Class for itself?

Shack/slum Dwellers International: the praxis of a transnational poor movement.

by

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I certify that the work in this thesis has not previously been submitted for a degree nor has it been submitted as part of requirements for a degree except as fully acknowledged within the text.

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Abstract

Slums are on the rise around the world. Estimates suggest that ninety-five percent of the world population will be living in cities by the year 2050 and that a large proportion will be living in slums. Given this, it is important to ask what social agency are these slumdwellers able to exercise? The thesis investigates this agency. It does so through a triangulation of intersecting approaches, involving theoretical and historical inquiry, archival and contextual investigation and participant observation. This synthetic approach is founded on the idea of grounded research, which understands that context matters and that theory can be derived from data. The thesis opens up with an analysis of current and expected patterns of urbanisation in order to comprehend the material relations that lead to slum production. It then moves to investigate the class relations that emerge from this modality. This analysis leads the study into an examination of notions of praxis, so as to try and understand ways in which slum agency is catalysed. From this conceptual foundation the thesis focuses on the transnational urban poor movement, "Shack/slum Dwellers International" (SDI). It examines SDI's intellectual and historical roots in various slum-community based organisations around the South, outlining the social movement formation in terms of its own ontology. The thesis then investigates the praxiology that SDI draws from the contours of daily life in the slums, arguing that in the process, slumdwellers are finding ways of constituting themselves as a class acting "for itself." Here the thesis pays particular attention to a number of themes relating to galvanising subjectivity and mobilising agency. These include issues of overcoming alienation, pedagogy, empowerment (particularly of women), legitimation and contestation. The thesis outlines how these are operationalised through savings schemes, slum-to-slum exchanges and mutual federation, and describes key practices the movement engages in, such as self-enumeration, house-modelling, community sanitation schemes and resolute engagement with public authorities. The thesis ends by drawing out the implications of this social movement for understanding social agency today.

Contents

Introduction 2

Part 1: *"Class in-itself"* 15

Chapter One: The Future as Slum 16

Chapter Two: Class in the Era of Globalisation 68

Chapter Three: The Ontology of Praxis 114

Part 2: *"Class for-itself"* 157

Chapter Four: The Origins, Background and Formation of SDI 161

Chapter Five: Savings as Praxis 212

Chapter Six: Horizontal Exchanges 251

Chapter Seven: Federation Praxis 287

Chapter Eight: SDI Tools of Vanguard Praxis 317

Conclusion 358

Appendix:

1: SDI Enumeration Survey Template 378

2: Enumeration Process of the International Federation 379

3: A Quick Look at the Exchange Circuit 381

4: Exchange Strategies 384

Bibliography 388

Introduction

The rise of industrial modernity has seen a steady shift in human relations away from autonomous or "vernacular" modes of production and reproduction (often closely tied to land, ecology and a sense of collective sociality) toward concentrated urban ways of living based upon the specialisation of labour. The global diffusion of the neo-liberal market economy in the wake of the end of the Cold War has accelerated this process of urbanisation with evidence showing that already more people live in cities than in rural areas (Lutz et al 1997). The bulk of this shift is occurring in the post-colonies of the South (UNCHS 2001). While the current narrative framing this structural change is described as the spreading of democracy and human rights through progress, growth and development, the material outcomes, particularly in the post-colonies, are not entirely beneficial, with increasing numbers of people living in slums.

Economic globalisation, rather than providing a panacea to developmental woes via market-driven growth, seems to be actually intensifying poverty by subjugating all alternative and autonomous modes of production to a singular cash-nexus. When considering the spatial and social flows driving the new world order, the outcome appears bleak for the increasing urban populations. Globalisation therefore needs to be interrogated. A number of question arise, for instance, why does the market not provide for all as promised by classical economic theory? In other words, why has the promised trickle-down of wealth failed to materialise, and why is social and economic inequality increasing? Why are slums the dominant feature of contemporary urbanisation throughout the South as well as more discretely within the North too? In the light of these questions, struggles of the urban poor become historically significant.

From this milieu of increasing urbanisation and poverty, a transnational social movement, Shack/ slum Dwellers International (SDI), has emerged as a grassroots response to the pervasive urban crisis. SDI has evolved a series of practices, rituals and tools that construct a broad reaching counter-discourse to

the conditions of their dispossession. The praxiology spontaneously evolves within the ranks of the "poorest of the poor" in the South, and suggests the awakening of a deep class subjectivity and agency, of the emergence of a new class of slumdwellers both in-itself and for-itself. It needs to be emphasised that the specific class conditions that this class of slumdwellers face are primarily located in livelihood struggles, which means that the revolution the social movement seeks, is situated in domains of social reproduction and sustainability rather than political transformation. The slumdwellers seek a revolution of the everyday life of poverty rather than a political transfer of power. Yet, in an era of deepening ecological, climatological and resource crises, praxis pertaining to sustainability, be it social or ecological is of increasing significance. This slum "praxiology" forms the substance of this thesis' investigation.

Objectives

The primary objective of the thesis is to understand the nature of subjectivity and agency in the milieu of dispossession. In order to do this the thesis will first seek to establish an accurate picture of the world system of poverty production based upon existing, and emerging literature and data. Following upon this, the goal will be to define the social classes at play within this milieu. Once this class structure has been understood, the next step will be to explore the concept of praxis and draw out a working definition that can be used in the course of the thesis. This will lead the study to question the nature of the slumdweller praxis and how it emerged.

It needs to be noted that a significant aspect of SDI is its rejection of any form of external vanguard of intellectuals, leadership or expert intervention into their actions. Their emergence is autonomous and outside familiar class conceptualisation, including academic surveys such as this thesis. The burgeoning slum populations of the world resemble in large part what Marx and others describe as the lumpenproletariat. According to orthodox social theory, this class is dismissed as "dangerous" and incapable of social and structural

transformation. Yet, as will be seen in the study, SDI as a transnational lumpen social movement defies this generalisation through its praxis. This raises key theoretical and empirical questions for social theory. The central objective of the thesis will be to explore this problematic and thereby to shed light upon praxis within the current milieu of multiple crises, and its efficacy for counter-hegemonic transformation.

Structure

These objectives will be investigated through analysis of statistical data, through theoretical examination, through the discussion of historical and contemporary tendencies, through the analysis of discourse, through the intermixing of data, theoretical, historical, contemporary discourse analysis (drawn from interview material gathered in the field and from the social movements archives) as well as narratives drawn from the slumdwellers themselves and their allies, and finally analysis of how the slumdwellers as political actors respond to prevailing structural conditions.

Throughout the focus is upon the agency of the slumdwellers as political actors as well as the structural tendencies that make it possible. In order to do this, the thesis will be organised around the concepts of "class in-itself" and "class for-itself". Accordingly the study is divided into two parts. Part 1 is framed around the idea of class in-itself. This looks at the origins, data, theory and discourse pertaining to the slum milieu, that is the structural and epistemological context of the slumdwelling lumpen class in-itself. Part 2 is in turn located around the idea of class for-itself and is focussed specifically how the lumpen slum class acts for-itself through SDI.

Part 1 provides the theoretical perspective and framework for analysis. Chapter One examines existing and emerging data to determine the broad geo-political milieu in which the social movement is located. Chapter Two provides a theoretical discussion on the nature of class conflict within the current milieu and

the implications that this has for the slum constituencies that SDI represents. In Chapter Three, the notion of praxis and key theoretical positions on it is explored in an effort to provide a template for assessing SDI's praxiology.

In Part 2, the focus is upon SDI itself as slum praxis, looking at its ontology as a social movement and its evolving praxiology. To do this, archival and interview material will be used to illustrate SDI's methodology and exemplify trends in their praxis, as well as providing the basis for evaluation. The analysis will be split into three sections. The first section, Chapter Four, will situate SDI within its broader geo-political and discursive context by looking at the history of its emergence and its antecedents. The second and third sections will provide a detailed analysis of SDI's praxiology in relation to the set of themes that emerged out of the preceding theoretical discussion in Chapter Two. The division here will be between the core operational principles of the social movement, and its mobilising "tools". Chapters Five, Six and Seven will focus upon the operational "rituals": Chapter Five looks at the ritual of "Savings"; Chapter Six, the ritual of "Exchanges"; and Chapter Seven the ritual of "Federation". The third and final section is contained in Chapter Eight, which explores SDI's mobilising tools of "Enumeration"; "House-modelling"; "House Building" and "Sanitation". The final concluding chapter summarises the key points of the preceding parts and draws out some of their broader implications.

Methodology and Sources

The methodological approach of the thesis involves three intersecting approaches. The first is a theoretical and historical inquiry; the second, archival and contextual investigation, and the third, participant observation. These three dimensions form a mutually reinforcing template for the research process. Each is defined in relation to the others across the different phases of the inquiry. During the course of the investigation I oscillated from one point to another. I began with a pre-existing, "naïve" theoretical body of knowledge that I brought to the research process, which informed my choice of subject and the first six

months I spent conceptualising the problem. This was followed by six months of working in the field. I then came back to UTS to synthesise the data and observations into a working body of knowledge in draft form. I then returned for a further six months to the field, armed with a growing critical objectivity to my subject. I spent another six months finalising the thesis. On completion, I returned to the field to feed my research back to my informants, literally providing practitioners with drafts of chapters. This was in part to share with them my work as well as to be judged by them. I did this because it became clear to me as I worked that my informants were the most significant element of the thesis. The research approach therefore reflects the dialectical process of engagement and disengagement through the research process of involvement and detachment (Elias 1987).

This triangulation of approach can be laid out roughly as follows, with the intersections and overlaps occurring within the body of the text:

- Theoretical investigation – Chapters One, Two, Three and Four.
- Socio-historical context drawn from embedded observation through work in the field – Chapters Four, Five, Six, Seven and Eight.
- Primary qualitative data gathering – Chapters Five, Six, Seven and Eight.

This synthetic approach has been located in the idea of grounded research (Glaser and Strauss 1967; Strauss and Corbin 1998). Grounded theory, as defined by Glaser and Strauss is "the discovery of theory from data" (Glaser and Strauss 1967:1). Contrary to the logico-deductive model of theory generation, grounded theory should not be influenced by preconceived theories but should emerge from data. Scholars such as Glaser and Strauss (1967), Straus and Corbin (1998) and Giddens (1976) argue that traditional logico-deductive approaches do not reflect real social life. Instead they argue, for more valid results analysis must begin at the level of the individual, taking his of her definition of the situation into account, "otherwise we are left to work with preconceived notions of categories that may have no meaning to the individual,

producing useless information in the end" (Statham et al 1988:5). It is this grounded logic that underpins the research methodology of this study.

Drawing from it is the assumption that, firstly, context matters and, secondly, that theoretical propositions derived from data, "are likely to offer insight, enhance understanding and provide a meaningful guide to action" (Strauss and Corbin 1998: 12). Included too, is the idea of research as social change, which implies a rethinking of social research and its objectivity. Certainly my approach is informed by research-activism (Batliwala 2002) or what might even be termed partisan research, the outcome of which sees my subjectivity being reflexively engaged throughout the research process. As such the strands of knowledge were not chosen at the outset, but deliberately allowed to emerge out of the dialectic of doing the thesis, the theoretical propositions crystallising from work done on the ground as reflexive research.

Method: Participatory Action Research, Partisan researcher

I began with the problem of negotiating a relationship with Shack/slum Dwellers International that would allow me to be simultaneously involved and detached, and the intellectual process of the thesis reflects this. SDI as a social movement declares itself to be "anti-expert", that is, it opposes interventions by external experts or professionals. Its entire rationale is to generate autonomous action from below and they view academics and external activists with justifiable class-based suspicion. It was only as a result of personal friendships made during the anti-apartheid struggle in South Africa that I was able to penetrate the cordon sanitaire surrounding them. When I approached them with my research project they were highly dismissive, regarding it as "ivory tower activism" and futile. They recommended I drop the thesis and get involved directly in the slums if I really wanted do participate. I suggested a compromise that I work for them as a volunteer for half a year and then decide. This they accepted and in 2003 SDI approved my voluntary presence within one of its support NGOs; the South African based "Community Organisation Resource Centre" (CORC). My role in

this regard was to act as an interlocutor for informal communities in engaging with the formal world in their attempts to secure tenure. In addition, I was to conduct a social capital survey on behalf of the International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED) and do a comparative study of social capital within an SDI constituency and a neighbouring community (see appendix 1). Dovetailed to this survey was an “enumeration” survey (see appendix 2) designed by and for the South African Homeless Peoples Federation. It was clear that any research into the slums could only proceed if it contained a strong slumdweller agenda. In a real sense then, my research was armed to comply with Tandon’s determinants of authentic participatory research:

- People’s role in setting the agenda of the inquiry.
- People’s participation in the data collection and analysis.
- People’s control over the use of outcomes and the whole process (Tandon1988: 13)

In the capacity of volunteer, I had the opportunity to witness SDI and its praxiology in the field. As things turned out, the initial terms of engagement changed completely once I arrived and I found myself in the thick of the UN sponsored Millennium Goals “Three Cities Alliance” program which was constructed around three of SDI’s key urban constituencies, Quezon City, Philippines, Durban, South Africa and Mumbai, India. This saw me accompany SDI slumdwellers on their travels (exchanges) to these cities, giving me the opportunity to cover a broad transnational field in my data collection. By the end of the six months, I was an accepted member of SDI’s support personnel, conducting surveys, documenting slums, transcribing narrative histories of slumdwellers, scripting and filming videos for them, amongst other things.

This relationship was picked up and strengthened in my second work period with them in 2004. During this time I was also involved in their rural slum work, which addressed the impact of the cash-nexus on spaces outside the urban. This provided me with a profound counterpoint to the urban conditions I had

witnessed, and allowed me to verify the data. As I began to write I gave this material directly back to activists in SDI for their scrutiny, and despite their hostility to "ivory tower research" they responded enthusiastically, establishing a dialogue of ideas around my observations that honed and tightened them. This critical feedback was central to the development of my propositions. It also was a pragmatic way for the grassroots to realise some power, despite their marginality, in an exercise of academic discourse, thus enabling a process of strategic reflection on action for the participants.

1. Qualitative Methods and Sources

Qualitative data for this thesis was gathered through in-depth interviews with shack/ slumdwellers from a number of countries affiliated to the social movement SDI, namely, Brazil, South Africa, Zimbabwe, Zambia, Malawi, Swaziland, Lesotho, Namibia, Kenya, Ghana, Uganda, India, and the Philippines. During two six month periods in 2003 and 2004 doing fieldwork across the South, I interviewed and co-ordinated the peer interviewing of hundreds of shack/slumdwellers, most of whom were women. I decided to do in-depth interviews because while SDI has considerable quantitative data (see SDIa 1996- 2006; UNCHR 2003; SPARC 1984-2006; People's Dialogue 1996-2004 et al) there is very little that examines the subjectivity and narratives of the slumdwellers themselves. From SDI census and surveys of the slums (see "Enumeration" in Chapter Eight) much is known statistically about slums, their population densities and occupations, incomes, and tenure, but understanding the subjective and agentic aspects of their lives requires researchers to talk directly to the slumdwellers themselves about the quality of their lives (Cawthorne 2001). Life in slums before and after joining the social movement SDI is not just about material costs and benefits, employment status, or the right to tenure or not, it is a fundamental psychological, emotional and cultural experience. Qualitative research is essential to explore these aspects of slumdwelling, in order to capture the nuances of the shift in subjectivity since joining the social movement and to shed light upon its praxiology.

2. Data collection

I conducted interviews between June 2003 and December 2004. I did these in two six-month periods I spent working for the SDI support NGO, Community Organisation Resource Centre (CORC). These interviews were done mostly in the homes of SDI members in the slums, shantytowns and squatter-camps of South Africa, Kenya, Uganda, Ghana, India and the Philippines. Some interviews were done at SDI events, such as house-modelling and enumerations, or programs in which SDI was involved like the Three Cities Alliance. Interviews with slumdwellers always involved fellow slumdwellers in the process, as interviewers, data collectors and compilers, facilitators, friends, guides, translators or bodyguards. All the slums reflected similar basic conditions of poverty: lack of tenure, dense population concentration, social and spatial vulnerability and precariousness. I did not choose the areas I was working in, as SDI decided this. Furthermore, in each area where I conducted interviews, local community participation was obligatory for me to proceed. SDI insists that all its activities occur through dialogue and involvement of the local community. Local slumdwellers were consulted and specific questions (such as health, key in areas where HIV is rampant) they needed answers to, were included in the questionnaire. As a result most interviews were tailored to the social needs of the slum community under examination. This both established their control over the research and also provided a degree of randomness to my research. The work I did for CORC in my first field trip involved doing a Social Capital survey, based upon the World Bank model, and the nature of this questionnaire coincided with my questions.

The interviews were done using a variety of tools, survey and census forms, mini-disc recorder, tape recorder, video-recorder. A number were recorded in long hand either by myself or by “enumerators” using my template. Many of these required translation by slumdwellers. In all cases, fellow slumdwellers were involved in the interview process to some degree, either for translation, moral or

explanatory support. Curiosity, and humour were constant, which greatly assisted in establishing my credibility and acceptance. The interviews were semi-structured and typically lasted twenty minutes. The interview schedule comprised a combination of closed and open-ended questions that specifically sought to reveal what the participants felt about the SDI mobilisation process. In this the questions were tailored to ask participants their opinion on key aspects of the social movement's praxiology (see Appendix for the template questionnaire as well as the full IIED-South African Homeless Peoples Federation Social Capital Survey).

The open ended questions and semi-structured nature of interviews allowed respondents to provide detailed accounts of their lives as slumdwellers, the many narrative histories of the surveys creating a composite subjective view of the slum as personal yet collective history of space and time. This style of interview is well suited to gaining rich, high quality description from respondents who are allowed to a large degree to take questions where they choose rather than being directed by the interviewer. Throughout, a key goal of the research was to understand how individuals interpret their lives and situation (see for instance Nichols and Armstrong 1976: 150, Ho. C 2004)).

In the interviews I sought to make the respondents feel at ease, often I was with fellow community members so credibility was assured, facilitating open engagement allowing respondents to respond freely. Being a "white" African male and so obviously out of place in the slums, provided a certain humorous contradiction in the midst of mainly women respondents. This overt "otherness" also provided me with obvious neutrality to the local tensions and allowed for a more trusting research relationship, as it was clear that I had no ulterior motives, and was furthermore endorsed by SDI, not simply acting for a university in far-off Sydney, Australia. On a number of occasions, indeed, the interview provided a light relief from the ongoing struggle of the respondent's everyday lives.

The respondents were recruited serially and simultaneously (when SDI enumerators were doing interviews too) in relation to their spatial location or "address" in the slum, pavement and squatter camp. On occasions, I would approach respondents when they were attending SDI activities (house-model, sanitation bloc opening, mapping exercise etc) and interview them ad hoc. This combination of systemic spatial selection and impromptu interviewing introduced a random sample within the research data.

3. Archival Material

In addition to the dialectic of participant observation and grounded research, engagement with SDI and its allies allowed me complete freedom to use their considerable archives. This material was in the form of letters, typed reports, tape recordings, video material, posters, digital documentation, emails, computer-archives. There was a cornucopia of such material dating back to the 1970's. It was impossible to go through all of it and I made selective forays, either randomly, or by title or by recommendation. There is no archival system in place and it is unlikely that any such system could encompass the slum's discursive production. For the purposes of this thesis I have categorised these materials in terms of the organisation or institution under whose umbrella the material originated e.g. SDIa 1999 will reflect Shack/slum Dwellers International material dated in 1999.

Close analysis and comparison of archival material with theoretical material was used to explain, highlight and sometimes expose agendas, content, intentions, links and underlying relationships. This material represents to some the degree formal discourse in the slum milieu. Materials reflect a diversity of sources, however material produced by slumdwellers themselves is often outweighed by that generated by external actors working in the slums (NGO's, Civic officials etc). This material proved very useful for reconstructing the history and ontology of the social movement. While a lot of it involves the transcription of slumdwellers

accounts, it is nonetheless a primary resource. I have borne this in mind and throughout have sought to use this material in adjunct to the qualitative data.

4. Data Analysis

In order to conform to the principles of grounded theory, the interviews were semi-structured and allowed respondents to raise issues that they felt important. Instead of pre-determining the parameters of the interview, the questions were open-ended, and in the interview the respondents were allowed to interpret questions largely as they wished. Despite this liberty, the interviews were not entirely free, as they were in the first place constructed around my theoretical preconceptions of the research project and design, and thus were loaded in the first place with my subjectivity. This of course reveals an unavoidable contradiction in grounded research, in that it assumes that the researcher is, as Ezzy argues, "a *tabula rasa*, who will absorb and understand the meanings of the subjects of the research unfettered by any of the researcher's previous understandings" (Ezzy 2002:10). However, this latent subjectivity can be to a degree countered by its acknowledgment, and in the researcher's inescapable reflexive response to the interview milieu. This dialectic is inevitable and is key to the development of the research, as questions become increasingly pertinent and interview techniques more fluent. The research in this sense becomes a form of praxis, which rather than being directed, leads itself (Newby 1977; Corrigan 1979; Burgess 1982).

In analysing the data, I sought to allow the theory to emerge from the data by generating categories drawn from the respondent's own words, before putting together my deductions and interpretations. Data analysis proceeded from open coding (identifying categories, properties and dimensions) through axial coding (identifying conditions, strategies and consequences) to selective coding around an emerging theme (Creswell 1998). These codes were then assessed according to an "interpretative model" of rigour (Gubrium and Holstein 1997), which emphasises:

- Scepticism – of the quality of common sense and quantitative understandings of social life.
- Close scrutiny – getting "close" to the world of the people being studied and noticing the details of their experiences and interpretations.
- Thick description – research should provide a rich, clear and nuanced description of social life.
- Focus on process – social life as continuously actively constructed as part of a process that constructs and transforms social life.
- Appreciation of subjectivity – social life made up of meanings, interpretations and feelings.
- Tolerance for complexity – social life and contemporary culture are a complex web of significations and interpretations.

Tying grounded theory to such protocols generates research that allows theory to emerge from data, which is both accommodating and rigorous. The data collection and analysis of slumdwellers, in seeking to reveal their experiences and interpretations based upon their own accounts, allows for a rich description of their lives, which is understood as complex, changing and a reflection of their own feelings and interpretations of the world. Yet, by overlaying their many accounts, strong themes emerged that formed the basis for the thesis's propositions. In this way, the transnational social movement's praxiology of subjectivity can be subjectively evaluated across its terrain, revealing its congruencies and differences. This subjective data, representing as it does widespread customary usage, in turn can be used heuristically to extrapolate, explain and define the praxiology. The collation of qualitative data amongst members of the same slumdwelling class across many locations across the South reveals the world system of poverty and of action against it. Hereby the generally impersonal, "cold" discourse of political economy is meshed to an interpretative approach that reveals underlying structure, but gives it a human face.

Part 1

"Class in itself"

"While The Band Played We Danced Out Of Step"

Why were we out of step?
Why did we look clumsy?
Why were we so false?
Why could we not keep to the beat?
Why were we out of tune?

We were not used to the tune.
The tune was not ours.
The band was ours
But it did not play our music.
We had rehearsed to dance
the People Centred Waltz.
Instead the band played
the Top Down Cha-Cha.

While the band played, we danced out of tune.
The band is ours, but the music is not.
We will dance to our music.
We must compose our own songs."

Patrick Maghebula- South African slumdweller, poet and people's leader (SDIa 2002).

Chapter One – The Future as Slum

Introduction

This chapter will examine the growth and impact of urbanisation, particularly in the post-colonial South, during the last half of the 20th Century and the beginning of the 21st Century. The period under examination reflects in structural terms the rise to dominance of the globalised market economy and its associated hegemonies. The purpose of the chapter is to establish slums as the backdrop and formative milieu for the rise of new subjectivities, the lumpenproletariat of shack/slumdwellers, and hence the locus for this thesis's central theme of praxis.

In the thesis, the Southern urban context is understood as the ultimate node of convergence of numerous forms of contradiction and crisis reflecting the increasingly discordant conversation between the North's Eurocentric master narrative and its cash nexus on one side and the multiple "other" vernaculars of human endeavour displaced and overwritten by it, on the other. Underpinning this position is the conjecture that the North's discourse of modernity-rationalism-democracy is compelled to irreversibly overwrite, redefine and anticipate the full horizon of human existence. The underlying premise of this totalising Weltanschauung is that of "progress", a normative dynamic claiming the possibility of perpetual growth and expressed consistently throughout the entire gamut of its ideological forms as such. Accordingly, everything from its science to its economic rationale and even its religious views are predicated upon the logic of transcendence and ascendance. Within this rationale, the absolute form of its spatial articulation is the urban. Confirming its imperative, the urban grows.

Through a survey of available data, section A of the chapter focuses upon understanding and contextualising the urban explosion that humanity currently faces. The statistics and data demonstrate that the domestic and productive spatial formation of humanity is irrevocably changing to the urban. The citing of these figures in respect to the rural-urban migration, is not to suggest that rural

production is in anyway outside the cash nexus or independent of it, but rather that the rising demands of the current neo-liberal urban productive logic have overwhelmed rural based vernacular relations of production, compelling them to succumb to the urban prerogative however contradictory and irrational this might appear to be (Lau and Huang 2003). The account seeks simply to provide the evidence that those alternative modes and relations of production have finally given way to the inexorable and totalising logic of the city.

In section B, the urban as "slum" will be introduced. Contrary to the positive vision of the neo-liberal Weltanschauung it will be shown that the current pattern of urbanisation has not led to a parallel increase in growth and prosperity, but instead to an overwhelming rise in poverty and the precipitation of this poverty in the form of slums and informal settlements. Drawing from a diversity of sources, a quantitative picture of this dystopia will be presented that clearly shows that slums are the ubiquitous expression of Southern urbanisation. This data will be examined in order to establish the causal links in current slum creation, showing in particular the devastating consequences Structural Adjustment Programs have had upon the South.

Section C looks at a cross section of theoretical perspectives explaining the dynamics behind urban and slum growth. It begins with a short background to the normative and pejorative content of the term "slum" and proceeds to an overview of the historical and structural linkage between modernity and urbanisation.

Section D considers contestation of the neo-liberal paradigm of urbanisation from the perspectives of exclusive local agendas and from that of deep transnational cosmopolitan resistance.

The final section E looks forward to the future. It is suggested that slums represent the absolute spatial and social contradiction of capitalism and as such it is within this milieu that its dialectical antithesis is found. Slums therefore are

the material terrain that will produce and reproduce the subjectivity appropriate for seizing the historical moment presented by current and future contradictions of globalised, hyper-commodified capitalism in a world of both manufactured and real scarcity, ecological jeopardy and climatological disaster.

A. The Era of the City

"This is the century of cities..." (Anna Tibaijuka, Executive Director, UNHCS 2001.)

At the start of the 3rd millennium in the Euro-Christian calendar half the human beings on earth live in cities. In data presented in *Nature 387* by Lutz et al in 1997, it was demonstrated that the present urban population of 3.2 billion is larger than the total population of the world in 1960. Furthermore, the rural population is at its peak of a matching 3.2 billion that will begin to shrink after 2020. The UN predicts that this rural to urban trend will be exacerbated by expected universal reductions in fertility levels (UNDP 2004). If this occurs, one outcome will be an eventual reduction in the rural population of less developed regions. The UN prediction is that by 2020 the rural population growth rate will turn negative for the first time. The rural population decline that the less developed regions of the world are about to experience is similar to the one that has been underway among the rural population of more developed regions since 1950 (UNDP 2004).

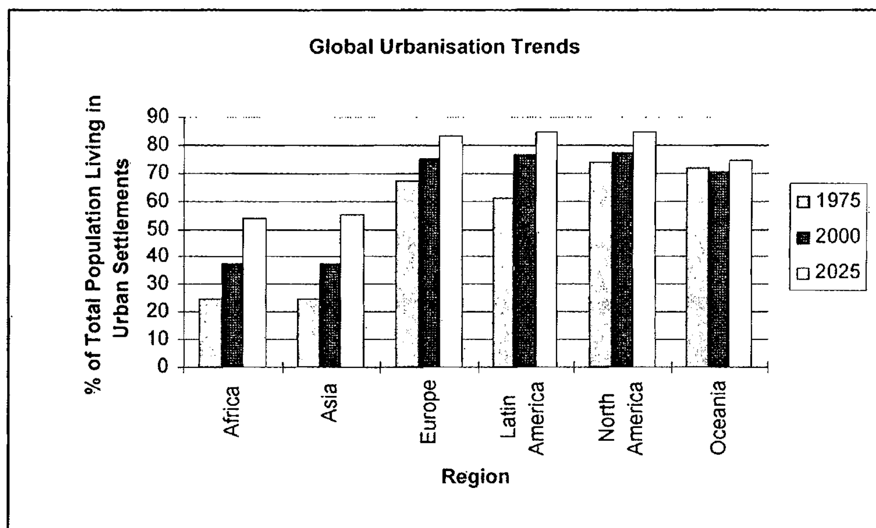
According to this view, cities will account for all future world population growth, which is expected to reach 10 billion in 2050 (Lutz et al 1997: p 803-4). This is extraordinary, for never before in any period of human history has this ever occurred. A watershed moment has been passed in the way humanity lives and relates to the world: for the first time more people live in urban areas than off the land. When one considers that during the 1950's, 24% of the global population was urbanised (www.urbanobservatory.org) it is clear that this has been a sudden and in its scale, unprecedented change. This coincided with that intensification of "progress and development" associated with the diffusion and

spread of modernity throughout the world in the last 200 years that has reached its apogee in the current era of "neo-liberal globalism". While the initial velocity of this movement was checked by the multitude of pre-existing contingent modes of production, the steady homogenisation of the world around industrial modes of production in a post-colonial milieu has seen a boom in the urban demographic.

This Malthusian scenario is consistent with observations from many quarters. In its 2001 revision of *World Population Prospects* (UNDP 2002) the UN's Population Division noted that in 1950 there were 86 cities in the world with a population exceeding one million. Today there are 400, and by 2015, the number will probably exceed 550. By 2050, it is anticipated that around 85% of the world's population will live in cities (Wakely 2000). According to the Urban Observatory, 95% of population growth will occur in the urban areas of the developing countries: the global South, whose population is expected to double to four billion within the next generation. Urban centres in Asia expanding at an explosive one million people a week, and rising, though still a step behind the world's most rapidly urbanising continent, Africa (Wakely 2000: p8).

This though, is just the tip of the iceberg, for urban populations in the South are today only half of what they are expected to be in 2025 (see table below). The urban populations of the Indian subcontinent will double, whilst that of sub-Saharan Africa will triple (Lutz et al 1997). Significantly this urban growth will generate cities with populations in excess of 8 million known as "mega-cities". In addition this scaling up will produce even greater "hyper-cities" with more than 20 million inhabitants (UNDP 2003). Whilst to date only Tokyo has touched this point, it is estimated that by 2025 Asia could have at least ten such metropolitan giants (Yeung 1997: p93). Most of these large cities are located in developing countries, projections cited by Davis (2004) include Jakarta: 24.9 million; Dhaka: 25 million; Karachi: 26.5 million; Shanghai: 27 million and Mumbai: 33 million. Presently 10 of the 41 largest cities are located in developed countries. However,

by 2015, only one of the 18 new mega-cities will be located in developed countries.



(Source: UNCHS 1996)

From the above table it is clear that there are distinct continental differences. Africa, Asia and Latin America show the greatest relative urban growth. When this is evaluated in terms of greatest regional and sub-continental differentiation as the UK's Department For International Development has done, the following comes to light (DFID 2000):

Latin America and the Caribbean: The region as a whole went from being predominantly rural to being predominantly urban between 1950 and 1990, although there are significant differences between countries. 76% of the population now live in urban areas. In addition, the economy of cities is undergoing rapid change as some industrial centres have declined, and migratory patterns increasingly reflect urban-urban migration in response to changing employment opportunities.

East and Central Europe: By 1992, 56% of the population of Eastern Europe was in urban areas. Within the former Soviet Union, 83% of the central region was

urbanised. Since then, the collapse of the eastern bloc, and the accompanying relaxation of controls on economic planning and the movement of people, has led to out-migration to non Eastern Bloc countries, and the introduction of market based systems. This has had a significant impact on urban economies and settlement patterns. The greatest pace of change has occurred in Poland, Hungary, Czech and Slovakia.

Asia and the Pacific: Asia contains three-fifths of the world's population, and many of the world's fastest growing cities. In 1990, Asia contained 72% of the world's rural population, and 44.5% of the world's urban population, reflecting the rate of urbanisation in China and India. Within the region as a whole, 32% of the population live in urban areas. Eighteen of the world's twenty-six mega-cities, with populations in excess of 10 million, will be in Asia by 2015.

Africa: Conservative estimates suggest the proportion of urban dwellers in Africa rose from 25 to 37% between 1975 and 2001. Yet rapid urbanisation has not been accompanied by strong economic growth, resulting in a decline in the levels of investment in basic infrastructure and urban services. Lack of investment has in turn inhibited economic expansion. Despite the fact that cities are not performing as engines of growth in the economy the percentage of people living in urban areas is set to rise to over 50% by 2025. (DFID 2000)

When considering this data, it is important to note that while the urban giants of mega and hyper-cities dominate in size, they reflect the scaling up of the entire urban spectrum. Growing at even greater pace are the smaller hubs located within the rural landscape. According to researchers at the United Nations (UNDP 2002) more than half the urban population live in urban centres with less than half a million inhabitants, including a substantial proportion in urban areas with less than 50 000 inhabitants (Mitlin and Satterthwaite 2004). Villages, lesser towns and secondary cities are generally the first stop for those fleeing the rural (Guldin 2001; Davis 2004). This collision of rural and urban trajectories leads to a

synthesis of each. The result is a rural/urban hybrid that retains both productive and ideological characteristics of each. What distinguishes the urban-rural mix from the mega-city is the weight of their inherent productive dynamics. The productive consistency, levels of infrastructure and specialisation of the latter will always outweigh the former, resulting in an increasing inequality between these spatial forms in favour of the larger cities.

For all the differences it is obvious that the future is urban. While the logic of this has been a consistent thematic of much of modernity's narrative, the effect of a globalising economy has been to finally open up the insulation of the rural to the full flow and impact of the market. The current tide of urbanisation thus reflects relative rural poverty in relation to the urban. Consequently, the greatest urban growth will be in the global South with its large rural populations, and its apotheosis will be the mega-city and hyper-city. In a sense then, a new chapter has opened on human geography: no longer are large sections of humanity retained in insulated local economies based on relations of production constructed upon the "land", instead we now live in a predominantly artificial geography polarised between surplus generating mega-cities and a struggling mix of secondary cities and towns (Guldin 2001). This spatial revolution involves new forms of human aggregation and connection.

B. The City becomes "Slum"

What is not clear in the data pertaining to urban growth is that irrespective of how one interprets the current urban explosion, one fact is undeniable: given their predominant location in the "underdeveloped" and developing countries, together with the multiple dynamics driving Southern rural-urban migration, the burgeoning urban-scape is and will continue to be occupied by the "poorest of the poor" of the global South. Furthermore, this urban explosion is growing faster than the capacity of these Southern cities to accommodate, provide employment or civil amenities for the influx. Therefore the bulk of all urban growth will be

slum. For that reason it is necessary to reframe the data in terms of slum growth.

