interest and a great deal of amusement flowed, at least to me, from this novel situation in the world' (72). In essence, the experience is represented as 'fun', even if, in actuality, it reflected some hardship, and promises access to the 'other' side of the class barrier with the attendant thrill of transgression – an adventure. We might also read this as a narrative and personal defensive strategy by which Stevenson preserves his middle-class identity. Again, humour is the chief means he employs to defuse very real social sensitivities – perhaps, even, concealing his shame – that seem bruised by his experiences among the steerage passengers. This seems to be the main reason why the entire manuscript was not published in his lifetime, since it both alarmed and provoked strong criticism from family and friends, such as his father's sternly

disapproving observation that ‘I think it not only the worst thing you have done, but altogether unworthy of you’.⁷ As James Hart writes: ‘Stevenson allowed his father to pay the publishers a hundred pounds to withdraw the work that showed the scion of a good professional Edinburgh family travelling with dirt and disease and associating with poor people.’⁸

The introduction of an adventure theme into the narrative register creates an expectation of cliché and stereotype common to both the imperial adventure story and travel writing of the time; a series of conventions that confirm the superiority of the protagonist as middle class, male and white. ‘Adventure’, observes Richard Phillips, ‘was generally – but not universally – motivated by a clear political agenda: broadly speaking, imperialism.’⁹ Phillips’s qualification here is important when considering *The Amateur Emigrant*. Stevenson’s observations during his Atlantic crossing are structured as a considered social critique that is all the more powerful because it emerges from within the very middle-class discourse that it attacks. In doing so, the narrative strives not to alienate its ‘ideal’ reader to the extent that he or she would cease reading on the grounds of obvious ideological provocation. By a subtle shift in perspective, he achieves a real sense of defamiliarisation for readers from his own class. On the other hand, while Stevenson certainly takes as much care to retain his ‘positional superiority’ *vis-à-vis* his working-class objects, he never seeks to conceal his class status from his fellow passengers and this seems to gain him some acceptance. Indeed, Jones, a steerage passenger with whom Stevenson struck up a friendship, complimented him on how he ‘managed to behave very pleasantly’ to the working-class passengers, although, as Stevenson noted, this was also an acknowledgement of their essential difference: ‘I could follow the thought in his mind, and knew his compliment to be such as we pay foreigners on their proficiency in English. I daresay this praise was given to me immediately on the back of some unpardonable solecism which had led him to review my conduct as a whole’ (77–8). It is significant that the class relationship is described in terms of ‘foreignness’, although the direction of this objectification is returned to Stevenson and the ‘superior’ classes he represents, since it is they – or he as their representative in this alien situation – who are foreign. His situation is far more ambivalent, since he is now foreign to both social groups and a strangely liminal narrator, a fact that is only partially obscured by both the self-deprecating humour and quasi-ethnographic stance. His social exclusion from the salon passengers was so total as to render him socially invisible:

In my normal circumstances, it appeared, every young lady must have paid me some passing tribute of a glance; and although I had often been unconscious of it when given, I was well aware of its

absence when it was withheld. My height seemed to decrease with every woman who passed me, for she passed me like a dog. This is one of the reasons for supposing that what are called the upper classes may sometimes produce a disagreeable impression in what are called the lower; and I wish some one would continue my experiment and find out exactly at what stage of toilette a man becomes invisible to the well regulated female eye. (74–75)

Despite the humour of equating his wounded vanity with a reduction in physical stature and the smirk behind his proposal for a sociological study, this still leaves the social criticism clear and direct in this passage. Nor is the thrust of this critique directed against women; the phrase ‘well regulated’ demonstrates some sensitivity to the patriarchal constraints under which Victorian women lived, suggesting that they are also the subjects of a broader social control played out over their bodies. Women become part of the discursive nexus that Stevenson is probing here, a highly complex and diffuse range of attitudes and narrative strategies that combine/confuse attitudes towards race, nationality, class and gender, brought together by a narrative structure organised around the apparently detached point of view of an ethnographic observer and adventurer. As a matter of course, late Victorian adventure narratives vigorously reproduced contemporary doctrine on private and public spaces, creating aggressively masculine textual spaces far away from the hearth and home that were centred on women and children and which were depicted very much as a passive realm. Ruskin argued in a speech of 1864: ‘man’s power is active’ and ‘his energy [is] for adventure’,¹⁰ yet the private space of home was part of a patriarchal discourse that sought to define not only domestic relationships, but could also govern in another setting the interrelation between ‘inferior’ classes and subject races. As Ania Loomba observes: ‘Initially, women were described in terms taken from racial discourse, and then gender differences were used to explain racial differences.’¹¹

While Stevenson was able to suggest insights like this, his text reproduces much of the same restrictive social apparatus in relation to the women who are part of the adventurous realm he has created from the raw material of his experiences on the emigrant ship. According to Karen Lawrence: ‘to varying degrees, all . . . studies of adventure . . . encode the traveller as a male who crosses boundaries and penetrates spaces; the female is mapped as a place on the itinerary of the male journey’.¹² In contrast to Stevenson’s more open attitude towards the male passengers, the steerage women are generally notable in this text for the extent to which they transgress patriarchal dictates of female behaviour. The cabin women are then, by implication, too superficial to identify his quality among the mass of steerage passengers, and, while he is willing to admit some of the steerage men into

his laudably inclusive idea of gentlemanly behaviour and *politesse*, the steerage women do not fare so well: 'It will be understood that I speak of the best among my fellow passengers; for in the steerage, as well as in the salon, there is a mixture. The women, in particular, too often displeased me by something hard and forward, by something sullen and jeering both in speech and conduct' (79). The salon ladies affect not to see him at all and the steerage women, by their forwardness, do not afford him the 'proper' respect due to a man of the 'better classes'. There also remains the unresolved question of whether the male passengers of whom Stevenson writes so admiringly were, in actuality, those who effectively deferred to his class status while pretending not to do so. It is not only the women of the 'upper class' whose gaze is 'well regulated', but also Stevenson's towards the working class.

Although there are clear limits to Stevenson's egalitarian discourse, he does construct a critique of the imperial project that is not so obviously filtered through his narrative persona of social investigator and middle-class traveller, when he attempts to represent the views and beliefs of selected steerage passengers as distinct from his own opinions. Again, of course, there are limits to how far such an attempt can remain uncoloured by Stevenson's own views and social identity, as will be evident through *how* he chooses to present the others' viewpoints. For this group, disillusioned with Britain, are not reluctant to strike at that very source of deep nationalistic pride, the expanding empire: 'for nearly all with whom I conversed were bitterly opposed to war, and attributed their own misfortunes, and frequently their own taste for whisky, to the campaigns in Zululand and Afghanistan' (16). Having denied these 'deserters' the role of adventurous pioneers, Stevenson is reluctant to grant them the acuity to comprehend that imperial aggrandisement does not benefit the British people as a whole. Since it is the working classes who provide the majority of the troops and risk their lives for that expansion with, arguably, the smallest share in the resultant spoils, it is a highly rational conclusion. Stevenson suggests, however, that as a consequence of their limited comprehension and discontent, they are simply focusing on colonial expansion as a convenient issue on which to blame the consequences of their own failings. Indeed, he depicts them singing an imperialist/nationalist 'bastard doggerel of the music hall – "We don't want to fight, but, by Jingo, if we do"' (16) – to further undermine their apparent level of political comprehension. Such pointed discrediting betrays Stevenson's own sensitivity to such criticism.

As an alternative to such an overt anti-imperialist stance, Stevenson seeks an explanation for the allure of emigration that does not discredit the British social, national and imperial status quo. We have already seen that he is willing to allow for the debilitating effects of the harsh economic conditions that have fallen disproportionately heavily on

the working classes (11–12). His solution to these contradictory impulses is to single out a few of his steerage companions as exemplary members of their class and to stigmatise the rest – including all the women – as inherently degenerate; not only unfit for success in Britain, but in some cases biologically and culturally inadequate. Drunkenness, in particular, is isolated as the primary sign of failure and advancing degeneration, a view that is developed at some length with a passenger called Mackay. This man, an engineer and hence a member of the artisan class, is intelligent and well spoken, but has the fatal flaw: ‘He was . . . another so-called victim of the bottle. But Mackay was miles from publishing his weakness to the world; laid the blame of his failure on corrupt masters and a corrupt State policy’ (36). Note how Mackay’s social critique is represented as a displacement of his own failings, again demonstrating the same discursive template Stevenson made use of to undermine the steerage passengers’ criticism of Britain’s recent imperial conflicts. Moreover, this enables Stevenson to represent Mackay, who was only a few sentences before a ‘pertinent debater’, as an analogue of the illogical ‘savage’: ‘He had an appetite for disconnected facts which I can only compare to the savage taste for beads’ (35). The introduction of this trope also recalls the tawdry colonial practice of trading alcohol to unsuspecting colonised peoples and calling the widespread resulting drunkenness a singular mark of their ‘savage’ degeneration. In this case, it is just as likely that Mackay has been drawn to the bottle by hardship and, as such, can be seen as the victim of the same exploitative commercial and class interests as those directly subjected to the iniquities of colonial trade. There is also a latent fear of the ‘fanatic’ in Stevenson’s representation and dismissal of Mackay’s ‘pertinent debates’. This discursive strategy of undermining the credibility of an argument by discrediting the speaker is scarcely original, but in this context has a particular resonance with depictions of colonised peoples, such as that noted by Frantz Fanon, here commenting on the place of Africa and Africans in the European imagination:

Colonialism . . . has never ceased to maintain that the Negro is a savage; and for the colonist the Negro was neither an Angolan nor a Nigerian, for he simply spoke of ‘the Negro’. For colonialism, this vast continent was the haunt of savages, a country riddled with superstitions and fanaticism, destined for contempt, weighed down by the curse of God . . .¹³

Stevenson has already characterised the political acuity of the steerage passengers as something akin to superstition; of beliefs held, but with no faculty or comprehension of the economic and political causality behind them. In Mackay we find an intelligent ‘pertinent debater’ whose views are dismissed from the first. Much like a colonised people, their

way of life and culture disrupted by contact with Europeans, the 'savage' conveniently gives way to the morally and physically 'fitter' white race, and this is the fate figuratively assigned to Mackay: 'Although I am far from cherishing unfriendly thoughts towards Mackay, for the man both interested and amused me, it seems still an open question whether, for the general interests of the race, he had not better remain poor and drink himself to death' (38). Why, one might ask, for the 'general interests of the race'? 'Race' here has become analogous to class, since it seems to be less for the good of the working classes – part of the 'race', after all – that Mackay should disappear than for the status quo that reflects middle-class interests.