According to the Panos Institute in a publication *Governing Our Cities, Will People Power Work?* (2000) between 30 and 60% of urban populations in developing countries currently live in slums and informal settlements. The UN-Habitat's seminal report *The Challenge of the Slums* (UNCHS 2003) exceeded this figure two years later with slumdwellers accounting for an estimated 78.2% of the population of the least developed countries (UNCHS 2003: p3). Southern cities like Cairo, Lagos, Mexico City, Mumbai and Manila typify this urban-as-slum growth. In 1990, 84% of the population of Cairo were living in slums, including thousands who live in a vast cemetery, the "City of the Dead" (Panos 2001: p3). Lagos' population doubled in the ten years between 1985 and 1994. The Governor of Lagos State admitted at a press conference in 2003 that "about two thirds of the state's total land mass of 3,577 square kilometres could be classified as shanties or slums" (Davis 2004: p15). According to the UN's Urban Observatory, the world's most extensive impoverishment occurs in Ethiopia and Chad, where 99.4 % of the urban population are considered slumdwellers; Afghanistan follows at 98.5 % and Nepal 92 %. The Urban Observatory warns that by 2020 "urban poverty in the world could reach 45 to 50 % of the total population living in cities" (www.urbanobservatory.org). Slum settlements are expected to account for between 75 and 90% of all future urban growth (UNCHS 2001). The prospect of two billion slum dwellers by 2030 or 2040 is openly anticipated by UN agencies (UNCHS 2003).

The Rise of the Washington Consensus, the Triumph of the Market and the Decline of the Southern State

For many observers, slums are not unexpected but rather an unavoidable material fact of the process of urban growth. There is a growing realisation that the current urban-as-slum explosion is directly linked to the triumph of the market-economy and globalised neo-liberal hegemony. In contradiction with its professed delivery of material abundance, the capitalist expression of industrial

modernity appears not only to have entrenched but also deepened the crisis of poverty.

Ironically, much of this realisation has been forthcoming from within the cosmopolitan ranks of global hegemony itself. According to the Panos Institute, in a view that typifies the consensus that emerged after the UN's Habitat Agenda was signed in 1996:

> "Much of the growth in poverty, particularly in the South can be associated with deteriorating macro-economic conditions and structural adjustments. Globalisation of the economy has also fragmented production processes and labour markets and pushed more people into the informal work sector. The poor bear the brunt, being the first to lose their jobs and the last to receive any socio-economic benefits." (Panos Institute 2000: p6)

This view anticipated the UN-Habitat's 2003 report (UNCHS 2003), which echoed and developed this critique of the Washington Consensus" neo-classical market approach

> "During the 1990s, trade continued to expand at an almost unprecedented rate, no-go areas opened up and military expenditures decreased...All the basic inputs to production became cheaper, as interest rates fell rapidly along with the price of basic commodities. Capital flows were increasingly unfettered by national controls and could move rapidly to the most productive areas. Under what were almost perfect economic conditions according to the dominant neo-liberal economic doctrine, one might have imagined that the decade would have been one of unrivalled prosperity and social justice (but instead) the gap between poor and rich countries increased, just as it had done for the previous 20 years and, in most countries, income inequality increased or, at best, stabilized." (UNCHS 2003: p34)

This admission brought into the open a general realisation that when the IMF and World Bank began to use debt leverage to restructure the economies of what is now known as the South, slums became the inevitable norm of Southern urban growth. Underpinning this failure was the fact that despite its own narrative history of explicit economic intervention through various forms of New Deal and social-welfare, the Northern agenda motivating the Structural Adjustment Programs (SAPs) directly targeted Southern state attempts to modernise. According to UN-Habitat the "main single cause of increases in poverty and inequality during the 1980s and 1990s was the retreat of the state" (UNCHS

2003). By undermining the largest structural element in Southern national production, adjustment led to the collapse of domestic industry and manufacture, decreased export incomes, caused capital flight, severe reductions in public services, escalating prices and a sharp decline in real incomes. Thus, contrary to its intention of stimulating economic growth by extending market liberalisation, adjustment proved to be a direct assault on state-subsidised infrastructure, employment and interventionary processes of Southern governance that had allowed them to move from the often, chaotic post-colonial void into the rudiments of autonomous modernity. Without the state, development appears to have become de-linked from growth. Contrary to Adam Smith's expectations, the market seems to have failed to provide for all.

- **Adjusting to Slums**

Expressed normatively as ending nepotistic, corrupt and parasitic dependency so as to free the national host for greater growth and efficiency, structural adjustment simply emptied the ranks of the urban professional and working classes in order to provide a void for external market-based actors to fill. In preventing Southern state attempts to develop through welfare policies, fiscal structure or government investment, SAPs opened up this space to Northern financial interests. But the failure to adequately fill this void led to the collapse of urban centres and abandonment of CBD's around the South. In this sense SAPs, were unable to deliver on the development promise and proved effectively anti-urban in outcome.

In countries under SAPs, urban incomes fell following retrenchments of public sector workers and restrictions on wage levels, leading to increased informalisation. Reflecting the transition to market economies, statistics given in 1995 by the World Bank show that in adjusting Latin American (Bayat 2000) and Middle-Eastern countries formal employment fell by 5-15 % (World Bank 1995). This had an impact across the economy affecting both formal sector workers and the informal sector activities dependant upon this circulation of cash. Increases in

food prices and service charges, cuts in public expenditure especially health, education and in infrastructure expenditure affected most strongly low-income groups.

Directly linked to the economic restructuring was a rise in urban inequality. This is reflected in increasing domestic segregation exemplified by enclosed, gated communities of the rich and sprawling shanty towns of informal, insecure housing for the burgeoning poor (Robins 2000). In Argentina for instance, the earnings of elites increased from 10 times that of the poorest in 1984, and to 23 times in 1989 (Ainstein in Gilbert 1998: p139) in direct correlation to the implementation of SAPs. Similarly, Peru's minimum wage value plummeted 83% and the population of households living below the poverty threshold increased from 17% in 1985 to 44% in 1990 (Riofrio in Gilbert 1998: p73). In Brazil, disparity in wealth as measured in Gini coefficients leapt from 0.58 in 1981 to 0.67 in 1989 (Tolosa in Gilbert 1996: p211).

This connection between the onset and implementation of Structural Adjustment Programs and increased economic disparity is consistent throughout Latin America. According to a 2003 World Bank report, Gini coefficients in the continent were 10 points higher than in Asia, 17.5 points higher than the OECD, and 20.4 points higher than Eastern Europe (World Bank 2003). This disparity mirrored directly the retreat of the state and the shrinkage of the public sector as an employer. Exacerbating rising inequality has been the profitable filling of this void by ascendant private sector and corporate actors and the surge of migrants from the parallel rural implosion.

There has been a similar outcome in Africa. Across the continent as a whole, unemployment grew by 10% or more every year throughout the 1980's as formal wage labour consistently declined (Van Der Moortele 1990). The impact of this decline has not been uniform, some countries like South Africa and Botswana, though not immune from its effects, have as a result of their greater levels of

established domestic industry been better able to weather the storm than other more vulnerable nations. By contrast in the Democratic Republic of Congo, economic depression due to adjustment followed by ongoing civil war has virtually eliminated the entire civil bureaucracy and its associated middle class, producing an "unbelievable decline in real wages that, in turn, sponsored a nightmarish rise in crime and predatory gangs" (Davis 2004: p20).

During the 1980's, Tanzania's public per capita service expenditure dropped 10% annually, effectively expunging the local state (Mattingly 1999). Sudan's implementation of structural adjustment ruined its emergent middle-class, haemorrhaging over a million "new poor". According to Ahmad and El-Batthani these were "mostly drawn from the salaried groups or public sector employees" (Ahmad and El-Batthani in IIED 1995: p205). Similarly for Cote D'Ivoire, adjustment meant the disintegration of its manufacturing sector and public services (Dubresson in Rakodi 1997). With respect to Nigeria, the World Bank observed that poverty levels in urban areas had increased from 28% in 1980 to 66% in 1996 and that when viewed historically, "GNP per capita, at about $260 today is below the level at independence 40 years ago and below the $370 level attained in 1985" (World Bank 2003).

In South Africa, despite its established infrastructure and for all its conformity to Northern democratic and human rights imperatives, opening the country up to international markets has ravaged domestic industry. Much of the self-reliance that economic sanctions and trade boycotts had ironically brought into being has effectively been wiped out within a decade of engagement and compliance. Despite the end of the draconian Group Areas legislation, unemployment remains critical in limiting the ability of the majority of South Africans to access the land and housing market, with the unemployment rate having increased from 32,7% in 1994 to 37,6% in 1999 (Rust 2000). Low household affordability levels push access to formal housing beyond the reach of an increasing proportion of the South African population and fuels the shantytowns.

A second aspect to the SAP's assault upon Southern modes of production has been the restructuring of the rural economy through commercialisation and marketisation. This has radically accelerated and extended rural-urban migration over the last twenty years. While the earlier part of this chapter explored the broad rural-urban shift associated with modernisation in the 20th Century, the particular impact of the SAPs on Southern rural economies needs to be examined more closely. To get a sense of perspective, according to the UN's Population Division, during the 1970's in Latin America the rural poor were estimated to be 75 million, far exceeding that of the cities, at 44 million. By 1990, however, the vast majority of the poor, 115 million, were now living in urban slums rather than farms or villages where only 80 million poor remained (UNDP 2002).

SAP's requisite removal of rural and agricultural subsidies forced smallholders and subsistence farmers to participate in global commodity markets dominated by Northern agribusiness (Panos 2000; UNCHS 2003). Cecilia Tacoli argues:

> "At the global level, the liberalisation of trade and production has changes or reshaped rural-urban linkages in most regions. The increased availability of imported goods affects consumption patterns in both rural and urban settlements...since these are often cheaper than locally produced goods...local manufacturers and processors can be negatively affected. This is especially the case for small-scale enterprise using traditional or limited technology and often employing women..." (Tacoli in IIED 2003: p4)

Rural vernacular economies have been significantly and permanently altered through restructuring and integration into the global economy. Local dynamics have been subsumed or displaced entirely. The key to this has been the fact that subsistence, cash-crop and other small farmer's production have not been able to compete with more advanced international agribusiness in domestic and international markets. This failure has forced them to abandon the land and move to the towns and cities. The unequal competition with globalised, Northern agribusiness has, as Bryceson points out, torn rural traditional society "apart at the seams" (Bryceson 2000: p308). The commercialisation of land and rural

demobilisation has resulted in deep and wide-ranging socio-economic changes, primarily felt by the rural-urban migrants reflecting the shift from vernacular livelihood production to insecure urban “livelihood struggles” (Escobar 1995), often involving high levels of multi-tasking to ensure daily survival.

Furthermore, in terms of culture and socialisation, the massive urban migration has irrevocably altered customary lifestyles, practices and forms of attachment, creating in the new locations different forms of social identity with new values, pertaining primarily to the cash-nexus, no longer defining status by archaic and cultural means but by position within the pecking order of the urban poor, as cash earners by any means.

- **The Double Edge of Adjustment**

As the data above clearly shows, twenty years of structural adjustment have inflicted a heavy toll upon Southern states and their populations. Within the first decade of the SAPs around one billion mostly Southern workers, representing one third of the worlds labour force, were either unemployed or under-employed (CIA 1992; Bayat 2000). This reflected the immediate meltdown of domestic economy, which pushed a large number of the educated middle-class, who (as government employees, public sector officials and service providers) now was redundant, together with de-landed peasantry into the ranks of the urban poor. According to U.N. Habitat the efforts of the Washington Consensus to create a neo-classical economic utopia was contradicted by the fact that its demands were simultaneously “deliberately anti-urban in nature” (UNCHS 2003), as well as destructive of the livelihoods of rural smallholders and subsistence agriculture of the South. This contradiction expressed itself in the production of slums.

Compliance with the SAPs then, has been a double-edged sword, simultaneously forcing people off the land as well as emptying the ranks of the urban formal employed. The effect of this has been to create a vast and increasing urban surplus population trapped in “daily survival strategies”, prey to

amongst many other things, the "sweatshops" of the "world factories" of globalised corporations (Arrighi 2005). The end of state-interventionist practices and the discounting of the cluster of benefits associated with urbanisation, such as welfare policies, service and infra-structure provision and government investment, and forcing these to be linked to global free-market provision, which of course means local elites and foreign private enterprise, has made urban life in the South become increasingly precarious and untenable.

The imposition of Northern market relations on Southern economies, by sapping the power of the Southern nation states to manage and direct their domestic development, undermines the foundations of citizenship, as Bayat notes:

> "The historic shift in the periphery from socialist and populist regimes to liberal economic policies, through the Structural Adjustment Program has led to the erosion of much of the social contract, collective responsibility and welfare state structures. Thus millions of people in the global South who depended on state provisions must now rely on their own to survive." (Bayat 2000: p534)

The two-fold collapse of both the rural-vernacular production and the slump in urban employment combined with the abandonment of welfare has made the society of desperation the norm. No longer are people located within a self-made or locally embedded or even nationally consistent economy, instead they have been subsumed en masse into a fluctuating globalised neo-liberal narrative not necessarily of their choice or making. This subsumption to a paradigm of competition and commodification now directly informs social relations. Sociality and community are displaced by the urgency of individualised, commodified relations whereby individuals are pitted against each other in order to survive. Settlements, squatter camps and slums are thus sites of anomie and mutual hostility. The normative sense of community as such no longer exists. Caught at the archeon of the cash trajectory, the urban surplus population is forced into a condition of hyper-competitiveness. These characteristics resonate closely with what Engels observed in 1894:

> "It is the Darwinian struggle of the individual for existence transferred from nature to society with intensified violence." (Engels 1975: p313)

This reduction to a Darwinian imperative contradicts humanist political notions of a social contract, shattering usual community empathy and order. In its place, a state of violence proliferates at a scale that has made it in many contexts become "routinised" or "normalised". Violence and its production of fear and insecurity pervade people's lives with serious implications for trust, well-being and the establishment of collective agendas among communities and individuals. As Mo Hume notes in an article on El Salvador:

> "social and political relations remain characterised by what Tausig calls "terror as usual", exhibiting itself through a sharp increase in crime, a growing gang culture and high levels of violence toward women and in the domestic realm (Mo Hume in IIED 2004: p63).

The linkages between exclusion, inequality and identity are important causal factors in explaining this violence and crime, as Daniel Esser says, "the city becomes as arena, hub and prey..." (IIED 2004: p31). Significantly it can be concluded that urban spatial and population production under the current market hegemony does not grant access to the hypothetical bundle of rights and entitlements, or the extension of citizenship that liberal democracy purports to advance, rather it manufactures deep seated anomie and an "uncivil society". This uncivil society is in dialectical opposition to the ideals and norms desired by formal civil society, which due to its permanence poses a constant problematic and threat to the essentially bourgeois society that its liberal narrative advocates.

The significance of this is that it opens the door for subtle new forms of internal colonisation. By undermining the Southern state welfare agendas and their capacity to uphold their social contracts, the Washington Consensus created the need for outsourced development (with its imposition of outside values) underwritten by donors and international aid organisations, in a further fracturing of public sphere and civil society (Sassen 1995). As Habitat observes:

> "The whole, apparently decentralized structure is foreign to the notion of national representative government that has served the developed world well, while it is very amenable to the operations of a global hegemony. The dominant international perspective (i.e., Washington's) becomes the de facto paradigm for development, so that the whole world

> rapidly becomes unified in the broad direction of what is supported by donors and international organizations." (UNCHS 2003: p48)

Here the Janus faced character of Northern hegemony is most apparent. The outsourced "aid" replicates the historic role played by missionary organisations in the establishment of colonial rule. They are the seemingly benevolent face of the Northern Weltanschauung, appearing to be critical of the political economy that produces inequality and oppression. Yet at the same time this plethora of NGO's are the very vehicles that proselytise the juridical and normative formula of Northern discourse and through their practice, overwrite local relations of production and oversee livelihood struggles in terms of their ideological agenda. This paternalistic imposition only adds to the peripheralisation of slumdwellers.

- **Living on the Edge**

The academic and institutional vision of dystopia presented above is borne out by censuses and surveys conducted around the world by slumdwellers themselves. The social movement, Shack/slum Dwellers International (SDI), routinely self-surveys its domain and many of these figures now appear in UNCHS reporting. From their constituency's surveys amidst the mountainous garbage dump dwellings of Payatas (Philippines), the cages of Hong Kong, the floating shacks on stilts along the waters of Thailand, Philippines, Indonesia, Sri Lanka, the desert camps in Sudan, Ethiopia, the forest settlements in Amazon, Congo, Mozambique, Angola, the enumerable slums of Africa, Asia and Latin America, the future of urbanisation is clearly seen by SDI as ubiquitously becoming slum. When this validation from below is seen in the context of market-based scarcity of land and the hyper-commodification of space, the urban future appears very bleak for the poor.

The growth of the urban as slum is a complex phenomenon that challenges familiar spatial constructions. The intensified and totalising commodification of land in conjunction with the fact that slums are largely unofficial and outside the formal inclusion of the urban means that as the urban-as-slum grows, simple

space is transcended in a non-quantum space within space equation. This escalation of spatial demands has led to what Indian town planners describe as "hyper-slums" (Shindi in SDIa 2003); "slums within slums" (Burra in SDIa 2003) that emerge as slums encounter the limits of spatial possibility and are forced to occupy any vacant land within the urban domain. In the Indian case, "hutments" of squatters occupy tiny pockets of unoccupied ground amidst the resettlement camps of the previously evicted "old urban poor" (Ali in Roy and Gupta 1995).

What typifies these hyper-slums is the desperation and ingenuity of their situation. The spatial crisis is resolved by the growing numbers of urban poor in a multitude of ways and each solution reflects the intensification of contradictions in that particular setting. The most obvious forms of this occur in what Bayat describes as the "quiet encroachment" (Bayat 2000) of public interstices such as forecourts and footpaths by pavement dwellers as well as those illicit superimposed occupations of private spaces such as squatting upon rooftops in "slum cities in the air" (Rigg 1991: p143). As mentioned, Hong Kong for example hosts a considerable hidden population of unenviable "cage people", made up of economic migrants and displaced people who dwell in multi-storied caged bed-towers (Workers World News Service 1997). Furthermore, the quiet encroachment of the urban interstices extends beyond the pavements and forecourts to increasingly concealed, precarious and dangerous interstices, such as the verges of railway tracks (SPARC 2000), flood-plains (SDIa 2003) and intra-tidal stilt-colonies (SDIa 2003).

While these spatial variations describe the diverse architecture of slums, they fail to capture qualitative shifts in other areas. Health and safety issues of poverty, for instance, are often ignored in the data. Surveys conducted in Mozambique's capital, Maputo, and Democratic Republic of Congo's Kinshasa, indicate that 66% of the inhabitants of these cities earn less than the cost of their minimum recommended daily allowance of nutrition and so are trapped within a downward spiral of starvation (Simon and Piermay in Rakodi 1997). In addition to the

precarious spatial conditions, levels of violence, disease and injury are consistently severe in most slums around the world, making daily life an extreme activity for their occupants. Yet the dialectic of this adverse materiality produces a potent synthesis in terms of consciousness, a slum expertise located in the slumdweller's subjective and embodied knowledge of surviving. This embodied consciousness is an important asset, a latent potential that the praxiology of SDI seeks to unlock and transform into an active subjectivity (as will be explored through the thesis).

Of all the factors involved in the rise of the slum as the dominant site of human habitation, primary importance must go to the slum's qualitative impact on sociality, of how slums reconfigure social production and reproduction. It is this aspect, the way in which slums prefigure and create social force and the potential for agency, that is central to the subjects of this thesis and which will be explored in greater detail in Chapter Two. Significantly in this regard, when one considers the demographics of "democracy", the global South is the global majority and more importantly, the majority of the South are slumdwellers. This weight of numbers is a powerful asset in a globalised narrative of democratic practice.

- **The Malthusian Slum suddenly appears**

For those in the North, the dystopic reality of market-governed development might not seem obvious. Blessed with an apparent stasis in population growth and movement and thereby relative spatial equilibrium, the rise of the meta-slum seems implausible, the material for a science-fiction dystopia such as China Miéville's, *New Crobuzon* (2000). However, this status quo should not be taken for granted for long. The spill-over from the collapse of the Second World of Command Communism, typified by the Balkan Crisis as well as the relentless increment of refugees from other conflicts together with diverse Southern economic migrants, soon to be joined by the first waves of environmental refugees, suggest the immanence of slums in the North. The long restive inhabitants of British ghetto communities from Brixton in the 1970's and 80's to

those implicated in the 2005 London bombings tell of consistently escalating incivility, attendant growing internal “othering” and enclave formation within the heartlands of the North.

While there is still quite a difference between a ghetto and a squatter camp, the two realms merge in Northern urban squatter movements utilising urban decay for habitation. “Nomadic” urban squatter community movements such as Spiral Tribe, or those “travellers” escaping the urban dystopia that began in the UK during the Thatcher era, suggest the growth and immanence of a mobile urban surplus directly linked to the rise of the neo-liberal hegemony. This dynamic is overlaid by Northern enclave formation, besieged both internally and externally and connected to the strong-arm exclusion that has followed the rise of the neo-liberal state (a theme explored more fully in the following chapter). The subtlety with which these social transformations occur and the radical changes in spatial ordering that they generate, is often totally overlooked at first because they are so unexpected. Northerners seem particularly prone to a kind of cognitive myopia that renders them blind to even the most staggering changes unless it is represented to them through familiar media.

In this regard it is worth noting the following passage. In it, the chairman of the Residence Committee of the upper middle class “European” (read Northern) suburb of Manor Gardens, South Africa, describes how in 1994 he and other people in his neighbourhood first came to notice the Cato Crest squatter camp that now borders Manor Gardens at its edges:

> "It was a day no different from any other day. I came home from work about an hour before sunset. I parked the car in the garage as usual and locked the gate. It was a particularly beautiful evening. There had been a thunderstorm that afternoon. The air was fresh, the heat and humidity extinguished by the rain. I looked across the valley where the clouds were racing towards the horizon, leaving a cosy blue sky behind them. Just below the clouds I saw some black dots. "A flock of birds on the horizon", I thought to myself, half deciding to get out a pair of binoculars to double check. But then my wife came out of the house to greet me and I forgot about the birds. A few months later I was playing soccer in the garden with my sons. The younger boy kicked the ball into the street. I went out to retrieve it. As I passed out of my

driveway I happened to look out over the tops of the mahoganies and the acacias in the virgin bush below me. My house is on the crest of a hill. A grove of dense indigenous bush begins on the very edge of my property. The bush is a lot thinner these days. Anyway I glanced across the valley. I was startled by what I saw. It looked like a herd of cattle making its way down the hills on the other side of the valley. I told my kids to come and have a look, but they protested, saying they wanted to get on with the game. About a month ago I got a frantic call from my neighbour, whose house, like mine was right on the edge of the forest. My neighbour was extremely agitated. He said I had to come right away; he had already called the police; squatters had built their shack against the vibro-crete wall that circled his property. I went up to my balcony on the second floor. I looked into the forest. I noticed there were shacks everywhere." (SDla 1995)

Strikingly reminiscent of the arrival of the Martians in H. G. Wells' scenario at the outset of the *War of the Worlds*, the presence of the slums is relentless, unexpected and irrevocable. The exact nature of the social transformation implied is so incommensurable to the preceding status quo, as to remain unrecognised until too late.

C. Theoretical Perspectives of Urban Growth.

- **Historical appearance of the Slum in Bourgeois Discourse.**

At this point it is worth exploring the ontology of the term "slum". While the subjects of this thesis refer to themselves in globalised English as "Shackdwellers" and "Slumdwellers" depending on where they live, the standard Anglophone referent in urban bureaucratic terms for the terrain they occupy, is slum. Understanding the ontology of the idea of slum is important in order to situate conventional understandings of the term, however, in so doing it must be remembered that this is to understand the hegemonic notion of slum, and not to supplant the myriad autochthonous and unique terms in local parole, such as the "bustees" of Kolkata, the "hutments", "chawls" and "zopadpattis" of Mumbai, the "katchi abadis" of Karachi, the "kampungs" of Jakarta, the "iskwaters" of Manila, the "shammasas" of Khartoum, the "umjondolos" of Durban, the "intra-murios" of Rabat, the "bidonvilles" of Abidjan, the "baladis" of Cairo, the "geçekondus" of

Ankara, the “conventillos” of Quito, the “favelas” of Brazil, the “villas miseria” of Buenos Aires and the “colonias populares” of Mexico City (Davis 2004).

Up until a few thousand years ago humanity existed quite adequately without cities, in fact considering Homo sapiens as a species, living in urbia is a relatively recent phenomenon. Multiple modes of production have sustained humanity in various ways without recourse to the referents implicated by urban discourse. By definition as a “constructed environment”, urbia abstracts itself from the purely organic and relies almost entirely upon human input to produce and reproduce it. It becomes a hermetic realm generating its own creative dynamic and internal discourse. Cash, markets, complex and specialised productive techniques of industry characterise the urban and are necessary for its continuance. While malnourishment, lack of shelter and security etc are perennial human issues, these physical conditions of “poverty” reach intense levels in the abstracted condition of the constructed urban environment. It is the urban context and its Weltanschauung that constructs the deepest and most alienated expression of wealth and poverty.

Derivative of this context, the slum is a concept that originates directly from the urban-cash nexus. As a term, its roots are significantly recent with its appearance coinciding with the rise of early entrepreneurial capitalism at the turn of the 18th to 19th century. As Davis (2004) reminds us, the first published definition of slum reportedly occurs in Vaux’s 1812 *Vocabulary of the Flash Language*, where it is synonymous with “racket” or “criminal trade”. Slum begins as a term for uncivil entrepreneurial ventures, criminal practices of production, extortionate, anti-social and undesirable to civilised norms, although, according to Davis:

> “By the cholera years of the 1830s and 1840s, however, the poor were living in slums rather than practising them. A generation later, slums had been identified in America and India, and were generally recognized as an international phenomenon. The “classic slum” was a notoriously parochial and picturesquely local place, but reformers generally agreed with Charles Booth that all slums were characterized by an amalgam of dilapidated housing, overcrowding, poverty and vice. For nineteenth-century Liberals, of course, the moral

dimension was decisive and the slum was first and above all envisioned as a place where a social "residuum" rots in immoral and often riotous splendour." (Davis 2004: p12)

What can be seen is that the term "slum" shifts in meaning from an uncivil mode of production to become a pejorative term for the domestic site of the older idea of urban poverty, the so-called "poor districts". This shift in semantics reflected the visceral fear the slums elicited amongst the bourgeoisie, as Engels points out in *The Housing Question* (1950):

"Modern natural science has proven that the so-called "poor districts" in which the workers are crowded together, are the breeding places of all those epidemics which from time to time affect our towns. Cholera, typhus, typhoid fever, smallpox and other ravaging diseases spread their germs in the pestilential air and the poisoned water of these working class quarters. Here the germs never die out completely...they develop into epidemics and then spread out into ...the parts of the town inhabited by the capitalists. Capitalist rule cannot allow itself the pleasure of generating epidemic diseases among the working class with impunity; the consequences fall back on...its ranks...as ruthlessly as in the ranks of the workers. As soon as this fact had been scientifically established the philanthropic bourgeois became inflamed with a noble spirit of competition in their solicitude for the health of their workers. Societies were founded, books were written, proposals drawn up, laws debated and passed..." (Engels 1950: p524)

It was the fear of the slum that was the foundation of welfarism in Victorian England. It is in the light of this pejorative ontology rooted in the criminal, frightening and uncivil, that the term slum, as a normative synonym for the spatial description of poverty should be understood.

Anna Kajumulo Tibaijuka, Executive Director of UN-HABITAT described the peculiar ambivalence that slums continue to present as a blurring of categories between the "official city" and its un-official actuality, in the following terms:

"Let us be clear about slums. They are not an abstract concept. They exist in our cities wherever there is insufficient water or sanitation, insecure tenure and lack of protection against the elements, lack of security, and the presence of conditions that breed disease. Slums are often not part of the official city, and thus slum dwellers may be disconnected from ameliorating urban services. Slums are places where most people live on less than one dollar a day, where most children suffer from hunger, where child and maternal mortality is abnormally high, where children suffer disproportionately and women carry the greatest

> burdens, where education falls far short, where HIV/AIDS is rampant and where the natural environment has been completely degraded." (Tibaijuka in UNHCS 2001)

Slums constitute an intra-zone of urban spatial reality. Officially, de-jure they are prohibited from existing, yet, de facto they do. They fall outside the legitimate territory of the city and thereby forgo the rights and entitlements that this inclusion bestows. In this form they are invariably characterised by over-crowded, unsanitary living conditions within large informal settlements without security of tenure, with limited or no access to basic utilities or services such as health, education, energy and law and order. What constituted a slum in the Victorian period continues today and remains a breeding place for contagion of various sorts magnified in scale, diffused globally and directly correlated to the flow and spread of capitalism.

- **Dynamics behind Modern Urbanisation**

Historical urbia notwithstanding, there is a direct relationship between the rise of modernity and current trends in urbanisation. Industrial modernity requires the concentration of space, resources, labour, infrastructure, and accessibility that urbia provides. The factory and the modern city are integrally connected and symbiotically shape each other. The modes and relations of production of each are shared throughout. The rise of industrial modernity is coupled to the rise of modern hegemonies whose competition expressed in terms of spatial and industrial ideologies have shaped the course of history over the last few centuries. From the European enclosure movements beginning in the 15th century that defined the decline of European feudalism and the ascendance of the industrial revolution, urbia and conflicting relations of industrial production have been at the core of modernity's narrative.

Based upon a structural commonality of requiring resources and labour to fulfil its drive to growth, industrialisation is compelled to be expansionist. This logic finds itself justified in a variety of ideological ways. Essentially these are located around the interface between two main axes; inclusion and exclusion; and

authoritarianism and individualism. The recognition of this interplay of variables led to a host of social contract theory. Typifying the ends of the philosophical spectrum were the visions offered by John Locke and Thomas Hobbes. Locke's perspective was essentially optimistic, located in a positive idea of humanity as inherently disposed toward the common good. Locke thought that the laws of reason guide most people and that society ensured the fulfilment of natural human rights. Consequently the benefits of civilised living could only occur from social cooperation. Government was therefore consensual and necessarily minimal (Locke 1960). Hobbes, by contrast was pessimistic, believing that human beings were fundamentally selfish and acted without regard to the consequences for others. According to Hobbes, the state of nature is typified by war of all against themselves by whatever means. In such a state, Hobbes maintains, life would be "solitary, poor, nasty, brutish and short" (Hobbes 1950). The political solution for Hobbes is that people compromise their liberty by submitting to an all-powerful sovereign who could guarantee peace, without which it is impossible to enjoy a good life.

This duality underpins the bulk of all considerations of industrial modernity and the hegemonies that compete within it. According to Kees Van Der Pijl in *Transnational Classes and International Relations* (1998), the rise of capitalism gave birth to the "Lockean Heartland" of the international system located in the expansion of British power based upon the promotion of strong transnational bourgeois interests. This favoured imperialism through private enterprise to overcome Britain's internal difficulties (Van Der Pijl 1998: p85). In opposition to this were the states that favoured development through bureaucratic means. Being incapable of competing as freely with those of the Lockean bloc they could not institute more liberal systems domestically. These states were more authoritarian, "Hobbesian" than their bourgeois counterparts (Van Der Pijl 1998: p86). The history of the expansion of industrialisation, according to Van Der Pijl has been tied to these conflicting perspectives.

Beginning in the 19th century early market capitalism, through to the mid 20th century mature early monopoly capitalism, the contradictions of industrial-modernity developed three main competitive ideological-hegemonic forms that in one way or another continue this legacy and still form the basis of urban-industrial sociality. These Hobbesian and Lockean values form the basis of their power and contestation and their intersection inevitably results in conflict. Culminating in World War II, these were: the exclusive, inwardly directed nationalized state-crony industrialisation of Fascism typified by Nazi Germany; the inclusive, socialist internationalism of Soviet state-industrialism; and the cosmopolitan capitalist industrialisation led by the USA. On closer scrutiny each of these epistemes contains a number of tensions and contradictions between the way they related to their internality and externality, for instance between containment and expansion; inclusion and exclusion; inward looking and catholic; insular and cosmopolitan; nationalist and globalist; or bounded and unbounded.

Nazi Germany's defeat saw the decline of the overt form of the fascist tendency and the normative and material realignment of international relations to accommodate the remaining two epistemes in the form of the super-power conflict between the USSR and USA known as the Cold War. This conflict overwrote much of the last half of the 20th century and swept up most of the world in the process. Considerable portions of the globe were embroiled in the proxy wars of engagement between these dominant industrial narratives. While warfare defined the encounter at its point of intersection, industrial development and urbanisation dictated its modal construction, whose cosmetic differences failed to hide their similarities and common ontology in a Eurocentric narrative of modernity and spatiality.

Left in the wake of this conflict, there was also a "Third World", the scree of Europe's colonial-industrial history, made up of the under-developed newly independent post-colonies who sought desperately to remain non-aligned to the conflict between the two super-powers (discussed in Chapter Four below). These

nations floundered about in their attempts to develop narratives of modernity autonomous from the Eurocentric master-form. But for all their attempts to independently colour their trajectories, in one way or another they inevitably replicated in whole, part or combination, the epistemology dictated by the industrial modality. Today in a post Soviet Union globalised neo-liberal market-economy the relations of industrial production have again been restructured. Most obviously, the globe is no longer overtly divided into three different ideological worlds, instead it has become split between two poles of industrial development reproducing the aftermath and outcome of the prior epistemic conflicts: North and South, reflecting development and under-development respectively (Escobar 1995; Pieterse 2004). While the history of industrial modernity has played itself out according to differing narratives, these have concealed a similar structural-spatiality: industrial urbanisation. Modernity in all its forms is consistently and integrally tied to the city. The city is the nexus of its industrial modality, which has reached its apotheosis in the triumph of the market-economy.

- **"Urban Growth Optimism" and the Neo-liberal Agenda.**

> "...by converting the little farmers into a body of men who must work for others, more labour is produced, it is an advantage which the nation should wish for... the produce being the greater when their joint labours are employed... there will be a surplus for manufactures and by this means manufactures, one of the mines of the nation, will increase in proportion to the quantity... produced." (Dr Price in Marx 1954: p680)

This was how in 1887, Karl Marx cited an enthusiastic Dr Price, who fired up by Adam Smith's labour theory of value, praised the 18th Century Enclosure movement in England. It bears an obvious resemblance to and prefigures the arguments posited by many development practitioners and researchers today. The coincidence reflects their mutual location in classical liberal economics. A common view espoused in these circles is that the main reason for the rapid shift from rural to urban areas is that most of the growth in economic activities has been in industry and services located in the urban areas (Mitlin et al 2004). In other words, urban areas are attractive because they are the dominant sites of

production and this productive logic generates sufficient surplus to support a greater population than otherwise. Garau and Sclar in a paper for the UN Millennium Project sum it up as such, "Urban centres provide considerable social, economic and political opportunities for poor people..." (Garau and Sclar 2002: p8). In this thesis this view, essentially reflecting a Lockean vision of the world, will be termed the "urban growth optimist" paradigm. It is both consistent with and validates the dominant neo-liberal global hegemony. It also includes what Goodman and others have termed the liberal-internationalist or "globalist adaptation" perspectives (Goodman 2002). In part this paradigm reflects optimism in modernity itself as well as an enduring belief in Adam Smith's assumptions that the specialisation of labour and allocation of resources will provide surplus, expressed in terms of human geography.

This view is supported by a World Bank observation that most low-income and all middle-income states derive more than half the value added in GDP from industry and services located in urban areas, while less than 20% comes from agriculture (World Bank 2002). The norm associated with this view is that the nations with the fastest economic growth are those with the largest increase in urbanisation (UNCHS 1996; Satterthwaite 2002), implying by corollary that increased urbanisation produces economic growth. While promoting this common vision, the optimist camp does debate the way in which it may unfold. This can be viewed as an intra-hegemonic dispute between various levels of faith in liberal democratic practice. On one side there are those directly attached to its core ideological enterprises like the IMF and World Bank who advocate a "hands off" approach to development, premised upon the rationality that the deepening of the market-economy in conjunction with urban growth will automatically lead to economic growth. On the other side is a bevy of development agencies, actors and social movements, such as the Ford Foundation, UN-Habitat and the International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED) who feel that for all the possibilities offered by urban and economic growth, an interventionist approach is required in order to facilitate its better distribution to the most needy.