Whether Stevenson reproduces this discursive pattern consciously or not, he again manages to extricate his own class carefully from the critical frame, even though his strategy seems to acknowledge an implicit threat posed by Mackay's radical artisan:

And he plainly looked upon me as one who was insidiously seeking to reproduce the people's annual bellyful of corn and steam-engines. I feel there is some mistake in this alarm, and that people could get through life perhaps with less of either. But when I hinted at something of this view, and that to spend less was, after all, as good a way out of the difficulty of life as to gain more, he accused me, in almost as many words, of the sin of aristocracy and a desire to grind the masses. Perhaps there was some indelicacy on my part in presenting him with such an argument; for it is not in his class that such a movement must be inaugurated; and *we* must see the rich honest, before we look to see the poor considerate. (38; emphasis added)

The 'we' emphasised here is again telling, since it establishes a subject position that is neither of the poor working class who are 'inconsiderate', nor of the aristocratic rich who are 'dishonest'. It is the 'we' or, quite literally here, the 'middle class' who must see both reformed to achieve social harmony. This 'middle class' is further refined by a concern 'about the continued property and power of many unworthy capitalists' (38) who are, thereby, effectively excluded from Stevenson's class. So, who belongs to this 'middle class'? Certainly Stevenson is careful to maintain his 'positional superiority' on the ship and in the narrative as a commentator who can dissect it as a microcosm of class ills – an identity critical of the haughty cabin passengers who pick their way among the steerage passengers whom they patronise. It is a haughtiness that, paradoxically, also ignores Stevenson's own social pretension for which he demands recognition, as he shows by distinguishing himself from those very steerage passengers whom he regards as exemplary, but different, and patronised or degenerate by turn.

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Stevenson's narrative persona is politically conservative, sensitive to slights towards Britain and quietly supportive of empire, but also incorporating a liberal social conscience and a political critique that is quite pointed on occasion and has a reformist thrust. Yet he is chilled when a working man, for whom he evidences some respect, insists that: 'capital, by some happy direction, must change hands from worse to better . . . to rend the old country from end to end, and from top to bottom, and in clamour and civil discord remodel it with the hand of violence' (55). Despite his alarm at this prospect, Stevenson does allow the inevitability of reform and is willing to accept what he views as an extremist course from a man of this calibre who 'was calm; he had attained prosperity and ease; he was a gentleman' (55). Indeed, these credentials would almost seem to co-opt this prosperous, level-headed radical to Stevenson's 'middle class', an appropriation that provides some clue to the discursive co-ordinates of Stevenson's position. His emphasis on culture and manners recalls Matthew Arnold's argument in *Culture and Anarchy* (1869), which castigated the ruling classes both for their materialism and selfish indifference to the sufferings of the poor, leading to their disaffection from the nation and cultural degeneration, thereby creating a fearsome mob, alien in culture and interests. Arnold's argument was to reclaim the working classes to the national project by a diffusion of English (middle-class) culture through mass education which would encourage national cohesiveness and hold off revolution born out of resentment and exclusion. This approach is not unique, however, having been tried and tested as an aspect of imperial governance long before Arnold adapted it for use in the motherland. For example, Macaulay puts much the same strategy forward in his infamous 'Minute on Indian education' of 1835:

We at present do our best to form a class who may be interpreters between us and the millions we govern; a class of persons, Indian in blood and colour, but English in taste, in opinions, in morals, and in intellect. To that class we may leave it to refine the vernacular dialects of the country, to enrich those dialects in terms of science borrowed from the Western nomenclature, and to render them by degrees fit vehicles for conveying knowledge to the great mass of the population.¹⁴

The only difference is that Macaulay calls for the education of an intermediary class to mediate British culture and interest to a foreign population whereas Arnold calls for middle-class culture to be taken directly to the no less foreign masses. Stevenson adds a more social Darwinist edge to this Arnoldian discourse by contrasting Scottish labourers with the equivalent English farm labourer:

I was already a young man when I was first brought into contact with some of the heavy labourers of Suffolk; and only those who have some acquaintance with the same class in Scotland can conceive the astonishment and disgust with which I viewed the difference. To me, they seemed scarce human, but like a very gross and melancholy sort of ape. (85)

Stevenson's point here is less to emphasise Britain's internal rivalries (although the standard of general education as a whole in Scotland was superior and far more egalitarian than that available in England throughout the nineteenth century) than to underline his Arnoldian theme of the benefits of education and cultivation. As a contrast to these Suffolk labourers, he recounts the story of an encounter with a Scottish labourer and the ensuing discussion which exemplified the possibility of communication over a mutually shared cultural vocabulary, while maintaining an absolute material and class inequality. Here, a colonising 'positional superiority' is unnecessary, since both parties know their place in the social scale, yet give allegiance to common cultural ground. If nothing else, the vision is curiously feudal in terms of its fixed social roles. It does, nonetheless, betray a comprehension of the dehumanising effects of contemporary colonial as well as class relationships that he uses to interpret class antagonisms. The apelike quality of the Suffolk labourers emphasises the discursive connection in terms of their potential 'racial' otherness by hinting at a colonial register that echoes the very worst type of racial slur.

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‘Black skull’ consciousness: the new Swedish working class

DIANA MULINARI and ANDERS NEERGAARD

Abstract: Many of the immigrant workers who came to Sweden from the sixties onwards, and their children, are stereotyped as ‘black skulls’. They are seen as silent, passive and mired in ‘traditional’ cultures, a stereotype that also pervades the trade union bureaucracies which are closely tied to the dominant Social Democratic Party. But interviews with activists in the FAI, a network of immigrant union activists, reveal a new ‘black skull’ consciousness in which the stereotype and insult of passivity have been turned on their heads. A new consciousness and analysis of Swedish racism has emerged – one which ultimately seeks to transform the whole way in which trade unions operate.

Keywords: activists, immigrants, racism, Sweden, trade unions, workers

They do not discriminate against us; it is not about racism, they only want us to go.

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A respectable immigrant is a silent immigrant, one who has learnt to stay calm. One who never demands anything . . . But we in FAI, we are so tired of being wimpish. We cannot and will not continue to show that we are integrated 'black skulls'. We are not that any more . . . We are ready to be a pain in the ass; if it is needed, we will be loud and rough . . .

The Swedish political landscape has changed drastically in the last ten years. As research has shown, issues related to 'race' and ethnicity are central not only to debates about migration and national belonging but also to political identities and political movements.¹ In the last parliamentary elections, a right-wing racist party gained several seats at the municipal level. At the same time, the Liberal Party, historically recognised for its progressive stance, strengthened its position by demanding language tests for immigrants. Undoubtedly, the support of the Swedish 'immigrant'² population for the Social Democrats and the Left influenced the outcome of the elections and the triumph of a red-green coalition. This population (a product of both labour migration in the sixties and refugee policies from the seventies onwards), although highly differentiated, generally shares a similar position in the labour market, experiences segregation in housing and everyday life and institutional racism in welfare institutions.

This population is also throwing up new forms of working-class organisation and struggle, such as the network of immigrant union activists (Fackligt aktiva invandrare, the FAI) that is our subject here.³ There is increasing scepticism, among both 'Swedes' and the immigrant population, about joining a union and about the way that unions function.⁴ These are criticisms that FAI also voices; it demands organisational development to increase unions' dynamism at the expense of their institutional bureaucratic structures.

In Sweden, most social science research has focused on immigrants from a cultural standpoint, characterising them for the most part as passive and 'different' – apart from a few critical studies. We begin, however, from an awareness of the way in which the internal division of the working class has been structured around gender and by 'race'.⁵ How does an inclusive, reformist and bureaucratic trade union organisation respond to challenges from new groups? And how does this connect with issues of gender and patriarchy, especially given the way that the status of women receives particular emphasis in the standard conception of the Swedish nation?

Our study is based on empirical research carried out between 1997 and 1999, which included both in-depth and group interviews (based on regional FAI networks) with immigrant union activists, in which we captured both the context of discussion and the collective voice of our informants. These methods (together with participant observation

of FAI's activities and at union meetings on issues related to discrimination) made it possible to challenge the stereotypes of silence, passivity and difference. We also collected and analysed different types of material produced by the trade unions and the FAI, and analysed articles in the LO weekly over some six years, to understand the picture the unions paint of 'immigrants' within the movement. The LO (Landsorganisationen) is the Swedish trade union confederation. As researchers, we did not occupy a neutral space. That we identify ourselves as 'black skulls' (Anders is black; Diana, Latina) strongly influenced the way that immigrant workers and 'Swedish' union activists spoke to us about racism.

Historical context

Swedish governments have, since 1932, been dominated by the Social Democratic Party (SDP), apart from 1976–82 and 1991–94. The SDP is one of the pillars of the Swedish labour movement; the other is made up of the trade unions organised around the LO.⁶ The significance of Swedish trade unions for understanding the processes of racialisation and discrimination lies partly in the fact that the LO is actually the largest 'immigrant' organisation. More than a fifth of LO's members are of non-Swedish background – that is, they were either foreign-born (13 per cent) or had at least one parent who was born overseas (8 per cent).⁷

The first feature to emphasise is the Swedish labour market's very high degree of unionisation; however, this is not necessarily evidence of the strength of the LO, since, from an international perspective, the degree of unionisation of white-collar workers (TCO, Tjänstemännens centralorganisation) and professionals (SACO, Sveriges akademikers centralorganisation) is even more exceptional, as is the organisational strength of the employers (Svensk Näringsliv).⁸ This is an important element in LO's self-image, an image challenged by our informants.

They are . . . how can I explain this to you? Well, when I was a child my parents bought the first [home with a] living-room. We were the first family in the neighbourhood to have such a room. We never used it but we learned that we were better than all the others because we had that room . . . It is the same thing with the Swedish unions . . . have you seen the European unions at the anti-globalisation demonstrations, have you seen them when their people lost their jobs? If something is never used, it is pretty and it is big, but it is like my mother's living-room.

Throughout the LO's history, it has witnessed a number of organisational conflicts that have indirectly affected the development of

strategies for immigrant workers. The first serious political conflict within the LO arose in the aftermath of the 1909 general strike, which was lost. Radical groups based on syndicalism forged a new trade union (the SAC, Sveriges Arbetares centralorganisation) which is still around but has never mounted much of a challenge.⁹ A more serious challenge to reformism within the LO and to its links to the SDP came from the strength of communist activism. But, during the 1950s in particular, the communists were marginalised by a concerted effort from within the unions with the help of the SDP. Subsequent major conflicts have focused on the challenge from public-service employees to improve their relative position within the labour market *vis-à-vis* industrial workers. In the LO, this also became a gender conflict between the predominantly female union of municipal workers and the male bastion of the LO, the metal workers' union. Finally, strains developed between the SDP and the LO during the 1980s and 1990s that threatened their alliance, as the SDP became increasingly influenced by neoliberal ideas and the example of Britain's 'New Labour' Party.

Compared to Britain, there has rarely been any organised explicit racism within the Swedish trade union movement. Among the reasons that may explain this low level of articulated racism are Sweden's short (and failed) colonial project; the fact that the biological racism prevalent in the 1920s was discredited following the Nazi defeat in 1945; and the organised subordination of immigrants within the labour market which, for many years, restricted them from competing with 'Swedes'. But this has not prevented the processes of racialisation and the spread of non-organised forms of racism. Furthermore – in contrast with emerging anti-racist trends in the UK that spread to the labour movements – Swedish trade unions generally still view the subordination of immigrant groups as a failure of integration and rarely as a result of racism.

The unions' view

But how do the unions view the position and status of immigrant workers? What do they see as their role in respect of them? To gain a picture of this, we examined articles published in the LO's weekly magazine for the period 1995–2001. The following quotes (all from the beginning of the period) illustrate the three broad approaches that we identified:

We are creating a society where no longer is it about immigrants getting the worst jobs, but, rather, that they don't even get those jobs. We in the labour movement cannot see this happen.