Unifying these "optimistic" understandings of urban growth is the assumption that cities provide access to the bundle of possibilities offered by the now ubiquitous Eurocentric, Northern discourse of "modernity" and its "rational" representation of social and economic "progress" associated with liberal notions of "democracy" and "citizenship". According to this view, urbia constitute focal hubs where people can tap into a share of the ideological bundle of rights and opportunities that urban development theoretically presents, and where they can actively participate in processes of socio-economic and political change (DFID 2000; World Bank 2000; Garau and Sclar 2002). Underpinning this argument is the premise that people make a rational choice to move to urban centres where the opportunity to secure and improve their livelihoods through paid employment in both the formal and informal sector is greatest, and where a range of choices are open to them about how and where to live their lives. They stay in cities that continue to meet those needs. In many situations, the inability of families and individuals to improve their livelihoods in rural areas forces them to seek opportunities in cities (DFID 2000; World Bank 2000). Within this logic, poverty and slums are aberrations that can be resolved.

In order to capture the full sense of the urban growth logic and its hegemonic bias, it is worth quoting at length from the UK's Department For International Development's (DFID) paper, *Meeting The Challenge of Urban Poverty* (2000):

> "Urban areas create enormous employment opportunities for poor people, because they account for a disproportionately large share of national economic production. This is due to the fact that they allow increasing returns to land, labour and capital, and as a result, savings, investment and wealth become accumulated in cities. Businesses demand the availability of basic infrastructure at a reasonable cost - transport, water, building materials, energy - as well as complex information exchange systems, a skilled local labour force, and a wide range of service industries, including finance and banking to meet their transaction needs. With the increased ease of movement of goods, services, capital and information within and across national borders, manufacturing and service industries are placing an increasing premium on what cities can provide to meet their changing needs. Successful cities are those which can respond to these shifting challenges, provide strong public services, command and retain a

> skilled labour force, and overall, create a secure environment within which business can flourish...Towns and cities are well placed to provide access to a wide range of services at a relatively low cost. This means that greater numbers of people should benefit from improved health care, better education opportunities, drain clearance programmes and a wide range of services and products which support different labour markets, such as banking and shops...The very density of population provides opportunities, due to the economies of scale, for the wide scale provision of services to poor urban communities. In addition, People's livelihood strategies are dominated by the need for cash to meet their transaction costs (rent, food, utilities etc.) in a monetised urban economy. The opportunity to earn cash does, however, provide poor people with more choice in how they sustain and improve their livelihoods..." (DFID 2000: p4-5)

As the above passage indicates, urban growth optimists start from the premise that urban spaces offer opportunities to people. From this they make the tenuous generalisation that it is therefore good for all. This inference reveals their understanding of the urban in terms of neo-classical liberal economics: as the spatial reflection of the market, the urban will provide for all, provided it is unfettered by welfarism and encouraged by private development. It becomes apparent that the urban growth optimist view is established upon the positive reduction of the world to the neo-liberal cash nexus.

Consistent with this view, the current trend in urbanisation represents the global triumph of the Eurocentric master-narrative of rationalism, progress and modernity (Ohmae 1990, 1995; Perlmutter 1991). Global market forces are seen as acting over and outside the human domain and control. For neo-liberals the imperatives of globalisation are seen as irresistible and inevitable, almost natural forces (Ohmae 1990, 1995). Participating in and adapting to the urban-cash process and "the modern" is thus the only rational option available. In this sense the urban becomes the requisite terrain for allowing the fulfilment of Adam Smith's "invisible hand of the market". Accordingly, urbanisation will ultimately be beneficial to everyone and all problems will be solved when the underlying dynamic of rationalism-modernity-progress is fully complied with: citizenship extended to all, civil-society made totally inclusive and democracy "deepened" through full social diffusion and participation. In this paradigm no genuine

accommodation for alternatives to the market economy exist, because it is presumed that everything can be fulfilled within it.

In this way, participation legitimises hegemonic institutions and normalises current neo-liberal practice. Contestation is therefore not revolutionary or in any way paradigmatically transformative but adaptive and persuasive, located in a particular paternalistic episteme of rational and informed debate (O'Brien 2000). These NGO's, lobby groups and social movements are broadly reformist, attempting to ameliorate existing globalising institutions and practices. As Goodman observes:

> "The demand is typically for greater institutional accountability and the formation of goals that address popular priorities rather than elite interests. This involves a focus on weakly legitimated intergovernmentalism, with social movements exploiting political opportunities to widen participation and reorient institutional goals. This approach is popularised most enthusiastically by dominant Northern INGO's that integrate cosmopolitan values with a relatively privileged worldview, allowing for a critical accommodation with dominant sources of institutional power." (Goodman 2002: p216)

This position legitimates the conception of an emerging cosmopolitan "global civil society" (Norris in Nye 2000; Walzer 1995; Kaldor in Held 2000; Mathews in Held 2000) reliant upon consensus formation as a regulatory framework (Van Der Pijl 1998), whereby problems are shared by "stakeholders" (SPARC 2003) with political elites through a system of critical engagement and participation.

With respect to trends in urbanisation, it is argued that as global civil society is widened and developing nations are assisted by transnational institutions, the associated deepening of cosmopolitan democracy will see the steady and incremental trickle down of development to the slums. In order to facilitate this deepening of democracy, alliances between transnational institutions and social movements are crucial for seeding "power from below" (Appadurai 2000). Transnational NGO's and social movements representing the urban poor are persuaded to seek a deepened globalism, whereby cosmopolitan affiliations are asserted over national or local agendas, civil society is legitimised against state

power and inter-state governance is privileged over state governance. Consistent throughout is the appropriation of this kind of cosmopolitanism by elite interests, and the strengthening of the Northern narrative through the marginalisation of alternative ideologies.

The globalist adaptation model of contestation clearly implies a cosmopolitan form of democracy in which national representative liberal democracy is extended into trans-national contexts through, for instance, democratised intergovernmental organisations grounded in transnational norms. This democratisation is promoted by NGO's complicit with the prevailing hegemony. These politicise transnational power sources and force the creation of new forms of accountability and levels of representation beyond the state, thus extending the national level of democracy upwards. Community based organisations (CBO's) and social movements representing slumdwellers are encouraged to explore these opportunities and resources, the hope being that in the process they democratise and widen participation amongst their constituencies. Urban contestation by slumdwellers is expected to lead to the emergence of accountable and transparent institutions (SAHPF 2003). In this way the potentially restive populations of the slums are transformed and civilised. By participating in the institutional processes dictated by hegemony, they are shaped by them, thereby fulfilling the liberal prerogative to extend civil society. As alliances between slum communities expand from national to transnational social movements the transnational institutional forms of hegemony are thus replicated from below, and the neo-liberal development agenda is totally diffused.

In this way, the agenda of the slums can be carried forward within established hegemony, without contesting this power itself. Social movements of slumdwellers are seen as vehicles for participation in the processes of public decision-making relating to urban development, mobilising political resources and exploiting political opportunities to achieve and deepen democracy (Kreisi 1995; McCarthy and Zald 1995). From this perspective, tackling the problem of slums is

not a paradigmatic issue rather it is a question of improving the diffusion of liberal-democratic practice and its associated market-economy. The emphasis in urban development is on "working with institutions rather against them" (SPARC 2000). The aim is to create a culture of consensus wherein the hegemonic episteme is replicated throughout. Communities of slumdwellers are persuaded to seek acceptance as stakeholders, to pursue problem situations through dialogue and consultation, and to act responsibly and promote a concept of global citizenship.

Rather than challenge the neo-liberal hegemony that might in fact perpetuate poverty and slums, contestation of urban development is thus incorporated into the very construction of hegemony itself. The logic behind deepening democracy in its neo-liberal form is programmatic to its continuance. In this form, it fails to address substantive power differentials. Thus the process of adapting global norms can leave dominant practices intact and be complicit with those practices, so that instead of substantially challenging the conditions that create slums, they in fact exacerbate them. The norm of possessive individualism disseminated through globalised consumerism may be shored up rather than challenged (Johnston and Goodman 2006) and as a result slums themselves become the sites of deepened exploitative and individualised sociality. This paradigm has shaped the dominant understanding of urbanisation. Its concept of development is located in a paternalism underwritten and supported by the UN, EU, the World Bank, progressive Northern government departments and most of the plethora of NGO's attending to the global crisis of urbanisation. While stating the obvious that urban spaces do offer opportunities to people, it neglects the negative corollary of the process of accumulation in a finite ecological system (which James O'Connor substantiates below): that in order for there to be winners there have to be losers.

- **"Urban Growth Pessimism" and the Failure of the Development**

The optimistic vision of urban growth and development is not unchallenged, a number of critics dispute this from a wide array of positions, from post-Marxists attached to defensive and nostalgic localities, as well as counter-hegemonic internationalist neo-Marxists, and even critical elements within the UN umbrella of initiatives (UNCHS 1996; Panos Institute 2000; UNDP 2003). Linking all these voices has been the realisation that urbanisation as a global phenomenon does not adhere to the neatly staged liberal discourse of development, economic growth and modernity offered by Eurocentric history. As Davis notes, the dynamics of Southern urbanization "both recapitulate and confound the precedents of nineteenth and early twentieth-century Europe and North America" (Davis 2004: p9). This spectrum of critics will be described as "urban growth pessimists", and while they might not fully endorse Hobbes' bleak vision, they are located in the world of realpolitik derivative of the Hobbesian paradigm. They provide a spectrum of debate over what they consider to be the failures of growth and development, ranging from those who view it as totally negative, to those who feel that the contradictions provide the opportunity for a positive dialectics to emerge. For many of the pessimists, poverty and slums represent both the inevitable outcome of capitalism's productive logic as well as the source of its transformation, through the emergence of new social forces from the dystopia. While not attempting to present a comprehensive overview of the entire field of criticism, some of those salient to the thesis are considered below.

A crucial criticism of modern urbanization has been Clifford Geertz's, seminal concept in 1963 of "involution". According to Geertz, the shift from rural areas as the store for population surplus (and the sustenance of their livelihoods) to the urban domain as the holding pen of this population (and their livelihood struggles), in a condition of economic scarcity produces "urban and agricultural involution" (Geertz 1963). For Geertz urban involution is:

> "an (urban) overdriving of an established form in such a way that it becomes rigid through an inward over-elaboration of detail... urban involution can be described as spiralling labour self-

> exploitation which continues, despite rapidly diminishing returns, as long as any return... is produced." (Geertz 1963: p 82)

In short, the magnitude and scale of population shift from rural to urban has overwhelmed cities' capacity to provide adequate livelihood to all citizens. Contrary to the model of urban growth equating economic growth that thereby produces a "better life for all," the actual result is the steady decline of living conditions for the majority of city inhabitants and the incapacity of the city to provide for them as promised. From this, one has to conclude that as urban growth exceeds urban production, urban involution is the final result. The burgeoning marginal working masses are thereby increasingly underemployed and trapped in a downward spiral of desperation to survive. The reality of urban growth means the complicit growth of urban poverty through involution. Inevitably, the spatial form that urban involution takes is the slum.

The idea of progress leading to scarcity is taken up by sociologist James O'Connor, who, pace the optimists that see growth as infinite and therefore capable of eventually resolving the current urban crisis, points out the obvious that the capitalist system is based upon the logic of ecological and social limits. O'Connor observes that contrary to the ideas of "urban-progress", the period both before and since World War II has been predicated upon a destructive model of economic growth:

> "based on the neglect of what Marx called the "conditions of production"– which are also the conditions of life and life itself– namely, a happy, a healthy, qualified, cultured population, liveable cities, a productive symbiosis between the urban and the rural, and the integrity of the complex ecosystems and ecotones that greens call the "environment"... By impairing or destroying the conditions of production– capital and the state have destroyed the conditions for life. " (O'Connor 2001: p3)

O'Connor uses what he terms the "fiscal crisis of the state" to reinvigorate a Marxist argument. Confronting the cliché of Adam Smith's market-provision, he states that the dynamic of accumulation is contradicted by a world of finite resources. The urban process as it stands becomes the site for this contradiction expressed in terms of a totalising destruction of human life and value:

> "Cities are more congested and polluted and drug and crime ridden and mean-spirited; the countryside is culturally "urbanised"; nature is redefined as "natural capital"; people are regarded as "human capital". Everywhere there is a spiritual emptiness, cultural decadence, "morbid forms of social life" (Gramsci)...bad social practices drive out good ones...This should come as no surprise. By its nature, capital is bad at preserving things, whether they be people, land, amenities, rural life or nature..." (O'Connor 2001: p3)

According to O'Connor, capitalist "progress" comes at a terrible cost: the commodification and consumption of nature and human life itself. For him it is this contradiction between the conditions of capitalist development and survival of nature that is now dominant (O'Connor 1998). O'Connor calls this the "second contradiction" of capitalism, the first being between capital and labour. While the first is primarily manifested in the realisation crisis, that is the problem of maintaining consumption levels while squeezing wages; the second is manifested in the form of a production crisis, where social and environmental exploitation for profits undermines the capacity for ecological renewal and social reproduction. O'Connor's argument raises significant possibilities in terms of sociality and resistance that will be taken up further in Chapter Two.

The totalising absorption and destruction of all alternatives by globalised capitalism that O'Connor reveals, is not a new phenomenon. As Wallerstein pointed out in 1974, right from the start the capitalist economy has been inherently a "world system", based upon colonialism's marginalisation and exploitation of peripheral countries and agriculture. According to Wallerstein, this overwriting colonial structure was and is the basis for what became known as "free trade" in the 18th and 19th centuries. Furthermore, Wallerstein felt that this urge to dominate was not just a temporary historical phenomenon, but due to its inner logic of permanent growth and accumulation, capitalism is compelled to strive toward universality and globalism (Wallerstein 1974). The result is, as Marx pointed out, that this system is structurally condemned to absorb all areas of the globe and life.

Capitalism in this sense is consistent with what Bob Jessop calls an "operational autonomous system" that has eclipsed its rivals and is now the dominant system within the "lifeworld". Because capitalism is:

> "...asymmetrically dependent on other systems and the lifeworld for key inputs and to help secure closure of the circuit of capital and for compensation for market failures...capitalism is "structurally coupled" to other systems and to the "lifeworld". (Jessop 2001: p7)

The urban landscape is consistent with, validates and is structurally coupled to the capitalist economy. In order to explain the sustained "ecological dominance" of capitalism, Jessop uses a biological simile to expose what he sees as the Darwinian logic concealed within capitalism's so-called bundle of ideological possibilities:

> "the idea of ecological dominance emerged in work on plant and animal ecosystems, where it refers to the capacity of one species to exert an overriding influence on others in a given ecological community..." (Jessop 2001: p4)

Urbanisation under globalised capitalism represents the reproduction of hermetic spatial and ideological realms, which contain the nexus of social relations and institutions that reproduce, regularise and govern the accumulation regime in favour of the capitalist class. In this way, capitalism subsumes the urban terrain in order to maintain its hegemony beyond a purely economic logic (Jessop 2001). Jessop's explanation resonates with Doreen Massey's urban and spatial nexus between stratification and accumulation (Massey 1994). Socio-spatial consumption is critical to the capitalist economy's continuance, and necessitated by its internal contradictions is its dialectical imperative. What is called "growth" or "progress" can be interpreted through this model as simply the consumption-accumulation practice beneficial only to the capitalist ruling classes and at the cost of other systems and to the "lifeworld" (Jessop 2001).

The theme of spatial re-ordering being necessarily inherent to the paradigm of accumulation as progress resonates with other critics. Harvey notes in *Spaces of Hope* (2000) that:

> "The accumulation of capital has always been a profoundly geographical affair. Without the possibilities inherent in geographical expansion, spatial reorganisation and uneven

> geographical development, capitalism would long ago have ceased to function as a political-economic system... Urbanisation concentrates productive forces as well as labour power in space, transforming scattered populations and decentralised systems of property rights into massive concentrations of political and economic power..." (Harvey 2000: p 23-25)

Urban spaces are indicative of the artifice of accumulation, denaturing humanity and forcing them to collude in the material logic of a singular economy. Rather than providing opportunities for all, denaturing humanity alienates them from alternative modes of production. As a result, urban populations become entirely captive to the urban productive logic. Urban spaces subsume alternatives and reify a false consciousness of "progress" which conceals inequality and injustice through its spatial re-ordering, what Harvey calls "spatial fixes" (Harvey 1996). While Harvey does not subscribe to a zero sum model and to some extent celebrates the urban as the site of mobilisation, he takes issue with the consumptive logic that underpins capitalisms spatial configurations. For Harvey, the hypocrisy of the liberal ideology and its capitalist discourse of "equality" and "the provision for all", comes to a head in the key mechanism (albeit contradictory practice) of re-ordering the urban into fortified enclaves that forcibly manufacture difference and facilitate the unequal distribution of wealth. This "urban apartheid" (Harvey 1996: p 409) is ubiquitous, and necessary to allow the flow of accumulation in specific directions. In one way or another for Harvey, this ideologically concealed system of enclosure, limitation of access and manipulation of space underpins the entire capitalist construction of the built environment.

Pieterse continues this idea of repressive spatial ordering tied to a restrictive containment of labour. He explores Harvey's "urban-apartheid" in the post September 11 world, drawing the conclusion that the younger George Bush regime's "War on Terror" is the obvious reproduction of this apartheid logic globally, in what he calls "Dixie-capitalism" (2004). This counter-revolutionary structural mechanism favours the plantation economics of "primitive accumulation," mercantilism and accumulation by conquest that Pieterse sees underlying the Bush agenda. Rather than easing the plight of the poor it

exacerbates the disjuncture between rich and poor. Pieterse sees that the urban logic has become the global logic: segregation and containment of the underclass, fortification and mobility of the ruling class underpin for him the global mechanism of capitalism and its hegemony.

Both Harvey and Pieterse echo Rosa Luxemburg's work on imperialism. Luxemburg explains why capitalism, contrary to Marx, requires "non-capitalistic classes", societies and milieu in order to start and maintain the "extended reproduction of capital" (Luxemburg 1951). According to Luxemburg, the destruction and overwriting of "non-capitalistic" traditional subsistence economies is not limited to the pre-history of early capitalism, it is the basic precondition for the ongoing accumulation of capital, what is generally called economic growth. Capital accumulation requires the constant exploitation of ever more non-capitalist milieu for the appropriation of more labour, more raw materials and more markets (Luxemburg 1951). These colonies continue to be necessary to keep the growth mechanism going. As Mies et al point out, "therefore we talk of the need for "ongoing primitive accumulation and colonisation" (Mies et al 1988: p15). As this hinterland becomes exhausted it has to be artificially constructed through deliberate impoverishment or military coercion.

These inconsistencies in urbanisation's production model fulfil for Mike Davis the role of spatial reconfiguration advantageous to capitalism's accumulative rationale. In *Planet of Slums* (2004) he observes that urbanization is not just inconsistent in its production (as the optimists would assume) but has in fact, throughout much of the underdeveloped world been radically decoupled from industrialisation, even from development per se (Davis 2004: p3). He acknowledges the arguments of others, presumably Castells, that the era of informational-capitalism or "silicon capitalism" has an inherent tendency to de-link the growth of production from that of employment, but notes that in much of the South other factors are at play:

> "in sub-Saharan Africa, Latin America, the Middle East and parts of Asia, urbanization-without-growth is more obviously the legacy of a global political conjuncture—the debt crisis of the late 1970s and subsequent IMF-led restructuring of Third World economies in the 1980s—than an iron law of advancing technology. Third World urbanization, moreover, continued its breakneck pace (3.8 per cent per annum from 1960–93) through the locust years of the 1980s and early 1990s in spite of falling real wages, soaring prices and skyrocketing urban unemployment." (Davis 2004: p3)

This perverse urban boom contradicts orthodox economic models that predict that the negative feedback of urban recession should diminish or even reverse migration from the countryside. Contrary to the "rational choice" argument of the optimists, people are migrating to urban areas despite the fact that no real opportunities exist for them. Exemplary of this is China's "floating population" of rural-urban migratory workers (Lau & Huang 2003), although it is African urbanisation that Davis finds particularly paradoxical:

> "How could cities in Côte d'Ivoire, Tanzania, Gabon and elsewhere—whose economies were contracting by 2 to 5 percent per year—still sustain population growth of 5 to 8 per cent per annum?" (Davis 2004: p4)

The solution to this conundrum for Davis lies within the SAPs package of fiscal compliance, marketisation and austerity measures introduced under the Washington Consensus through its organs the IMF and WTO. For critics like Davis, enforced policies of agricultural deregulation and "de-peasantisation" upon the South have accelerated the exodus of surplus rural labour to urban slums even as cities ceased to provide sufficient employment for the influx. Urban population growth in spite of stagnant or negative urban economic growth is exemplary of what Davis and others call "over-urbanization", and is one of a number of unanticipated ways in which the neo-liberal world order has manipulated millennial urbanization (Davis 2004).

The implications of over-urbanisation are consistent with Geertz's earlier understanding of involution. To validate his argument Davis makes use of some critical voices within the hegemonic apparatus, citing the UN-Habitat report *The Challenge of the Slums* (2003), as unusual in its "intellectual honesty". According

to Davis one of the researchers associated with the report admitted to him that:

> "the "Washington Consensus" types (World Bank, IMF, etc.) have always insisted on defining the problem of global slums not as a result of globalization and inequality but rather as a result of "bad governance"." (Davis 2004: p 11)

Confronting this denial, the report breaks with traditional UN circumspection and self-censorship to squarely indict neo-liberalism, especially the IMF's structural adjustment programs. The report states that:

> "The primary direction of both national and international interventions during the last twenty years has actually increased urban poverty and slums, increased exclusion and inequality, and weakened urban elites in their efforts to use cities as engines of growth." (UN-Habitat 2003:p6)

This surprising admission reflects a growing dissonance within hegemonic institutions. An increasing number of mainstream organisations are developing strong critiques of their own. It would appear that the Washington "Consensus" has deep divisions within its ranks. In fact, as Storey points out (2007), Fine et al (2001) argue that the Washington Consensus broke down years ago. This brings us to an intriguing conflict of discourse at the heart of neo-liberal ideological production. A number of bodies associated with the United Nations, such as UNICEF, UN Habitat and the clustering of voices associated with them have become steadily dissatisfied with the conventional explanations of urbanisation and its capacity to deliver. To some degree this can be explained by the pre- War on Terror quality of globalism which rhetorically at least complied with the juridical Empire of Jeffersonian norms associated with the simultaneous spread of "democracy" and the market-economy as described by Hardt and Negri (2000).

Typifying this was the *Habitat Agenda* or *Istanbul Declaration* that emerged from Habitat II in 1996, which tied 171 governments to a UN plan of action that seeks two goals: "Adequate Shelter for All" and "Sustainable Human Settlements Development." Implicit in this declaration is an internal hegemonic critique of the Washington Consensus structural adjustment regime. In adopting this agenda the member states of the UN committed themselves at least on paper to the

recognition of the failure of both the market and development to deliver the professed benefits of progress. In response they committed to producing a model of urban governance that did not dismiss but was responsive to the needs of the poor and marginalised within cities. Essentially they sought through recognising the slums to implement processes to reform them. By creating guidelines to their participation in slums, such as endorsing the principles of enablement and participation emphasising a strong commitment to gender equality, these agencies could use their power in relation to this recognition to mediating slums to suit their broader agenda to extend civil society and citizenship. The *Habitat* document also committed the signatories to the creation of partnerships with grassroots organisations. In all these commitments it acknowledges in significant manner the failure of the orthodox models of development and a realisation of the ineluctable disconnection between urban growth and economic benefits for all. In this way the UN endorsed alternative development but not any alternative to development. It simply broadened its range of development products to accommodate what should be called complementary development.

Unifying the critics is the realisation of the unavoidable shift from relations of production attached to autonomous economic systems such as those of subsistence-based vernacular agrarian societies (or any other hermetic economy somewhat distanced from the global marketplace), to the urban-cash nexus. This reflects the steady and totalising effect of a Eurocentric (now Northern) ideology of "modernity-rationalism-progress" that has reached its apotheosis in the globalised neo-liberal market-economy. According to these authors, the de-linking of humanity from any real alternatives to development has allowed capitalism to continue despite its contradictions. Through manipulation of the ideological package associated with modernity such as the discourse of rights, equality of opportunity etc. capitalism's protagonists can justify the subsumption of alternatives to its accumulation regime and sublimate its contradictions, despite the folly of pursuing the "insane logic" (O'Connor 2001) of unlimited growth and consumption. At the same time, involution (Geertz 1963) through

over-urbanisation satisfies capitalism's need for a captive subaltern and surplus population to provide a permanent reserve army for its sustained reproduction.

This has created a binary of mobility and confinement favourable to the needs of capitalism. On one side, orchestrated by the Washington Consensus (Jessop 2001) through what is popularly termed, "globalism", capitalism has overcome its earlier national-economic restraints, superseding much of state sovereignty and been allowed to flow freely around the world. On the other side, the surplus urban populations are prohibited such liberty by increasing scarcity of tenure and containment (Harvey 1996; 2000), and now intensified repression and restrictions on movement generated by post-September 11 security clampdowns (Pieterse 2003). Contained within the "War on Terror" rhetoric is the implicit threat that the free flow of humanity means the free flow of terrorists, a corollary of which is the deepened surveillance of the urban poor. Refugees and economic migrants find their flight apprehended by a legal curtain of homeland security protocol, which prohibit their movement. Both internal and external migrations are affected by this policy of confinement. Whereas in earlier periods the worker with nothing to sell but their labour was portrayed as free as a "wandervógel" (Marx 1978) or as a "propertyless proletarian, formerly chained to the land, liberated from all traditional fetters, a *free outlaw...*" (Engels 1950: p 511) free to drift in search of work and as such possessing the "sole condition... under which the exploitation of capitalist production can be overthrown" (Engels 1950: p 511), this liberty has now been withdrawn. It is the exploitation of the differential between labour's enclosure and capital's fluidity that underpins the current era of capitalism's relations of production and its ability to maintain profitability despite contradictions and limitations of ecology and resources.

There is an obvious echo in the current rural-urban pattern of urbanisation with the consequences of the European enclosure movements from the 15th Century and which laid the foundation for the capitalist mode of production (Marx 1954: p 672). In many ways the arguments for and against urbanisation recapitulate this

historic debate. However, one crucial factor in the subsequent development of the European model is missing today: the capacity to transfer and thereby sublimate the contradictions of the domestic crisis to an exterior. Colonies, initially as "frontier capitalism" and in its wake, "Dixie capitalism" and finally as autonomous developing nodes of industrial capitalism, provided this externality. Today of course there is no externality to export one's urban population surplus to, plunder resources from, and in turn generate economic surplus: under the globalised market-economy there is no longer an outside. All is inside: there is nowhere to displace the crisis of the Smithian discourse of "perpetual growth". Nature is irremediably ecologically undermined (O'Connor) and spatially speaking, terra nullius no longer exists. There is instead a paradigm of ubiquitous scarcity (explored more closely in Chapter Two). As a result, capitalist practice is being forced to confront its internal contradictions as it no longer has a frontier it can only turn inward. In so doing, these relations become increasingly autophagic, rolling-back the associated rhetoric of egalitarianism and instead precipitating internal differences.

This internal spatial displacement of contradiction has a sinister precedent: apartheid South Africa. This regime, in order to approximate the European discourse of development, sought to replicate the principles of colonialism by creating an internalised "external", a totalising system of differentiation both in terms of labour, resources and geography in order to facsimile the conditions of colonialism. In so doing it achieved what numerous anti-apartheid writers have described as a "colonialism of a special type" (African Communist 1973; Bond 2005; Alexander 1996). It is the contention of this thesis that there are direct parallels and structural similarities of this parochial neo-platonic fascism with the current world order of global capitalism. This link will be explained in greater detail in Chapter Two.

D. Contesting Urbanisation under Neo-Liberal Hegemony

There are two modes of contention to the dominant neo-liberal model development. One of these is located within the realm of localised exclusivity and the other in inclusive, cosmopolitan social democracy. Both of these positions are situated in a pessimistic vision of neo-liberal globalisation and its implications for urban development.

- **Exclusive local agendas**

As witnessed by the repeated eruption of divisive hostilities amongst ethnicities, religions and races etc. there is a recurrent sub-strand of human sociality within industrialising society that views engagement and intersection with others as jeopardising their integrity and material existence. The globalised culture of the neo-liberal enterprise represents a direct threat to their local hegemony and they articulate, in response, a localist confrontation (Goodman 2002). In contrast to the cosmopolitan, globalist adaptation of the liberal-internationalists, some critics, communities and social movements react to the emergence of transnational power sources by marking out and constructing local communal or national autonomies.

In terms of urban development, these collective actions are driven by rationale of localist confrontation that contrasts with globalised capitalism's cosmopolitan project (SDIa 2005). Rather than engage or seek accommodation within the neo-liberal narrative, these groups reject it. They may in fact explicitly define themselves against cosmopolitan norms. These localist confrontations can be seen as challenging what is seen as an overarching dynamic of cultural and material domination under neo-liberal globalism, expressed in urbanisation. Forms of urban autonomy are seen as ends in themselves. In this way certain urban communities might close ranks against development outside their immediate demands. On one end are the gated exclusive communities of urban elites, and on the other are the defensive insularities of certain ghettos, squatter-camps or housing estates.

Central to this tendency is the role of specific history, culture and identity in the logic of collective action in articulating urban demands. Outside the slums and ghettos, this resonates with the new social movements approach expressed by post-Marxists who claim capitalist industrial society and its class-driven dynamic is passing into history (Cohen 1985). For the privileged in urbia, issues of material safety and security, cloaked in cultural and aesthetic terms, replace overt structural conflicts. In this context, demands for cultural democracy replace demands for social democracy (Touraine 1977; 1995). Within the slums, localism is expressed in the ghetto "us-against-them" mindset historically linked to fascist hegemony. In this case, external bigotry is reified within often at cross purposes with long-term developmental perspectives. Instead of unifying against the commonality of dispossession, the involution of urban reality pits communities against each other in bitter, often bloody conflict over limited resources.

Across the scale of wealth and dispossession, community organisations and urban social movements subscribing to this approach emphasise local norms and cultural practices. They come to value self-reliance in self-contained urban communities that become carriers of their specific counter-culture. They are generally nostalgic and divisive. Their engagement with the exterior is conflictual and predatory. They define democratisation not in terms of constructing transnational linkages but through strengthening locally centred institutions that are grounded in day-to-day practices. Their local focus is often sub-national and reflects a frustration with limitations of state democratic structures. Their impulse is to de-link their community from the world at large and hermetically enclose themselves.

- **Transnational Resistance to Urbanisation**

In contrast to the proto-fascist localist responses to globalised development, there are perspectives contesting current relations of urbanisation located in historical and dialectical-materialist discourse. Ranging from orthodox Marxists,

neo-Marxists and various form of materialist anarchism, these perspectives emphasise material relations of power, observing that late modern industrial capitalist society remains class divided and their historical development is primarily driven by class conflict. Urbanisation mirrors the class relations of a specific temporality and location. Systemic and hence spatial changes are driven by the contradictions and conflicts created by the particular modes of accumulation. This dialectical reading sees the world capitalist system locked into a constant battle with a range of anti-systemic movements with specific modes of resistance shaping the capacity to accumulate and direction of change.

Accordingly, critics, communities and social movements subscribing to this view assert that there is a common underlying class dynamic that drives and shapes resistance. While each locality has a specific logic of accumulation and hence urban spatiality, the general diffusion of neo-liberal capitalism as a totalising global hegemony singularises the form of oppression and thereby simplifies the contradiction, facilitating greater congruence in forms of resistance. Globalised capitalism has overwritten the sovereign bounds of the Westphalian system, threatening post-colonial states with a form of recolonisation and in the process undermining popular democracy in post-imperial contexts. Irrespective of whether the source of domination is local or global this provides the possibility for counter-hegemonic forces to coalesce in common cause. Movements of this sort focus upon bringing together relatively autonomous constituencies into "coalitions of the dispossessed", what Goodman describes as, "creating rainbow alliances on a common perception of domination" (Goodman 2002: p224). These perspectives use the possibilities of globalised flows to develop resistance strategies. In this way, autonomy and trans-nationalism are not seen as in opposition but as complementary. Correspondingly they seek to mobilise across national divides, bridging differences and reinvigorating the "International" form of solidarity.

While the contradiction of the current world order has been simplified by a singular dominant hegemony, there are, as seen in the previous section, still strong forces that resist this international coalition of resistance. The master narrative of globalism clearly overwrites differences and integrates discrete localities, spatiality and societies. Additionally, this homogeneity of oppression allows the emergence of transnational norms and institutions carried by transnational classes. However, its impact is also felt in the form of sharpened divides between localities and peoples. The tendency to local confrontation is very often an immediate objective necessity wherein a precondition of survival is to defend and extend autonomy. This tension between localism and trans-nationalism elicits the question of consciousness and mobilisation. The common experiences of urban dispossession, disempowerment and poverty under globalised capitalism produce the conditions for common consciousness and action. As Goodman points out, "a shared experience of the processes and causes of exclusion may provide a powerful basis for common response across otherwise unrelated and autonomous movements" (Goodman 2002: p226). Transnational movements of the urban poor are able to bring together locally-based demands and transnationally-defined norms and forms of organisation. This allows them to significantly gear up their counter-hegemonic resistance and make their demands felt across the world stage.

Slumdwellers who conspire in this fashion are able to utilise aspects of globalisation's flows to their advantage, in a sense turning one of the weapons of their oppression against their oppressors. Reflecting this, urban social movements that utilise a materialist discourse locate themselves loosely between globalism and localism, strategically positioning them to capture the possibilities of both points. However, to be truly effective they agree that counter-hegemony must be transnational in capacity. Some urban activists like Joel Bolnick of Shack/slum Dwellers International (SDI) insist on the necessity for movements to range across the levels of international politics, flowing from the local and national to global contexts to match the global reach of material domination.

Through this multi-scalar "internationalisation", urban poor movements become more closely articulated, with the common intent to constitute a counter-hegemonic bloc with the capacity to generate the necessary "paradigmatic transition" into the new global order (Sousa-Santos 1995; Arrighi 1989).

Despite globalisation's reach though, urbanisation is still controlled on the whole by national and local authorities. These powers can be particularly vulnerable to coalitions that mobilise across North-South divides to politicise the economic activities of states. State authorities are also vulnerable through their labouring electorate. State's economies are constantly required to adjust to electoral demands, and these can be highly unstable and vulnerable to transnational campaigns that exploit the gap between state democratic claims and actual practice. In direct parallel to consumer power over corporations, voting may be emerging as the new weak link in the circuit of capital. Urban electorates become significant nodes of power, which considering the data, implies that the urban poor, the slumdwellers, are steadily becoming the democratic majority. Poverty in this sense becomes a political tool, and slums a key site of power.

Recognising the politics of visibility offered by global media as a tool of mobilisation and conscientisation, a number of movements have coalesced to confront international agencies of neo-liberalism such as the World Trade Organisation (WTO), World Economic Forum (WEF), IMF, and the World Bank through the construction of alternative forums that shadow or mimic the meetings of these institutions such as the World Social Forum (WSF). Various urban movements use these broad coalitions of counter-hegemony to present their agendas and seek solidarity across the frontier of oppression. Practice and familiarity in these forms of protest build the confidence and capacity of the urban poor, allowing them to develop targeted political events such as the many lesser fora that SDI organises around specific slum issues (such as a sanitation forum and installation in the foyer of the UN building in New York). This leads for instance to the deliberate and strategic inclusion of urban organisations into

hegemonic institutions such as the World Urban Forum, effectively hijacking such institutions.

The key issue for those contesting urbanisation from a historical-materialist perspective is the ability to articulate contending social movement objectives across the local-global axis. As shown by the history of socialist internationalism, the complex process of managing potentially conflicting local perspectives is rendered less problematic by the logic of transnational class formation and domination. Urban contestation located in this paradigm focuses upon transnational coalition-building grounded in a sense of common purpose, where the common power source is located in the slumdweller's shared experiences of common subordination.

Conclusion

To recap: the overwhelming consequence of neo-liberal restructuring in the South has been the totalising process of integration into the cash nexus, overwriting both Southern vernacular relations of land production and agriculture as well as their domestic narratives of urban reproduction and production. This has created two main causes of poverty production. The first has been the rural-urban shift where adjustment and liberalisation has forced the unprecedented abandonment of the land and migration to cities. The second impulse has been the collapse of the domestic economy to sustain an urban workforce, linked to the shrinkage of the state as employer, supplier of services and welfare. These impulses have generated an impossible surplus population overwhelming domestic capacity for labour absorption. Contrary to the classical economic model, predicated upon notions of perpetual growth, the urban growth explosion has failed to deliver commensurate economic growth. In fact exactly the opposite has occurred: urban growth has been matched by increased poverty and economic scarcity, in effect manufacturing a surplus population. The inevitable conclusion arises that growth has become de-linked from development.

While the Neo-liberal dispensation has resulted in the rise of a few highly affluent groups within Southern states, as well as the improved extraction of profits for foreign multi-national corporations, restructuring has also given rise to the growth of a ubiquitous marginalised and deinstitutionalised subaltern in Southern cities. As the UN-Habitat 2003 report concludes:

> "instead of being a focus for growth and prosperity, the cities have become a dumping ground for a surplus population working in unskilled, unprotected and low-wage informal service industries and trade...The rise of (this) informal sector is...a direct result of liberalization." (UNCHS 2003: p 46)

This situation is consistent with Geertz's definition of urban involution (Geertz 1963). As rural spaces no longer can provide "storage capacity" for surplus population, urban slums replace them. Urban involution replaces rural involution and slums become the holding sump for surplus labour. In the absence of alternative economies and livelihoods outside the global-urban cash nexus, the migrants face intensifying livelihood struggles within the urban terrain: downward spiralling of economic possibilities and increased self-exploitation, mutual hostility and competitiveness.

Thus the inclusion into the North's cash narrative ineluctably generates social exclusion, informalisation and a permanent, incremental subaltern: a surplus population, de-linked from the benefits of the Northern narrative, both in its economic and juridical forms, compelled to "livelihood struggles" sans the bundle of rights and civic benefits of "civil society" (Bayat 2000). This excluded urban surplus is rapidly becoming representative of the largest section of the global population. By 2050 it is anticipated in excess of 85% world's population will be urban and most of this will be slum (Wakely 2000). The future of the majority humanity lies in the globalised meta-slum.

The conclusion to be drawn from this is that the Northern narrative of "modernity–development–progress" fails to fulfil its egalitarian and democratic promise. The triumph of capitalism in the wake of the collapse of the USSR as the dominant mode of modernity's production has failed in extending "civil society", deepening

democracy and "citizenship" to all, in its rhetorical Jeffersonian embrace. Instead, it has only intensified difference and suffering, debunking the myth that growth equals development. The extreme and permanent inequalities that globalised capitalist practice have produced, seen in conjunction with climate change, irremediable ecological devastation and increasing scarcity, unequivocally indicate the unprecedented contradictions and crisis underpinning this mode of production. Slums, as the nexus of all these dystopic trajectories, represent the absolute form of the spatial and social contradictions of the capitalist economy: a hyper-dystopia. It is within this milieu as such, that capital's meta-dialectical antithesis can be found. Slums are the material terrain that produce and reproduce the subjectivity appropriate for seizing the historical moment. In a world of both manufactured and real scarcity, ecological jeopardy and climatological disaster, the conditions presented by the current and future contradictions of globalised, hyper-commodified capitalism construct slums as the advanced spatiality of revolutionary potential. The meta-slum, as hyper-dystopia reveals the conceit of capitalism's narrative and through this spatial revelation can provide the inalienable critical consciousness from which new subjectivities can arise.

Chapter Two - Class in the Era of Globalisation

Introduction

This chapter will refine the research agenda across lumpen slum-sites by examining the class problematic within this milieu. The class problematic can be posed as a question: how, under the globalised market economy, the Northern idea of a formalised, co-operative and incrementally empowered proletariat has been defused and replaced by a seemingly inexhaustible reservoir of weak, factionalised and disposable Southern labour whose potential for transformatory subjectivity seems dubious under orthodox conceptions of class agency?

Under scrutiny in section A of this chapter will be the modes and relations of global production and its creation of a new binary of class antagonism broadly defined in a geo-polar vernacular as "North and South". This binary constitutes on one hand the beneficiaries of the market economy located in the metropoles of advanced industrial society and on the other a heterogeneous and pluralized industrial reserve army resident in the underdeveloped sectors of the globe. This simple binary will be counterposed by Trotsky's description of non-linear, uneven historical development. The interplay of complexity and the simple binary will be seen to be the root of the current class problematic. Drawing from authors such as Van Der Pijl, Pieterse and O'Connor, it would appear that historical material relations have seemingly retrograded to earlier, more exploitative conditions, reviving a model akin to buccaneer capitalism. Through its creation of new borders and frontiers, this modality is able to side-step the labour-capital crisis. The conjecture of this part of the chapter, is that the structural differences in terms of development and underdevelopment recapitulates in a globalised form the class segregation that defined South Africa's "apartheid capitalism". This is of course in profound contradiction to the normative tenets underpinning neo-liberalism.

The constitution and complexity of this now global apartheid will be explored showing that the interplay between juridical and material impulses produce a complex diffusion of this modality across the globe in multi-scalar expressions caught between various contradictions. These contradictions both jeopardise and constitute capitalism's hegemony, providing at once the differential in labour and resources that it requires to accumulate as well as provoking deep ideological and material crises. It is inferred that the absolute form of this apartheid is the global pluralisation and informalisation of its labour force. The key outcome of this has been that the social-spatial prism of the industrial workplace or factory floor has been deconstructed. In this way the informalised working class breaks the workplace configurations that historically produce co-operation and social cohesion, the fundamentals of class-consciousness and agency. This raises the question of how to reassert subjectivity?

We may adopt a critical but optimistic stance that such sublimation of capitalism's contradictions is surely temporary and simply symptomatic of the "uneven and combined" process of capitalism's development (Trotsky 1964). In actual fact the new slum formations should not be considered retrograde, but rather a fundamental step forward in so far as they provide sites for the social reproduction of the labouring classes and consequently its production of class-consciousness and agency. The proposition developed here is that while these apparently counter-revolutionary relations of production advantage capital in the short term, there is a catch in it, for although the workforce has been atomised in its workplace, it has also been reunited in its domestic realm. The slum is the now dominant point of social overlap and co-operation for informalised labour. In effect the slums provide the spatial equivalent of the factory floor (riddled with safety issues and social tension) but intensified through its domestic expression. Slums are currently the leading points of social aggregation and thereby offer the potential of the socialisation of co-operation. It is the suggestion of this chapter that it is from the hyper-dystopia of the meta-slum that a new subjectivity is due to arise.

Section B looks at the implications of this slum-based subjectivity, namely what class of people is generated within slums and their capacity for agency. This examination will reveal that the informalisation and desperation of the new labouring masses has redefined them into a problematic category, the much maligned class of the lumpenproletariat. To appreciate the implications of this, a basic archaeology of the term will be undertaken. This will reveal the pejorative archaic understanding of the word proletariat and its amelioration and reclamation by socialist writers of the 19th Century. The concept of the lumpenproletariat emerges from the discourse of these 19th Century commentators as a semantic catch-all for the proletariat's now excised negative qualities, such as informalisation, disorganisation, unruliness, immorality, and opportunism. Crucially, in this form the lumpenproletariat was deemed lacking in any structural power, particularly in the capacity to withdraw its labour. In this way the lumpenproletariat will be seen to be the negative discursive doppelganger to the reconstructed proletariat. The question raised is how collective agency can be catalysed and reconvened in this dismissed class? (Marx 1970)

The problem is explored by a number of alternative revolutionary discourses to Marxism and establishes contra orthodox models that the potential for agency in socio-economic transformation does lie in the ranks of the so-called "dangerous" class of slumdwellers. In doing so the intention will be to steer a path that avoids both the neo-liberal position as the initiator of modernisation and progress (Fukuyama 1989; Ohmae 1990, 1995; Perlmutter 1991; De Soto 2000), and those liberal globalist-urbanists who see the urban-metropole as the site of identity production and a reclaimed civil society (Sassen 1995; Appadurai 2000). Also, the analysis steers clear of orthodox detractors who celebrate globalisation as the diffusion of revolutionary rationality and claim that rural-urban migration brings about the steady increase in agency through proletarianisation (Hardt and Negri 2000; Castells 2000) within the burgeoning ranks of these working class

migrants. Against these positions, the key contention of this chapter is that the un-civil lumpenproletariat slumdweller, displaced in a much more radical sense as a global meta-industrial class, is itself the new bearer of transformative agency (Bolnick 1996; Salleh 1997; Burra 2003).

The suggestion put forward in section C, is that slums play a systemic role as the new hinterlands for cheap labour under increasingly apartheid capitalism. As a result, what can be crudely called the lumpenisation of the bulk of humanity through slums advances the stage of capitalist contradictions. The deepening crises of exhaustion confronting capitalism create vulnerabilities that are transforming the slums of the globe into sites of resistance. It will be shown that globalised poverty provides a new commons for the global poor. For the meta-class of slum-dwelling commoners the commonwealth of slums will be seen to embed and embody their residents, particularly women, with the subjectivity and agency necessary for social transformation. Establishing this premise will allow the thesis to move onto its next conjecture, explored in Chapter Three, that *transformatory praxis originating in the slums of the world is an appropriate* antagonist to globalised neo-liberal capitalism.

A. Geographies of Difference and Globalised Class-conflict

- **North and South as Class Antagonists**

In the current era of market globalisation, the categories of North and South reflect a crude class antagonism that establishes the "internationalisation" of the class struggle. This endorses what some observers (such as Hardt and Negri) have suggested is an increased homogenisation of class contradictions under globalised neo-liberalism's "empire". However, it must be emphasised that the making of this association is simply to establish the broad brush-strokes outlining the current world order. In doing so, the deep complexities of the real world of detail must not be forgotten or underestimated, for as will be seen later, it is this complexity that drives both capitalism and its adversaries.

Throughout much of the 20th century the contradictions of industrial-modernity expressed themselves in the interplay between Lockean and Hobbesian models (Van Der Pijl 1998) underpinning three dominant ideological and epistemological expressions: cosmopolitan expansionist capitalism, insular predatory fascism and cosmopolitan socialism. After World War II this triad of hegemonies was reduced to two main competitive forms, Soviet style state-industrialism and capitalist industrialisation led by the USA. The nationalist state-crony industrialisation of Fascism became a pariah narrative that nonetheless continued in various forms (usually politically disguised), in isolated pockets such as South Africa and ironically, Israel. There was also a “Third World” made up of the under-developed newly independent ex-colonies who sought desperately to remain non-aligned to the conflict between the two super-powers and who formalised this resolution at Bandung in 1955 (looked at in Chapter Four).

The dominant binary came to an end with the collapse of the Soviet Union, leaving an expansionist cosmopolitan capitalism triumphant. In the absence of an at least mythical proletarian republic (USSR) to act as an ideological counterweight and champion an alternative narrative of modernity and development, capitalist class interests have been provided the temporal and spatial opportunity to roll back concessions to labour and momentarily initiate what appears to be a counter-revolution to their benefit.

As a result, the relations of industrial production have again been reconfigured. In this case, the preceding Cold War binary of competing hegemonies and their ideologies has been replaced by a new binary reflecting the internal contradictions of an expanded and globalised capitalism. Most obviously, the globe is no longer divided into three different ideological worlds, instead it has become split between two poles of industrial development: North and South, reflecting development and under-development respectively (Escobar 1995; Pieterse 2004). In broad terms this nominally polar binary has many parallels to

the old colonial and later Cold War contours. The South roughly equates to the previous category of colonial territory that became the “less developed Third World” while the North corresponds to the colonial metropoles and the First and Second Worlds.

However, the totalising diffusion of globalism’s imperative means that North and South are no longer discrete spatial categories and overlap considerably. The intensification of capitalism’s contradictions, its globalised juridical discourse of democracy and the rights based ethic within which it conceals its market agenda, has led to an inevitable counter-flow of the South into the North and the North into the South. Both are capitalised and global North and South can be anywhere. As the tide of commodification and profit has risen, this diffusion manifests itself as Southern symptoms of underdevelopment re-emerging in the North, exemplified by the permanent endogenous underclass witnessed surfacing from the New Orleans disaster (Davis 2005), or as crypto-communities of illegal immigrants trapped in murky servitude in sweat-shops or sex-work. At the same time there has been a counter-flow of wealth into the South manifesting as Northern-style metropoles and hermetic pockets of affluence, typified by the efflorescence of gated, enclosed communities living in a localised apartheid sustained by private security and fortified architecture (Hardt and Negri 2000; Harvey 2000; Robins 2000; Hoogvelt 2001). Yet despite this diffusion the global North retains its geographic nominative primarily because that is where dominant power is still located. There is a valid reluctance to abandon the terminology as the binary still retains a spatial character in accord with its social character.

When stripped down structurally, North and South parallels what Marx and others simply called class. In the post-Marxist era, class discourse has been circumvented by recourse to geographical metaphors, yet for all its neutral spin, the North-South categorisation is still about defining insoluble historical-material antagonists. Class is a social relation defined by the mode of production, where the key issue is ownership and material power, as opposed to status and cultural

power. In the era of globalised capitalism, the independence, sovereignty and cultural autonomy of nation states has been brought into question (Hardt and Negri 2000). In the aftermath of the Cold War, class is re-emerging as the defining condition of the now globalised neo-liberal political economy.

Now that the interlude of state socialism is over and the nationalised expression of the industrial-ideological conflict has been defused, class-conflict appears to have returned to basics, manifested as a transnational contradiction between the owners of capital and those who toil for them. The significant difference to all preceding historical moments is that the diffusion of class exceeds previous conceptions of geography: the Third World has now also been subsumed into the contradictions of advanced capitalism, which of course are everywhere that the market is. Significantly, it would seem that class struggle has now become truly "international".

In this respect, the presumed counter-revolution should not be deemed an immutable capitalist utopia, for, in the current era of globalism a new and historically significant binary has been established. The historical material categories of class have re-emerged in a global sense, dividing the world into polar antagonists. Under globalisation, an increasingly similar class contradiction between expanding capital and the slums of exploitable labour is now the ubiquitous historical condition. However having said this, it needs to be emphasised that the sources of agency and leverage are complex and confounding. The spread of capitalism through the guise of development needs to be examined closely, particularly with respect to subsumption and sociality.

- **Uneven Development: Uneven Subsumption and Sociality**

In order to offset the simplicity of the North and South class binary described above, the following will explore the profound and complex inconsistencies that continue to define material and social reality at its infinite locations, and how these persistent differences collude with and add to the historical contradictions

of the moment and will continue to define the future. Despite some observations that production is becoming unified under globalised capitalism in a singular hegemony that some call "empire" (Castells 2000; Hardt and Negri 2000), it is obvious that the staged, linear progression, in which Marx envisaged class, has been undermined by the multitude of ways in which the industrial modality has actually flowed across the globe, encountering, overwriting and contradicting myriad local productivities and relations. Instead of the homogenous "world after its own image" (Marx 1950: p37) of the Communist Manifesto, the spread of capitalism as a historical process actually reproduces a multiplicity of unique patterns. Thus, pace Hardt and Negri, the spread of empire is not a smooth state, as Seth reminds us in his critique of their work:

> "it was one of Lenin's insights... that the expansion of Capital can occur without necessarily refashioning in its own image the new areas which it subordinates; that there can be uneven development in which a "formal" subsumption to capital is not accompanied by a "real" subsumption." (Seth 2001: p47)

To understand what Seth means, it is worthwhile heeding what Lenin's erstwhile collaborator, Trotsky, had to say on the matter. Trotsky paid particular attention to the complexity and unevenness of historical development, noting that:

> "Unevenness is the most general law of the historical process...the unevenness of historical development is in itself uneven." (Trotsky 1980: p5-15)

According to Trotsky capitalist development does not follow the same course in every circumstance owing to the very different sociological starting points of each location. Advanced capitalism impacts chaotically and uniquely upon each and every less developed area. The interaction between international conditions and locality upsets and defies linear conceptions of development, as Trotsky noted:

> "Savages throw away their bows and arrows for rifles at once without traveling the road which lay between those two weapons in the past" (Trotsky 1980: p5)

Nowhere has there been a single path to social development. This unevenness gives rise to "combined development", where a variety of forms express themselves simultaneously.

As a result, subsumption to capital is similarly uneven and varied. Development and consequently, subsumption, is erratic and inconsistently expressed. As Arrighi reminds us, "The disappearance of the second world does not mean that the third world has disappeared" (Arrighi 1999: p33). Thus while formally the bulk of the world subscribes to the imperatives of globalised capitalism, the real implications of its uneven and combined expression mean that subsumption is equally as complex and inconsistent.

Offering insight into the complexity of these implications Trotsky noted that combined development is relational across many levels (Trotsky 1980). It is not only differentiated, it is also interactive, consequential and intrinsic to the diffusion of the industrial modality (Rosenberg 2006). It refers to the sociological outcome of transnational capitalist pressures on the internal development of non-capitalist forms, specifically the sociological amalgam of capitalist and non-capitalist forms, which result from these pressures. Therefore the unevenness of development entails multiple inter-societal co-existences. These in turn give rise to a range of forms of communication, interaction, acculturation and sociality. In terms of social theory, the conditions of reproduction of any given society are not limited to the internal structures of social relations that predicated classical social theory. They include too, a plethora of socio-economic links to the rest of the world. Thus the world can be considered an uneven but continuous causal pattern without a discernable centre. This has profound consequences for sociality.

With causal imperatives already decentred and diffused across this terrain of difference, social development becomes increasingly causally interdependent, as Waltz notes, "everybody's strategy depends on everybody else's" (Waltz 1959: p201). This occurs across time and space, representing a multiple synthesis of history and geography. The constitution of any society is thus fundamentally tied to its interaction with other societies, as Trotsky observed:

> "in reality the national peculiarities...are not themselves in each case pre-interactive essences, but rather an original combination of the basic features of the world process" (Trotsky 1962:p23).

Causality, subsumption and sociality have an uneven and combined character made up of the same essential elements. What is unique in each case is the specific combination of features and influences.

The premise of unevenness recognises that the meta-identity of humanity as subject of the historical process, gattungswesen, is internally multiply differentiated. The inner causal structure of development as a historical phenomenon is intrinsically both uneven and combined. There are no uncaused events. Every aspect is subject to the influences of disruptive externalities. As Marx observed:

> "Society does not consist of individuals, but expresses the sum of interrelations, the relations within which these individuals stand" (Marx 1957: p67)

In this way, uneven development reproduces a diversity of unique patterns of combined development, whose political instability and international connectedness has fundamentally altered the social and geographical co-ordinates of revolutionary crisis and opportunity (Rosenberg 2006). This impacts deeply on the capacity of labour to socially constitute and reproduce itself as a class.

- **The Problem of Class under Globalism**

In reviewing the interplay between globalised meta-class struggle (North-South), and the myriad uneven local complexities that it operates across, it seems that the current class problematic reflects the tension between these points of analysis, that is, a shifting encounter between simplified global flows and complex, uneven local pressures. If this is so, then understanding this tension and differentiation is important, for it provides the productive modality both with its dynamics of continuance and contradiction. In comprehending this tension it is necessary to consider the prevailing material conditions underpinning the mode of production.

As noted earlier, industrialisation is predicated upon the logic of growth and mass production, requiring resources and labour to ensure its continuance. Yet it is obvious that the world does not contain infinite resources, and the contradiction between the insatiable appetite of the productive modality and limited resources must come to bear at some point. This entails introducing the notion of exhaustion into the industrial schemata. It is the conjecture of this thesis that slums reflect the human point of impact of exhaustion. The data in Chapter One reveals conclusively that the complexities and discrepancy in wealth and hence class are enormous. More than half the world's population live below the poverty line in a variety of states of development and assimilation, while in excess of 85% of the world's wealth is held by less than 15% of the global population (Pieterse 2004). Most of the world today, represented overwhelmingly by the South, is not engaged in expressive or creative work, or even basic wage-labour but in desperate livelihood struggles (Escobar 1995). The net consequence is the fact that the bulk of the current globalised labour force does not exist as a formal working class. This has fundamentally undermined the status of the established industrial proletariat, challenging their relevance and threatening them with redundancy or collusion with capital. This makes orthodox class analysis uncertain and difficult to apply. One thing that can be claimed with certainty is that at this moment in time a single ideological hegemony dominates the globe: neo-liberal capitalism.

In observing the development of capitalism, Kees Van Der Pijl notes that specific forms of capital accumulation have varying social effects that generate different forms of resistance. He sees at least three modes of accumulation, which he characterises as original, extensive and intensive modes. Each of these charts out a specific process of commodification and resistance (Van Der Pijl 1998):
The original mode of accumulation ruptures pre-existing social structures, usually through violent means in order to establish the priority of commodity exchange over non-commodified practices. It is this violence that elicits a dialectical

response to resist. In this case the "discipline" of capital over use values is resisted, as Van Der Pijl notes:

> "the very fact of being separated from ones more or less independent means of subsistence and the destruction of the entire life-world with which they are entwined, with its natural / traditional time-scales and rhythms, drives people to resistance" (Van Der Pijl 1998: p38).

The extensive or industrial accumulation is the imposition of the disciplines of commodification over labour power. It is this process that becomes the site of resistance, expressed primarily in the struggle over the distribution of the economic surplus. Conflicts are channelled into trade union cadres and are expressed as industrial militancy. This process of worker corporatisation is aimed at striking class compromises mainly through the state in the form of welfarism (Van Der Pijl 1998).

In its intensive mode, the discipline of capital begins to erode the very social and natural substratum on which this accumulation depends. The increased discipline of capital intensifies the effort of work required to cover most aspects of human life. This in turn threatens the wider processes of reproduction whether delivered through the household or through the state. Commodification is dramatically deepened, reducing all modes of being to the cash nexus, jeopardising social life and cultural existence. These pressures dovetail with the advancing ecological exhaustion as the discipline of capital further undermines the survival of the biosphere. In these circumstances where the necessary substratum of livelihood is whittled away resistance becomes a "struggle for survival" (Van Der Pijl 1998:p47). Consequently a host of conflicts emerge located in the exhaustion of this substratum that bring hegemony into question. Van Der Pijl astutely observes:

> "the atomisation inherent in commodification in this way is no longer compensated by socialisation and the state itself is losing credence as a source of social regeneration" (Van Der Pijl 1998: p4).

According to Van Der Pijl, the current world order of globalised capitalism coincides with what he calls the "exhaustion crises" generated by intensive modes of accumulation. All types of accumulation become patterned by the

overarching exhaustion crisis: resistance to original accumulation and resistance in the workplace are increasingly subsumed into wider struggles for survival. This crisis of survival created by intensive modes of accumulation is a global crisis that applies to all humanity and necessarily subsumes all other crises.

Much of Van Der Pijl's perspective resonates closely with James O'Connor. As noted earlier, O'Connor identified two contradictions of capitalism. The first being between capital and labour, which is primarily revealed in the realisation crisis, the problem of maintaining consumption levels while limiting wages. The second contradiction of capitalism O'Connor sees is currently dominant, and manifests in the form of a production crisis between the conditions of capitalist development and the survival of nature (O'Connor 1998). Here social and environmental exploitation for profits undermines the capacity for ecological renewal and social reproduction.

Again the central theme is exhaustion, and as is clear from the preceding chapter, this combined form of ecological and social exhaustion coincides with what Geertz defined as "involution" (Geertz 1969). Where the working class could be co-opted, divided or lulled by welfare into submission, the present and escalating exhaustion of humankind and of nature is exposing the foundations on which accumulation depends (Goodman 2003). This has fundamentally undermined the status of the industrial proletariat, challenging their capacity to respond and resist, so recasting them as part of a globalised surplus population.

The situation recapitulates for Pieterse many of the themes that Karl Polanyi had earlier raised in terms of the "first great transformation" (Polanyi 1957). As Pieterse comments:

> "Global inequality evokes what has been termed the "second great transformation", the transformation from national capitalism to global capitalism. Themes that ring familiar from the time of the first great transformation – the "social question", the "victims of progress", the divide between rich and poor are now amplified on a world scale." (Pieterse 2004: p62)

In O'Connor's view, the first contradiction was initially contained by welfarism but has now been circumvented by globalism flowing beyond the sites of industrial resistance. Repressing the realisation crisis by imposing a dependency and peripheralisation across the South has had the effect of globalising poverty (Chossudovsky 1997). It is this globalisation of poverty that has been holding the system in place and has abandoned the bulk of the world's population to lives of poverty as unconscious members of a surplus class of labour.

The absence of any New Deal in globalised neo-liberalism means that as capitalism penetrates the frontiers of under-developed regions, it is provided with the temporary opportunity for what a number of authors call "Dixiefication" (Applebome 1996; Cummings 1998; Pieterse 2004). In an unfortunate coincidence of geography, the economics of America's South (Dixie) is now considered as synchronous with the globalised South, based upon:

> "low wage, labour intensive, high exploitation production and hostility to unions... this Southern economics has its roots in the plantation economics with rural oligarchies and a low-cost workforce that performs manual labour – slaves, segregated blacks, rightless migrant workers... and illegal immigrants." (Pieterse 2004: p3)

This Southern economics has a resonance with the modes and relations of production of the late-medieval plantation economics of Britain and Spain as Lind describes:

> "What might be called "Southernomics" is based, like pre-industrial agrarian economics, on extensive development not intensive development."(Lind 1999: p81-2)

According to Lind the current world order (particularly since the rise of the younger George Bush) is the culmination of seventy years of counter-revolution against the New Deal exported to the world at large through the Washington Consensus (Lind 1999). Recapitulating Polanyi's idea of the first great transformation proceeding within a commoditisation and socialisation nexus (Polanyi 1957) this is an economy geared toward accessing unprotected resources and cheap surplus labour in a time of apparently increasing exhaustion, enclosing scarcity and capturing markets.

For Van Der Pijl, O'Connor, and Pieterse, globalisation has facilitated capitalism's capacity to side-step working class resistance by allowing capital to flow to sites of limited resistance. According to these authors, this temporary spatial regression to frontier capitalist relations has reduced the resistance of the developed form of industrial proletariat in the face of a global pre-industrial Southern mass.

- **Apartheid Capitalism**

As seen earlier, history has brought forward a new class binary defined in terms of geo-polar antagonism. No amount of liberal geo-speak can hide the fact that North and South are inextricably bound in a dialectical embrace. Under globalisation this North-South binary appears to confirm historical materialist expectations of the immanence of a working class "International". For authors such as Castells, Hardt and Negri et al, globalisation heralds the potential harbinger of capitalism's nemesis. At the same time it is apparent that the combined and uneven development described by Trotsky and Lenin mitigates the homogenisation of class. This asymmetry is most felt in the South, which has become an immanently tumultuous region that recreates an ubiquitous and unstable frontier allowing capitalism to temporally revert to more primitive and more profitable "frontier" modes of production. This concurs with what Pieterse, to repeat, calls "Dixie-Capitalism" (2004). When these perspectives are overlaid upon each other in a material world of finite resources and labour, they support the paradigm of exhaustion presented by O'Connor, Pieterse and Van Der Pijl et al. However these analyses do not shed enough light upon the current constitution of the labouring slumdwellers and closer scrutiny is required.

The intensification of crisis compels capitalism to resort to forceful means to attain its goals. With ecological exhaustion in the metropoles, capitalist incursions into non-commodified zones are driven by an increasingly desperate search for new resources, in what some have characterised as the "new resource wars" (Geddicks 1993). Capitalism is obliged to roll back its cosmopolitan vision as the

crisis of exhaustion increases and its recourse to coercion and enclave formation (expressed rhetorically as a clash of civilisations) is symptomatic of the heightened state of contradiction. The structural implications of this exhaustion have a direct impact upon ideology. The War on Terror has demonstrated that the juridical basis for capitalism located in a Jeffersonian system of values has been one of the victims of this deepening crisis.

While the initial aftermath of the Cold War seemed to suggest that globalism was superseding the nation-state, the exhaustion crisis has reversed this. As Meiksins Woods notes in her criticism of Hardt and Negri's Empire:

> "Capitalism relies on the State to create the conditions of accumulation and enforcement that capital cannot create for itself." (Meiksins Woods in Balakrishnan 2003: p80)

The nation state is once more a useful tool for narrow sectors of the capitalist class, particularly the ruling elite of the USA and its axis of allies, to create the geographical differences in labour and resources that its capital interests need to continue. In other words as the frontier possibilities provided by the first wave of post Soviet globalised capitalism dry up, nation states again become crucial for the continuation of profitability. Lenin and Trotsky's recognition of the plurality of historical material interaction, exceed capitalism's capacity to shape them unassisted by use of force. As Chakrabarty reminds us, Marx accepted:

> "that the total universe of pasts that capital encounters is larger than the sum of those in which are worked out the logical presupposition of Capital." (Chakrabarty in Seth 2001: p49)

Consequently:

> "difference continues to exist, although... (it) is not something external to capital. Nor is it something subsumed into Capital. It lives in intimate and plural relations to Capital, ranging from opposition to neutrality." (Seth 2001: p49)

Difference is therefore abundant and highlights the fact that rather than smoothing out the world of difference (pace Hardt and Negri), contemporary capitalism, just as it always has been; is simply superimposed upon the "universe of pasts" of uneven and combined development (Trotsky 1980) which abound, regardless of "Empire" or the market.

This plethora of nationalised and locally differentiated states of development provides the diversity of labour and resources that contemporary capitalism now requires to endure. To reiterate, as the exhaustion crisis deepens, capitalist practice can no longer proceed unassisted and has recourse to nationalistic, crypto-fascist paradigms to recreate the differences necessary for its continuance. The result is that the forces of capitalism in direct rejection of their cosmopolitan ideology, use the archaic conduits of the nation state and religion to deliberately encourage and manufacture difference. President George Walker Bush's program of "universalising democracy" in tandem with the "war on terror" reflects this normative crisis, containing patently contradictory ideological premises for the continuation of capitalism by reconvening national boundaries made porous by the end of the Cold War. This effectively prohibits flows of surplus populations in search of better markets to sell their labour. It can be said that a labile and unbounded capitalism requires variable and segregated labour to suit its mobile needs, which as structural contradictions rise, need to be forcibly insured. This policy of national labour containment and differentiation tied to a disproportionately small population of beneficiaries and underwritten by military force has a precedent: apartheid South Africa. It is this that leads me, together with others familiar with South Africa (Bolnick in SDIa 2003; Alexander 1996; Bond 2005), to suggest that the current world order should be deemed "Apartheid capitalism" using a global apartheid concept. In this way the globalised labouring population is understood in the plural and divisive manner that apartheid constructed its labour force. This has profound implications for the constitution of class and will provide an insight into slums as sites of agency.

The Apartheid model of diffused, manufactured and controlled segregation attached to a globalised market allows the North to manage its internal contradictions. In reconfiguring national boundaries capitalism forcibly contains labour and resources. By exporting its productive capacity to the geographic South with the threat of force ever immanent, it brings Harvey's (2000) "spatial fix" into play with ruthlessness typical of the capitalist modality under threat.

Harvey echoes and extends upon Lefebvre (1976) in saying that capitalism has survived the twentieth century only "by occupying space, by producing space" (Harvey 2000: p54). Repeating the familiar pattern, capitalism resorts to moving beyond the territorial confines of the contradiction and seeking resolution in the externality beyond its borders. Globalism for Harvey is a new phase of exactly this underlying process of the capitalist production of space. When this is tied to finite resources and the galvanising of transnational labour demands, cosmopolitanism is sacrificed, insularity reconfigured and global apartheid is cemented.

Symptomatic of this fascism, the move externalises and displaces costs outside the spatial "Norths" to inside the "Souths" making territoriality and exclusivity once again central to industrial production (Goodman 2005). At the same time, in their "separate but equal homelands" (to use apartheid terminology), that is, their post-colonial ghettos, the South can labour for the North. The ecological and economic devastation of their domains has reduced their productive peasantry and indigenous industry to simply a ubiquitous surplus population.

Relying implicitly on Marx's dismissal of the lumpenproletariat as a "dead and dangerous class", Fukuyama and the Rand Corporation's neo-liberal think tank could herald in the "End of History": an era of bourgeois utopia ala Hegel, which through its neo-liberal discourse can expediently ignore the dystopia of the South as "their democratic choice to be poor" (Bolnick 2004), whilst the labour so provided allows Northern capital to continue the state of attrition against and co-option of their working classes at home. Thus the South, in its nominally sovereign democratic states (homelands) can continue to toil both cheaply and in obscurity for Northern interests.

This apartheid is not limited simply to national borders: as a result of the flows and eddies of globalism it has diffused everywhere. Apartheid capitalism, like its constituent classes, North and South or capital and slum, is ubiquitous. Therefore

in its globalised form, apartheid capitalism parallels the complex North-South binary that through uneven and combined development plays out across a number of levels. One level is the nationalised spatial segregation offered by the geographic divisions of the developed North and South of under-developed states, a state of affairs that can be termed “macro-apartheid”. Another level is the domestic and internal “micro-apartheid” represented by the diffusion of intensified inequality within states themselves (the North within the South and vice-versa). Both these levels play upon the social and spatial tensions between global and local possibilities and limitations. The dominant capitalist interest groups and their proxies manipulate this interplay very effectively, using for instance at the macro scale, the rhetoric of the free-market and democracy to penetrate everywhere while closing off labour movements through discriminatory migration criteria and anti-terror legislation. At the same time, at the micro level, they advocate tougher laws on crime together with decreased welfare for the poor. Encapsulating the nexus, in all cases the capitalist process’s relentless assimilation of everything into its commodification regime is tied to increasing legislation limiting freedom and curtailing civil liberties, reifying xenophobia and social differentiation. This reconvened paradigm of insularity directly contradicts the cosmopolitan enterprise of globalisation, retarding the juridical and normative extension of liberal capitalism in favour of fascist crony-capitalism, where once again the state becomes simply the agent for class interests. In a sense, the crisis of exhaustion calls the bluff of capitalism and has exposed its Machiavellian workings.

Apartheid is juridical social difference and spatial segregation, imposed by force favouring minority capitalist interests. In its Verwoedian formulation the militarised oligarchy resists cosmopolitanism and economic dilution by advocating an enforced neo-Platonic segregated society, a multi-culturalism of hermetically enclosed labour units in constant competition with each other, ever divided, whose lack of escape from oppression fuels a lateral violence between groups and retards their universal resistance. Symptomatic of this aspect of

apartheid are amongst other things, firstly; Balkanisation at the local and regional level, the wide-ranging, pernicious spread of tribal, ethnic and internecine conflicts throughout the world fanned by opportunistic capitalism such as Rwanda, Bosnia and the expanded Middle-Eastern crisis; secondly, war at the global level, the so-called "War on Terror" in combination with draconian anti-terror laws, detention without trial, de facto torture and POW treatment which defies the Geneva Convention. Resonating with what Justin Rosenberg calls the "empire of civil society" (Rosenberg 2006), the totalising commodification of all human relations and the resultant heightened social inequality crystallises in spatial and ideological forms. Sites of wealth and slum deepen these "group areas" into persistent adversity and hostile insularity.