Leif Blomberg, former immigration minister and president of the metalworkers' union

All workers should be organised in the unions and covered by collective agreements. If any group is left outside, there is a risk that they will take jobs at lower salaries than under collective agreements.

Bertil Jonsson, chairman of the LO

It is only admitting what is true. We haven't paid sufficient attention to immigrants and to tendencies towards segregation. And we haven't noticed in time the alarming tendencies towards discrimination against immigrants during their working lives.

Jan Edling, LO official with responsibility for migrant workers

The first statement betrays, as we see it, the Swedish labour movement's perspective on immigrants as a reserve army of labour for the worst jobs. It implicitly assumes that the major and most alarming problem is that of unemployment, compared to the 'natural' situation of immigrant workers which is simply to be employed in the worst jobs. In many comments made by union officials, immigrants are perceived as lacking the human capital possessed by 'Swedes' and so seen as a natural labour reserve of unskilled workers.

In the second quotation, unemployed immigrant workers are constructed as a threat to union organisation and solidarity, despite the fact that there is no evidence to support such a position. This 'threat', which unions have hitherto not dealt with, is to be combated by stressing the benefits of union membership. The view expressed not only divides workers into 'us' and 'them', it also underscores the subordinate position of immigrant workers within the labour market. In this view, the problem is not so much racism and discrimination as it is the need to stem the increasing gap between 'Swedish' and immigrant workers, which would otherwise lead to the lowering of wages and worsening of conditions.

The final quote highlights a certain self-criticism by the LO leadership. As such, it is typical of a number of articles about 'what we haven't done' that identify 'alarming tendencies'. But, like most such articles, it demonstrates an unwillingness to go from such talk to making a statement about actual racism within union ranks, workplaces or the labour market. Even rarer are discussions about what to do about racism. There is a reluctance to see racism and discrimination as structural and institutional. Instead, the general solution advanced is more discussion, education and work on combating prejudice. However, on closer examination, one may also detect a return to the idea that the underlying problem stems from the language and human capital deficiencies of immigrant workers themselves, and not the racialised means by which they are subordinated and excluded.

Furthermore, in union discussions of immigrant workers, all too often issues of racism and discrimination are rewritten as issues of class oppression and thus subsumed under the general agenda of the

LO. In this final quote, as in other articles, there is a tension about dealing with issues of racism and discrimination, which are, at times, explicitly formulated as a threat to class cohesion. For the 'white' LO leadership, tackling racism can be seen as undermining worker solidarity.

A further core issue in our analysis of the union newspaper was, who is allowed to talk about the situation of immigrants. As the initial quote demonstrated, the dominant voices are those of 'Swedish' trade union leaders and Social Democrat politicians; they are joined by experts, researchers and welfare state officials. There is rarely space for immigrant union activists to give their opinions or analysis, to express general reflections. In part, this is one consequence of a racialised labour market and a trade union organisation in which there are few from immigrant backgrounds in positions of authority. And even when such voices do get through, they generally come in subordinated and restricted forms; purveyors of autobiographical data or ethnographic descriptions of themselves and 'their' culture. They are also used to criticise other immigrants (often as too passive) or to hail labour market or trade union projects that cater for immigrants.

The FAI network developed in part as a challenge to the representation of immigrant workers as just a source of cheap labour and a corresponding threat to working-class cohesion. In doing so, it also challenged the idea that an all-'white' trade-union leadership can represent immigrant workers.

Who are the FAI? What do they want?

The unions are as the sun. We have the unions in our blood . . . it is warm. Many of us have been active in agitation, organisation, demonstrations, strikes; we have experienced police repression, prison and exile. But we also know happiness, solidarity and human value. The FAI believes in the sun . . . even when it does not shine. Today the sun does not shine. The union does not shine either for us migrants. We do not want to take over the organisation – we want to participate.

FAI was formed in March 1997. It aims both to organise immigrants and to strengthen the representation and impact of immigrant members within the union movement. All the members in the three major union confederations; the working-class LO; the professional employees' TCO; and the academic employees' SACO may join the regional networks of FAI, although most of its activists are members of LO.¹⁰

The quote above is from a long interview with one of FAI's founders. Most FAI activists came to Sweden as political refugees from the late 1970s onwards. There are great variations in nationality,

religion, ethnic identity and gender among the group we worked with. What most have in common, however, is their long involvement in union and political work before they came to Sweden. All of them have worked in Swedish unions for over five years – some for over twenty. They have successfully linked up with and supported the demands of the first generation of immigrant workers organised in the unions, some of whom (especially of Finnish background) have also organised within FAI.

Three basic questions were put to FAI by the leadership of the unions when FAI first became nationally visible: who are they; are they against us; and what do they want? Below are some of the answers to these questions, as expressed by our informants.

Who are they?

I've always been part of the working-class movement. I come from a Chilean family. Both my mother and my father were union activists. I have a brother who 'disappeared' in Argentina, a sister in Canada – and, well, here I am in Sweden.

I was fifteen when I began to work politically in Tehran. It was during the Shah's time . . . I have been a union activist all my life.

As a whole, the people whose views are expressed in this article strongly identify with the modernist project that the unions represent. They did not discover 'equality' and 'justice' after coming to Sweden. For these activists (and for the people they try to represent), the union is the natural place to be.

What do they want?

The need for FAI was stated very simply by one member:

It began with the fact that we had difficulties in understanding why the unions did not do anything for migrants.

In other words, Swedish unions do not prioritise immigrants and their needs. This interviewee expects an organisation that claims to represent all workers to be sensitive to the demands of an increasing group of members: immigrants. She highlights the contradiction between the unions' universalising ideology and their exclusionary practices. For this informant, FAI's agenda is simple – to demand that the unions do what they say. Another put it like this:

Often they [immigrant workers] organise in the unions because it is some kind of insurance. You pay your fee and you know that the unions are there if you need them . . . but there are very few who come to the meetings. And why should they? There is no point in

going. Nobody listens. You go there and the only thing you can do is *listen and nod. And then it is finished. Wrapped and ready.*

While the first interviewee criticises the unions for their inability to represent a large section of their members, the second shifts the focus from what the unions should or should not do to the argument that, in order to provide what immigrant workers demand, the unions must become more inclusive and democratic.

The group that we discussed these issues with had all actively approached unions to join. They were not passive recruits and have stayed in the union, despite its inability to provide a forum for what FAI members conceptualise as the new Swedish working class. When we asked why so few immigrants are active in unions – an accepted platitude within the official union movement – our informants told us that there is a paradox in union rhetoric. On the one hand, the unions always complain about the difficulties of organising immigrants. On the other, when immigrants organise themselves and try actively to influence and participate in the unions, they are hindered and blocked in a number of ways:

I do not know what they are afraid of . . . First, it is not only migrants that they do not want to accept, it is also women and young people. I think that the Swedish unions have developed into . . . how can I explain this . . . developed into a government that does not want to share power with others. There are a lot of traditions in the union bureaucracies; [one is] to sit there until it's time for their pensions. But that was not the idea in Sweden at the beginning . . . Workers did not create unions so that these bureaucrats could stay there until they died, doing nothing. This is how it functions now. [They have] meetings where ten people vote for thirty . . . ten are in the meeting and they have the right to vote for thirty . . . And they wish to make compromises with the employers. That is why many of my friends (not only immigrants) lose interest. We have to fight, we cannot always just accept. There are so many rules – you cannot go on strike during negotiations; a local decision to strike is a wildcat strike. So many rules, all these rules, people get tired, you can never do anything here.

A number of significant points are being made here. The problem with the unions does not just relate to discrimination against immigrant workers, but is part of a much larger problem relating to the position of new groups. And the form of representative democracy practised today by the unions seriously limits their strength to act.

A number of FAI activists told us that many immigrant workers do not organise because they are afraid of the consequences. To chal-

lenge racism within the Swedish union movement demands strong commitment:

Everything looks so nice here, and most people really believe that in Sweden you can say what you want – but that is not the case . . . ask the communists who were crushed in the unions. People are afraid here. They know that nobody is going to say anything, but that you might come to work and find that you have been moved to another section, or that nobody votes for you any more or whatever . . .

A significant number of activists have struggled to put the issue of racism within the unions before FAI. FAI's strength, but also its limitation, is that it attempts to develop strategies within the framework of working-class respectability, so central to the Swedish union movement.¹¹ Indeed, our informants identify strongly with the Swedish working-class unions, sometimes even maintaining boundaries against more class-privileged groups within their communities:

I am a real 'black skull', a worker . . . I am against the Rainbow Party in Malmö. It is true that we all suffer from racism but many of those that are organised in the Rainbow Party scream against racism but do not like workers. For many of them, the most terrible thing that has happened to them is that they are treated as 'black skulls' (*svartskallar*) like everybody else and that they have to work with their hands for the first time in their lives . . . No, I am against any form of migrant party coalition.

Indeed, many of those who spoke to us assert that they see FAI as an organisation that, they hope, will not be needed in the future.

There are also tensions and disagreements within FAI about how far the network should 'push' the unions:

We should organise ourselves. There are serious problems but we should not 'break' the unions. I do not believe (as others do) that we have the right to divide the working-class movement. That is why FAI will only be needed for some years in order to strengthen immigrants' position within the unions. We do not want a separate organisation. If the Swedish unions did their work, if they stopped working only for Swedes, I do not believe we would need FAI.

While most activists that we met shared a common understanding of issues of racism and discrimination within the unions, there are different approaches to tackling these issues. Some struggle towards what we might term the 'de-racialisation' of social relations. Their focus is on anti-racism. Others emphasise the importance of respecting ethnic and cultural belonging. These different positions (broadly speaking, anti-racist or multicultural) are not necessarily expressed in separate and

systematically structured arguments. Indeed, many incorporate the two discourses in often creative ways. However, it should be pointed out that Swedish unions and the Swedish welfare state have more easily incorporated the discourse of regulated multiculturalism than issues of racism.¹²

Despite these differences, FAI's collective identity is created through several common standpoints. The *first one* revolves around the meaning of the word 'Swedish'. Many spoke to us of 'our mates at work', 'our co-workers who voted for us', or 'our members' without calling them 'Swedish'. In their language, Swedishness links directly to positions of power, rarely to Swedish people in their everyday life. Within FAI, there is a conscious effort politically to re-appropriate the term *svartskalle*, black skull. It is an insult that has become a symbol for belonging and struggle:

We are all *svartskallar* . . . it does not matter where we come from . . . what we have in common is that we understand each other, we have the same experience, the same bloody work, the same suspicion when we go shopping, the same problem with the children . . . many say that we are not, but I say, as things are, we are all *svartskallar*.

Throughout all our interviews, people used *svartskalle* to name the new form of pan-ethnicity that is growing up in Sweden. They would say, for example, 'they got afraid, there were many of us *svartskallar* in the room' or 'the first thing everybody does but never admitted before is check how many of us *svartskallar* are in the meeting . . . before we did that in silence, now we ask how many *svartskallar*'.

But *svartskalle* also marks class boundaries; it reveals the class stratification within minority ethnic communities, knowledge of which Swedish union representatives often lack, as in: 'She is not a real *svartskalle*, married to a Swede and with that job, she cannot represent us.' It is a political concept that can include Swedish or Nordic (white) workers, as in: 'no problem with him, he is a real *svartskalle*'. It is a term that is gaining wider exposure in the public arena, in part because the so-called second generation uses it continually in oppositional ways. In our view, the term 'black skull' grasps and names an emerging Swedish immigrant and pan-ethnic working-class identity.

National belonging and working-class unions

You can collect mushrooms all life long, get a degree in mushroom gathering and they will continue to say that you do not know because you are not from here.

In the Swedish context, the barriers between immigrant workers and the unions are created through the language and concepts of an

exclusionary nationhood. The sense of nationalism that developed in Sweden can be described as welfare nationalism; the institutions of the welfare state serve as a proof of national superiority and mark the boundary between 'us' and 'them'. In our view, the unions, constructed as 'Swedish' organisations, express, in fact, a systematised form of resistance to the mobilisation of immigrant workers. Despite the increasing number of immigrant workers organised in the unions, the LO continues to speak about Swedish unions *and* immigrants. One interviewee explained this as follows:

I am so tired . . . we have been working in the unions for more than twenty years . . . more than 20 per cent are immigrants. We have always supported the union. Some of us are very active, yet they [the hierarchy] continue to speak about Swedish unions and immigrants. One wonders what needs to happen to make them understand that we [pointing to a group of immigrant workers] are the Swedish unions.

Another way to draw boundaries between 'them' and 'us' is through the interpretation of Swedish history. Historical knowledge, it has been argued, is important for a democratic society. But what is conceptualised as valid historical knowledge is a selective reconstruction, shaped in the present. Working-class history is made into a national story that excludes the experience of radical Swedish workers, of political struggle and of conflict. This, in turn, is linked to the eradication of the part played by immigrant workers in Swedish working-class struggle. Yet this was, as our informants often pointed out, particularly important during the 1970s. Working-class and union history are discussed in ways that reiterate a connection between place, culture and national territory and reinforce the assumption that there are natural bonds – virtual blood ties – among those workers who are deemed to belong to the nation and to Swedish working-class history. Immigrant workers are construed as both outside this history and unable to 'know' it. Many FAI members suggested to us that Swedish union activists represent themselves as having a born right to – indeed owning Swedish working-class history. They made comments such as: 'They do not only say "our organisation", they say also "our history".' Or, again,

When they do not like what I say, then they often claim that I do not know or understand Swedish history. But that is not true. I have read a lot and I have gone on courses. Do you know what I say to them when they say that? I tell them that their union leaders lie about their history.

Central to our argument is that radical challenges arising within the Swedish unions from immigrant workers are deemed by the unions to

be 'un-Swedish'. Our contacts often returned to the issue of how their criticisms are interpreted in the unions. Often, such criticisms are taken as a criticism of the Swedish nation itself:

It's amazing . . . you are not going to believe me, you are going to think that I am exaggerating . . . but I came to this country when I was nineteen, I've lived all my adult life here. They say all the time that they want us to participate, and when I do participate and say what I think, then they tell me that I am too critical, that I do not have any patience. And they begin to defend Sweden, but if a Swede says the same things – and a lot of Swedish comrades do – then they accept the proposition.

Many of the activists we met made a connection between organisational forms and union exclusion. Some researchers have suggested (without much evidence) that immigrants' lack of interest in unions is due to a 'cultural clash' between the ways unions function in Sweden and immigrants' experiences with unions before they came. But our research shows that immigrant union activists handle the rules of the game as well as Swedish activists. In fact, the majority of Swedish (as well as immigrant) workers rarely participate in union meetings: finding bureaucratic procedures difficult is not related to a worker's ethnicity. Swedish unions are highly centralised and bureaucratic and have developed techniques that exclude most people from taking an active part in decision-making.¹³ FAI aims to connect these practices to forms of ethnic exclusion and subordination and develop more collective participation:

It is so difficult, all that language. Once I stood up and said 'Comrades, I do not understand' . . . After the meeting a lot of people (not only immigrants) congratulated me. The Swedish do not understand it either – the only difference is that they have learned not to show it.

Some of our informants expressed a sense of failure; they felt that they spoke too much and were unable to be effective and concrete. Others suggested that it was not so much the formal rules governing meetings that were the problem as that Swedish union leaders use this bureaucratic language to ratify what has been decided before the meeting.

I understand people who do not want to go . . . They have decided everything beforehand, you are not allowed to speak and when you do, it is always out of context or it is not the point that should be discussed, or they say you are right but must come up with something concrete.

Talking in order to create an alternative world-view is central to subordinated groups. FAI's members talk a lot about racism and discrimination, often simply to get the issue on to the agenda:

We have to speak. There is a point in speaking. They say we are not effective. It is true, if we are there they cannot go home after two hours with everything decided. It is difficult to provide what they want . . . like McDonald's food, you know, ready to eat . . . that is not the kind of thing we can provide. The issue of racism is huge and one way to kill off all forms of resistance and struggle is to say, like them, 'Well, get concrete, tell us what you want so we can carry on'.

One sort of question often posed to FAI activists, is whether they are for or against a particular proposition. Restricting possible action by posing this kind of 'either/or' choice illustrates how fundamental change is resisted through the demand for easily implemented solutions to problems that, according to our interviewees, are not even properly described. According to researcher Maud Eduards, within Sweden's established representative democracy, those politics that are seen as irrelevant or threatening are continually being reformulated.¹⁴ Both politicians and 'experts' set clear boundaries between what is considered normal and what aberrant; they try to evade new issues that emerge because such issues often create tensions and unbalance well-organised routines. They often, Eduards argues, transform issues of power into issues of ability and knowledge.

Most of those we spoke to claimed that, while they are often asked to support the unions, they are rarely asked to participate. Clear lines are drawn between support, membership and participation on equal terms. But when union officials are asked to explain the lack of immigrants in senior positions, they suggest that either immigrants are not interested or lack the necessary ability; however, officials do not see this as a problem because the interests of immigrants are represented by the union. But, in the words of one immigrant worker:

I said, if it does not matter, if you can represent us, why not try it the other way round so that we can represent you. Some laughed but others did not.

Immigrant activists have developed a number of strategies that help define what kind of inclusion they are really struggling for. They often allude to the risk of inclusion under conditions that reinforce the unions' power over FAI, as in: 'Well, and then they choose an immigrant to take care of the flowers'. 'To take care of the flowers?' 'Yes. One immigrant to make coffee, take care of the flowers and leave them [the officials] in peace.'

'Taking care of the flowers' is an apt description of Swedish union efforts to depoliticise union meetings by holding them in a home-like environment. But 'taking care of the flowers' exemplifies a fundamental paradox that, while many immigrant activists want to work politically in the unions, the members who are supported and get elected are those who 'do not want to work; you get some free hours and then do not do anything more than change the water of our flowers. And we, those of us who want to organise, we have to meet after work.'

Our research shows that an important shift has taken place; from a struggle by immigrant union activists that focuses on inclusion to a struggle for forms of inclusion that immigrant workers can control. But not all forms of exclusion can be explained as based on racialised practices. Immigrant activists are also excluded because they challenge the long-standing dominance of the Social Democrats:

It took me some years to understand that the unions were social democratic: [one is] forced to be a Social Democrat to be allowed to organise a union.

Or again:

I have spoken with many of them . . . even if I am not from Sweden, I live here and my children and grandchildren were born here. And then they say, 'You are not a Social Democrat', and I answer, 'Well, I have been a worker all my life.'

This study has focused on how FAI activists reflect on their experiences of exclusion in terms of racial and ethnic discrimination, and how they understand the processes that make racism a marginal issue for the unions. Central to their analysis is a focus on the unions' power to define what racism is and who is authorised to define an action as racist. But because racism is narrowly defined as politically articulated right-wing extremism, issues of everyday and institutional racism are kept off the agenda. As one FAI activist put it:

It is always like this. First, out there, there is revolution, catastrophe . . . murder. So then at home, even if they have closed the factories, even if the union does not lift one finger to defend the workers . . . believe me, you are going to sigh with relief. There is Nazism in Germany, racism in the US, war in the Balkans, England is destroyed after Thatcher, Spain and Italy are terrible places – you know, Catholicism and women's oppression – [laughs] Believe me, you get very thankful that you live here, and you learn to close your mouth.

The image of the unions as 'rational' and 'responsible' is one of the leading elements in a national story that constructs Sweden not just as stable, consensus-based and homogenous but as the best country

in the world. But the obverse of what constitutes 'Swedishness' is a stereotype of the foreigner, the outsider, as embodying chaos and conflict – and this is what is used against radical workers.

Gender, 'race' and class

Immigrant men – especially if they are activists – are stigmatised in Sweden through a discourse that sees equality between men and women as a specific Swedish cultural attribute that is lacking among immigrants.¹⁵ Moreover, it is often asserted that immigrant men embody dangerous, traditional forms of patriarchy. One central theme in our work is how immigrant men resist these forms of stigmatisation:

They needed labour, I went directly to the factory; nobody said [different] cultures do not function together and you are from a Muslim country . . . I began to work beside a Swedish young woman . . . I did not rape her.

Or again:

I was so hurt. We had been to a union meeting and I felt so good. I felt that things were getting better, that I was one of the group . . . We took the subway together and there was only a seat available besides a black guy – and my comrades, not one of them took that place. You know, a black guy, nothing special, could be your husband or my little brother . . . And then I felt, I will always remain for them the black guy that they are so afraid of.

Women activists were very cautious about criticising male activists, not only because the FAI is a new organisation and patriarchal structures have not yet been institutionalised but also because, in a context of increasing racism, it is very difficult for them to criticise immigrant men publicly without conceding ground to the racists.

I knew you were going to ask me about this . . . I am married to one of them and he does not abuse me . . . they are not angels either, but we know where we are with them.

Or again:

You should write that they are neither better nor worse than anyone else. Of course, they can be tiresome but they do not try to hide what they think. You know, smile and smile, be polite, polite, yet never allow women in positions where they can make decisions.

Within the Swedish unions, there is a hierarchy of different forms of masculinity through which relations between different groups of men are expressed. The hegemonic image of the modern, gender-equality-aware man as exemplifying Swedish masculinity stands in opposition

to the image presented by many union leaders from working-class backgrounds. But again, the working-class concept of masculinity is in opposition to the way in which the masculinity of immigrant workers is seen.

Immigrant women face other challenges; they need to carve out a space between the issue of gender equality (the province of Swedish women) and the issues of multiculturalism/racial discrimination (the platform of immigrant men). As one put it:

They think they own it, they think they have invented this thing about gender equality. When I said I was interested in these questions, they asked me if I did not want to work on integration.

Immigrant women also have to confront sexism and racist representations of themselves:

They loved me in the beginning. They'd got an immigrant woman and, on top of everything, a Muslim. They were so happy . . . but when I began to criticise them, when I demanded to have a study circle about racism, then I was not really the one they wanted. They explained that what I wanted was not what immigrant women wanted.

Or again:

I was invisible during the entire meeting . . . nobody asked me anything about FAI. No one spoke to me . . . But in the evening, after they'd drunk enough, then they came to me and wanted to dance salsa.