- **Apartheid Labour**

To recap, this dialectic produces an ever-present antagonist to both the Northern conceit of civilisation at the macro level and civil society-citizenship at the micro. The uncivil society so produced observably disavows the bundle of civic rights and duties and thereby relinquishes their right to these, justifiably becoming fair game for what politely can be called "productive cannibalism" of capitalist hegemony's use of force to repress and coerce these restive groups into expendable servitude. Global capitalist practice therefore, in complete contradiction of its professed humanitarian ethics (of "democracy" and "human rights"), has to manufacture separation and division, whether by war or famine, so as to exist. In order to sustain itself the ruling capitalist class increasingly not only reproduces, but actively produces difference and poverty in order to manufacture an abundant, expendable and divided labour force. This is achieved by creating an apartheid system of capital congealed in fortified nodes of civil society amidst a burgeoning landscape of war, terror, poverty and uncivil society, recapitulating at large the "colonialism of a special type" which sustained "European" hegemony in South Africa.

In short, globalised neo-liberal apartheid capitalism is progressively producing a hitherto unmatched surplus population or industrial reserve army contained broadly in a macro-apartheid of nation states. This strategy is very effective for ruling class interests, for it overcomes their greatest historic threat: the "International" of organised labour. At this level many factors contribute to the sustained separation of labour. From the fact that today, more so than any prior period, economic migration to developed countries is highly selective and prohibited to the bulk of the world's population. This enculturation of difference continues across all the scales of capitalism, right from the national level to the localised, internal micro-apartheid of slum communities within not only the South but also to even the hidden and dismissed ghettos in the developed nations.

It is in light of this multi-scalar complexity that we must consider the globalised labouring classes. They are apparently a deeply divided and heterogeneous multitude spanning a great diversity of labour forms, including women, work-for-the-dole labourers in decaying welfare states, illegal immigrants, sweatshop workers, pre-literate gatherer-hunters displaced by logging, oil prospecting or deforestation; traditional farmers and pastoralists forced off the land by drought, green revolution failure or evictions; to over-educated and now unemployed ex-Soviet citizens or disaffected hyper-literate Muslim youth marginalised by racial prejudice. What constitutes the meta-industrial labouring class is a highly pluralized and variable mass made up of a mosaic of discrete forms, acting in diverse ways to a variety of relations to capital.

In *Capital* (1978), Marx observed that:

> "When numerous labourers work together side by side, whether in one and the same process, or in different but connected processes, they are said to co-operate, or to work together in co-operation." (Marx 1978: p308)

Significantly, apartheid capitalism deliberately undermines the spontaneous social production of co-operation reproduced at the factory and workplace. At the macro-level global capital is allowed to constantly flow to the cheapest labour

resource zones, pitting the enclosed nationalised labour forces against each other. The dialectics of spatiality under globalism appear to work in favour of capitalist interests. The absence of permanent sites of production in a world of shifting capital flow seems to inhibit the creation of a formal proletariat and the corollary of working class-consciousness, while at the local level, the multitude of dynamics driving the mass production of slums again undermines the reproduction of co-operative labour.

Where historically labour came together to co-operate in work, now job scarcity under conditions of urban involution drives slumdwellers against each other in desperation. The broad mass of slumdwellers, the burgeoning majority of humanity occluded from the Northern gaze, has become their own enemy in the competition to provide labour. The national "proletariat" proper has been atomised and broken: they no longer co-operate but compete and the formal modes of production, which guaranteed some permanency no longer prevail, resulting in a constant state of impermanence and anomic desperation. Instead of a proletariat the reproduction of apartheid labour produces a surplus population, which share many of the characteristics of Marx's "dead and dangerous class" of lumpenproletariat. Any attempt to galvanise them into a universal class both in-itself and for-itself (Marx 1956) will have to take cognizance of this.

- **Slum as the Site of Co-operation**

The key to globalised apartheid capitalism is the informalisation of the working class. The labouring masses are fragmented in their quest for work, separating each day to toil independently and precariously. Yet because they are prohibited from residing at work (excluding the slum based sweat-shops) they return to their homes in densely congested slums to rest. Their only point of contact thus lies in the slums, the concentration camps of informal habitation where they live. The segregation of labour, its excision from the domestic spaces of formal "civil" society at once produces the workplace atomisation but produces too the co-

operation of living together. The point of current co-operation has shifted from the workplace to the places where the workers live, the slum. Outside the slum the surplus population are forced to compete, within they are obliged to co-operate. Any efforts to foster collectivity and class-consciousness will have to be directed to this area. Because slums are where their power resides, slumdweller praxis is necessarily directed toward the domestic realm of slum life and the everyday ingredients of slumdweller's livelihood struggles. The production of class-consciousness and agency is necessarily embedded in the daily lives of the dominant nexus of their discrete lives, the slum itself.

B. The Rise of a New Subjectivity

Clearly the hybridisation of space (Harvey 2000) and production generated by rural-urban migration, combined with intensification of livelihood struggles further antagonised by the failure of raised expectations (Gurr 1970) suggests intriguing possibilities for agency and subjectivity beyond the staged increments of orthodox development. As Bayat observes:

> "... the new global restructuring is reproducing subjectivities (marginalised and deinstitutionalised groups such as the unemployed, casual labour, street subsistence workers and street children), social space and thus terrain of political struggles that current theoretical perspectives cannot... account for. " (Bayat 2000: pp535-536)

This corresponds with Biel's account of globalism's production of "informalisation" (Biel 2000). Both Bayat and Biel echo the point that Barrington-Moore (1967) made that the history of modern revolution and class struggle has consistently defied the staged rules of orthodox Marxism. Rather than occurring as massed, co-ordinated uprisings of the urbanised industrial proletariat in keeping with the laws of historical materialism, generally the communist revolutions of the 20th Century have originated in rural rebellions and peasant wars of colonial resistance and national liberation (Fanon 1967; Amin in Polet et al 2004).

The forced migration of rural populations to the urban and the failure of the urban to provide for them reduce them to a surplus population, an uncivil society or

lumpenproletariat. This raises the implicit potential of Jacobin restiveness, the possibility that new revolts will come from the urban surplus population. Due to the coercion inflicted upon them, the rural migrants are not a passive movement but imbued with the potential for direct action. Furthermore, the global informal working class is almost one billion strong, "making it the fastest growing, and most unprecedented, social class on earth" (Davis 2004: p24).

As the crisis of exhaustion deepens, this class can only become greater. Corollary to this crisis are countless refugees of war generated, the increased reactionary crypto-fascist militancy of dominant capitalist nations and their proxies as well as the growing numbers of environmental refugees. When this numerical advantage and potential for restiveness is linked to the now systemic use of informalised labour, the question arises, can the slumdwellers become more than simply lumpen, can they become an active subject in the historical process?

- **Lumpenproletariat?**

Surplus population is not itself a new condition but rather the direct product of the contradictions of the logic of accumulation. At the heart of commodification is the extension of the realm of private property but here there is always a problem, as the limitations of finite resources leads to the exhaustion of non-commodified property. Accumulation requires control of resources and where resources are held in common, this necessitates a process of dispossession and expropriation. In early English capitalism the enclosures of the commons dispossessed the rural poor, driving them to the towns where they became the labour for the emerging factories. Susan George argues than today's "enclosure movement" has no use for the rural poor, only for the resources that provide the basis for their existence (George 1998). Global capitalism has no interest in the commoners, only their commonwealth. Having said this, the capitalist process does require the urban poor as its source of labour, so the relations of the social

production of the urban poor are similar to the time of the enclosures, only much greater in scale.

The exhaustion crisis is a product of class power and advancing commodification extends the power of property and affirms the subjection of the property less. This deprives them of the means of production, of livelihoods outside the capitalist economy, compelling them to servitude. Surplus population is a direct corollary of the process of accumulation. As Marx observed:

> "The relative surplus-population exists in every possible form. Every labourer belongs to it during the time when he is only partially employed or wholly unemployed... Not taking into account the great periodically recurrent forms that the changing phases of the industrial cycle impress on it...it always has three forms, the floating, the latent, the stagnant (lumpenproletariat)." (Marx 1975: p 600)

What is unique is its current scale and its points of origin: including firstly, the established historical poor and urban working classes; secondly, the ubiquitous, massive increment of this category drawn from both the degraded educated middle-class; and thirdly, the rural peasantry in the wake of the neo-liberal assumption of power and its imposition of Structural Adjustment Programs to globalise its market-economy agenda. The effect of globalised urban involution (Geertz 1963) has thus been to totalise the production of the last form of surplus population, the lumpenproletariat.

At the time, Marx dismissed this group as "dangerous" classes, "social scum" and "refuse of all classes" (Marx 1975: p600), who ranged from powerless orphans and street children; to obsolete elements, the aged and infirm who have "succumbed to their incapacity for adaptation"; and to criminal parasites such as beggars, thieves and prostitutes (Marx 1975: p602). In all cases it was assumed that the desperation of their milieu and their marginality made them politically ambiguous and incapable of collective agency and class subjectivity.

However, given that the current contradictions of capitalism, particularly the exhaustion crisis, has given rise to new forms of commodification, what

Goodman and others call "hyper-commodification" (Goodman 2004), this suggests that there are new forms of agency directly linked to the new relations of commodification. The 21st century city no longer is a fixed spatiality, but as noted in Chapter One, a chimera that hybridises rural and urban, civil and uncivil, suburbia and slum. The surplus population, the lumpenproletariat also reflects this plurality and hybridity, and given Marx's failing to anticipate these potential agents of 20th Century revolution it is worth re-evaluating this category.

Two considerations at least suggest that this concept needs to be reviewed. First is the sustained and incremental nature of this category that generally throughout the South far exceeds the formalised "industrial working class". Second are its roots in classes that have played the central roles in 20th Century communist revolution: the rural peasantry, urban poor and the disaffected intellectual classes. It would seem that what appears today, as the lumpenproletariat, might be something deeper than the superfluous category that Marx dismissed. The spatial fusion in the slums of two powerful historical agents, the disaffected intellectual elements from the retrenched middle-classes and disappointed rural migrants, suggests a powerful latency that exceeds the traditional pejorative vision of the lumpenproletariat. These neo-poor are superimposed upon the pre-existing urban poor and reconfigure the body of the poor accordingly, injecting this traditionally redundant class with new vitality and potential for agency. This combination lends itself to the prospect of a uniquely embedded vanguardism directly attached to its masses. The combination of permanence and revolutionary hybridity suggest a fulminatory potential.

- **Archaeology of the Lumpenproletariat.**

It is noted in various sources (OED 2006; Encyclopaedia of Marxism 2001) that Marx and Engels made seventy uses of the term lumpenproletariat as outlined in over forty documents. There is no record of the exact word prior to their usage. What is consistent is that it used to convey the sense of redundancy. Yet despite their numerous references to it, a certain ambiguity hangs over it, not least

deriving from its dual role to describe both the "financial aristocracy" in *The Class Struggle in France 1848-50* (Marx and Engels 1950: p131), as well as the "passively rotting mass thrown off by lowest layers of the old society" in *The Communist Manifesto* (Marx and Engels 1950: p42). Therefore in order to shed light upon this social category it is appropriate to delve into the archaeology of the term. In so doing I must acknowledge the debt that this archaeology owes to the revealing chapter on Marx's lumpenproletariat by Nicholas Thoburn of London University in his book, *Deleuze, Marx and Politics* (2003). I make use of and extend a number of Thoburn's observations in order to get a purchase upon this subject.

According to Bestor (1948), the vocabulary of the emerging social revolutionary classes was being constructed as they wrote and acted. The parole of the revolution emerged through its praxis. In this respect, Marx's category of the lumpenproletariat emerged integrally with his definition of the proletariat. To attain clarity on lumpenproletariat therefore, requires first some elucidation of its semantic progenitor, the "proletariat". Here, Marx was not the first to coin the term. The on-line archives of the Libertarian Communist Library provides and uncovers a number of interesting references to the origins of the term that point to the fact that like the word, "slum" examined earlier, the first usage of the word "proletariat" was pejorative and disparaging.

Initially coined in ancient Rome, "proletarius" was used up until 2 BC to describe the lowest class of society whose only worth was to reproduce themselves (Briefs 1937). It reappeared in the 14th Century as a simile for "knave" and "rabble", associated with charlatans, vagabonds, mendicant friars and goliards. Samuel Johnson's 1755 Dictionary refers to the proletariat as "mean, wretched and vulgar" (Linebaugh 1991: p22). Later, in the 1838 *Histoire des classes ouvières et des classes bourgeoises*, Granier de Cassagnac described it as a subhuman class formed of a cross between robbers and prostitutes (Benjamin 1983). Haussmann characterized the proletariat as a "mob of nomads", and in

1850 Thiers spoke of "this heterogeneous mob, this mob of vagabonds with no avowed family and no domicile, a mob of persons so mobile that they can nowhere be pinned down" (Chevalier 1973: p364-5).

From this rudimentary fossick through the ontology of proletariat it is apparent that since its first appearance in Rome more than 2000 years ago, the general meaning of the term describing the inheritors of Marx's final synthesis of history has been derogatory. In fact the modern definition of proletarian as a "free wage worker" and proletariat as the diachronic working class, only emerged in the first half of the nineteenth century with the rise of workers movement (Bestor 1948: p275; Draper 1972: p2286; Linebaugh 1991: p121-2). It is this highly ameliorated proletariat that Marx makes use of and helped establish. Marx and his social-revolutionary peers set about rewriting the semantics of the proletariat to suit their agenda of a positive class leading the transformation of society. To produce a suitable socially heroic vanguard of change, a diachronic and morally transcendent revolutionary class, it was necessary to purge from it any negative characteristics. It is in this remaking of the proletariat that the lumpenproletariat was born.

The first references to the lumpenproletariat appear in Part II of *The German Ideology* (Marx 1972) in the course of Marx's critique of Max Stirner. Stirner in his 1844 *The Ego and His Own* had on a number of occasions made use of the word, "lumpe" as a derogatory prefix (though not as lumpenproletariat). Meaning rags, it had over time come to mean a person in rags, a "ragamuffin", a low-life, "riff-raff" or knave and hereby overlapping in singular as a simile for proletarian. By the time of Stirner's writing, it began to be used as a prefix to make a range of negative terms: "lumpen" could be attached to German words to convey a sense of criminality or social degradation. What Marx did was via his diatribe on Stirner to replace the archaic and pejorative form of proletarius with a neo-logism: "lumpenproletariat." As Marx describes:

> "the plebeians "stationed between free citizens and slaves never got beyond a *Lumpenproletariat*." (Marx 1972: p13)

Four years after he coined the term lumpenproletariat in *The German Ideology* Marx reintroduced the idea of a superfluous and negative social category in the *Communist Manifesto* of 1848 normatively describing them as:

> "The "dangerous class" the social scum, that passively rotting mass thrown off by the lowest layers of old society..." (Marx 1950: p42)

While not using the term lumpenproletariat it is clear that that the word is anticipated.

It seems that to break the word from its negative past, Marx simply manufactured a negative doppelganger from the same word, as Nicholas Thoburn, points out:

> "At a basic level, the lumpenproletariat is Marx's mechanism for freeing up his concept of the proletariat from the bourgeois image of a seething rabble; he transfers all the old content into the new category of the lumpenproletariat." (Thoburn 2003).

The lumpenproletariat therefore begins its life as the diametric inversion of the proletariat. Peter Stallybrass (1990) suggests that the purity of Marx's dialectic is achieved only through its comparison to the grotesqueness of lumpenproletarian heterogeneity. The proletariat then becomes uniform and unified, the source of revolutionary agency. By means of the creation of the lumpenproletariat Marx's proletariat expunged itself of its unruly self, and like a Nietzschean übermensch, stood over its tardy alter ego with a steely normative supremacy.

It is in this sense that most orthodox Marxists would understand the term. One of the most complete attempts to capture this semantic shift between the archaic proletariat and the lumpenproletariat is that given by Karl Kautsky in *Social Democracy versus Communism* (1946) and as such it is worth quoting at length:

> "the workers themselves are divided into two categories, neither of which own any means of production. But only under certain specific historical circumstances can they find buyers for their labour power. This becomes possible on a large scale only where capital has acquired control of industry and requires wage labour. Before this development becomes a fact the masses of the propertyless have but one recourse, to beg or steal. This type of proletarian is

not necessary to the basis of society. On the contrary, they are an unnecessary burden. They live only upon the alms of the propertied classes or by plundering them. *Such workers cannot grasp the ideal of a new, better social order, much less are they fit to fight for it.* To the extent to which they are dependent upon the good will of the higher classes they become cringing and sycophantic. Individuals among them, those of stronger character, turn to violent resentment and become criminals. Such elements are easily disposed of by the state.

Due to particularly favourable circumstances, proletarians of this type attained great political power in ancient Rome, which after prolonged struggles had established a democratic constitution, but a great portion of whose citizens had become impoverished as a result of continued civil wars. Under this condition the urban proletariat obtained the power in the state, but not knowing how to utilize it found nothing better to do than to sell its votes to those who paid the most in bread and circuses, or to sell itself as hired mercenaries to successful and ambitious military leaders.

It was this political and military assistance on the part of the proletariat that made possible the dictatorship of a single individual in Rome, which led to the rise of Caesarism and its development into a state form.

Marx differentiated sharply between the proletariat of this type, which he termed the *Lumpenproletariat*, and the *wage earning proletariat*. It was the latter type that he regarded as capable of developing, in the process of many struggles and through long experience, the requisite power and ability to emancipate itself, and thus move society forward to higher forms.

Hundreds of years of struggle were required before such consciousness became possible, and even then it was confined at the beginning to a small elite, which, perceiving its social power and significance, placed before itself the aim of achieving a fundamental social change." (Kautsky 1946, italics in original)

Described as such, for Marxists the lumpenproletariat are incapable of transformation, they have no real motive for participating in revolution, and due to their parasitism on the middle classes and aristocracy, as well as their central role in the circulation of cash through illicit trade and black market activity, might have in fact an interest in preserving the current class structure. As Hirst (1972) suggested, Marx and Engel's rejection of the lumpenproletariat was a practical materialist criticism of the reactionary tendency of the marginal and criminal classes. In this understanding, the lumpenproletariat parody and mirror the Weltanschauung of the ruling classes, in much the same way that a parasite

resembles its host, except where capital acts in a residual class fashion, the lumpenproletariat do not, theirs is simply a déclassé individualised capital accumulation, fetishlike and opportunistic. In that sense, Marxists see the lumpenproletariat as a counter-revolutionary force.

Despite orthodox attempts to pigeonhole the term as such, it remains elusive. In *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte*, published in London in 1859, Marx expanded the definition of his neologism by describing the lumpenproletariat of Paris as:

> " Decayed *roués* with dubious means of substance and of dubious origin, ruined and adventurous offshoots of the bourgeoisie...vagabonds, discharged soldiers, discharged jailbirds, escaped galley slaves, swindlers, mountebanks, *lazzaroni*, pickpockets, tricksters, gamblers, *maquereaus*, brothel keepers, porters, *literati*, organ grinders, rag-pickers, knife grinders, tinkers, beggars, – in short, the whole the whole indefinite, disintegrated mass....which the French term *la bohéme*....scum, offal refuse of all classes." (Marx 1950: p267)

Unlike Puccini's romanticised la bohéme, Marx's lumpenproletariat was a "class fraction" that constituted the political power base for Louis Bonaparte of France in 1848, a class of reactionaries constituting the "mob". In this sense, Marx argued that in the particular historical events leading up to Louis Bonaparte's coup in late 1851, the proletariat and bourgeoisie were productive and progressive, advancing the historical process by developing society's labour-power and its capabilities, whereas the lumpenproletariat was a disparate mass that was not only unproductive and regressive, but significantly: morally degenerate. Reflecting upon the semantic and moral confusion surrounding the lumpenproletariat, the Marxist Draper suggested that they do constitute a distinct category but only in so far as they "are being exuded, extruded, excreted from the class structure and onto the scrapheap" (Draper 1972: p2308).

The various descriptions Marx gives rather than clarify, actually obscure the exact historical role of the lumpenproletariat. They appear as a composite meta-class of all the social scree generated by the formal mode of production,

including both permanent under-class elements such as criminals as well as people in transition from one class to another. As Thoburn notes:

> "This nebulous non-class takes multiple guises (from financial aristocracy and Louis Bonaparte to secret society conspirators, criminals, service workers, and indeed "pen pushers") and is placed in varying historical trajectories (sometimes as a last manifestation of pre-industrial forms, sometimes as a strictly modern manifestation of industrial cities). As such, it appears to pop up everywhere rather than exist as a neat and distinct social group. Such confusion has led some more recent theorists influenced by psychoanalytic and post-structuralist frameworks to posit the lumpenproletariat not as a social group, but as the irruption of heterogeneity in Marx's conceptual system." (Thoburn 2003)

Gradually from all these sources the lumpenproletariat emerges as a perennial category that defied Marx's mechanistic and stagist formulation of historical materialism. It is really a collective term for all that is contingent and alternative to his "science".

The lumpenproletariat is, then, a composite and heterodox category that exceeds both historical and modal limitations. It is a historical anomaly that does not conform to the onward march of history. For orthodox Marxists they are counter-revolutionary, for neo Marxist social democrats like Eduard Bernstein, counter-evolutionary. The lumpenproletariat is literally underclass. It would appear that the real complexity of social relations ultimately defied Marx and the quest of his era for hermetic Linnaeus categorisation. Marx contra his usual meticulous discourse could not capture this amorphous contingency. Instead he resorted to crude moralising, hoping it seems by invective to separate the purified proletariat from this alternative.

In examining the various forms that the lumpenproletariat assumes, Thoburn goes on to make the observation that despite their nebulous nature they do manifest three main practices in relation to:

> "history — as comic repetition of past identities, production — as self-separation from social productive activity, and politics — as vacillating spontaneity) we see a category which is marked by its externality to capitalist social relations and its inability to engage with the potential becoming of history." (Thoburn 2003)

History as the comic repetition of past identities, the first practice that Thoburn describes, captures this defiance of a neat mechanical progression through history. This is best described in *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte* wherein the lumpenproletariat are portrayed by Marx as a *parody* of agency that pretended to represent just cause but simply conspired to seize power purely for profit. In this capacity they recur throughout history despite modal and hence dialectical differences, as opportunistic Jacobins motivated by personal rather than class interest. They seem to elude the specific historical production of consciousness and act beyond these limitations. In contradiction with dialectical progress they represent a recurring impulse without antithesis. They are a transcendental thesis that Marx cannot explain, instead he reminds us of Hegel's remark "that all facts and personages of great importance in world history occur...twice" but who had neglected to add: "the first time as tragedy, the second as farce" (Marx 1950: p225). It would seem that the lumpenproletariat reflect a transcendentalism that Marxist science denies, yet by coining the term acknowledges.

By corollary, Marx's purging of the proletariat in order to force it to comply with his "scientific-materialism", created a mythical and heroic proletariat, that for many across the field of radical militancy, ranging from anarchists such as Johann Most and Mikhail Bakunin, anti-colonialists like Frantz Fanon and Black Consciousness activist, Huey Newton, never quite lived up to its historical role. Instead, it was drawn into co-dependency with the industrial process. Plagued with false consciousness, it was subject to what the Frankfurt School called "the dominant ideology thesis" (Arato et al1988). This is seen quite clearly, on one hand by its conflation by Marxist orthodoxy with the Communist Party and thereby subsequent dictatorship of the proletariat with often tyrannical outcomes; and on the other of the incorporating effects of regular employment and consumer culture that curtailed the proletariat's revolutionary potential, what Thoburn reminds us of, "in processes of "embourgeoisment", "one-dimensionality", "recuperation" and so on" (Thoburn 2003).

By expunging the sinister side of the proletariat in creating the lumpenproletariat, Marx ideologically created a hollow category without the destructive vigour necessary for primary revolutionary action. Despite Marxist's wishes to the contrary, the proletariat became an industrious eunuch, filled with an earnest morality that deprived them of capacity for ruthless militancy. This failure goes some way to explain why in due course other historical materialists and revolutionary theorists went to some lengths to redeem the lumpenproletariat from its dismissed status.

At odds with his oeuvre, Marx on occasions suggests the idea that the lumpenproletariat is not always counter-revolutionary. He writes of their possible radical tendencies and the fact that although they vacillate, they do have the capacity for spontaneous insurrection. He displays an interesting ambivalence that seems to flirt with the ostensibly irrational. Thus, even the "lazzaroni" of the Mobile Guard, in so far as it was "thoroughly malleable", was "capable of the greatest acts of heroism and the most exalted self-sacrifice" and was acknowledged by the Paris proletariat "to be its foremost fighters on the barricades" (Marx 1959: pp142-143). This potential Marx ascribed to the fact that their "precarious" means of subsistence dependent on "chance" in "irregular lives", and their "constant dangers" situate this group with an inclination to insurrection:

> "the greater the insecurity... The desperate recklessness which is exhibited in every insurrection in Paris is introduced precisely by these veteran professional conspirators, the *hommes de coups de main* (men of daring raids). They are the ones who throw up and command the first barricades, who organize resistance, lead the looting of arms-shops ... In a word, they are the officers of the insurrection...(who) launch a revolution on the spur of the moment... they are like alchemists of the revolution...they leap at ...incendiary bombs, destructive devices of magic effect..." (Marx and Engels 1978: p318)

This description of pure agency suggests the explosive potential of the lumpenproletariat and resonates closely to the voluntarist discourse of violence advocated by a cross section of revolutionary advocates, including many

anarchists like Johan Most and Bakunin, militant Black Consciousness groups such as the Black Panthers as well as writers such as Frantz Fanon. It embodies an adulation of street gangs and mob violence quite removed from the disciplined force of the trade unions.

This unruly, unpredictable and spontaneous tendency is precisely what Marx objected to. It did not appear to Marx to be embedded in genuine social antagonism and as a result meant that this element would be unable to play a key role of revolutionary agency to enact history. Yet as history is beginning to indicate, this very dismissed, unhistorical category is rapidly becoming the largest class on earth, as argued by this thesis. The contradictions of globalised capitalism have undermined previous categories such as the formal working class, rural peasantry, Third-world intellectual petit bourgeoisie and subsumed them into a multitudinous informalised urban-poor labour force – the lumpenproletariat of slumdwellers.

An important point of difference between Bakunin and Marx lay in the crucial area of agency. Dubbed by Engels "the *lumpen* prince", Bakunin doubted the proletariat's capacity for revolt, noting with foresight that labour's integration into capitalisms discipline diminished their capacity to resist. Anticipating the actual course of history Bakunin instead saw the peasantry in collusion with other marginalised sectors of society as central to revolution. As a class destroyed, a historical hangover, they more than any other class had the least to lose by rebellion and the most to gain from it. Because they were excluded and superfluous to the industrial mode of production they were not fully subsumed under the regime of the industrial productive process. Their consciousness had not thus been entirely corrupted by the discipline of capitalism (but are a hangover) and the coercion that created them filled them with righteous discontent and restiveness. The lumpenproletariat exist in an extraordinary state to the ruling modality, it can be said that they exist from the outset in a condition of anarchy, in an intra-modal state of rejection–rebellion that characterises their

milieu and that fills them with a trans-historical rage expressed weakly as criminal and uncivil acts or powerfully as insurrection and rebellion. It is this revolutionary commitment, this "frisson of radical excess," immanent to their identities as the multitude of "excluded" which elects them for their political role (Thoburn 2003).

The primacy of the lowest classes was long held by Fanon to be crucial for the success of genuine revolution:

> "in order... to incarnate the people... there must be decentralisation in the extreme... it is from the base that forces mount up which supply the summit with its dynamic" (Fanon 1967: p157).

For all its political ambiguity and indicative of its militant value, special attention had to be paid to the lumpenproletariat in order to prevent it siding with the oppressor, "Any movement for freedom ought to give the fullest attention to this *lumpenproletariat*" (Fanon 1967: p109). Contrary to the Marxist dismissal of them as not being historically strategic, Fanon recognised the strategic requirement of their inclusion. At the same time Fanon like Bakunin, emphasised the total commitment and historical predictability of the peasant masses, which "will always answer the call to rebellion" (Fanon 1967: p109). It is when the peasant masses join the ranks of the lumpenproletariat, as is occurring in the slums, that intriguing possibilities for social change emerge.

Inspired by Fanon, Cabral, Marcus Garvey et al but taking it to an even deeper level, Huey Newton and the Black Panthers appreciated the dialectic between activism and criminality in what they saw as a fundamentally unjust society. They viewed the lumpenproletariat as the true vanguard of revolt, not least because, many in the civil rights movement were, in light of racist laws, technically criminals. Newton and the Panther's approach strikes at the heart of the problematic: the very legitimacy of hegemony and its constituency (including the industrial proletariat). For these radicals, Marx's dismissal of the lumpenproletariat as dangerous and criminal is not just a reification of bourgeois morality, but utterly one-dimensional. The uncivil lumpenproletariat clearly are the dialectical products of an illegitimate society, as such they are symptomatic of its

corruption. They symbolise the actual embodiment of social injustice inspiring the platitudinous anarchist remark that "as revolution is outlawed, all outlaws are revolutionaries!" (Blackened Flag 2005). As outlaws, as the product of social injustice, they replace the proletariat (part of hegemony's constituency) as the moral agent for social justice. However, can they implement this agency?

- **Historical Exclusion**

The recurrent theme that emerges from the examination so far is the lumpenproletariat's exclusion from the formal economy. They exist in the intra-zones of crime, mendicancy, "adventure" and, via brokers, waste recycling. Unifying them all is a separation of all their activities from the "proper" kind of "work": understood as labour productively connected to the capitalist mode of production in a subaltern position, subordinate yet integral. While some have defined this as the refusal to work, this is not strictly true. They are simply outside the rigid structures of formalised production and make their livelihoods by unorthodox means. While the focus of Marx's invective was directed toward the criminal elements within this category, the real implications of this exclusion meant that the lumpenproletariat have no work and no security of livelihood. In this they constitute that overwhelming global multitude trapped through the structural implications of modernity and development in what Escobar so aptly described as "livelihood struggles".

Following directly from their exclusion, the overriding criticism of the lumpenproletariat has been that it is disorganised, disaggregated and lacking in any structural power such as the capacity to withdraw its labour (Goodman 2005). The conditions of urban involution further contribute to atomisation and mutual hostility making the possibility for collective social action, let alone class-conscious agency, appear slim. However as the contradictions of capitalism deepen, the dialectics of social reproduction synthesise changes in sociability to occur. Nothing in history is static, least of all human ideological production, thus moments of social crisis are advanced as material conditions synthesise new

social relations. The lumpenproletariat as a social product of material forces is therefore malleable to such advances. They are not immutable and the pressure of history relentlessly synthesises new social forms within in them. What governs this process is the nature of the prevailing structural contradictions. The dominant contradictions provide the vulnerabilities and strategic possibilities that will shape the sociality of the lumpenproletariat.

In anticipation of this qualitative mutability and to counter the pejorative connotations of a lumpenproletariat, McGee and Cohen (in Thoburn 2003) offered the notion of "proto-proletariat" at the very eve of the neo-liberal ascendance to power, while Ariel Salleh has developed the useful category of a feminised "meta-industrial class" (Salleh 1997) that will be looked at below. However for the purposes of this thesis the ambiguous term lumpenproletariat will be retained, with the proviso that it is recognised that this is a class with considerable more potential for subjectivity than Marx credited them with. As the largest category of humanity, the future hinges on the question of potential leverage within them. They are in this sense a latent subjectivity that history is beginning acknowledge but which needs to be galvanised to act. The key issue therefore is to identify the structural vulnerabilities of the historical moment that provide strategic openings for the lumpenproletariat to galvanise.

C. Lumpenisation, advancing the stage of Class Conflict?

A Question of Time

The issue of structural inclusion is key to the future of the lumpenproletariat. It is only if they can become essential to the productive modality that they acquire strategic power: slums have to become necessary for capitalism for the lumpen to become relevant. The conjecture of this thesis is that the inclusion of the lumpenproletarat as such is simply a question of time. From the data presented in Chapter One, it is apparent that the future is going to be dominated by hyper-slums. The lumpenproletariat will soon be the most visible and prolific element of

urban society. They are an indisputable fact of social reality that cannot be dismissed. This objective presence provides two points of pressure on the productive modality. The first is the capacity of threat, to precipitate instability (concurring with orthodox criticism of the lumpenproletariat as "dangerous") and in this regard the sheer weight of numbers of the uncivil society will become a formidable force in the cities. The second is what the slumdwellers represent as a reserve of cheap labour and thereby a crucial resource for capitalist profitability in times of increasing scarcity and exhaustion: slums are new hinterlands for labour under apartheid capitalism.

Looking at the first, this pressure will be brought to bear across a number of areas, most obviously in terms of private property and health. Significantly, over time the lumpen's demand for space for habitation will be become increasingly more difficult, changing the current "quiet encroachment" described by Bayat (Bayat 2000) to more aggressive strategies of occupation typified by the strategy of "hobar" already popular amongst some Latin American squatters (SDla 2003). This burgeoning encroachment will bring civil society and uncivil society into greater contact with predictable outcomes in terms of crime and safety. The spatial density and lack of services will impact directly onto issues of health too. Deepening bourgeois concerns of pandemic crises will be fuelled by this spatial overlap.

The inevitably increasing encroachment of slums upon the civil city, particularly the dovetailing crime and disease within the context of neo-liberal hegemony creates deep instability. As Stellenbosch University sociologist, Steven Robins describes:

> "Major elements of instability in the neo-liberal scenario [include] the downward trend in corporate taxes and the inability to finance common goods, nationally and globally... Without taxation, no proper education, no affordable health care. Without taxation, no public sphere. Without public sphere, no legitimacy. Without legitimacy, no security. This is a familiar future scenario." (Robins 2002: p1)

This instability can only be resolved through increasingly apartheid social and spatial practice. In the South this apartheid heightens the dialectic between civil and uncivil society, as Robins continues:

> "It could take the form of "Californianization" while California is "Brazilianised". A world of gated communities, high barbed-wire fences, steep hierarchies, robots on the workfloor and at the gate, and automated surveillance all around... A "post-human" world... of which we see in Blade Runner and other cinematic dystopias... [Looking at a city like Cape Town]... A globally competitive city with advanced IT and financial service sectors, and a booming tourism industry with world class hotels and convention centres, a Californian dreamscape at the tip of Africa... [that is replicated as] A fortress city of gated communities, "zero-tolerance" policing, community policing strategies, eg. neighbourhood watches, commandos and vigilante groups, private security companies, automated surveillance cameras, high barbed wire-fencing and vicious guard dogs on the one side of the divide and urban ghettoes of racialised poverty and violence on the other." (Robins citing N. Pieterse 2002: p1-2)

When this localised urban apartheid is seen in conjunction with deepening global apartheid practice in an era of unprecedented and multiple crises the issue of instability becomes critical, indicating a point of intense structural vulnerability. It is also here that the second point of pressure comes into play. The multiple crises mean that the conditions for capitalist profitability are increasingly in jeopardy. The comparative advantage provided by the vast multitudes of slumdwellers as a labour resource offer a way forward for capitalist enterprise. This potential is a key route to the inevitable inclusion of the lumpenproletariat into the productive structure.