Male immigrant activists often speak about Swedish women's struggle in the unions; they feature as examples and role models. This is not the case for immigrant women. Our interviews show that there are often structural barriers between Swedish and immigrant women. Not only do these two groups work in different parts of the labour market,¹⁶ but 'Swedish' women in welfare institutions maintain a hierarchy in their roles as social workers, teachers and nurses *vis-à-vis* immigrant women.

A very common belief among union leaders and commentators is that immigrant women lack knowledge about the unions. This is based on an implicit comparison with Swedish women; assumptions based more on prejudice than on any actual research.

They [union officials] come and complain to me that women do not speak to them but go direct to our supervisor, about things they should discuss with the union . . . They want me to inform them . . . they think that women are ignorant but in this workplace, the union and the management are the same. And what these women are doing

when they go straight to the supervisor is showing how things are done in Sweden . . . They actually have a lot of knowledge, they know that the unions collaborate with the employers and that they decide things together.

The concept of gender equality is central to the idea of Sweden as a modern rational state. It is a discourse that has become intrinsically linked to Swedish nationhood – and also used as a boundary marker between 'us' and 'them'. Immigrants are judged incapable of accepting and adapting to what are presented as specific Swedish gender equality values. In the Swedish context, cultural differences are represented as those between rational, secularised, women-friendly values (embodied in the Swedish nation) and traditional, religious and women-oppressing cultural values 'imported' by immigrant groups.

Conclusion

In the early 1990s, Ålund and Schierup suggested in their book *Paradoxes of Multiculturalism* that the ways immigrant workers organise in Sweden should be understood in the context of the welfare state's recognition and institutionalisation of immigrants' demands, as expressed in ethnically separate and culturally based organisations. The rise of the FAI network illustrates the changes that have occurred over the last ten years, as reflected in the increasing demand from immigrant activists for equal participation and representation in areas that transcend those covered by purely immigrant organisations. The change is expressed not only in the new organisational forms they have created in the unions but also in the emergence of a common, political 'race'/class or pan-ethnic consciousness. 'Black skull' has been appropriated as a term of positive self-identification.

Our study shows that immigrant working-class groups embody a specific form of consciousness, which differs from that of the 'national' working class. However, pan-ethnic politics are not necessarily the first priority for all immigrant activists and many of our informants emphasised their loyalty to the unions as their first and strongest identification. The same person can discuss ethnic discrimination and the need for collective strategies, even as she positions herself as belonging to other collectivities (such as her workplace, her union, her women's group). And political identification, ranging from the Social Democrats to the parliamentary and extra-parliamentary Left is also an important organising principle. While there may be no direct connection between the position of immigrant workers in the unions and a 'black skull' consciousness, there is no doubt that an identification with this pan-ethnic collectivity is growing among immigrant workers in Sweden.

FAI's demands transcend the discourse of 'integration' that has been the mainstay of the unions, focusing instead on discrimination and institutional and everyday racism. It has challenged stereotypes of immigrant workers as passive, ignorant and a problem for the unions. FAI demands a new response from the unions in that it claims that the model of union/employer collaboration does not protect the interests of an increasing number of union members: immigrants. But not all the resistance towards FAI stems purely and simply from racial discrimination. In our view, there is increasing evidence that the LO is happy to include immigrant workers – but only if those groups exclude FAI activists who link the critique of racism with a critique of union policy more generally. For such a critique demands not only anti-discrimination policies but also a more radical union movement.

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Diversity management can be bad for you

By *John Wrench*

Abstract: Is diversity management the new tool to combat discrimination in employment, and how is it seen by both employers and union activists? A trend that began in North America, it is now being increasingly incorporated in European businesses. How it relates to equal opportunities, positive action and the priority given to combating racial discrimination in the workplace is closely analysed here. Attractive to employers, it can be a means of evading hard choices about equality and justice at work.

Keywords: BME, discrimination, employment, equal opportunities, positive action, racism

Over recent years, the language of diversity management has been increasingly replacing that of equal opportunities in the sphere of employment in the UK, and further afield in Europe too.¹ Diversity management differs from previous employment equity approaches directed at under-represented minority ethnic groups, such as anti-discrimination, equal opportunity and affirmative action approaches, because of its primary emphasis on business benefits, organisational efficiency and market performance. Activists for anti-racism and anti-discrimination at the workplace have long been working to get equality issues taken seriously as integral parts of an organisation's

routine activities. Surely now they must welcome the fact that, with the spread of diversity management, major business corporations are voluntarily mainstreaming policies for the fair and equal inclusion of black, immigrant and ethnic minority workers on the grounds of business self-interest, instead of needing to be persuaded to do so for moral reasons or for fear of anti-discrimination law?

However, not everyone is convinced that the spread of diversity management is a positive development in the fight against discrimination in employment. At the 1997 TUC Black Workers Conference, a motion was passed deploring and opposing the trend. Recently, two separate pieces of academic research independently confirmed the strong resistance of British union officials and equality activists to diversity management in Britain. Interviews with trade union officials responsible for equality issues² revealed dominant attitudes ranging from scepticism to outright hostility, with diversity management being described as 'a cover-up', 'window dressing' and a 'softer term' which detracted from the equality agenda.

What is diversity management?

Diversity management stresses the necessity of recognising cultural differences between groups of employees, and making practical allowances for such differences in organisational policies. The idea is that encouraging a culturally diverse workplace where differences are valued enables people to work to their full potential in a more creative and productive work environment. An advantage of diversity management is said to be its more positive approach, compared to the negative one of simply avoiding transgressions of anti-discrimination laws. It is said to avoid some of the 'backlash' problems associated with affirmative action as, unlike previous equality strategies, diversity management is not seen as a policy solely directed towards the interests of excluded or under-represented minorities. Rather, it is seen as an inclusive policy, one which therefore encompasses the interests of all employees, including white males.³

In the US and Canada, a diversity management policy is relatively normal business practice, at least among the bigger corporations. Among the various *Fortune* lists of company performance in America, there is now one called 'Best for minorities'. Of the top fifty on this list, *Fortune* states 'Each of these companies takes extraordinary care to recruit and retain a diverse workforce – even, in some cases, at the cost of throwing over the old culture and constructing a new, more inclusive one in its place.'⁴ Diversity management consultants predict that Europe will follow the US and Canadian trend. Common external forces – globalisation, continuing post-industrial migration, demographic shifts, the decline of manufacturing and the growth of the

service sector – mean that European firms, too, will increasingly need to turn to diversity management techniques in order to survive. One indication of a growing European interest was a conference, held in Amsterdam in January 2004, called ‘Legitimising diversity as a business tool’. Here, senior speakers from major household-name companies from the IT sector, oil, chemicals, pharmaceuticals, finance, telecommunications and vehicle manufacturing all described how their diversity policies have produced market and business benefits.⁵

So why is it that equal opportunity activists hesitate to embrace this apparent ‘opportunistic coincidence of organisational needs of business and moral principles of inclusiveness’?⁶ To help understand this reluctance, I discuss below key examples of critiques made of diversity management from various quarters. These critiques can be grouped according to five main themes: diversity management is a ‘soft option’; it dilutes the focus on ‘race’; it encourages ethnic reification; it replaces the moral argument by the business argument; and it mystifies the basis of social inequality.

A soft option

First, equal opportunities activists fear that diversity management might be used to prioritise ‘soft’ rather than ‘hard’ equal opportunities practices. There is a continuum of equal opportunities measures in organisations, with measures such as the recognition of cultural differences at work at the ‘soft’ end, and the setting of targets and the use of positive action at the ‘harder’ end. The fear is that diversity management policies will, for example, concentrate on intercultural awareness training, while avoiding, for example, the introduction of positive action targets to produce a workforce that reflects the ethnic make-up of the locality; anti-discrimination training to modify the behaviour of white managers and employees; or strong internal anti-harassment initiatives.

The suspicions of British activists are perhaps rooted in what happened in the US. Here, employers tended to back-track towards softer measures at the time when affirmative action first came under attack and diversity management was taking off. During the late 1980s, employers curtailed their most proactive affirmative action measures, with fewer special recruitment programmes for women and minorities than there had been ten years earlier, and fewer special training programmes. There were also fewer employers with affirmative action plans.⁷ The American authors Kelly and Dobbin raise serious questions about whether the ‘weakened version of affirmative action’ found in current diversity management practices will improve the prospects of women and minorities in the future, particularly in the light of a 1995 study which showed that broader diversity policies

and programmes were much less effective than measures that specifically target women and minority groups.⁸

Suspensions might also be reinforced by the example of New Zealand, where the embracing of a diversity management approach by business interests was interpreted as a conscious strategy to avoid the imposition of tougher measures. In the early 1990s, a new equal employment opportunities trust was set up in New Zealand to educate the private sector into 'making the most of a diverse workforce'. In the eyes of many equal employment opportunity practitioners, the trust was established in order to enable a backing down from the introduction of potentially tough equal opportunities legislation at the national level. Thus, the concept of managing diversity was seen as the acceptable 'soft option'.⁹

Diluting the focus on racial exclusion

A second area of concern is that diversity management dilutes policies against racism and ethnic discrimination by mixing them with policies relating to other groups. For advocates of diversity management, this is an advantage in that it broadens the appeal of equal opportunities by moving it away from policies for racial and ethnic minorities to the inclusion of other groups. However, critics say this does not allow for the fact that some groups have suffered historically from much greater prejudice and exclusion than others. Some groups have been marginalised for generations, with strong and negative social meanings attached to perceived group traits, but this will not necessarily be the same for all those who are considered to fall into the diversity calculus. A management professor from Arizona State University argues that the move to diversity 'pushes race to the fringes'.¹⁰ She gives the example of Federated Department Stores in America whose diversity initiative six years previously covered two groups, women and minorities. Now, it covers twenty-six, including seniors, homosexuals, atheists, and so on. How can African Americans and other minorities benefit, she asks, when the same human resource chief who handled just two programmes now administers twenty-six? In the US, there are those who see diversity's broad approach as a tactic to defuse the black struggle for employment equality precisely because it was the 'race' angle which was most unpopular with employers. Thus, for example, the diversity chair of the Society for Human Resource Management was quoted in its journal as saying 'Race was a sacrificial lamb to launch diversity and make it palatable to corporate America. And who is corporate America? White males. And they don't want to hear about race.'¹¹

Encouraging ethnic reification

Another order of criticism is that diversity management operates from

an unnaturally reified view of ethnicity and exaggerates the importance of cultural differences. It risks perpetuating a view of the permanence and immutability of cultures, while reducing ethnicity to simplified constructs that can be easily summarised in management training sessions. The potential excesses of this approach are easy to see. For example, an ILO survey of US training in the anti-discrimination/equal opportunities/diversity field cited an independent training provider whose training material 'describes Hispanics as family oriented rather than work oriented and then explains to employers how they can motivate their Hispanic employees by appealing to these family interests'.¹² Another American diversity management trainer teaches that blacks 'react quickly to changing situations', as evidenced by their style of playing basketball (*The New Republic*, 5 July 1993). Many argue that it is erroneous to regard ethnic cultures as identifiable and unchanging systems of shared values and attributes attached to particular groups. As one Swedish academic put it when discussing the recent spread of diversity approaches in Sweden, the problem is the 'conservative, essentialised and static' perceptions that become associated with the concept of diversity:

The existence of differences among people due to their national origin thus becomes an axiom which requires no verification. Furthermore, inasmuch as individuals are still defined in relation to their 'home' countries after two or even three generations, the importance of actual living conditions in Sweden is neglected. This makes the message of ethnic diversity not only static and conservative, but also a message that contributes to essentialising differences on the basis of ethnicity.¹³

Furthermore, some people may not wish to be categorised by their ethnic origin. In their study of diversity in Norwegian organisations, Berg and Håpnes observe that some individuals may find it burdensome to be defined as a carrier of particular cultural characteristics. 'In several of the companies we visited, many of the migrants emphasised that they did not at all wish to be "marketed" as very different from Norwegian-born employees.'¹⁴

Replacing the moral with the business argument

Perhaps the most fundamental criticism of diversity management is that it removes the moral imperative from action for equal opportunities. Arguments for traditional equal opportunities and affirmative action policies relate to equality, fairness and social justice. Critics argue that diversity management has moved equal opportunities away from a moral and ethical issue and turned it into a business strategy. Miller sees this in the context of the push by management consultants to reconstitute equal opportunities in the management

language of the 1990s.¹⁵ For Miller, the shift from an equality to a diversity perspective is symptomatic of a de-politicisation of social relations in much of the management consultancy literature on equal opportunities. 'This remoulding of equal rights to capture and contain it within a market model has all but expunged the political meaning of positive action.' While this development is seen as advantageous by many, in that it increases the likelihood of the adoption of policies by employers, others see it as a long-term weakness. The problem is that fighting racism and discrimination will now only be seen as important if there is a recognisable business reason for it. Under a diversity management approach, racism is indeed argued to be unacceptable, but only when the outcome of such racism is recognised as leading to inefficiency in the utilisation of human resources. If a change in market conditions means that racism and discrimination do not lead to inefficiency, then there will no longer be any imperative to combat them.

Diversity management proponents claim that there is no need to worry because the self-evident benefits of diversity for companies mean that, from now on, ethnic minorities will always be recruited positively and treated fairly and sensitively. But what if the benefits of diversity are not self-evident to a company? One of the main claims of diversity management which has come under critical focus is the assumption that demographic and cultural diversity automatically brings benefits to the organisation and workforce in terms of, for example, the creativity of diverse work groups. However, an American review of diversity literature concluded that the 'diversity is good for organisations' mantra has been overstated. For example, its authors argue that most of the research which supports the claim that diversity is beneficial for groups has been conducted in a laboratory or classroom setting. Laboratory studies neglect the variable of time, and research in short-lived groups is not a strong foundation for judging the effects of diversity in a real organisation. After reviewing the literature, the authors conclude that, under ideal conditions, increased diversity may have a positive impact through, for example, the increase in skill and knowledge that diversity brings. However, they argue that under other conditions diversity is just as likely to impede group functioning: 'In our view . . . diversity is a mixed blessing and requires careful and sustained attention to be a positive force in enhancing performance.'¹⁶ A subsequent literature review by two American scholars similarly found that many of the promises and claims of diversity management for improving group and organisational performance could not be said to have been rooted in the findings of empirical research. After critically examining 106 empirical findings from thirty-three studies of the outcomes of diversity, Wise and Tschirhart concluded that 'Given the weaknesses in the body of research on diver-

sity, we can draw no firm conclusions for public administrators. We cannot claim that diversity has any clear positive or negative effects on individual, group or organizational outcomes.¹⁷

While the potential benefits of a diverse staff seem clear in hi-tech, knowledge-based innovative work activity requiring creativity and flexibility in production, or in services where contact with clients is important, there are other sectors where the benefits of demographic diversity in the workforce are likely to be minimal, such as areas of work characterised by routinised economic activity and uniformity in the production of goods. A simple illustration of the fact that diversity management is not always relevant to an organisation comes from a study of Norwegian companies in 2001.¹⁸ In one company, ethnic diversity was seen to be directly relevant to profits and, in another, completely irrelevant. The former was a bakery experimenting with product development and innovation, and immigrant workers were being drawn on for their knowledge of various baking traditions. Their contribution to these new products was positive for the business and also raised the status of the immigrant employees themselves, who felt that their own backgrounds and culture were now better appreciated and understood. The latter was an industrial printing company where there was no use for employees with different linguistic skills, as the bulk of its products were destined for Scandinavia and the entire production process was automated to a degree that made it difficult to see how ethnic differences could be drawn on and profitably exploited, either in the production process or in the organisation of work. In this case, the management did hold the view that the company workforce should reflect the ethnic composition of the local community, and recruited accordingly. However, this was not driven by a diversity philosophy but, rather, by notions of equality of treatment and fair distribution of work. The second example indicates that there can be work environments where diversity management has no obvious business benefits, yet, in these companies, the need for fair recruitment, equitable treatment and anti-discrimination measures will remain.

Put simply, you cannot rely on diversity management policies alone to deliver fairness and inclusion at work when, first, many of the alleged intrinsic benefits of demographic diversity have been overstated and, second, in some sectors of work, it is completely irrelevant. The important difference is that equal opportunity legislation, and the legal endorsement of positive/affirmative action, were introduced as means of social engineering by governments, in order to produce a more equitable society. In contrast, diversity management is an organisational policy with business motives. If it is adopted widely it may *indirectly* produce a more equitable society as a side-effect of the actions of individual companies, but there is no guarantee of this. Thus, although

some welcome diversity management as an acceptable substitute for more 'political' interventions such as affirmative action, others see this as a more worrying development which reflects a broader trend at a societal level; namely, the intrusion of the market into areas where previously democratically elected governments would take action. As Hobsbawm writes:

Market sovereignty is not a complement to liberal democracy: it is an alternative to it. Indeed, it is an alternative to any kind of politics, as it denies the need for *political* decisions, which are precisely decisions about common or group interests as distinct from the sum of choices, rational or otherwise, of individuals pursuing private preferences.¹⁹

Mystifying the basis of social inequality

Hobsbawm's point leads us to those critiques of diversity management which have a common core in seeing it as an ideology which mystifies and obscures genuine social inequalities and ignores their structural bases. For example, the American scholar Kersten agrees that 'it is very tempting to join the bandwagon and view diversity management as the final answer to our long-standing national and corporate problems of racism and exclusion'. However, diversity management is too simplistic. It presents a model that is relational rather than structural in nature; its emphasis on aspects such as training, communication, mentoring and teamwork excludes the more fundamental issues of structural equity and accountability. 'This fails to take into account the deeply rooted nature of racial problems and ignores the extent to which such efforts are influenced by both the organizational and societal context.'²⁰ In Kersten's view, even after diversity management programmes have been implemented, real problems of exclusion, conflict, harassment and marginalisation continue to exist in organisations.

According to Kersten, the emergence of diversity management must be understood in the context of 'a general regressive change in the social climate that has included a political and a judicial withdrawal from a commitment to racial equity, as reflected in the renewed political debate around affirmative action, the judicial narrowing of affirmative action application, and the continued struggle around EEO [equal employment opportunity] funding.' Two New Zealand academics from the same school of criticism as Kersten are Grice and Humphries. They argue that moving the discourse of diversity management away from the discourse of equal employment opportunity moves the focus away from categories of people who may be said to have had a history of exclusion and therefore be deserving of some particular attention. The whole question of the *injustice* of the exclusion of

anyone on any basis from access to the security afforded through employment is side-stepped.²¹ The context for this is the New Right discourse of *laissez-faire* in relation to government activity and a complete faith in market principles, so that external non-business constraints promoting equal opportunities are seen as illegitimate. Diversity theorists such as the American R. Roosevelt Thomas state that previous equal employment opportunity and affirmative action policies that have focused on group membership are 'unnatural'. In response, Grice and Humphries argue:

To Thomas, affirmative action is referred to as 'unnatural' because it interferes with the 'natural' functioning of a market comprised of competitive individuals aspiring for upward mobility. What Thomas doesn't say is that the categories natural and unnatural are equally the products of discourse. Anything can be defined natural or unnatural if you are in control of the parameters by which that categorising is based. The market is held up as the ultimate natural while things like intervention based on an ethical argument is [sic] held up as decidedly unnatural.²²

Thus, despite having an appearance of concern with fairness, equality of opportunity and empowerment, 'the economic argument underlying the discourse of managing diversity is unlikely to reduce the systematic disenfranchisement of groups of people from access to employment opportunities and economic security'. Where inequality has been historically structured into social and employment relationships, and where a group has been systematically confined into low-paying jobs for generations, then group-structured inequalities in education and employment will simply persist over time. Only positive or affirmative action policies, it is argued, will shift this, rather than a 'celebrating diversity' approach.

Positive action and diversity management

The issue of positive action is one of the key areas for critics of diversity management. Positive action initiatives are those over and above the simple provision of equal treatment and the production of a 'level playing field' through the removal of discriminatory barriers. Such measures are not enough if excluded minorities are starting from very different and disadvantaged positions, perhaps because of the operation of racism and discrimination in the past. Positive action, like the stronger American affirmative action, recognises the existence of a sort of structural discrimination known as 'past-in-present discrimination'²³ whereby the exclusion experienced historically by certain groups means that inequality of opportunity will continue even when current discrimination processes are removed. For example, if

past discrimination has confined minority group members to inferior jobs, then patterns of structured inequality will persist over more than one generation even after labour market discrimination has been removed. Positive action goes further than equal treatment. Whereas equal treatment would mean treating people who apply for jobs in a non-discriminatory way, positive action means, for example, making an extra effort to encourage groups that might not normally apply. Therefore, positive action is in fact doing something extra for previously excluded minorities, something not being done for the national majority. Positive action has often been an important component of 'pre-diversity management' equal opportunities policies.

The specific criticism of diversity management is that its weakness as an anti-discrimination measure is, above all, rooted in its lack of components addressing this form of structural, historical discrimination. What is the point of celebrating a diverse organisational culture when the long-term effects of historical exclusion mean that under-represented minorities are not in a position to take advantage of opportunities to join, or progress within, the organisation? Yet the authors of what is probably the best known textbook on diversity management in the UK, Kandola and Fullerton, emphasise that they see no place for group-targeted positive action or affirmative action in a diversity management approach. 'Our view is that an approach whose underpinning philosophy is the needs of the individual will automatically be compromised when any actions are based purely on someone's supposed group membership.'²⁴

Many employers welcome the 'individualising' tendency of diversity management, away from the categories associated with traditions of affirmative action and equal employment opportunity, as this fits well with the trend to economic liberalism and the move in industrial relations away from trade unions and collective bargaining. It is this 'individualising' tendency of diversity management that constitutes one reason why trade union and equal opportunity activists are so suspicious. As the American academic Nkomo puts it:

Is diversity management really just talking about respecting all individual differences? If so, this is problematic and cannot in its present form lead to inclusive organisations. There is a real danger in seeing differences as benign variation among people. It overlooks the role of conflict, power, dominance, and the history of how organizations are fundamentally structured by race, gender, and class.²⁵

Conclusion

So is diversity management to be resisted in all its forms? Should equal opportunities activists be fighting a rearguard action to stem the

encroachment of this new managerial ideology and practice? In fact, it is not necessary to dismiss everything that goes on under the heading of diversity management, not least because in reality the label 'diversity policy' is used rather flexibly to cover many things. It is important that the version which predominates is not the free-market, individualising, 'let's-celebrate-multiculturalism' type. Diversity management should not be allowed to become a Trojan horse that facilitates the undermining of gains already made in anti-discrimination measures, or those still necessary for the future. Equality measures and anti-discrimination strategies can, and must, be central components of diversity management, not replaced by it.