Thus it can be seen that current patterns of urbanisation are changing the structural dynamics of production toward increasing instability on one hand and the inevitable inclusion of the lumpenproletariat as a labour force on the other. These alterations in the relations of production provide the lumpenproletariat with the strategic openings they require to galvanise and act. The situation has a familiar element about it that a US Foreign Service official working in India, William Klein remarked upon:

> "The situation in India, particularly Dharavi (the largest slum in Mumbai) calls to mind Engels' descriptions of the slums in Manchester in *The Condition of the Working Class in England* and

> his letters on *The Housing Question*. You can see clearly how the injection of cash through their capacity as labour and piece-work manufacture is bringing them in from the outside and building their ability to articulate their needs..." (Klein in SDla 2006).

While this neo-liberal reading of Engels might seem a little ironic, it does point to the fact that as time passes, slumdwellers become increasingly accommodated within the productive process. Because they provide a hinterland of labour for productive zones they become necessary to capital accumulation and move from being a dismissed, peripheral category to center stage. This provides the key to understanding the slums as the sites of future class conflict and lumpenisation as advancing the stage of class conflict. The question now arises, how does this shift impact upon the subjectivity and agency of the lumpenproletariat?

A Reborn Lumpenproletariat

The dominant crisis confronting capitalism, and indeed all expressions of the industrial modality, is that of exhaustion across many spheres, ecological, resources and social. As noted earlier, the logic of exhaustion is revealed in the accelerated destruction the lifeworld (Jessop 2000) and in the dislocation of socio-economic, cultural and political relationships. These crises are embedded in the very foundations of social reproduction, the preconditions of social survival.

The effect of this is to undermine the stuff of everyday life (Goodman 2000), the substrata of society that underpins structures of exploitation begins to unravel, generating profound crisis of legitimacy and accumulation. As intensified accumulation on a world scale erodes structures of reproduction the second contradiction that O'Connor observed earlier, between capitalism and the survival of nature comes into play. The first contradiction between labour and capital becomes increasingly entrenched in wider conflicts between the conditions of social reproduction and the process of accumulation. The primary site of conflict ceases to be industrial relations and instead is framed by a broad range of conflicts over social reproduction. As Goodman notes, "questions of cultural,

social and environmental exhaustion begin to overtake and subsume industrial conflicts" (Goodman 2003).

Under a regime of total commodification, people are themselves commodified. The milieu of exhaustion expresses itself in social exhaustion generating multiple and profound crises of belief in the disembodied instrumental rationality of production. There is a yearning for embedded and embodied modes of existence. Sites of social, cultural, political and ecological reproduction become radically valorised. These sites become germinal for movements of social resistance, catalysing social discontent and disaggregating into new forms of collectivity, identity and agency around issues of social reproduction. In the same way that the labour movement presented a "social barrier" to capital, so social movements as O'Connor points out, "contest and push capital and state into more social forms of the reproduction of production conditions" (O'Connor 1998: pp176-7).

Reflecting the many crises and their source, a range of struggles has broken out in recent years between a globalised capitalist hegemony and a plethora of counter-hegemonic forces. While the process of subsumption provides the opportunity to blunt the tensions between different movements and provide new grounds for connection, this unity remains challenged by deep internal divisions, "localist" orientations whose insularity sometimes mimic fascist social constructions. Thus while the historical moment provides opportunity, counter-tendencies need to be confronted and overcome. Contrary to the elite cosmopolitanism of Northern counter-hegemonic movements, many Southern movements are fiercely resistant to inclusion. Movements need to be forced to engage with each other's differences and find ways of working together. The key problem is how to balance universality with particularity, of recognising and at the same time bridging locality, in other words, constituting mass solidarity with local recognition. Here the burgeoning slums provide a solution.

- **Common Interests**

The lumpenproletariat of slumdwellers suggest a globalised class with an embedded spatial and material commonality that exceeds their differences. As the crisis intensifies so the concept of class struggle widens and deepens, driving new and expanding networks of trans-national solidarity. The politics of solidarity and recognition enter immediately as a vision of universal exclusion amongst the "poorest of the poor". This solidarity is an expression of the sociability that is the basis for paradigmatic change in the lumpenproletariat. Connectivity across the globe relies on the presence of a shared consciousness and a clear frontier between "them and us". This is a long frontier drawn across many divides, particularly the North - South divide (Harvey 2000). Central to overcoming this is the role of social movements of the urban poor as agents of dialogue. Dialogue across frontiers links the labouring masses in concerted response against the forces of exhaustion and exploitation. This dialogue overcomes the entropy of the lumpenproletariat and reveals their commonality as slumdwellers comes to the fore, providing connections that transcend locality, culture and language. As SDI notes, "the language of poverty is everywhere the same, and it always spoken by the poorest of the poor" (SDIa 2004).

Thus connections are emerging in the slums that provide the sites of agency. In community-based initiatives linked around the world to broader alliances of slumdwellers, groups of social actors acquire both the capacity and the consciousness to engage in transformative action. Paraphrasing Freya Mathews, slums provide a relational model for identity and politics that create frameworks for transnational communities of resistance to transcend backyard localisms, bring together embedded communities (Mathews 1996).

- **New Commons**

Embedded livelihood struggles provide the grounds for establishing a genuine commons. Commons concepts can create the ideological foundation for alternative paradigms, making possible credible emancipatory discourses beyond

the confines of capitalist reasoning (Sousa-Santos 1995: p265). In reviving the commons and confronting private property relations they offer an alternative to the origins of the exhaustion crisis. Slums and their inhabitants constitute the overlay of social and spatial to potentially found a new commons. In a way, a slum already constitutes what might be called a negative commons of poverty. The spatiality of lack, forces people to collectively occupy land. Sharing in the often illegal occupation of land without private ownership or tenure forges an illicit commons of domesticity that distributes the burden of crime collectively. At the same time, the idea of a positive commons of the slums is enabling many local slum movements to shift from an oppositional anti-globalism to radically more effective forms of counter-globalism, where visions for common survival are asserted against totalising commodification, or as an antidote to exhaustion.

All these lumpen vectors converge on the issue of development. Exhaustion is a global dynamic of class domination. At the center of it is a struggle over the concept of development itself. Development has traditionally been seen as defined in terms of the under-developed South. Against this hegemonic model, "anti-development" and "post-development" perspectives redefine development as in the first instance a problem for the over-developed North. These perspectives reverse the developmental nexus, valorising social relations in the underdeveloped South (Goodman 2003: p1). The idea of slum as commons provides again a radical alternative to hegemonic development. Hereby, the commoners, the lumpenproletarian slumdwellers become central to the development process. All other elements are subordinated to their demands. This constitutes a revolution of hegemonic practice. The lumpenproletariat ceases to be without structural power but becomes the key to their own autonomous development. In the slums, the "poorest of the poor" control the means of production. In this small, local sense at least, a revolution is effected.

- **Feminised Agency**

If slums provide the spatial milieu of embedded connection, women in slums provide the key point of its embodied interlocution. Central to slum life and its social reproduction are women. In *Ecofeminism as Politics* (1997) Ariel Salleh points to the key agency of women as a "meta-industrial class" in this advancing crisis of exhaustion. Concurring with involution's downward pressure on wages coming to bear on the most vulnerable segments of society, Salleh's data reveals that women undertake 65% of the world's work for 5% of the pay. This is borne out by surveys conducted in slums by SDI (SDIa 2003). Salleh finds that due to women's frequently unseen knowledge of nature, a precautionary principle is introduced and practised by this global majority. Drawing from the idea of holding a child, the capacity of nurturing is re-introduced into the labour process making women a class who engage in "holding labour" (Salleh 2001). Women's labour therefore synthesises the contradiction of industrial production and social reproduction. These forms of reproductive labour are "metabolic" contrasting with "instrumental", productive labour. Labour as practised by women generally minimises risk and reconciles differences, binding complex social and ecological systems. Key to it lies is feminised action, whose sociality confronts anomie, and resists the reified commodified individualism of industrial socialisation and its attendant patriarchical hegemony.

For Salleh it is irrelevant whether women's socio-ecological sensibility is cultural or biological because the material conditions of their lives dictate their actions. Salleh points out that:

> "the case for women as historical actors in a time of environmental crisis rests not universal essences but on how the majority of women actually work and think now" (Salleh 1997: p6).

Historically, the relations of production have marginalised women, but Salleh, like eco-feminists Shiva and Mies, argues that in the current crisis, women, together with complex social relations they generate, move to occupy center-stage. Indeed, SDI's central premise is the centrality of women to the sociality of slums. According to SDI, women are the "heart of the social movement of slumdwellers"

(SDIa 2003). Slum women become the central commoners in the new commons of the slums, tying together embedded and embodied poverty in a meta-industrial class that resist the processes of capitalist accumulation through social movements demanding collective autonomy and self-government (SDIa 2003).

Conclusion: Lumpen Advance the Class Conflict

The meta-industrial class of slumdwellers, as seen in Chapter One, is today the largest and most rapidly growing constituency of humanity on earth. As the global capitalist process expands its markets and need for cheap labour, this burgeoning informalised labour pool is correspondingly drawn into the production process. While they do not constitute a proper proletariat, they are no longer "lumpen" in a strict sense either. The crises arising from global capitalism provide key points of agency for the lumpen slumdwellers to transform themselves from a dismissed class to a neo-lumpenproletariat imbued with some structural power. Embedded in the slums, the lumpenproletariat is now increasingly feminised, with the potential to reconstitute itself as commoners in a global commons of poverty. Slums can be seen as lumpen sites for processes of integration, mobilisation and resistance, providing mechanisms for accommodation and contestation. Primarily slums generate a new subjectivity and agency that contrary to Marx's eschatology, see the slumdwellers of the world acquire the potential to become the gravediggers of global capitalism. As such their actions and resistance strategies gain significance. This brings out the purpose of this thesis, to what degree is this question answered by the praxis of SDI?

Chapter Three - The Ontology of Praxis

Introduction

Praxis is a commonly used term predicated upon the early writings of Marx that rose to prominence primarily through usage by Gramsci and the Hegelian Marxists. This chapter provides an archaeology of praxis, drawing out themes that will be explored and developed during the course of the thesis. The ontology of the concept will be reviewed in a selected survey of the literature pertaining to it in relation to contemporary historical conditions. The literature review will not attempt to be complete but will rather focus on texts considered most apposite to understanding the expression of praxis developed by the social movement SDI. Specifically it will look at the evolution of humanist praxis and examples of praxis originating in the Third World that can exploit the structural vulnerabilities noted earlier in Chapter Two. In so doing it will pay particular attention to the shift between the Eurocentric and Third World ontology of praxis and the role played therein, by critical theory and the psychoanalysis of oppression.

In charting the historical development of the concept of praxis within its changing socio-economic context, the chapter will begin with the early Marxist roots of the term. It will follow its initial optimistic formulations in a time of immanent revolution through the works of Gramsci, Korsch and Lukács, before moving to the pessimistic Hegelian Marxism of the Frankfurt School of Critical Theory in a period of declining revolutionary possibility. Particular note will be made of Gramsci's anti-vanguard approach to praxis and his ideas of the incremental development of counter-hegemony from Revolutionary Party to what he terms an "intellectual-moral bloc" and finally an "historical bloc" capable of social transformation (Gramsci 1957). Consideration will also be given to the work of Erich Fromm, whose focus on the subjective, individualised transformation of the bourgeoisie produced a psychoanalytic formulation of praxis. This allowed praxis to be de-linked from historical moments of co-operation, to form a relational

concept of praxis that can be re-tooled to fit many conditions in which atomisation and alienation dominate. Fromm's idea of praxis, while forged in a bourgeois context, anticipated the totalising oppression within the hearts and minds of Third World subjects. Significantly Fromm's work on praxis, particularly his notions of "social character" and the "social unconscious" (Fromm 1970), forms the key intellectual link from its Eurocentric ontology to its Third World formulations via Paulo Freire's "praxis of pedagogy" (Freire 2000).

Attention will be devoted to Paulo Freire's discourse of praxis because of its resonance in idiom to that of SDI. It will be shown how his concept of praxis transformed the divide between reflection and activism into a productive tension located in daily survival. His method of generative themes grounded his praxis in a pedagogy that sustained the tension between reality and hope about transforming everyday life in a methodology that reconciled subjective and objective understandings amongst the oppressed. It shall be shown that Freire pioneered a powerful dialogic model of praxis that tied together structural analysis and agency, overcoming both defeatism and naïve optimism. This section establishes Freire's key premise that the focus of praxis for the lumpenproletariat is the dialectic between survival and co-operation. Finally the examination of praxis will discuss Frantz Fanon's formulation of a dialectical praxis of labour-violence and its implication for recreating the central role of authentic culture rooted in the daily lives of the masses. This provides an epistemological counterpoint to European models and situates the discussion of praxis within its true setting, the most marginal of industrial society, the lumpenproletariat.

Throughout the focus will be on what constitutes praxis for these different thinkers and how they see its relationship to agency. The intention is to show how in these different formulations of praxis a class in-itself becomes a class for-itself. Furthermore, for the purposes of understanding the social movement, SDI, praxis will be examined as the means for, as referred to in the previous chapter,

bringing the lumpenproletariat of Southern slumdwellers to the center of class analysis.

A. Praxis as Self-revealing Creativity - the "Being" of Humanity.

Arguably the most influential of Marx's theoretical assumptions is the idea that human reason could become a "material" or life-transforming force able to shape history by revealing and directing human action. This "revolutionary activity" he termed in *Theses on Feuerbach* (1845), "practical-critical activity" (Marx 1970) or the "pragmatological-dialectic" (Adamson 1980: p130). It is not clear exactly, but at some point in English publications this becomes "praxis", a Greek word for human activity (Agger 1979: p99). For this concept, Marx drew upon the earlier notion of praxis expounded by August von Cieszkowski; who, in a short book published in 1838, argued that philosophy should:

> "become a practical philosophy or rather a philosophy of practical activity, of "praxis", exercising a direct influence on social life and developing the future in the realm of concrete activity" (McLellan 1969: p9-11).

Praxis is the defining feature within Marx's schemata of what it means to be human; it is central to his dialectical conception of human nature. In *Theses on Feuerbach*, Marx dismissed any anthropological essence as mystification. The resulting "pragmatological dialectic" found here and in the *German Ideology* (1845-6) treated human nature not as an "essence" but as the "ensemble of social relations" in a particular material-temporal setting.

By constructing this fluid and dialectical conception of humanity's essence – as the product of deliberate self-creation concealed in the skein of history's alienation, Marx dismissed any idea of the primacy of historical paradigms or consciousness (Adamson 1980). All Weltanschauung were socially and historically produced and symptomatic of a moment in history, as such they are not essential to humanity as gattungswesen (species-being) but simply ad hoc rationalisations of the specific epoch.

Marx rejected the traditional conception of humanity as a rational animal not simply because this gave reason primary place, but because he believed no single activity or property could describe human nature. In the gendered parole of his English translators: man (menschen) is not the mechanical sum of his various "spheres" (moral, economic, creative etc), for none of these spheres is ever eternally constant and unchanging (Tucker 1964). Therefore what makes humanity "human", is not any sphere or combination thereof, but their whole way of Being: the general structure of their relationship toward the world and toward themselves. This Being is the entire gamut of productive-creative, "world-creating" activities that belong to humanity, a way of Being peculiar to man that Marxists describe as "praxis".

Marx argued that the essence of human freedom, to be realised under socialism is praxis: reuniting mental and manual labour – the ability to realise ourselves in our work and our interactions with nature. "Being" for Marx (to be human) is the being of praxis. Humanity is the being of praxis and the outcome of praxis is the re-linking of humanity to their essence as gattungswesen, of humanity to both itself and nature through praxis. Praxis is the means whereby humanity reveals itself to itself, the process of self-revelation: it is the means for humanity to transcend the alienation of being *in* itself, to being humanity *for* itself (Tucker 1964).

Accordingly for Marx, all revolutionary theory and "true" philosophy would be implicitly autodidactic: labouring, productive and thinking people are their own educators through their specific praxis (Adamson 1980). Because this didacticism is not pre-formed but elucidated in the course of history, Marx concurred with Hegel's view that individual praxis is in a dialectical relationship with history. It is through their praxis, their being, that humanity collectively create their own history. Reciprocally this history limits and conditions their being as praxis.

The masses of oppressed are the point in extremis of the impact of historical contradictions, the advanced stage of social antagonism. They are the social lens through which the future is constructed. Drawing from Hegel's metaphor of the self-tutelage of the slave in the master-slave dialectic, Marx added the idea that the self-awareness of the slave is the foundation of revolutionary consciousness. In this formulation philosophy and education are grounded in the self-activity of social labour, a move that effectively solves the riddle of "who shall educate the educator" (Bluhm 1978). This places considerable pedagogical responsibility for revolutionary praxis upon the agency of the oppressed.

The auto-didacticism implicit within praxis is the catalyst to creating class-consciousness and agency. Praxis is the specific tool to counter the alienation of oppressive relations of production and initiating revolution. It captures the core of Marx's dialectical method. Marxist praxis was the theory and practice of a critique of ideological mystification that in its performance outlined the possible forms of revolutionary change. Through revolutionary praxis the alienated masses discovered themselves and revealed the world oppressing them as well as the route to transforming it. For Marx the relations of capitalist production created an oppressive, alienating binary, which saw the industrial proletariat as the class necessary for its transformation. Drawing from *The Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844,* for this class to be an effective revolutionary agent it needed to self-consciously constitute itself as a class both in-itself and for-itself (Marx 1956:p159). In this understanding, in-itself, "*an sich* means roughly... "unconscious" and for-itself, "*fur sich*...can be read as "consciously" (note in Marx 1956: p93). The tool for this autonomous and reflex constitution of self-conscious subjectivity is "practical-critical activity", praxis.

Marx's proletariat vacillated in the strength of its agency depending on the particular expression of capital at the time. Proletarian power lay in the assumption put forward by Adam Smith (in Marx 1978: p574) that as the process

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of accumulation advanced it would be accompanied by a necessary increase in the demand for labour-power (hence improving their wages), whilst the composition of capital would remain the same. But, as Marx noted, this tendency was short-lived, as it obliged capitalists to change the technical composition of capital (variable capital) by shifting the power of production away from labour and into plant, thereby too reducing their rate of profit (Marx 1978). Responding to this, the logic behind accumulation is to constantly undermine the labouring class and produce a surplus labouring population. For Marx there is a continuous and dynamic tension within the relations of capitalist production that produces and relies upon this surplus labour. In this way, Marx noted:

> "The greater the social wealth, the functioning capital, the extent and energy of its growth and therefore, also the absolute mass of the proletariat and the productiveness of its labour, the greater the reserve army. The same causes, which develop the expansive power of capital, develop also the labour-power at its disposal. The relative mass of the industrial reserve army increases therefore with the potential energy of wealth. But the greater this reserve army in proportion to the active labour-army, the greater is the mass of a consolidated surplus-population, whose misery is in inverse ratio to its torment of labour. The extensive, finally, the Lazarus-layers of the working class and the industrial reserve army, the greater is official pauperism. *This is the absolute law of capitalist accumulation.*" (Marx 1978: p588)

The only remedy is for labourers to "put their heads together... as a class" (Marx in Harvey 1982: p30).

According to Marx this was an irresistible aspect of the relations of production:

> "When numerous labourers work together side by side... they are said to co-operate, or to work in co-operation... not only do we here have an increase in the productive power of the individual, by means of co-operation, but the creation of a new power, namely, the collective power of the masses... this power is due to co-operation with others. When the labourer co-operates systematically with others, he strips off the fetters of his individuality and develops the capabilities of his species." (Marx 1978: pp308-12)

It was precisely the issues of the determined collective agency of the proletariat and the inevitability of capitalism toward crisis that would eventually split Marxism in two. Marxism found itself caught between two strands of epistemology: Marxism as "science" and Marxism as a revolutionary philosophy.

Central to this rupture was the capacity of the proletariat to constitute itself as the agent of change, with both interpretations of Marx differing considerably in their views on this matter. Fundamental to the agency of the proletariat was its class-consciousness. For those who saw Marxism as a science of economic-determinism, class-consciousness was inevitable. However, for those who saw Marxism as a theory for change, class-consciousness was not given. This forced the latter to confront the problem of how to awaken the proletariat as a class-conscious subject and actor capable of revolutionary transformation.

B. Gramsci and the Philosophy of Praxis

Abstractly Marx could resolve the problem of who should educate the educator using Hegel. Within Hegel's master-slave dialectic, the slave needs to be stripped of all human pre-determination so as to reach a consciousness of themselves as pure humanity and thereby break through to self-consciousness. Practically however, Marx encountered a paradox when applying this conception to the capitalist mode of production, for capitalist labour "produces intelligence, but for the worker it produces imbecility and cretinism" (Marx in Eastman et al 1967: p291). Thus while the reduction to abject human oppression occurs, it is unclear how the concrete and stupefied worker (as opposed to Hegel's metaphysical slave) in capitalist society can become independently "self-conscious", or for that matter, muster the revolutionary agency to actually transform society. Marx never offered a systematic resolution of this problem and it was left to later writers like Gramsci, Lukács, Korsch and the Frankfurt School to tackle this issue of initiating agency. During the period of the Second International (1889 –1914) there was a prevailing sense of the immanence of revolution. Early market capitalism reached its peak during this period and the contradictions within it seem to herald the collapse of the capitalist system. This led to three main trajectories in Marxism: the passive "scientific socialism" of Kautsky et al; the evolutionary socialism, parliamentary social democracy

movement of Eduard Bernstein; and the emancipatory-revolutionary socialism of Gramsci and Rosa Luxembourg.

By the end of World War One and the Third International (1919), Gramsci (1891-1937), like Luxembourg, felt that socialism must be achieved through the active participation of the working class in its own emancipation. Gramsci sought to avoid both economic determinism and the Bolshevik (Leninist) concept of vanguardism or "democratic centralism" by substituting in their place a theory of revolutionary activism that he termed (depending on the edition) either "Marxism" (Gramsci translated by Marks 1957: p92) or the "philosophy of praxis" (Gramsci translated by Hoare & Smith 1971: p425). This notion directly tackled the paradox of revolutionary pedagogy expressed above by linking the masses to certain critical intellectuals who could comprehend this alienation and in this co-operation act to overcome it. Gramsci's logic was underpinned by a double polemic: firstly, against what he saw as the post-Leninist stagnation of Bukharin's "*Popular Studies*" (Gramsci 1957: p 90) which erred in forgetting that philosophy is a "cultural battle to transform the popular "mentality"" (Gramsci 1957: p 91) as well as failing to grasp that philosophy is itself a form of collective activity; and secondly, against Croce's "immanentism" which saw the dialectic of history revealing a rational "essence" (immanence) pre-coded in humanity. While not having access to all of Marx's earlier works (which were only "discovered" later), Gramsci sought out his "pragmatological dialectic" in Marx's *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844, Capital* and *Theses on Feuerbach*.

According to Adamson the praxis so derived contained the following elements: the grounding in subjectivity and inter-subjectivity; the pragmatic conception of prediction; the concept of necessity as need made conscious; the repudiation of all transcendental and speculative notions, including traditional metaphysical materialism; and the concepts of history's contemporaneity, of the non-definitiveness of philosophy, and philosophy as a collective activity pursued for practical, historical ends (Adamson 1980: p132). The key linkages within

Gramsci's understanding of praxis are between: humanity, knowledge and the world. Through collective action, humanity can learn to transcend their "givenness" as products of nature and history, to become aware of their knowledge-gaining capacities and thus to act to change their given circumstances directed by consciousness and will. Philosophy-knowledge-theory in this sense is not an abstract system of ideas but a concrete historical tool. Praxis becomes a blueprint for change, not a theory about society but rather a theory for it. Praxis is the synthesis of theory and action.

Gramsci believed that "all men are intellectuals…but not all men have in society the function of intellectuals" (Gramsci 1957: p102). The task of mobilising the inherent intellectual within each human being and so furthering the class struggle for Gramsci, lay with a special relationship between intellectual revolutionary "experts" and the a-theoretical "feeling" masses. To avoid the pitfalls of vanguardism, Gramsci argued for a mutually supportive, non-authoritarian relationship between an intellectual cadre and an insurgent working class, which would teach both sides about each other: the masses possess "feeling" while the intellectuals "knowledge". Without the masses the intellectuals descend to pedantry and without the intellectuals the masses collapse into "blind passion and sectarianism." Overcoming this, the relationship between "intellectuals and people-nation" must be "provided by an organic cohesion in which feeling-passion becomes understanding and thence knowledge" (Gramsci in Agger 1979: p103). This fusion of interests between organic intellectuals and ordinary people in a common revolutionary pedagogical entity had its apotheosis in the revolutionary Party. Here the dialectical unity of mass action and intellectual direction would at its best be described as a chimera, corresponding to the dual nature of Machiavelli's Centaur as half animal and half human, force and consent, power and direction, authority and hegemony.

Integral to Gramsci's discourse of praxis are his ideas on hegemony. He uses the term in two related ways. In the first he refers to the consensual basis of an

existing political system within bourgeois civil society. The second sense describes an upwelling of class-consciousness resisting this dominant hegemony, overcoming the economic-corporative repressing it. For the purposes of this thesis this will be referred to as counter-hegemony. This counter-hegemony has its roots in the cadres and actions of the Party. Over time, as the class conflict intensifies, this leads to the social formation of an intellectual mass dialectic known as the "intellectual and moral bloc" (Gramsci 1957). When looking beyond the process of political education itself to the larger social implications of this bloc, to its capacity for creating history, Gramsci referred to it as an "historic bloc". Crucially this historic bloc is an attempt to build a broad consensus for social change based upon class alliances constructed through horizontal linkages.

To reiterate, for Gramsci agency and class-consciousness were thus the direct result of the spontaneous feeling of the masses transformed through praxis into knowledge amongst the masses. A key role in this is played by organic intellectuals who emerge from the masses to translate the alienation and frustration of the workers into a coherent theoretical system that articulates these experiences in historical and structural terms, directing the path toward socialism (Agger 1979: p100). The incremental amassing of this intellectual-mass from revolutionary cadre to intellectual moral bloc, when linked in a broad horizontal class alliance, creates the transformatory "historical bloc" capable of creating history.

C. The Hegelian Marxist Praxis of Georg Lukács and Karl Korsch

The shift after World War One from early entrepreneurial, market capitalism to early monopoly capitalism backed up by increasing state intervention in the economy was one of a number of factors that held at bay the immanent revolution anticipated by Marxists in Western Europe and the USA. The

relationship between capital and labour began to change, requiring new modes of analysis and new theories on revolutionary action. According to some Marxists, the New Deals that emerged in response to economic crises such as the Great Depression placated and co-opted the proletariat into a false consciousness of national solidarity that concealed underlying class interest. At the same time there was a growing resistance in the Western world to the Third International or Leninist approach to revolutionary vanguardism (Agger 1979).

Gramsci's formulations on the class struggle and praxis typify this move. However he did not pay sufficient attention to the growing conservatism and integrationist tendencies of the working class in the western world. Revolutionary theorists in the west were thus compelled to rethink their Marxist focus. Theorists like Georg Lukács and Karl Korsch revived the dialectical method, bringing to the fore the Hegelian elements of Marx's revolutionary model. According to Agger:

> "By reinvigorating the Hegelian foundations of Marxism, centred around the theory of alienation and the concept of creative praxis found in the early writings of Marx, Lukács and Korsch could restore the dialectical foundations of Marx's vision of socialist emancipation without at the same time re-idealising his theory of socialist transformation." (Agger 1979: p119)

In so doing Lukács and Korsch hoped to restore the subjective and creative dimension of class-consciousness to revolutionary theory, which they felt had been lost.

Lukács' focus was on what he termed "the ideological crisis of the proletariat" (Lukács 1971: p304) that had failed to produce revolution in the West. He argued that the proletariat would not inevitably take control of its objective economic situation through inexorable natural laws, even though there was an economic crisis produced by the contradictions of capitalism. This contradiction could only be resolved through "free action of the proletariat" taken on the basis of critical class-consciousness (Lukács 1971: p310). Crisis theory was needed to prepare the proletariat for effective revolutionary action: revolution for Lukács would only emerge when both critical theory and practical action are united.

Lukács conclusions rested upon the dialectical methods of Hegel and the early Marx, which emphasised subject-object dialectics. According to this, dialectics links the objective situation of the working class, determined by the crisis tendencies of capitalism, to its subjective potential for formulating a "class-conscious" account of domination and liberation. The proletariat would have to become a "revolutionary subject" (Lukács 1971: p314). As a result, Lukács emphasised the elements of collective choice and purpose required to transform society. He described the necessary "unity of theory and practice" (Lukács 1971: p312) linking the recognition of the crisis with the will-to-action needed to revolutionise the crisis-ridden social order. This both echoed and added to the form and content of Gramsci's praxis.

Korsch in his *Marxism and Philosophy* (1970) was also to explore the revolutionary possibilities of a "Hegelian" dialectical materialism to overcome the limitations he saw in the Second and Third Internationals. His focus was the problematic of superstructural-ideological formations, particularly philosophy and Marxist theory. His view was that Marxism was a "theory of social revolution that comprises all areas of society as a *totality*" (Korsch 1970: p96). Accordingly ideological elements cannot be reduced to simple reflections of economic circumstances, for in doing so, revolutionary philosophy ceases to be active and merely becomes passive and disengaged theorising. Korsch sought to resolve this through dialectical materialism's capacity to "question the relationship of ideology to social revolution and of social revolution to ideology" (Korsch 1970: p71).

As a result all ideologies, including philosophy need to be treated "as concrete realities and not as empty fantasies" (Korsch 1970: p73). The obvious corollary of this reasoning is that philosophy needs to be acted upon and used as a concrete tool to transform society, resonating with and contributing to the understanding of praxis. For Korsch, when revolutionary philosophy realised itself as the concrete

abolition of the bourgeois social reality then revolution has transpired. Revolutionary theory and practice have to engage simultaneously and in this dialectical synthesis they abolish the whole of society and its economic base, as well as themselves as abstractions, using Marx's words Korsch says: "Philosophy cannot be abolished without being realised" (Korsch 1970: p97).

Both Lukács and Korsch believed that the immanent breakdown of capitalism failed during the 1920's because the working class did not develop sufficient class-consciousness of its role as the primary revolutionary agent. They sought to develop understandings of praxis to address this. Lukács developed a concept of a revolutionary "collective subject" which challenged working class passive determinism. History for Lukács was comprehensible and this made it malleable through praxis. By developing the insight of the working class into the working of history and making them aware of themselves as the agent for change, change was indeed possible. Lukács' praxis was this union of insight and action. Korsch on the other hand, approached the problem of class-consciousness from the angle of the structure-agency dilemma, arguing that Marxism was inherently dialectical and that a deterministic understanding undermined the revolutionary power of the working class. Class-consciousness was a material social force and needed to be developed. The working class needed engaged theory, which would consolidate and direct this social force. Inverting the standard logic, Korsch saw that only when revolutionary theory was realised (praxis) by the action of the working class, would it be abolished. Theory would cease in its realisation as social change.

D. The Frankfurt School and Critical Theory

The Institute for Social Research located in Frankfurt, Germany in the late 1920's and 1930's was the original site of the development of "critical theory", perhaps the most influential form of Western Marxism following the First World War. The Frankfurt Institute was led by Max Horkheimer, (the director of the Institute from

1930 to 1958) and included Theodor Adorno (who replaced Horkheimer as director after 1958), Herbert Marcuse, Erich Fromm, Walter Benjamin, Henryk Grossman and Friedrich Pollock, amongst others. The rise of fascism and the Nazi assumption of power in 1933 meant that this institution was forced to move firstly Geneva and finally to New York. To better comprehend their particular development of praxis-inclined "critical theory" it is helpful to pay attention to the circumstances and problems that led to their genesis.

It has been observed by a number of writers (Adamson 1980; Agger 1979; Arato & Gebhardt 1988; Bluhm 1978; Bottomore 1980 et al) that the combination of the failure of the German revolution (1919-21) and success of the Russian revolution together with the structural shift in capitalism's mode of production from market to state-interventionism, forged the "critical Marxist" or "Western Marxist" or "Hegelian Marxist" tendency. As a result of the transfer of socialist leadership to Lenin's USSR, the theoretical reconstruction of Marxism outside Russia was initially only possible on the periphery: Gramsci, Lukács and Korsch were dissident voices that laid the foundations for this approach. While they (Gramsci possibly excepted) never totally abandoned the idea of the inevitable crisis-ridden end of capitalism, they did pioneer a new revolutionary philosophy: the "philosophy of praxis" (Gramsci's term).

In the light of the failure of revolution in the capitalist world, the philosophy of praxis represented a return to issues of subjectivity and agency against the objective structures found in the early Marx. Together with the concepts of alienation, hegemony, reification and mediation, this praxis evoked Marx's original humanistic formulation of revolutionary ideology. Crucially the emphasis was away from economic determinism and back to human collective agency. Revolutionary action could be predicated only on the conscious and self-conscious actions of human subjects who anticipated in their self-organisation and inter-subjective relations the structure of the future (Arato & Gebhardt 1988).

Thus, when confronting the failure of revolution in the West after 1923, despite the prevailing economic crisis, these social critics, Gramsci, Lukács and Korsch were forced to conclude the fault lay within revolutionary subjectivity, which they described as the "ideological crisis of the proletariat" (Lukács 1971) or the product of the political-cultural hegemony of the bourgeoisie (Gramsci 1957). Ultimately though, these three pioneers of the theory of praxis, were still located within what one might term an optimistic understanding of history, which felt that for all the revolutionary shortcomings of the proletariat, the weight of capitalism's crisis was still in their favour.

This opinion was not shared by the Frankfurt Institute for Social Research. The consistent vision of Horkheimer, Adorno through to Fromm and Marcuse et al was much more pessimistic: the maturation of monopoly capitalism pointed quite clearly to capitalism's seemingly endless capacity for sublimating its internal crises and avoiding social transformation. In order to comprehend this, these theorists focussed upon extending Lukács and Korsch's analysis of ideology and false consciousness, which they felt in the given times was more widespread and more deeply embedded in the individual's structure of needs than in the past, necessitating the abandonment of the model of working class radicalism as the source of agency. As a consequence they devoted their attention to trying to resolve the problem of the dearth of revolutionary agency through a critique that would both reveal and transform society, continuing the development of praxis (Jay 1973).

During the 1930's Max Horkheimer in a series of essays published by the Frankfurt Institute sought to develop and extend upon this initiative, by developing what he termed a "systematic critical theory" (Horkheimer 1972). In so doing he too returned to the idea of a dialectical relationship between theoretical knowledge and political action. Horkheimer, like those Hegelian Marxists before him, looked to Marx's *Theses on Feuerbach,* drawing the conclusion that "truth" could only be assessed in terms of the accomplishment of

specific political goals. This premise meant that the aim of social and political activism was not a passive critique but "the abolition of social injustice" (Horkheimer 1972: p242). Critical Theory in this sense actively intervenes in the historical process, refusing to merely reflect it.

Horkheimer's approach became particularly significant in the light of World War II and its aftermath. The rise of the authoritarian state, the massification of culture and the decline of the individual had translated into what the Frankfurt School members saw as a totalising system of domination. The politics of fascism with its genocides and the kulturindustrie of kitsch, fashion and generalised manufactured tastes indicated a total separation of Eurocentric society from themselves as natural beings utterly alienated from their gattungswesen. Horkheimer and Adorno's theory of domination joined Marx's theory of alienation to Lukács reification. This concept of domination expresses the way in which the human being fails to perceive their own alienation and relishes industrial productivity and its material abundance. Domination is the self-alienation that a person "does" to himself or herself in a condition of "false-consciousness". Domination resists elimination because it appears not to be domination at all but simply the rational approach to living in society: the human being can only survive through "mimicry," imitating and thus accommodating themselves to the authoritarian power structure.

In the light of this discourse of domination, Horkheimer redefined rationality as the individual's capacity for adapting to the requirements of the surrounding social order, to be "realistic" in the Hobbesian sense:

> "...the life of the individual, including his most hidden impulses, which formerly constituted his private domain, must now take the demands of rationalisation and planning into account. The individuals self-preservation presupposes his adjustment to the requirements for the preservation of the system" (Horkheimer 1974: p97).

This process the Frankfurt School termed "instrumental rationality", which was produced through the "negative dialectics" (Adorno 1973) of contemporary industrial society. Domination thus comprised the authoritarian administration of

false needs and desires, instrumental rationality and a concomitant diminishment of individuality. Fascism was its most obvious expression, but the other main expressions of industrial-modernity, socialism and capitalism would prove too, to be underpinned by it in various ways and World War II would be the testing ground for all these competing forms.

After the war, the rise in fascism's wake of state-socialism and the maturation of monopoly capitalism saw the USSR and USA emerge as industrial and military superpowers. This binary would reflect the two dominant themes of industrial-modernity for the ensuing forty-four years. World War II had generated unprecedented state-driven industrial productivity on all sides. This capacity was put to good use afterwards in the maintenance of their specific hegemonies: in the West, manufactured personal consumption took off as the placatory mechanism for ensuring systemic continuance; whilst in the Socialist enclave the authoritarian provision of security of livelihood through universal education, health-care and employment for all non-dissenting citizens was used. It began to appear to Western Marxists that the post-war boom had sublimated all systemic contradictions in the main forms of industrial modernity and as a result, false consciousness of either unlimited consumption (in the West) or guaranteed livelihood (in the Soviet Union) was nearly universal. In keeping with the dominant–ideology thesis of Althusser (1970; 1977), the citizens of industrial modernity appeared trapped in a form of arrested development: contention and crisis was averted through the systemic infantilism of its society. At the same time there was the brutalisation of dissidence, the export of conflict to the non-European periphery and the relentless destructive exploitation of the natural world (Podlashuc 1988).

- **The Relevance of Freud and Psychoanalytic Theory**

The Frankfurt School questioned this paradox between industrialism's capacity for satisfying basic human needs and the co-existent reality of increasing human misery and social irrationality. To resolve this they were obliged to abandon

traditional political theory and look elsewhere, calling upon Freud's theory of internalisation for help to explain the sublimation-repression of critical consciousness under domination of the authoritarian industrial state. Martin Jay described this project in his history of the school as such:

> "The Institut für Sozialforschung's attempt to introduce psychoanalysis into its neo-Marxist Critical Theory was a bold and unconventional step. It was also a mark of the Institut's desire to leave the traditional Marxist straightjacket behind." (Jay 1973: p 87)

Events suggested Marxism to be lacking explanatory capacity. The Second and Third International's assumption of a direct relationship between the economic Base and the ideological Superstructure appeared inadequate and it was obvious that Marx had been obliged to leave this area unresolved due to his lack of a substantive model of psychoanalysis (which only evolved as a fully fledged field some time later with the work of Freud). For unorthodox Marxists who could not accept the official simplistic doctrine of superstructures and consciousness being mere "reflections" of the base, the central question remained open: what was the link, particularly in the problematic area of class-consciousness, between economic and cultural factors?

The emergence and popular diffusion of psychoanalysis at the time as a legitimate social science suggested a possibility. While condemned by orthodox Marxists as simply clutching at straws in order to justify their revisionism and rejection of the Third International consensus, the Institute claimed that Freudian theory could help resolve this problematic, as it provided concepts and explanations that revealed a great deal about the socio-psychological formation of the individual. Psychoanalysis showed as Horkheimer explained, how:

> "the lack of independence; the deep sense of inferiority that afflicts most men; the centring of their whole psychic life around the ideas of order and subordination; their cultural achievements; are all conditioned by the relations of child to parents or their substitutes and to brothers and sisters." (Horkheimer 1974: p7)

Marxist social theory, on the other hand provided an analysis of the structures and conditions that the theory of identity formation presupposed. Each theoretical framework supplemented the other. While today psychoanalysis has fallen out of

vogue as a legitimate "science", at the time it was taken very seriously (Zaretsky 2005). Significantly in "psychologising" or "subjectivising" social relations it demonstrated how agency could find a way out of the impasse of capitalism's fragmentation and sublimation of the working class and be revitalised through mass subjective action. In this manner it anticipated the identity and subjective politics underpinning 1970's "new social movement" theory.

- **Erich Fromm and the de-repressive praxis of "Being"**

The need for social psychology to substantiate historical analysis was clear to the Institute and while they were sensitive to the possibilities of psychoanalysis, it was not until 1932 when Erich Fromm joined the Institute that psychoanalysis was systematically incorporated into the historical materialism of the school (Held 1980). Fromm's basic argument was that Freud had diagnosed pathologies (neuroses) as products of the individual's history within the formative context of their family; from this it was a logical inference to show that the individual's history itself was located and dependent upon a larger historical collectivity; that as an agent of socialisation, the family produced the character types and behaviour necessary for and typical of its particular socio-economic class (Arato & Gebhardt 1988).

Fromm argued that Freud's oeuvre was compatible with Marx's sociology, particularly Freud's insight that individual psychology is simultaneously social psychology. However Freud, as most psychoanalysts after him, had not provided an adequate account of human's "social being". Freud's psychology therefore needed to be synthesised with Marx's grasp of social structure. The task therefore of what Fromm called "analytic social psychology" became understanding social phenomena in terms of "processes involving the active and passive adaptation of the instinctual apparatus to the socio-economic situation" (Fromm 1970). Key to this was the fact that, as Fromm maintained:

> "the instinctual apparatus itself is a biological given; but it is highly modifiable. The primary formative factors are economic conditions, while the family is the essential medium through which the economic situation exerts its formative influence on the individual's psyche. The

> task of social psychology is to explain the shared, socially relevant, psychic attitudes and ideologies – and their unconscious root in particular – in terms of the influence of economic conditions on libido strivings." (Fromm in Held 1980: p162)

In this way the method of analytic social psychology seems to dovetail with the methods of Freudian individual psychology and with the requirements of historical materialism: Freudian tenets of psychoanalysis providing the bridge across the Marxist gap between base and superstructure.

The importance of this theoretical exploration and synthesis of methodologies was that it at long last provided both a diagnosis of the passivity and decay of the revolutionary impulse in contemporary society as well as offered a prognosis and cure too, linking psychotherapeutic practice to critical theory in an enhanced form of social praxis. This would both unveil and release society from the social neurosis of false consciousness-ideology-domination as well as concretely refashioning the material relations to supersede the conditions causing the neurosis (Podlashuc 1988). To facilitate the move toward "sanity" Fromm emphasised the idea of a practical "de-repression", an elaboration of methods of social therapy, which could free humanity from the burden of the unconscious (Fromm 1978). This is exactly what above Fromm called the praxis of "being" (Fromm 1978). In terms of this praxis then:

> "what matters is not so much the content of what is repressed but the state of mind and to be more precise the degree of awakedness and realism in the individual." (Fromm 1962: p106)

De-repression as praxis involves overcoming the "fear" of freedom and knowledge; the development of an interventionary "critical consciousness and direct action that further the intellectual development of each individual (Fromm 1962). Fromm's idea of emancipatory praxis lies in self-knowledge, world-knowledge and the acquisition thereof. This self-knowledge is revealed in the specific world-engagement of Being. This praxis of being is creative social activity, through which the individual overcomes their existential isolation and is reunited with their species-being by collective creative work. The important links are between knowledge, self-knowledge and transformatory social action

(Fromm 1978). Fromm, paving the way for Freire, makes the explicit link between the cultural action of unveiling the objective world and a cultural revolution leading to social liberation.

E. Paulo Freire and the Praxis of Dialogue

Paulo Freire was a Third World theorist embedded within and informed by the complex contradictions of his milieu and contemporary resistance struggles around the globe. According to the 1993 motion recommending him for the Nobel Peace Prize, Marx, Lukács, Sartre, Mounier, Memmi, Fromm, Fanon, Merleau-Ponty, Gramsci, Kosik, Marcuse, Heller, Weill and Cabral influenced him. As a theoretician and activist, Freire embodies the dialogue between First and Third World knowledges. For the purposes of this section the emphasis will be on the specific resonance he found in the neo-Marxist tendency initiated by the Frankfurt School and in particular the ongoing dialogue he had with Erich Fromm's critical social-psychology and praxis of being.

In order to situate Freire, he needs to be seen within his historical and geographical context. At the time of his theoretical development, the shift in the productive forces of industrial modernity from Western Europe to the new superpowers of the USA and USSR corresponded with the decline of the colonial geography as it had been. In the wake of World War Two independence movements throughout the colonised landscape sought the "right to self-determination" guaranteed by the newly convened United Nations. Gradually these occupied spaces acquired the status of formal nations in their own right. The coming out of the popular masses into independence movements and national politics of the under-developed countries coincided with the emergence of the Third World onto the stage of global history. There were now three "worlds" reflecting differences in industrial capacity and rationale. The First and Second Worlds were typified by developed industrialisation but different governing ideologies. The Third World was largely under-developed.

The withdrawal of the “old European masters” meant that this valuable and resource-rich space opened up for the new superpowers to exploit. Concealed in the ideological conflict of the Cold War, the USA and USSR battled for territorial “influence” in these under-developed post-colonies. Recognising this, many such countries and their leadership attempted to steer a neutral path of autonomous development, forging an alliance at Bandung in 1955, whereby they sought to remain “non-aligned” to either superpower and pledged mutual co-operation. Bandung represented a vocalisation of the seldom-heard Third World speaking both to itself and up to the developed worlds.

Freire, located in the Third World reflected on the implications of this scenario of shifting power. What was clear to Freire was that the formal industrial proletariat had been effectively neutralised by the false consciousness of either endless consumption or guaranteed livelihood in both advanced monopoly capitalism and state-socialism. On the other hand, the incipient informalised working classes of the under-industrialised Third World, overwritten by colonial narratives, was voiceless. Broken from their vernacular modes and relations of production and not quite set in the mould of industrial-modernity, the masses in these newly independent countries were at a critical moment: they were either at the threshold of a true liberation or easy prey for more efficient means of domestication (Freire 1970).

In a discourse deeply reliant on Erich Fromm’s understanding of the tension between social character and the social unconscious and the social filters pertaining to it, Freire applies himself to understanding the historical-cultural configuration which he call the “culture of silence” (Freire 1970: p57). This culture of silence for Freire is “born of the relationship between the Third World and the metropolis” (Freire 1970: p57). It is not an imposed culture but rather one dialectically arising from the encounter between the two, as Jan Fiori observed in

a conversation with Freire, “this culture is the result of the structural relations between the dominated and the dominators” (Freire 1970: p58).

As a consequence of the cultural-intellectual vacuum left in the wake of colonialism, the relationship between the Third World “dependent” society and the “director” society of the metropolis is shaped by the will of the latter. The dependent society's culture is entirely false consciousness, as Freire concludes:

> “The dependent society is by definition a silent society. Its voice is not an authentic voice, but merely an echo of the voice of the metropolis – in every way, the metropolis speaks the dependent listens.” (Freire 1970: p59)

Post-colonial developing nations have a “social character” (Freire 1970; Fromm 1962, 1977,1978) that reflects the ideological imperative of the developed industrial “director” societies rather than their own domestic economic base. This is a false consciousness extraneous to its location. It is a mode of consciousness that cannot objectify or problematise the reality it confronts.

Lacking a critical structural perception, the members of these societies cannot truly comprehend the world of their daily lives and therefore cannot confront, challenge or change it. Instead they attribute the sources and problems of their situation to being beyond their comprehension, either the product of fate or supernatural intervention. Freire describes this as “magic consciousness” which in all cases views the human livelihood struggle as something outside objective, concrete reality (Freire 1970). As a result human action is not directed at transforming reality.

These dependent societies are characterised by a passive fatalism and are subject to exploitation and oppression. This dependent social character is propagated via the institutional forms introduced to these societies through the colonial encounter and now compounded by the ubiquitous conversation with industrial-modernity. Freedom from colonial oppression has not brought true

liberation, oppressive structural relations still continue only now they favour local elites.

This lingering psychic dependence Freire finds explained by Erich Fromm's idea of the "fear of freedom" (Fromm 1978). According to Freire in *The Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (2000):

> "The oppressed, having internalised the image of the oppressor and adopted his guidelines, are fearful of freedom. Freedom would require them to eject and replace it with autonomy and responsibility... the oppressed suffer from the duality, which has established itself in their innermost being. They discover that without freedom they cannot exist authentically. Yet, although they desire authentic existence, they fear it. They are at one and at the same time themselves and the oppressor whose consciousness they have internalised. The conflict lies in the choice between being wholly themselves or being divided, between ejecting the oppressor within or not ejecting them; between human solidarity and alienation... between being spectators or being actors... between speaking or being silent... this is the tragic dilemma of the oppressed..." (Freire 2000: p48-9)

Thus the ideological-cultural onslaught upon indigenous life continues unabated after independence with the native-born ruling elites of these countries now becoming the source of this oppression. The reason they can do this successfully is because of the ubiquitous "fear of freedom" inherent in the subject population who cannot consider existing without domination. Domination continues within the hearts and minds of the oppressed. The instruments for this domination lie in the various institutions that facilitate modernity, but for Freire they manifest most thoroughly in the realm of education.

Education for Freire is the both the social filter occluding the "social unconscious" (Freire 1970; Fromm 1962, 1977,1978) and the mould of dependent social character. In Third World society education is typified by "instrumentalist literacy" (Freire 1970) that disseminates, props up and reifies the dominant oppressive ideological perspective. The instrumentalist approach to literacy functions to domesticate consciousness by separating knowledge in a reductionist manner. On one hand the industrial process creates "specialised" fields and "subjects" of knowledge and on the other hand demands a general reading of the universe in

which these various specialisations are located. By de-contextualising knowledge in this way, by dividing it up into a myriad components, those who are educated in this manner no longer can conceive of the world in a total manner and are intellectually reduced thereby, facilitating easier domestication.

Ana Maria Freire (Paulo Freire's second wife and biographer) described this process in the following way:

> "This inability to link the reading of the world and the world is part of a *literacy for stupidification* that, at best, produces semi-literates...in other words, at the lowest level of instrumental literacy the semiliterate is able to read the word but unable to read the world. At the highest level of instrumental literacy achieved via specialisation, the semiliterate is able to read the text of their specialisation but is ignorant of all ...other knowledge that constitutes the world of knowledge." (Freire 2000:p3)

In any way, instrumental literacy produces a social character close to what Ortega Y Gasset described as a "learned ignoramus" (Gasset 1961:p87) the perfect object for domestication.

In response Freire set himself the task of formulating a program to both unveil this false consciousness and transform the structural conditions producing it. Located within the broad tradition of Hegelian Marxism, he believed that praxis would facilitate this. He saw this as "cultural action for freedom" (1970) and like Erich Fromm, drew an explicit link between the cultural action of unveiling the objective world and a cultural revolution leading to social liberation. To this end he identified education in the form of radical pedagogy as the crucial point of cultural intervention to effect change. Again his direction came from his dialogue with Erich Fromm, who Freire recalls as saying to him many years earlier:

> "an educational practice (based upon a dialectical understanding of how awareness and the world are given) is a kind of historico-sociocultural and political psychoanalysis (!)" (Fromm in Freire 2000: p238).

Located in this "psychoanalytic" model and corresponding to Fromm's social unconscious, Freire's praxis of pedagogy is informed a priori in humanism, "for

men, as beings of praxis, to transform the world is to humanise it..." (Freire 1970: p55).

- **The Answer lies Within.**

The key realisation of Freire's humanism was that transformation had to come from within the ranks of the oppressed themselves. It could not be imposed upon them from outside. Freire declared. "I cannot propose to the oppressed of the world what I believe would be best for them" and he rejected "(t)exts that primarily give recipes" which encourage the "domestication of the mind" (Freire and Macedo 1995: p390). As Macedo points out, "those who materially experience oppression have little difficulty identifying their oppressors", noting at the same time that those who adopt "a relativistic posture concerning the oppressed and the oppressor" may unwittingly enable the intellectualisation and abstraction of real problems (Freire and Macedo 1995: p387).

Freire's faith in the intellectual capacity of the oppressed as the source of agency was picked up and endorsed by Torraine, who in *The Voice and the Eye* (1978) observed:

> "the most oppressed and alienated are not completely alienated: they maintain an awareness of their situation. Intervention, like teaching or group-work and unlike activist propaganda helps the actor shake free of the constraints by which he is surrounded, to extend his field of analysis and become more capable of action." (Torraine 1978: p148)

Freire is very clear that for true liberation to occur it must take place at the level of the most oppressed in society, "to achieve this praxis, however, it is necessary to trust in the oppressed and their ability to reason" (Freire 2000: p64). The bedrock of oppression for Freire was to be found in the favelas, callampas and barrios that hugged the Third World metropolis. For only at the level of the slum dweller was there the concrete understanding (if inarticulate) of the structural conditions, which manufactured oppression, as Freire notes:

> "There are many people who consider the slum dwellers marginal, intrinsically wicked and inferior. To such people we recommend the profitable experience of discussing the slum situation with the slum dwellers themselves...they may rectify their mythical clichés and

> assume a more scientific attitude... they may even end up realising that if intrinsic evil exists it is part of the structures and that it is the structures which need to be transformed." (Freire 1970: p39)

In making this recommendation, Freire challenged the paternalistic external agency of traditional development practice, as well as orthodox vanguard-activism. Instead he valorised slum expertise. He correctly observed that slumdwellers possess subjective and embodied knowledge of surviving, that their daily lives are embedded in situated knowledge. The issue to be addressed for Freire was how to utilise this knowledge for social change.

The transformatory solution to the existential oppression and domination lay within the oppressed as unconscious potential. This solution could be revealed through a praxis of cultural action that, as psychotherapy does, would draw the unconsciously hidden into view and thereby become malleable, invoking action that would in turn initiate further revelation. Like psychotherapy this exposition would be revealed in the conversation between conscious and unconscious elements. The key element, that Freire describes as the synthesising mechanism of dialectical antagonism, and which underpins his entire methodology, is "dialogue" (Freire 2000).

Freire's dialogic concept of praxis transforms the divide between reflection and action into a productive tension that awakens from the depths of the sub-conscious the capacity to critically reason and act accordingly. As Freire notes:

> "the act of knowing involves a dialectical movement which goes from action to reflection and from reflection upon action to a new action." (Freire 1970: p31)

Evoking the submerged subjectivity of the oppressed to rise and engage with the world in a transformatory way, of making the unconscious conscious. The dialogue between situated subjective experience and objective knowledge occurs through a process of "conscientisation" (Freire 1970: p49) leading to agency.

As a methodology articulating the relationship between comprehension and social transformation, the core of conscientisation lies in developing the capacity to analyse and read the world (Torres in Mclaren 1994a: p430; Weiler 1991: p463). Originating not from abstract theory but from their subjective understanding of the world around them, the oppressed develop a critical consciousness of objective forces of oppression and its accompanying social, political and economic contradictions (Freire 1970: p17; Torres in McLaren 1994: p439). Freire's process of conscientisation focuses upon the dynamic relationship between emancipatory action and knowledge. Slumdwellers themselves become agents of conscientisation and creators of new knowledge to challenge the production of their poverty. Meaningful change is seen to occur through a process of conscientisation that empowers individuals to actively critique oppressive powers well as participate in the construction of alternatives.

Conscientisation is based upon the immediate experience of exploitation tied to objective accounts of limiting structures. This affects the critical shift from the naivety of "magic consciousness" (Freire 1970) to critical consciousness. Magic consciousness is characterised by passivity, resignation and a static worldview, whereas critical consciousness allows the oppressed to view themselves as subjects of a historical process and agents of collective action not as inert victims. "It is only when the oppressed find the oppressor out and become involved in the organised struggle for their liberation that they begin to believe in themselves (Freire 1970: p47). By making the oppressed aware of the anthropological meaning of society and culture, that it is not a divine, magic, supernatural, fatalistic or fantastic creation but based upon the economic-political-ideological context, Freire sought to challenge the system of cultural domination.

Cultural action would begin to become a cultural revolution when the oppressed realised their own role as the makers of culture (Freire 1970). Once this is understood the oppressed have begun the process of conquering the "director"

driven (Freire 1970) social character and embarked upon the journey toward regaining possession of knowledge of the world. They would become literate, politically speaking. The given representations of reality would be decodified and as the questioning deepened, the world would become authentically known again. This knowledge would allow a re-reading of reality whereby the learner's engagement in political practices would logically be aimed at social transformation. (Freire 2000)

- **Praxis of Dialogue, Everyday Tools for Change**

As noted above, the practical validity and effectiveness of Freire's pedagogical praxis lay in the fact that it began within the existential situation of the oppressed. It needed no external agency, but it did require a catalyst to initiate the process of self-discovery. For while the on-the-ground existential subject possesses unique practical knowledge, this knowledge is incomplete. The lived experiences of the oppressed are not a perfect source of knowledge and require a dialectical complement (Freire and Macedo 1995: p385).

To do this Freire devised a set of heuristic devices based upon the template of dialogue that as praxis would incrementally evoke subjective awakening. Underpinning these heuristic tools is the way in which learners shared their experiences with each other in a collective synthesis of knowledge. Through dialogue between theoretical insights and concrete existential perspectives a relationship can emerge which is "mutually informing" and mutually transforming" (Leonard 1990: p162). Informed by this approach the Zapatista's would later observe that dialogue is the capacity to truly listen (Marcos in EZLN 1995). The importance of this is the process of exchange.

The starting point of Freire's dialogic methodology was the daily lives of the oppressed, the "present, existential, concrete situation. Reflecting the aspirations of the people" (Freire 1970: p76), it was located within the milieu of their many livelihood struggles and began with what they already knew (but had not yet

valued as knowledge), from the pragmatic value of the many "facts" of their everyday lives. By embedding praxis in their daily lives and thereby acknowledging and respecting the commonsense of the oppressed, Freire proposes overcoming it. Freire declared that "liberation is a praxis: the action and reflection of men and women upon their world in order to transform it" (Freire 1970: p60).

Freire does not rely on experience as a pure knowledge source but one that should be problematised. Subjective experience provides ammunition to discontent but needs to be tempered through objective reasoning to become a weapon of change. It is only by engaging subjectivity and objectivity in constant dialectical relationship that the theory latent within experiences is drawn out and can be used in the production of new knowledge (Freire 1970: p32; O'Cadiz and Torres 1994: p220). As Freire wrote:

> "For dialogue to be a method of true knowledge, the knowing subjects must approach reality scientifically in order to seek the dialectical connections which explain the form of reality…to be an act of knowing…the process must engage the learners in the constant problematising of their existential situations. This problematisation employs "generative words"…" (Freire 1970: p38)

Recognising that the forces of oppression impact disproportionately upon the construction of knowledge, Freire challenged the predominantly illiterate slumdwellers to take ownership of the written code through the prism of their livelihood struggles and thereby to politicise themselves. The political dialogue of everyday words and deeds must be founded on the dialectic between action and reflection. Action without reflection is inauthentic activism while reflection without action is inauthentic verbalism (Freire 1970: p68). When action and reflection are united it forges a social praxis that Freire calls "generative" (Freire 1970; 2000) or "true words" (Johnston and Goodman 2004).

- **Generative Themes**

Generative themes or true words, contain both action and reflection, the combination of which is required for transformation (Freire 1970: p33). They refer

to a practical process of overcoming a passive outlook toward the world through simple literacy exercises using everyday words and themes from the slum milieu. These true words operate heuristically at a number of levels, teaching the illiterate to read, instilling the capacity of critical social visioning, establishing social connections based upon existential similarity, and building a sense of common cultural identity and pride. By using words from their daily lives to learn to read people simultaneously begin to understand possibilities for resistance and transformation. These generative words and themes ground literacy-training in a process of social envisioning. The sharing of experiences expressed out loud through the use of generative words acknowledges their private lives as a cultural phenomenon thereby valorising them and moving them from being dismissed to center stage. In this way, these words as tools of praxis sustain the tension between reality and envisaging hope about creating alternative ways of living.

Freire describes the historical conditions which limit the oppressed as "limit situations" (Freire 1970: p80). Current realities are viewed not as a "closed world from which there is no exit" (Freire 1970: p29) but as "limiting situations" that can be transformed. Generative themes are used to make the oppressed establish the connections between their existential situations and the forces that limit them. These words or themes identify obstacles to change and provide the keys to transformative action, for overcoming situational limits by turning these into situational benefits. Gradually expanding generative themes transcend the existential point of zero-sum nothingness of survival (Johnston and Goodman 2004), what Freire describes as "being from nothingness" (Freire 1970: p83).

Finally, generative words cannot be spoken by a vanguard, or in isolation, but must be spoken in dialogue. Freire insists that the goal is not to "win people over" (1970: p76) but to engage in dialogue to learn about objective situations and consciousness. It provides a strategic alternative to direct confrontation and opposition in which the oppressed are always weak and capable of defeat. By

using dialogue as a means to foster inclusion, filling the hollow citizenship of democracy, the oppressed can gradually build their autonomy and capacity to articulate their own agendas (Johnston and Goodman 2004).

- **Cultural Praxis as Politics**

Freire's methods were based in an understanding of education that was political at its core: teaching the oppressed to read was not designed as an end in itself but as part of a broader goal of politicising them so that they could read the world and connect the world with the word, and in so doing connect to themselves as cultural actors. It was designed to develop critical, transformatory consciousness (Freire 2000). Freire "invited" learners to examine themselves as men and women engaged in their livelihood struggles, living and producing within a given society, not in abstraction because reality is complex and dynamic; it is a "problem to be worked on" (Schaull in Freire 1970: p14). Beginning from this point of individual-social reflection, he obliged learners to see themselves critically, challenging them to break out of the apathy and conformism that dismissed them from life.

This cultural recognition prompted the beginning of class-consciousness with the ranks of the oppressed (Freire 2000). While the initial significance lay in its psychological "awakening" of the learners, the continuing dialogue also required a political and ideological analysis as well. Freire's "dialogue" was thus not a simple conversation of shared experiences but implied that this take place and be understood within a social praxis that entailed both reflection and political action. The dialogue must always contain a political project with the object of transforming oppressive structures and mechanisms (Freire 2000).

Freire took the notion of praxis as evolved within the Hegelian Marxist tradition, particularly the social-psychoanalytical synthesis formulated by Erich Fromm and re-tooled it for the Third World. Crucially he recognised the shift in productive forces presented by the post-colonial world and the implications this had upon

these societies. He realised that the colonial encounter had shattered the customary cultural forms and that in its wake a cultural vacuum prevailed filled only by the false consciousness of the "director" societies. This cultural falsity rendered the oppressed in these places voiceless and domesticated them. To overcome this Freire felt critical "cultural action" needed to be initiated. This action would be based upon the social filter of education and deliberately designed to both validate the daily lives of the oppressed and reconstruct a collective culture based upon their livelihood struggles, reflecting and subjectifying the social character of the oppressed (Freire 2000).

The successful transformation of society for Freire was located in a process of de-alienation and critical revelation that was again drawn from a Hegelian Marxist premise. According to Freire, the agent for praxis needed to be the most oppressed members of society, the slumdwellers of the Third World. Freire's focus lay in the crucial dialectic between survival and co-operation and utilised a dialogic model that overcomes both defeatism and naive optimism. His concept of conscientisation is a process that allows subjective engagement alongside objective investigation of power structures, tying together structural analysis and agency. Emerging from the logic of social action, his generative logic transcended the passivity of magic consciousness and the blind agency of oppositional consciousness.

Key to Freire's paradigm is that he identified simple and pragmatic tools of praxis located in the everyday survival strategies of the oppressed that would catalyse critical consciousness and agency. It is because of the congruency of this approach to the principles of Slum/shack Dwellers International that Freire's methodology, particularly his ideas on generative themes, will be used to frame the ensuing exploration of SDI's praxiology.

F. Frantz Fanon and the Praxis of Violence

While Freire resonates closely with SDI it must be remembered that his logic derives from a Eurocentric humanistic ontology. It is important therefore to look at the discourse of praxis that flows in the opposite direction. In this regard it is useful to consider the work of Frantz Fanon, whose observations as an active militant revolutionary engaged in liberation struggle will provide insight to the paradigmatic contingencies originating in the embedded and embodied oppressed. This in turn will inform the way in which this thesis reads praxis in the context of the continued oppression of slumdwellers in their expanding slums.

Frantz Fanon produced what Sartre called "a manifesto of the Third World" (Fanon 2001). Writing in the wake of World War II at the time of pitched hostilities between declining "old Europe" and its independence-seeking colonies, he examined the impact and legacy of the colonial encounter as well as the genesis and degeneration of Nationalist movements and parties. Fanon was a psychiatrist and revolutionary who had been born as a French colonial subject on the Caribbean island of Martinique and who was medically trained and practiced in France. It was in this encounter that he realised that he was a "black man" within a racist binary, which he sought to comprehend and confront. While familiar with Marxism, he considered it inadequate and too situated within a Eurocentric discourse, "...Marxist analysis should always be slightly stretched every time we have to do with the colonial problems" (Fanon 2001: p31). He found however, in Hegel's dialectics and Sartre's existentialist neo-Marxism a certain resonance. In this convoluted way he too is informed by a Hegelian "Marxism" (Gendzier 1973).

As mentioned above in relation to Freire, the decline of colonial Europe coincided with the ascendancy of the two super-powers of industrial-modernity, the USA and USSR. While this tension had proved very useful to independence struggles, Fanon (in keeping too with the non-aligned spirit of Bandung) was emphatic that

the Third World should shun the choice between the capitalist and socialist systems:

> "The under-developed countries, which have used the fierce competition which exists between the two systems in order to assure the triumph of their struggle for national liberation, should refuse to become a factor in that competition. The Third World ought not to be content to define itself in the terms of values, which have preceded it. On the contrary the under-developed countries ought to do their utmost to find their own particular values and methods and style, which is peculiar to them." (Fanon 2001: p78)

Like Freire, Fanon believed that colonialism's encounter had erased the traditional culture and Weltanschauung of the colonised countries. In its wake, all that was left was a corrupt parody of European civilisation and the extractive colonial structures sustaining it:

> "The colony's economy is not integrated into that of the nation as a whole. It is still organised in order to complete the economy of the different mother countries." (Fanon 2001: p127)

The economic systems that the newly independent countries inherited needed to change fundamentally for they were entirely out of keeping with domestic needs and could not sustain the nation in their current formulation. The Third World needed to expunge Europe as a mould and model from its consciousness, for imitation was disastrous:

> "Let us decide not to imitate Europe; let us combine our muscles and our brains in a new direction. Let us try to create the whole man, whom Europe has been incapable of bringing to triumphant birth... It is a question of the Third World starting a new history of Man... For Europe, for ourselves and for humanity, comrades, we must turn over a new leaf, we must work out new concepts and try to set afoot a new man." (Fanon 2001: p252-255)

The only solution for Fanon was to reject Eurocentrism outright and to begin afresh.

However, how were the colonised to do this? To achieve this tabula rasa, Fanon believed that a revolution was required. While framed in terms of national liberation, this revolution needed to go much deeper for it had to be a total social and productive transformation that utterly expelled the colonial-bourgeois content of the country. As a contemporary of Mao Tse Tung and Ché Guevara, Fanon

was concerned with violence, but unlike them, his interest went beyond the mechanics of revolutionary militancy.

Violence for Fanon was more than just an instrument for revolution and it exceeded the parameters of war and international relations. Violence underpinned the entire colonial encounter for "in the colonies, the foreigner coming from another country imposed his rule by means of guns and machines" (Fanon 2000: p31). Violence was the premise behind the establishment of European civilisation and all its relations of production. To conceal this heinous truth, European civilisation and values had evolved in a Manichean manner. A refined edifice of rationality, art and civil values was sustained by a separate structure of brutality and destruction of all else. Europe had compartmentalised the world in its own making and the colonies were the apotheosis of this. Fanon describes this as such:

> "The colonial world is a world divided into compartments...the colonial world is a world cut in two...The *settler town*...is a strongly built town, all made of stone and steel. It is a brightly lit town; the streets are covered in asphalt and the garbage cans swallow all leavings... the streets are clean and even, with no holes or stones. The settler's town is a well-fed town, an easygoing town, it's belly always full of good things. The settler town is a town of white people, of foreigners...The town belonging to the *colonised people*... is a place of ill fame, peopled by men of evil repute. The native town is a hungry town, starved of bread, of meat, of shoes, of coal, of light. The native town is a crouching village, a town on its knees, a town wallowing in the mire. It is a town of niggers and dirty Arabs." (Fanon 2001: pp 37-9)

For Fanon, South Africa's apartheid system was the apotheosis of this Manichean practice. Apartheid South Africa was the naked and unconcealed expression of the systemic use of racism by Europeans for the purposes of expropriating wealth from the colonies, but everywhere else too, the colonised were reduced to a permanently inferior status, only concealed by a hypocritical rhetoric of compassion and concern.

Fanon used the term "violence" in different contexts to describe different phases of the same process: decolonisation. Violence was the only means of

decolonisation at every level. The reasons for this were implicit in the nature of colonisation and the vested interests of the colonial country and in the relationship of the coloniser to the colonised. Violence meant the destruction of the colonial system, but it also meant the possibility of reconstructing human relations and so producing a new society.

This decolonisation was deeper than just title to territory, it meant too overcoming the "lobotomy of the native" (Fanon 1986). Here the divergent approach of Freire coincides with Fanon, in the recognition that the first step to liberation begins with freeing the mind of the oppressed from its fetters of psychic domination. Both Fanon and Freire root their discourse of revolution in a radical approach to consciousness. It is only through this psychic awaking that transformatory agency can be achieved. For Fanon violence and armed militancy would give rise to the new individual, effecting in its praxis the double decolonisation of both space and psyche of the oppressed.

But reading Fanon cannot be done simply at face value. For all his advocacy of militancy Fanon was not personally a violent individual and his life commitment to medicine suggests the contrary. According to Renate Zahar in her study of the links between Hegel and Fanon (Zahar 1976) the concept of violence was identified by Fanon as labour. In this way he could use Hegel's concept of work as a liberating instrument: violence represents absolute praxis and the militant the labouring worker. The power of rule is thus the work of all citizens; it is a democratic responsibility in which all citizens must participate. The Mau Mau in Kenya and the Algerian militants exemplified this for Fanon as their commitment of irrevocable acts reflected and sealed their commitment to the revolutionary struggle (Fanon 2001: p75). What can be understood by violence-labour as praxis is thus something broader than bloody militancy. Its implication is that for the purposes of national liberation an absolute, stoic commitment is required: the need of each individual to exercise their capacity to act in whatever manner the struggle for liberation demands. Work in this sense is for him a broad term

encompassing may expressions of social and material production. Crucially though he demands that this be "enlightened work free of its historical intellectual darkness" (Fanon 2001: p159) and he resists any exceptions.

Fanon thus moves from advocating violence to advocating a critical knowledge based upon the realisation of the structural presence of violence and its necessity to change. Ultimately a knowledge so formed is the only guarantee of genuine revolution. For Fanon the awakening of the whole people would not occur at once, "this clarity of ideas must be profoundly dialectical" (Fanon 2001: p156). The citizens must be able to speak, they need to be organised in cells, which supply content and life. And with this concerted voice of the masses they need to meet together, discuss and direct action. Only in this incremental, inclusive manner can the oppressed society regain its intellectual authenticity and act according to its real needs, "at each meeting, the brain increases its means of participation and the eye discovers a landscape more and more in keeping with human dignity" (Fanon 2001: p157).