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The views expressed in this paper are the views of the author and not those of the European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia.

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Reviews

RACE & CLASS

SAGE Publications
New Delhi,
Thousand Oaks,
London

The Pinochet File: a declassified dossier on atrocity and accountability
By PETER KORNBLUH, National Security Archive (New York, The New Press, 2003), 551 pp., cloth, £18.95.

The Chile Declassification Project came out of a compromise: the Clinton administration's desire to be seen to be cooperating in the drive to accountability in the wake of the London arrest in October 1998 of senator-for-life Augusto Pinochet Ugarte, versus its reluctance to provide active assistance in any prosecution. It resulted in the release of 24,000 formerly secret documents on Chile, comprising over 150,000 pages, from the US State Department, the White House, the Pentagon, the FBI and eventually, after much prevarication and resistance, from the CIA. This book re-tells the story of the Pinochet years in Chile, and of the involvement of the US in coup preparation and in sustaining Pinochet, with the help of the newly declassified archive.

The declassified documents were meant to cover human rights abuses, terrorism and political violence by Chilean governments from 1968 to 1991. The decision to start in 1968, rather than with the coup in 1973, was motivated by the desire to cover human rights abuses by Allende's regime as well as Pinochet's, but inadvertently opened the door to revelations of US sponsorship of terrorism before and during the Allende administration. By the time of Allende's election victory on 4 September 1970, the US had spent more than \$1 billion over twenty years secretly supporting the Christian Democrat government in Chile to prevent just such an occurrence. This long interference created what Kornbluh calls 'an imperial sense of obligation and entitlement', which allowed Nixon to declare that an Allende government was 'unacceptable' and Kissinger to state that 'we set the limits of diver-

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sity in Chile'. Within days, the CIA was ordered to prevent Allende from taking office.

The book details, in the first of its eight chapters, the frantic attempts by the CIA to carry out Nixon's orders, by a two-track route involving bribery or, if necessary, a coup. It describes the CIA complaint in September 1970 of the 'complete calm prevailing throughout the country' – an atmosphere not conducive to a coup – and its attempts to create social and economic turmoil. The US ambassador met Chilean ministers and corporate representatives to warn them that 'We shall do all within our power to condemn Chile and the Chileans to the utmost deprivation and poverty' if Allende was allowed to become leader. Agents were each instructed to plant at least three rumours per day, for example, of food rationing, closure of US operations, withdrawal of aid, credit and orders. The CIA's plotting also required its agents to conduct terrorist acts to foster a 'coup climate', and General Schneider, the Chilean armed forces' constitution-minded commander-in-chief (who would, as the US ambassador pointed out, 'have to be neutralised'), was assassinated six hours after six submachine guns and ammunition had been delivered in a US diplomatic pouch to a Chilean army officer. The CIA chief commended his staff for 'guiding the Chileans to the point where a military solution is at least an option', but the assassination had the opposite effect to that intended, and Allende was ratified by a massive majority.

The book goes on to describe US attempts to unseat Allende after he took office, mainly concentrated on the 'invisible blockade' designed, in Nixon's words, to 'make the economy scream': the withdrawal of investments, loans, credit lines and aid (except for military sales and assistance, which tripled, ensuring constant contact between the Chilean military and US government officials). As before, the programme was to create and exacerbate economic, political, social and military tensions so as to foster a coup. The Nixon administration put pressure on major European creditors to join the US in refusing to reschedule Chile's foreign debt, and approved massive clandestine funding for destabilisation. Among its recipients were the right-wing *El Mercurio*, which became 'a bullhorn of organised agitation against the government', helping to set the stage for a coup; 'militant right wing groups', such as the group behind the truckers' strike which paralysed the country in 1973; and *Patria y Libertad*, which was responsible for numerous acts of terrorism between 1970 and 1973. The ITT corporation coordinated efforts to pressure other US corporations to limit their operations in Chile, reporting back to the CIA. The leak of documents disclosing ITT's early discussions with the CIA, which included coup plotting, caused the first of a number of scandals in 1972 and led to the establishment by the Senate Foreign Relations Committee of the first of a number of sub-committees, chaired by Frank Church. This

explored the influence of multinational corporations on foreign policy, alleged assassination plots involving foreign leaders and US covert action in Chile. One of a number of the fascinating themes of the book is the battle between these Senate committees and CIA and State Department officials over accountability, in the course of which CIA director Helms was indicted (and fined a puny \$2,000) for failure to answer material questions.

The US had hoped that its massive covert propaganda and economic destabilisation campaign would lead to Allende's defeat, but his Popular Unity Party increased its electoral strength in the March 1973 Congress elections. 'He is still popular', lamented the CIA, and moved to coup planning. The CIA had been compiling lists of generals who might be interested in a coup, and, in 1971, recorded that General Pinochet, a 'mild, friendly, narrow-gauged military man . . . who enjoys feeling important', had a daughter-in-law who was keen to push him into action. In September 1972, US army officers met Pinochet and told him that the US would support a coup with whatever means were necessary. When, in August 1973, Pinochet replaced General Carlos Prats, another constitutionalist, as commander-in-chief at the height of the truckers' strike, they knew it would happen soon; on 9 September they were reporting to Washington, 'It's going to happen on 11 September'. The CIA and the State Department were confident Pinochet could do it alone, as he enjoyed the support of all three branches of the armed forces, but were making contingency plans to help him if necessary. As it turned out, the coup was 'close to perfect', in the words of a US military official stationed in Valparaiso. A contact set up through the embassy met Pinochet the day after the coup to be briefed on 'mopping up operations' and Chile's needs for economic and military assistance. On 13 September 1973, as Congress condemned the coup, a White House cable welcomed the junta. Immediately, the full spate of aid, credits, World Bank loans and food aid was switched on. The CIA's efforts were redirected to propagandising in support of Pinochet and cooperating with the junta's gestapo-like intelligence agency DINA, which was responsible for some 3,000 deaths and the detention and systematic torture of over 150,000 leftists. The CIA's cooperation extended to training DINA operatives and temporarily putting its commander, Manuel Contreras, on the CIA payroll.

As for support for international terrorism, the book discloses that the CIA and the FBI were not only aware of Operation Condor and some of its international abduction and assassination operations from the beginning, but were providing information on some US citizens; that US officials were told of individual operations as they happened (a US official request about the whereabouts of four Argentinian 'guerrilla leaders' captured in Peru received the chilling response, 'they will be . . . interrogated and then permanently disap-

peared’); and that two years after the killing of Orlando Letelier and Ronnie Moffitt in Washington, DC, Condor was using a US communication installation in the Panama canal zone to keep in touch and coordinate intelligence information.

The disclosure, through the declassified documents (which are reproduced, often heavily redacted, at the end of each chapter), of the details of the ‘special relationship’, of the precise knowledge that US administrations had about Pinochet’s methods, even while they continued to lavish support on him, and the wriggling evasions and downright lies they used to conceal the full extent of their support are what make this book so compelling. Kissinger, for example, complained about ‘this silly human rights question’ when the efforts of a few Congressmen led to the banning in 1976 of military assistance to Chile and to the tying of US aid to human rights. ‘The State Department is made up of people with a vocation for the ministry, but there aren’t enough churches . . . human rights are not appropriate in a foreign policy context.’ (New revelations about Kissinger are rare, however; Kissinger shrewdly took with him tapes of thousands of his phone calls when he left office.) Again, the declassified documents tell us that the destruction of the Chilean socialist experiment was undertaken in the full knowledge not only of the carnage that would ensue (a general contacted before Allende’s ratification estimated that the job would cost 10,000 lives), but also of the relative unimportance of Chile to vital US interests. An August 1970 national security study memo, combining the analysis of the CIA, the State and Defense Departments, told Secretary of State Kissinger that ‘the US has no vital national interests in Chile; the world military balance of power would not be significantly altered; [there is] no military, strategic or regional threat to US interests in security and stability’. But, the memo noted, an Allende victory ‘would create considerable political and psychological costs’. It was to avoid those political and psychological costs that Nixon and Kissinger engineered and embraced a blood-bath.

As Kornbluh reveals, it was the Horman and Letelier/Moffitt cases that led to the unravelling of US support for Pinochet. Horman’s case, and his family’s search to uncover the circumstances of his death, caught the public imagination in the film *Missing*. The State Department (which had colluded with the Chilean government in blaming left-wingers for his murder, although the US embassy knew within days of his execution at the National Stadium) was forced to investigate in 1976 after a Chilean asylum claimant alleged that Horman had been interrogated in the presence of the CIA, but the Department withheld from his family its conclusion that the US may have been complicit in the death. (And when Congressmen demanded the repatriation of Horman’s body as a condition of voting assistance to Chile, his family was

bombarded with demands for a \$900 fee for transport costs.) As for Letelier, the CIA had been tracking him for sixteen years, ever since he attended a conference in Cuba with Allende in 1960. But his assassination within fourteen blocks of the White House, and the fingering of DINA director Contreras by the FBI/Justice Department investigation two years later, spelled the beginning of the US's long farewell to Pinochet.

The book's timing, whether deliberate or fortuitous, at the beginning of another imperial adventure, is extremely apposite, as it notes in the introduction: 'regime change, unilateral US aggression, international terrorism, political assassination, sovereignty, human rights and the deaths of innocents' are all issues raised by Bush's war on Iraq. To which list could be added the interests of multinational corporations, the resort to dirty tricks and lies by the executive and the use of propaganda to whip up fears about 'terrorism' to reinforce support for international state terrorism. The only difference now appears to be that targeted assassinations (notably in Israel and the Occupied Territories), unaccountable detention (in Guantánamo Bay) and torture (there and in US facilities in Afghanistan and Pakistan) are no longer secret, but are increasingly seen as acceptable and necessary policy choices in the 'war against terror'.

Kornbluh's book lacks an index, which diminishes its value somewhat as a resource. But the book is immensely valuable, nevertheless, as a sombre reminder that the lengths to which powerful governments will go, if not rigorously controlled, in pursuit of imperial mission are beyond one's wildest nightmares, and, just as importantly, as a reminder of the vital importance of agitation and protest. It was the efforts of the families of the disappeared in Chile and in the US, the US Congressmen who offered their support, the investigative journalists who were not frightened off, which eventually forced much of the dirt out into the open. The resulting outrage forced the Reagan government to adopt a more human rights-friendly approach which, in turn, resulted in Pinochet's international isolation and his demise.

London

FRANCES WEBBER

The Anatomy of Fascism

By ROBERT O. PAXTON (London, Allen Lane, 2004), 321pp., cloth £20.

There has recently emerged, so we are told, a 'culturalist' consensus in the academic study of fascism. This has taken the subject away from such tired connections as class and political power and has instead situated it in the more up-to-date arena of ideology. This consensus was

never very convincing, indeed a good case can be made that it told us considerably more about the state of the academy than it ever did about fascism. No sooner had this consensus been proclaimed than it was decisively overthrown. This public service has been accomplished by Robert Paxton in his new book, *The Anatomy of Fascism*, the most important study of the subject to appear for decades.

At the centre of Paxton's approach is recognition of the problems involved in constructing a meaningful definition of fascism that can account, for example, for both the British Union of Fascists (BUF) and the Third Reich. His solution recognises that fascism is not a static phenomenon but, rather, a movement that goes through a process of development. This process is the key to understanding the phenomenon. In this respect, he quite correctly criticises the academic tendency 'to take programmatic statements as constitutive, and to identify fascism more with what it said than with what it did'. This is a salutary warning that has been ignored by too many students of fascism.

From these insights, Paxton derives five stages of fascism:

- (1) the creation of movements; (2) their rooting in the political system; (3) their seizure of power; (4) the exercise of power; (5) and, finally, the long duration, during which the fascist regime chooses either radicalization or entropy.

Not only is this approach a great advance in terms of understanding the development of any particular individual fascism, for example, from the NSDAP of 1919 to the Holocaust, but it is also crucial in terms of any comparative consideration. Instead of comparing the BUF with the Third Reich, we can compare Mosley's outfit with the Nazi Party when it was at a similar stage in its development.

Just as important as his five stages is Paxton's insistence that the fascists' relations with traditional conservative elites are central to any understanding of the phenomenon. As he makes clear, the only occasions when fascists have actually come to power have been at the invitation of traditional conservatives, as members of coalition governments. Mussolini did not seize power by force and Hitler did not come to power by electoral means. Instead, they were invited to lead coalition governments and only established fully-fledged fascist regimes once they had control of the state machine. In both Italy and Germany, the conservative elites believed that the crisis confronting them required desperate measures and in their desperation they turned to the fascists. Paxton's emphasis on 'Conservative complicities' is absolutely spot on.

Paxton also makes clear that, on other occasions, the fascists were made use of by the conservatives, used to hammer the Left and then cast aside (as was the case with the Romanian Legion of the Archangel Michael) or brought under state control (as was the case with the Span-

ish Falange). As for the BUF, Mosley hoped that British conservatives would turn to him, but the economic, social and political crisis in Britain was not deep enough to bring this about. The BUF was, as Paxton points out, 'one of the most interesting failures, not least because Mosley probably had the greatest intellectual gifts and the strongest social connections of all the fascist chiefs'.

Paxton develops his arguments with a wealth of detail, displaying a command of the material that one can only envy. Moreover, he brings the discussion right up to date with a useful chapter on fascism today, 'Other times, other places'. 'Fascism', he insists, 'exists at the level of Stage One in all democratic countries' and 'has reached Stage Two in a few deeply troubled countries'. Further fascist advance depends on 'the severity of a crisis' and in particular on 'the choices of those holding economic, social, and political power'. This highlights an important weakness of the book. While Paxton is quite right to emphasise the importance of fascist relations with the conservatives, he does not give enough attention to the Left's response to fascism. The coming to power of fascism in Italy and Germany was due as much to the failure of the Left as it was to the complicity of the conservatives. The Left's response should be an integral part of any discussion of fascism. Despite this criticism, Paxton's book is essential reading for anyone interested in and committed to fighting fascism. We are all in his debt.

Bath Spa University College

JOHN NEWSINGER

The Story of an African Game: black cricketers and the unmasking of one of cricket's greatest myths, South Africa, 1850–2003

By ANDRE ODENDAAL (Johannesburg, David Philip for United Cricket Board of South Africa, 2003), 367 pp., £30.00.

Andre Odendaal's captivating book on the history of 150 years of non-racial cricket in South Africa, with a foreword by Nelson Mandela, gives us a peep into the life of Wilson Ximiya, an opening batsman who played cricket on the wrong side of the colour line in the 1930s, '40s and '50s under the auspices of the South African Bantu Cricket Board (SABCB). Ximiya, who belonged to Port Elizabeth and played for the Eastern Province Bantu team in the 1930s, became a community leader and a sports columnist. He played for the New Brighton Cricket Club and Eastern Province team on his return in the 1940s to Port Elizabeth from Transvaal, where he worked as a clerk for a brief while. He was also selected for the national non-racial team, where one of his teammates was his neighbour and New Brighton Cricket Club mate Eric Majola, an all-rounder of great repute.

Ximiya's son Walcott Weekes, named after the West Indian legends Clyde Walcott and Everton Weekes, grew up playing cricket and rugby with Eric Majola's children, Khaya and Gerald. Both of them went on to represent Eastern Province and South Africa in the non-racial cricket of the 1970s and 1980s under the auspices of the South African Cricket Board of Control (SACBOC) and South African Cricket Board (SACB). In 1991, when the white South African Cricket Association united with the non-racial body SACB to form the United Cricket Board of South Africa (UCBSA), Khaya Majola became the joint director of UCBSA's celebrated development programme. In 1998, he played a central role in pushing for the agenda of transformation – UCBSA's action plan to decentre the traditional cricket culture that had dressed up privilege and power as cricketing 'merit'. The aim was to replace that culture with an alternative based on social and economic justice in keeping with the redefinition of nationhood in South Africa that followed the installation of popular democracy in 1994. In October 2000, Gerald became the first CEO of the UCBSA, a few weeks after the untimely death of his elder brother Khaya.

In April 2001, as Gerald Majola watched the South Africa–West Indies one-day international in Barbados, he took a look around the Kensington Oval pavilion and saw there seated beside him legends of West Indian cricket such as Sir Gary Sobers, Clyde Walcott, Everton Weekes, Wes Hall, Charlie Griffith, Lance Gibbs and Desmond Haynes. In one of the most poignant passages in *The Story of an African Game*, Odendaal writes about how Gerald Majola recounted his emotions then.

I recalled the image of two cricket-playing fathers watching their children play street games in New Brighton 40 years ago. Could Wilson, who named his first born Walcott Weekes and another one Sobers, and Eric have dreamed in those deep Apartheid days that one of their own boys would go to the West Indies one day as the head of South African cricket?

The narrative reproduced above sums up the content of Odendaal's book, a priceless treasure in the annals of cricket scholarship that retrieves information about a group of families, people and communities systematically wiped out by the oppressive power of, first, colonialism and then apartheid. The spirit of the book, at least in its second part where Odendaal traces the history of black African and non-racial cricket and sport through the family of the Majolas (the African equivalent of the white cricketing family of the Pollocks), is not at all illustrative of the traditional methods in which exclusion, oppression and violence are historicised within academic disciplines. For these are linear and programmatic, introducing a sense of disciplinary order and thereby a distance from the object of study. But

Odendaal's narrative is almost life in motion, combining individual and family memories of events and situations with public narratives of the organisational shifting of boundaries in cricket in South Africa, which, in turn, are linked to the national memory of the anti-apartheid struggle. For example, Odendaal is able to tell the story of the organisational redrawing of boundaries within the Eastern Province African Cricket Board (an affiliate of the South African African Cricket Board) and the larger issue of the relationship of black Africans to other black communities through incidents such as Eric Majola's death following a car crash in 1971.

Odendaal's book will go a long way to correcting a media discourse (which has sometimes spilled over to the discipline of the social study of sport) according to which the Transformation Charter, designed in 1999 by the UCBSA to ensure 'equal representivity' for blacks and Africans at all levels of cricket, including ownership, is intended to *take* cricket into black and African communities. The intention of the revolutionary charter, as Odendaal writes, is not to introduce cricket to these communities. Rather, it is to enable blacks and Africans officially to represent their nation, provinces and clubs in a game through which they have expressed themselves since it was first introduced as a colonial civilising project in the Eastern Cape region among the sons of Xhosa tribal kings, 150 years ago.

Warwick University

ABILASH NALAPAT

Books received

RACE & CLASS

SAGE Publications
New Delhi,
Thousand Oaks,
London

This listing does not preclude subsequent publication of reviews

- After Brown: the rise and retreat of school desegregation.* By Charles T. Clotfelter, Princeton and Oxford, Princeton University Press, 2004. Cloth, £16.95.
- American Arrivals: anthropology engages the new immigration.* Edited by Nancy Foner, Oxford, James Currey, 2004. Paper, £16.95.
- Bad Marxism: capitalism and cultural studies.* By John Hutnyk, London, Pluto, 2004. Paper.
- The Business of America: how consumers have replaced citizens and how we can reverse the trend.* By Saul Landau, New York and London, Routledge, 2004. Paper.
- The Cuba Project: CIA covert operations 1959-62.* By Fabian Escalante, Melbourne and New York, Ocean Press, 2004. Paper, £12.99.
- Freedom is a Constant Struggle: the Mississippi civil rights movement and its legacy.* By Kenneth T. Andrew, Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 2004. Paper, \$21.00.
- Genocide, War Crimes and the West: history and complicity.* Edited by Adam Jones, London, Zed, 2004. Paper, £16.95.
- 'The Infidel Within': Muslims in Britain since 1800.* By Humayun Ansari, London, C. Hurst, 2004. Paper, £16.95.
- Mixed-Race, Post-Race: gender, new ethnicities and cultural practices.* By Suki Ali, Oxford and New York, Berg, 2003. Paper. £15.99.
- Other Germans: black Germans and the politics of race, gender, and memory in the Third Reich.* By Tina M. Camp, Ann Arbor, University of Michigan Press, 2003. Cloth, \$29.95/\$19.00.
- Post-imperial Brecht: politics and performance, East and South.* By Loren Kruger, Cambridge, CUP, 2004. Cloth, £55.00.
- The Politics of Multiracialism: challenging racial thinking.* Edited by Heather M. Dalmage, Albany, SUNY, 2004. Paper, \$21.95.
- A Theory of Global Capitalism: production, class, and state in a transnational world.* By William I. Robinson, Baltimore, Johns Hopkins University Press, 2004. Paper.
- Through the Prism of Slavery: labor, capital, and world economy.* By Dale W. Tomich, Lanham, Rowman and Littlefield, 2004. Paper, £17.95.
- Twentieth-century writing and the British Working Class.* By John Kirk, Cardiff, University of Wales Press, 2004. Cloth.
- Union Jacks: Yankee sailors in the Civil War.* By Michael J. Bennett, Chapel Hill, University of North Carolina Press, 2004. Cloth, \$34.95.
- Unhappy Dialogue: the Metropolitan Police and black Londoners in post-war Britain.* By James Whitfield, Cullompton, Willan, 2004. Paper, £25.00.

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Notes to contributors

General

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Style points

Race & Class uses minimal capitalisation – e.g. for the first word of a heading, title of an article; lower case for terms like prime minister, mayor, etc.; ‘black’ is normally lower case, however author’s preference will be followed. Exceptions are ‘Third World’ and ‘Left’ and ‘Right’ as political entities.

Use British spelling, not US, except where necessary in quotations. Use -ise form, not -ize.

US, not U.S.; Mr not Mr. but Arthur A. Jones, not Arthur A Jones.

Numbers one to a hundred should be spelt out, otherwise given in figures, except for ages, percentages and statistical material. Use per cent (two words) not %.

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For short quotes, use single quotation marks, except for quotes within quotes, for which use double quotation marks. Punctuation should normally follow quotation marks, except when the quotation itself forms a complete sentence. Quotes of more than three or four lines will normally be indented.

Use square brackets [] to indicate matter inserted into a quotation, and a space followed by three stops and a space to indicate matter omitted. Please indicate where emphasis is added in any quotation.

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