For Fanon, revolution needs to be located in the lowest, broadest rung of society and it needs to reflect the national culture of this constituency. This national culture would not be folklore or a parody of Europe, but the actions attached to the ever-present reality of the people. This revolutionary culture would be found in the thought and action of the people that creates them and allows them to exist. Revolution lies within the productive and reproductive logic of their daily livelihood struggles, the praxis of the everyday (Fanon 2001). Fanon's formulation of praxis usefully focuses upon the uncivil, outrageous and pragmatic violence that resistance actually requires if it is to succeed.

Fanon's approach necessitates a fundamental rewriting of the social contract of society. In order to free Third World society of colonialism's corruption he advocates the democratisation of violence and in so doing takes this oppressive power away from the structural agency of the state and the special agents of its

elite rivals. Fanon does not want power to crystallise in any elite forms, instead he insists on the diffusion of this responsibility throughout society. The power to rule is the work of all citizens; it is a democratic responsibility that all citizens must participate in.

Conclusion: Common Themes in Praxis and their Relevance Today

During the time of his writing, Marx saw the modern industrial proletariat as the ultimate expression of alienated humanity. For Marx the industrial proletariat was the final class that would eventually subsume all humanity. This dissolution of society as a special class represents, as Marx put it in his *Holy Family* (1845), a dehumanisation (Entmenschung) that is conscious of its dehumanisation and therefore seeks to cancel itself, both affirming and superseding itself. The contention he expressed here was that if humanity externalises their being or human essence in the material objects they produce, then working humanity, the proletariat, made property-less by capitalisms "theft" is the apotheosis of self-alienated humanity (Tucker 1964: p117). This state of dispossession (Nichthaben) is at once a psychological state as well as material condition. The urge to rebel against private property and redefine the relations of production in a collective manner is thus underpinned by a real material logic. Communism as the philosophy of collective ownership of the means of production is thus the class ideology of the proletariat. As the proletariat is the final class, this philosophy of collectivism is destined to serve not only the material interest of this class but also the universal need of humanity to end their self-alienation (Marx 1950). By overthrowing private-property relations in a revolution, alienated humanity would be overthrowing their own self-alienation and recovering their human nature (gattungswesen). Revolution requires a component that is compelled to "practical-critical activity" (praxis), as Marx pointed out, "It is not enough for thought to strive toward realisation, reality itself, must drive toward thought" (Marx 1957: p60). By this he meant that transformative philosophy has

to be the intellectual reflex of the dispossessed class. The contours of material dispossession, the livelihood struggle of the underclass would necessitate a philosophy of action: praxis. In this way philosophy finds in the proletariat its material weapon.

Within the ranks of Marxist orthodoxy (typically understood as derivative of the Second and Third Internationals) this awakening of the entire working class was an inevitable aspect of the march of history. The psychological and self-conscious development of class-consciousness was for them a "scientifically" determined reflex to crisis and contradiction within the economic base. It was as such, pre-determined and only required at most a vanguard of revolutionary intellectuals aware of the science of revolution to guide and hasten this process to its inevitable conclusion. However, as the flow of history demonstrated, orthodox Marxist explanation of the proletariat and their agency did not go far enough. The evidence and revisions offered by the legacy of 20th Century Western and Third World neo-Marxism, as discussed above, shows the problems that these various thinkers had with the scientific determinism of Marxist orthodoxy. The common view held by these neo-Marxists and their major point of departure from orthodox Marxism, was that there was an explanatory gap in Marx's linkage between base and superstructure that needed to be resolved. This gap related to the question of how subjective agency is constituted amongst the masses, within a structure of industrial relations that seemed to defy the scientific inevitability of Second and Third Internationalist Marxism.

All the thinkers examined in this chapter tackle the issue of how to constitute revolutionary class-consciousness through the vehicle of praxis. Praxis in all cases was the synthesis of theory and action. Common throughout was an emphasis on what can be termed an auto-didacticism of the oppressed masses rooted in the authenticity and experiences of their daily lives. Praxis provides the reflexive and critical elements necessary for the constitution of collective subjectivity and the platform for social agency. In this way sociality within given

industrial society is shifted, as Melucci describes "from the inherited to the constructed" (Melucci 1996: p380). Society then is no longer the passive replication of the social order embedded in institutions and roles; rather, it becomes a field of cognitive and emotional investment which creates its own meaning (Melucci 1996). Collective action-praxis becomes the terrain for exploration of the possible, escaping the oppression of the inherited, and revealing the self-constructed future of the collective will of the masses. In all cases the connection between critical self-analysis and intervention is fundamental. Praxis is the constructive process of collective action, but unlike a mirror it does not reveal in a linear way, rather it is dialectical: a circular process of modelling its subjects and self-modelling itself as an instrument of praxis. It is a process continually being moulded and altered by social actors that in the doing creates both itself and the agency of the actors. In this way it offers a solution to both the failed idea that social change was economically determined and the pessimistic capitulation that believed capitalism had permanently eliminated contradictions and would be endlessly triumphant.

While all the theorists provided valuable insights into the notion of praxis as a means of constructing revolutionary class-consciousness in response to capitalism's capacity to sublimate structural crises, a significant theoretical problem arises when the discussion of praxis is introduced into the current era of globalised capitalism and apartheid labour. The changed structural conditions have shifted the conflict from being primarily located in Northern production to that of Southern reproduction, whose "livelihood struggles" are at the present the focus of discontent. As argued in Chapter Two, today the class of the oppressed is no longer the formal industrial proletariat but the informalised Southern lumpenproletariat. The absence of a revolutionary organised working class suggests that the role of social movements and community based organisations representing the Southern dispossessed moves to the centre of counter-hegemony. In this new set of contradictions, theories of praxis need to be evaluated accordingly.

Within this new terrain of engagement Gramsci's vision retains much relevance. As noted, Gramsci was particularly concerned to avoid the pitfalls of vanguardism, instead argued for a mutually supportive, non-authoritarian relationship between "organic intellectuals and people-nation". This had its apotheosis in the revolutionary Party, which united mass action and intellectual direction into a singular entity. Beyond the Party, Gramsci envisaged an "intellectual-moral bloc" comprised of intellectuals and activists that as it gained ascendancy in counter-hegemonic form allied with other class-conscious actors would become the transformatory "historical-bloc" capable of creating history. If one ameliorates Gramsci's idea of the revolutionary party to fit in with the current place held by grassroots social movements, his theory of praxis emerges with a new vitality. In particular, his concept of a revolutionary subject based upon the synthesis of organic intellectuals and the masses, is key to understanding the "anti-expert, anti-vanguard of intellectuals" approach of the social movement, SDI (SDIa 2003).

For reasons too of the shift toward the lumpen South, the work of Freire and Fanon is also of specific relevance in terms of constituency and approaches to praxis. Both thinkers resituated class analysis to the Third World, providing the ontology for the current Southern lumpenproletariat. Their formulations on praxis are also particularly relevant in understanding the origins of praxis in SDI.

Freire's dialogic praxis of conscientisation will be seen to resonate closely with SDI's approach to knowledge. Of particular relevance too, is Freire's premise is that praxis emerges from the dialectic between survival and cooperation. Here, his idea of generative themes provides a pragmatic methodology that sustains the tension between reality and hope about transforming everyday life. Freire's praxis reconciles subjective and objective understandings amongst the oppressed. This will be seen to be particularly close to SDI's logic of horizontal exchanges of knowledge.

The examination of praxis notes too Frantz Fanon's formulation of a dialectical praxis of labour-violence and its implication for recreating the central role of authentic culture rooted in the daily lives of the slum-dwelling masses. This provides an epistemological counterpoint to European humanistic models discussed prior and situates the discussion of praxis within the milieu of Southern slums. Furthermore Fanon emphasised the practice of "decentralisation in the extreme", noting that it is from the base of the social movement that the forces mount up and provide the dynamic for change. In this bottom-up rule, Fanon offers a radical and Third World expression of what many have called "democracy from below," that, as will be seen, forms a key element of SDI's constitution.

Central to all the literature examined, irrespective of their different formulations, praxis catalyses elements of a class in-itself to act for-itself, providing a means for bringing the so-called "dead and dangerous classes" (Marx 1954: 602) that constitute SDI, to the center. The ensuing task of this thesis will be to closely examine the praxis of SDI to see to what extent it is able to achieve this key objective.

Part 2

SDI as a "Class for-itself"

Part 1 established the milieu and characteristics of the Southern lumpenproletariat as a class in-itself. The conclusion drawn was of a future where most of humanity live in cities. This was seen as a deriving from deepening crises of exhaustion, ecology and climate tied to a globalised neo-liberal market economy. This economy it was suggested, is sustained by increasingly apartheid coercion manipulating real unevenness and difference. Given the underlying apartheid logic within the paradigm of scarcity, the majority will be domiciled in slums as a flexible, informalised workforce, a lumpenproletariat in short. The conditions of urban involution were thus seen to provide a key mechanism for the capitalist process to sublimate its contradictions and defer addressing structural inequality, although over time the lumpen slumdwellers will increasingly be drawn into the relations of production. This capacity to defer the crisis was contrasted against the ineluctable presence of the slums as a permanent feature of current and future urban development. This tension between dispossession and possibility led the discussion to examine theories of praxis as the means to constituting subjectivity and transformatory agency. It was noted in this respect that revolution requires a component that is compelled to "practical-critical activity" (praxis), as Marx pointed out, "It is not enough for thought to strive toward realisation, reality itself must drive toward thought" (Marx 1957: p60). By this we may surmise he meant that transformative philosophy has to be the intellectual reflex of the dispossessed class. The contours of material dispossession, the livelihood struggle of the underclass would necessitate a philosophy of action: praxis. In this way philosophy finds in the dispossessed its material weapon. The core of praxis is the constitution of class-subjectivity and transformative agency, what Marx described as class in-itself, for-itself (Marx 1950).

The debate on praxis highlighted three key themes that have particular relevance to the slums of the lumpen South. The first theme was drawn from Fanon's idea of praxis being the reflex expression of authentic culture that emerges from livelihood struggles of the slum dwelling masses. Praxis in this regard both includes and is produced by the most marginal in society: it emerges from and follows the contours of the daily life of the slumdwellers. In so doing it achieves "decentralisation in the extreme" (Fanon 1952). In addition, a sub-theme of Fanon's discourse links labour-violence to the undercurrent of uncivil and criminal action existent in the slum as both survival strategy and Jacobin potential of political direct action. The second theme that stood out was Paulo Freire's praxis of cultural action for social change as a means for capturing and directing this intellectual reflex to the material world of dispossession. Of relevance to the slum milieu is the Freireian project of dialogic praxis to create subjectivity, and using techniques of "generative themes" and "true words" to produce agency. The third theme that emerged from reading Gramsci was that praxis must galvanise a real politics of counter-hegemony. In other words, it must consolidate and amass sufficient mass action in common cause to carry a genuinely transformative agenda. Praxis in this Gramscian sense needs to be an incremental construction of counter-hegemony that leads to the creation of an "intellectual-moral bloc" and eventually in alliance with other actors to a "historic bloc".

In summary the three themes can be seen as firstly a question of authenticity and origin: praxis must be the reflex action-theory of the most marginalised, including thereby their uncivil, "dangerous" aspects too. The second is an issue of methodology; in order succeed in the fragile conditions of lumpen anomie, the praxis has to be located in a dialogic process of conscientisation, using appropriate elements from the milieu of dispossession to generate a culture of action. The third theme is political; praxis has to be able to create a politics of scale, of being able to build up counter-hegemony to the point of transformative

agency. These three themes will shape the line of approach to SDI.

The next five chapters will focus directly upon SDI as class for-itself. The prime issue will be, what is SDI praxis? The analysis will open in Chapter Four, with an historical account of the origins and background to the social movement. This will be followed by a close examination of SDI's praxiology. The thesis will suggest that this praxiology has two main objectives. Firstly, to build, consolidate and qualitatively develop the social movement itself. This is what SDI loosely refers to as "rituals" (SDIa 2003), which this thesis sees as the core operational principles of the movement itself. Chapters Five, Six and Seven will examine the three core operational principles of SDI's praxiology; Savings, Exchanges and Federations. Chapter Five will draw evidence from SDI's archives to show Savings to be praxis broadly directed toward autonomy and sociality. Chapter Six suggests that Exchanges is praxis toward conscientisation, both in terms of identity and knowledge that constructs transformative knowledge and class-consciousness through an open source radical pedagogy. Chapter Seven examines SDI's practice of Federation inferring it to be praxis of lumpen class formation (located in a meta-identity of the Southern "poorest of the poor"), democracy and counter-hegemony.

The second objective of SDI's praxiology is to proselytise its cause in new constituencies and thereby extend its field of engagement. This dimension of praxis has strong propaganda and pedagogical elements and as such will be described as vanguard praxis. For the purpose of the thesis, the SDI term "tools" (SDIa 2003) will also be used. This will be the subject of examination in Chapter Eight.

It will be observed that this praxiology emerges from the interface between two spatial dimensions of poverty: firstly, evolving in accord with the *local* material lives of the shack/slumdweller constituencies within SDI it reflects closely the contours of their specific livelihood strategies. Secondly, it emerges in response

to the collective possibilities of a transnational network of such localities. By means of this spatial amalgam SDI captures the repertoires of local practice and links them across the South to create a platform of agency transcending local limitations. In unifying these many localisms into a coherent collective actor as a common subjectivity, SDI relies upon, captures and reflects a broadly shared class-consciousness of the Southern lumpenproletariat. It is suggested that through this praxiology SDI facilitates the constitution of counter-hegemony that contrary to orthodox social theory is located in the slums whose scale and depth of representation approximates the Gramscian notion of an intellectual-moral bloc moving toward a historic bloc. This lumpen bloc expresses the dialectical antithesis of neo-liberal, apartheid hegemony in an era of heightened commodity and scarcity crises. The dialectic of this encounter is between the forces globalised production and the demands of lumpen social reproduction. In this synthesis SDI's praxis constructs itself as class for-itself.

Chapter Four - The Origins, Background and Formation of Shack/slum Dwellers International

Introduction

From the preceding chapter it is possible to see that the discourse of praxis, particularly as defined by Gramsci, Freire and Fanon is theoretically well suited to the expanding class of lumpenproletariat slumdwellers produced within the neo-colonial context of increasingly apartheid-like global capitalism and deepening urbanisation. It is this marginalised multitude that forms the constituency that SDI in part represents. SDI views itself as a transnational social movement constructed by grassroots praxis dedicated to the autonomous social and material transformation of the poverty and oppression that they all live in.

Yet despite the domestic co-operation produced by the slum spatiality, the negative lumpenproletarian characteristics of slumdwellers conjoined with the urban involution producing them, such as ghettofication, criminality, and mutual hostility, clearly work against cosmopolitan social constructions of this kind. One can envisage slums and ghettos reproducing proto-fascist collectivity (gangs, localist social movements) that coincide with the broader enclave formation demanded by global apartheid capitalism, but the construction of the deep cosmopolitanism that SDI claims is more difficult. It seems particularly at odds with their experience. The question arises then, how does praxis find purchase in the social character of this disaggregated, informalised multitude?

For this reason section A of this chapter will undertake an archaeology of the epistemological and institutional origins of SDI. In doing so, the chapter will not attempt a full intellectual history, but rather to sketch in the most overt intellectual and discursive influences that appear to inform the slums that in turn inform the SDI philosophy. Consequently the chapter will be limited to the paradigms and the specific histories of the areas most proximate to SDI. In this regard discourse

clearly outside the Eurocentric epistemology, in particular African and Asian ideas that obviously resonates with SDI will be examined. The three main non-European narratives that will be considered are Gandhi's "Sarvodaya", Black Consciousness both in a broad sense and its specific anti-apartheid formulation, as well as the non-aligned movement originating in Bandung. Section B of the chapter will tie this discursive milieu to the spatial development of SDI. To illustrate the total history of SDI would be encyclopaedic, for currently they represent the confederation of community based organisations from thirty countries across the globe, each with multiple regional and local chapters replete with their own histories. Any attempt at a comprehensive account of these would be beyond the scope of this thesis. Instead the focus will be on understanding their core ontology in the regions most immediate to the source of these ideas. In this regard the drivers of SDI seem to lie most substantially in South Asia and Southern Africa. As a result, for practical purposes, the chapter will be limited to closely examine the origins and antecedents of SDI in India and South Africa.

Once this background has been laid out, the dynamics of SDI will be looked at in section C. It will be seen that SDI represents a cross-continental convergence of differing social movements with common themes. Pursuing a similar paradigm shift pertaining to the intensification of homelessness, community based organisations (CBO's) in different geographies and reflecting different time scales in each location came together in South Africa in 1996 to forge an intellectual and social commons linking their various discrete struggles in one confederation of agency. This agenda is seen as reflective of the meshing of ideas spread by Bandung, continuing the traditions of non-Eurocentric discourse located in Black Consciousness in its broadest sense, on collectivist principles resonant with Gandhian Sarvodaya.

A. Epistemology of the South

Both Fanon and Freire were discursively situated as clear expressions of mobilised radical opposition to overt Eurocentric imperialism or its institutional legacy. The current Southern lumpenproletariat is engaged in a somewhat less clear-cut struggle. They often occur in states that arose in part from the very kind of struggles that Fanon and Freire were engaged in. Fulfilling Fanon's prophecy of the compradors, the milieu of oppression occurs today in a context of marked ideological and material contradiction. Despite the hypocrisy of the ruling elites, the rhetorical overlay of liberation politics is still a powerful element in many of the countries SDI operates in. This liberation orthodoxy trickles down and permeates all corners of these societies, including the slums. It is a significant element in the construction of the social character of the slumdwellers, who it might be said exist not only on material scraps, but also upon the scrap heap of ideas. It is important therefore to look broadly at some of the main narratives that inform this counter-Eurocentric discourse and how this has affected the intellectual milieu of the slums.

As noted earlier, World War II signified a shift in modus operandi for industrial modernity: two competing rivals allied together had defeated a third. State-socialist industrialism and capitalist industrialism had united temporarily to remove fascist industrialism from the field. The centres of both forms of power were outside the old European theatre and reflected the shift in hegemony away from these colonial nations. Colonialism in its European form was redundant; a new narrative of subjection had arisen. Democracy was on the rise, colonies were being liberated and the atom bomb had been used. Power in the post-war world might take on new legitimation strategies as hegemony through the ballot box, but it was still predicated on the realpolitik that might was right, and the mightiest were now limited to two, the USSR and USA. Both these dominant actors were of course located in Eurocentric understandings of democracy and human rights but they differed widely in theory and application. The debate over

these different forms of democracy spilled over across the globe. Inevitably the emerging nations of the South were caught in this conflict.

A distinguishing feature of the post-war period was the rise of supra-statal capital mediating mechanisms. Bretton Woods institutions like the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund dominated reconstruction and development initiatives around the globe. Located as they were as ideological products of the developed world and expressing Eurocentric narratives engaged in material governance, they inevitably favoured the logic of state centrality to this development. All engagements were predicated upon the state as the core actor and mediator for development, creating a dynamic where civil (and uncivil) society was obliged to make appeals to the state, written in the language of rights and entitlements.

Irrespective if state-communist, or capitalist developer driven, all actors were representative of centralised power and almost without fail, external to the spaces they acted upon. This state-directed dynamic typified all development during the immediate post-war years at least up until the 1970's when in the West market liberalisation began to shift development benefits from the state to the private sector. The inevitable consequence was to create a relationship where these institutional forms were deemed the dispensers of solutions for underdevelopment and poverty. This effectively alienated the poor and underdeveloped from constructing their own solutions, locking them into the roles of passive beneficiaries of state largesse.

As a result, most movements of the poor in both rural and urban contexts, devoted their energies to mobilising around gaining these "rights and entitlements", as Patel and others note:

> "this had a profound impact on how communities have sought to be organised, on what they saw as their goals for mobilisation, and who was the focus of their attention for advocacy, it was the central government of the nation-state." (SDIa 2000)

This process dovetailed with Eurocentric activists location and promotion of rights-based agendas, further reinforcing their hegemony. For the recently independent world emerging from the shackles of overt colonial oppression, this Northern discourse contradicted the more fundamental struggles over livelihood and reproduction. Unable to question it, post-colonial peoples became increasingly dependent upon the Bretton Woods system of aid and development and the complicit passivity this entailed.

Overwritten firstly by the colonial encounter and now subject to its normative demands, the South (or Third World) continued to fulfil the role the North (First and Second World) had written for them, and what was common to all this geography was the absence in decision-making of the voice of the poor and the land that sustained them. In particular, the forces of industrial-modernity stifled concerns resting upon its dialectical antithesis: women, peace and ecology. In an important move, it would be these subaltern voices located in People's movements (not nation states) that as the anti-colonial epistemic challenge, broadened and deepened, would rise in the context of post-colonial statist Development to be expressed in movements like SDI. Many earlier precursors and protagonists would however, set the stage for SDI's emergence.

Although often initiated by leaders of anti-colonial struggles, such as Gandhi and Nkrumah, who went on to preside over independent nations and as such constituted a new orthodoxy, their embedded and embodied vision had a deep resonance that would over time trickle down to the most removed of the margins, gradually becoming ever more inclusive and representative of the excluded, especially as their states became decreasingly geared to such aspirations.

It is the conjecture of this thesis that if the North is fashioned around centralised dominance, exclusion and oppression albeit clothed in a discourse of human rights and democracy, the South is fashioned in the dialectic of the margins, amongst those oppressed, excluded and exploited. As will be seen below, the

South's narrative seeks to foreground these margins. In this sense it can be said that the logic of Northern modernity produced its dialectical antithesis, the South. To establish this inference, it is first necessary to examine some of the constituent elements of this contingent narrative and establish themes that find a resonance in that milieu of the South in extremis where SDI originates, the slums, squatter-camps and pavements of the world.

Gandhi and the Legacy of Sarvodaya

Gandhi's ideas and activities on Swaraj (independence or self rule) gave post-colonial independence movements, and by implication those groups seeking autonomy, a method and content that far transcends the Indian context. His conception of a "new India" can be extrapolated as a ubiquitous "new Anywhere". It was an idea of self-determination and autonomy based upon a vision of a decentralised society, a society based upon autonomous, self-reliant villages, underpinned by a constructive programme of social upliftment known as Sarvodaya (welfare for all).

Contrary to Eurocentric development logic that is led from the top down, Sarvodaya as a process of democratised social-welfare, begins in the material conditions and consciousness of the lowest rung of society, the harijans (untouchables). As a "democracy from below" it reflected an understanding of self-determination rooted in the autonomy and self-consciousness of the excluded and most marginal. Gandhi's program of social upliftment, in contradiction of India's iniquitous caste system was based upon the sharing of resources, education, history, craft, and the mutual improvement in quality of life.

Voiced in mystical terms inspired in part by the works of Tolstoy, Gandhi's Sarvodaya focussed upon effecting a change in consciousness to spearhead his revolution. "Saving the soul, Salvation" as Gandhi and Tolstoy before him would put it, is a collective effort, rooted in the sharing of material resources. The creation, comprehension and articulation of the whole gamut of consciousness

derive from a social context and practice. Identity, belief and logic are hence all social products. The crucial implication for agency in this formulation is that, as consciousness is not understood in individual terms so too, agency is viewed as a social product.

In an irony of this social understanding of ideas, a number of Indian activists and academics associated with SDI have recently suggested that Gandhi himself was not unique in expressing these ideas but simply representative of the prevailing zeitgeist, a generalised idiom of such sentiment within the greater Indian society (Burra 2003; Patel 2004; Appadurai in conversation to Bolnick 2004). Despite this understanding, Gandhi's formulation of Sarvodaya is, as ample evidence and research shows, clearly formulated in direct conversation with the "bottom-up" logic of nineteenth century anarchist practices of deep democracy inspired by Tolstoy and Thoreau.

At the time however, Sarvodaya's specific formulation sought to steer a neutral path between the dominant narratives of industrial-modernity offered by either capitalist (First World) or communist (Second World) discourse and practice. In doing so Gandhi anticipated the Third World prerogative formalised by the anti-Cold War, "non-aligned" movement in Bandung in1955. Echoing this ontology it is suggested that SDI represents a continuation of this tradition, reconfiguring this third way to the current North – South binary.

Irrespective of the ideological origins of Gandhi's theory, the material outcome of the Sarvodaya process as national policy saw huge areas of rural India collectivised and resulted in the creation and consistent social reproduction of a mass consciousness of collectivism amongst the lowest rungs of society. This laid the foundation for subsequent collective practices to re-assemble anywhere in India with greater logical ease. Sarvodaya in this sense formed an integral strand in what Freire and Fromm would have called the social character of Indian society.

The implications of this legacy are particularly significant to the Indian roots of SDI's formation. For in addition to the issues described in Chapter One, the failure of India's "green revolution" (the modernisation of agriculture in post-colonial countries) and India's current meteoric rise as an industrial giant has intensified the mass migration from the rural areas to the city. The capacity for these rural migrants, now slumdwellers to re-establish collectivist structures, is a memetic one, built on the lineage of Gandhism. As will be seen in the subsequent chapters, the principles of Sarvodaya deeply inform the Weltanschauung of SDI.

Bandung and its Non-aligned legacy

One observer described the Bandung Conference of April 1955 that initiated what came to be known as the "non-aligned" movement in the following terms:

> "The despised, the insulted, the hurt, the dispossessed – in short, the underdogs of the human race were meeting. Here were class and racial and religious consciousness on a global scale. Who had thought of organising such a meeting? And what had these nations in common? Nothing, it seemed to me. But what their past relationship to the Western world had made them feel. This meeting of the rejected was in itself a kind of judgment upon the Western world." (Wright 1994)

The overarching imperative behind the conference was to find a third way (hence Third World) between Cold War super-powers USA and USSR, whose belligerence was seen as dangerous to all:

> "We do not agree with the communist teachings, we do not agree with the anti-communist teaching...if we rely on others, whatever great powers they might be if we look to them for sustenance, then we are weak indeed..." (Nehru in Kahin 1956)

Bandung was the realisation that the epistemology of European narratives was predicated upon the logic of war, aggression and domination. Bandung reflected an upwelling of a contrary logic to this discourse of violence. Originating in the pillaged landscapes of the colonial experience, Bandung sought to find a way out of the binaries of dominator-dominated; oppressor-oppressed as well as the

stalemate of MAD (mutually assured destruction), which appeared to be the apotheosis of Eurocentric scientific rationality applied to politics.

As such Bandung was rooted in the counter-discourse of the survivors of the sociocide inflicted by European capital accumulation upon their colonial geographies. It was directly predicated upon the experience of the weak and oppressed, that embodied wisdom of those who had been enslaved and ineffably understood the real physical, genocidal implications of MAD. It was a conference of the weak that recognised that without peace, their futures were bleak. As Indonesia's Sukarno declared at the time (somewhat ironically given Indonesian political and social violence then):

> "No task is more urgent than that of preserving peace. Without peace our independence means little. The rehabilitation and up-building of our countries will have little meaning, our revolutions will not be allowed to run their course, what can we do? The peoples of Asia and Africa wield little physical power...we cannot indulge in power politics...Diplomacy for us is not a matter of the big stick...(all) we can mobilise ...is the moral violence of ...peace." (Sukarno in Bunting 2005)

In order to mobilise the moral violence of peace, Bandung focussed on resurrecting social identities overwritten by colonialism, leading to the formation of a new politics where agency was located in the ranks of previously dismissed categories, such as gender, race and religion. By coining the neologisms of "people of colour" and the "Third World", Bandung clearly helped to forge the modern identity politics of race, religion and nationality. These in their wake would mobilise other identity and minority formations around feminism, gay and disability. Identity formations such as these, by their situation as meta-identities superimposed upon a world of nationalised politics, offered an alternative solution to the dominant Cold-War discourse of confrontation. In the form of "pan" identities many weaker cultures and nations transcended nationalism and pointed to a subaltern internationalism in a "Third World", South-South in makeup. The 1955 communiqué said:

> "the Asian-African Conference considered problems of common interest and concern to countries of Asia and Africa and discussed ways by which their people could achieve fuller economic, cultural and political cooperation." (Wright 1994)

The key rationale behind this agenda of heterogeneous cooperation was to break the cycle of dependency established by the colonial experience and to foster an alternative, non-Eurocentric development logic. Up till this point, "progress" whether by revolution or development had been expressed in terms of Eurocentric grand narratives. Caught in the predicament that their traditional political paradigms had been overwritten by the colonial experience but compelled by realpolitik to adhere to the Eurocentric political discourse, the newly independent countries were expectedly critical of development. A deep strand of suspicion at European values and the need to address the historical imbalances that existed permeated the conference.

Where Eurocentric narratives focussed on rubbing out difference in pursuit of a theoretical democratised mass and a similarly theoretical set of human rights, the agenda of the non-aligned movement was instead to encourage diversity and to foster strength through the confederation of difference amongst the weak and oppressed non-European nations, in a "United Nations" of difference. Values that European discourse hailed as universal, such as democracy and human rights, were perceived as exemplary of First World hypocrisy and normative imperialism. For had not the European state of development which fostered the appropriate terrain for these values to flourish been constructed at the expense and destruction of the non-European world? The need to address this contradiction between norms and history was not new. At the earlier Manchester Pan-Africa Congress of 1945, Kwame Nkrumah had declared: "We welcome economic democracy as the only real democracy" (Padmore 1972: p142). Bandung was the first concerted effort of an internationalised attempt by the previously colonised to formulate deliberate programs to address this in a collaborative way.

The combination of three premises originating in Bandung is vitally important to comprehending the subsequent praxis of SDI. These were firstly, a discourse of "peace above all" located in the knowledge of the oppressed (the survivors of colonialism's holocaust) as a strategy of the weak in a Third World against the superpower binary; secondly, an inclusive confederation of difference and heterodoxy which unifies and empowers but retains the distinct and discreet identity of all its many parts; and thirdly, the material demand for autonomous development to create "economic democracy" in order to level the playing field demanded by the hegemony of political democracy.

The Legacy of Black Consciousness

Kwame Nkrumah carried the flag of Black Consciousness to Bandung. Although defined in a racial form, Black Consciousness could also imply a universal resistance politics located in the commonality of colonial oppression, whereby "black" became synonymous with the "oppressed". This was as much a part of the dialectics of nomenclature as an expression of the circuitous route this contingent philosophy had taken in its formation.

The origins of Black Consciousness lay in the landscape of the forced African Diaspora of slavery, particularly of the United States in the theories popularised by W.E.B. Du Bois and Marcus Garvey. Black Consciousness in any form always meant a degree of inclusion, a "Pan-Africanism" which sought to unify the fragmented, broken ethnicities of those transported as slaves into a meta-identity or pan-identity. According to Gbadegesin there are three types of Pan-Africanism and this spectrum reflects primarily the degree of inclusion presented by each. Firstly, pan-Negroism, which is solidarity based upon either a phenotype or socio-historical notion of race. This racially based identity politics (akin to a black-fascism at its most extreme) is where the followers of Garvey locate themselves. Secondly, pan-humanism, which extends kinship of the oppressed to include people of colour other than those of African descent. This is where Du Bois exceeds Garvey. Thirdly, pan-continentalism shifts the agenda from the struggle

against colonial exploitation to the post-colonial struggle for unity and development. Du Bois heralds a ubiquitous solidarity amongst all victims of exploitation in a common agenda for their upliftment, which he felt expressed itself particularly in oppressed women (Gbadegesin in Bell 1996: p225).

For Du Bois in the 1890's, "Africa" was a mythical place, it was an idea of a identity more than anything else. It was also a universal "Africa" (like Gandhi's India) of ubiquitous oppression:

> "... the real essence of this kinship is its social heritage of slavery; the discrimination and insult; and this heritage binds together not simply the children of Africa, but extends through yellow Asia and into the South Seas. It is this unity which draws me to Africa." (Du Bois in Bell 1996: p224)

In this sense Bandung and the Non-aligned movement together with its Southern inheritors like SDI clearly bear the imprimatur of Du Bois.

Du Bois formulated a system of cultural-material relations, which while informed (and written at the time of) by Marx and Weber, departed from then conventional conception of dialectics as stagism, positing instead a series of "laws" which are conditional and essentially pragmatic. These laws of human progress are predicated on the premise that for people to "advance" requires specific action on their part, "progress" and "change" are dependent upon people doing certain things, and is inhibited if they fail to do so. A key element of Du Bois "laws" was that they were pragmatic rather than inevitable, prefiguring the humanist Marxist tradition and New Left agenda of praxis. Furthermore (as explored below) they anticipated radical feminism by emphasising the role of human social agency amongst black (oppressed) women. Du Bois' tradition of a universality of "Blackness" is what informed Kwame Nkrumah. In this way Bandung became the expression of Black Consciousness writ large, as an ameliorated, universalised politics of the oppressed expressed in a way deliberately non-aligned to the dominant Eurocentric rationale.

It is this understanding which trickles down through the "new orthodoxy" of non-aligned governance to the pavements and shantytowns of SDI's slumdwellers. The shack/slum dweller identity takes up the idea of non-alignment and continues the process of inclusion to its greatest extent, providing a meta-identity that continues the impulse that created Bandung. Based on an arguably still powerless class, the shack/slumdweller identity as lumpenproletariat seeks to transcend the problematic of vernacular, religious and ethnic identities as well as overcoming the nationalistic difficulties of "double-consciousness" (Du Bois 1971). Instead it provides a new but aware double-consciousness located in the self-conscious daily life of specific oppression and the class-conscious meta-identity of a globalised oppressed lumpenproletariat.

- **South African Black Consciousness and Community Development**

Following the epistemic trail informing SDI, if the slums and pavements provide the widest terrain for inclusion into a global expression of contemporary Black Consciousness then part of this metaphorical racial legacy must lie too within that notorious racist regime, apartheid South Africa. Reversing the route of slavery, anti-apartheid activists like Robert Sobukwe and Bantu Steve Biko took Black Consciousness from America back to Africa, basing their methodology of community development on two main influences.

The first was Julius Nyerere's philosophy of "ujamaa" as laid out in his Arusha Declaration of 1967, which sought to utilise the customary "economy of affection" as a logic driving self-help and self-reliance amongst the poor. Black Consciousness exponents saw ujamaa as resonant with local cultural practice of "ubuntu". This person-centeredness tied to an economy of affection could be broadened into a socialist agenda, located in an autonomous black communalism (Black Review 1975-76: p122-125).

The second was Paulo Freire's praxis of pedagogy as a vehicle for conscientisation. The Black Consciousness activist Bantu Steve Biko had read

Freire's *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* and had established an association with a Grail sister, Anne Hope who was a Freireian practitioner and her involvement facilitated the deepening of this practice, as Biko assured her, it was a methodology "we really want to understand properly and use" (Pityana et al 1991: p35).

Both these influences located their action as autonomous and autogenous acts, drawn from the logic of the "daily-lives" of the communities. This redefined the battle against oppression in a new episteme of livelihood-struggle rather than within the Eurocentric logic of human rights. This challenged the notion of agency, as it was understood within orthodox forms of anti-oppression resistance. As explained earlier in relation to the Gramscian legacy of praxis, this new front of engagement called for a fundamental alteration in the method of struggle. There was no room for the external, vanguard-intellectual and a discrete mass that it engaged with. The roles of the intellectual and mass were entirely reconstructed. Intellectual and mass were fused into one, in a process of embedded intellectualism located in the daily lives of the oppressed. This challenged the prevailing logics of elder-orientated, masculine leadership, seeking instead to find its dynamic in the genuine articulation of survival and its conveyors, regardless of traditional mores.

More significantly for the subsequent development of SDI was the critical understanding of who the real agents of change were. When Biko's Black Consciousness took hold in the 1970's, a priority was eradicating contradictions of agency that hindered advancement. "Black" activists from this perspective were clear, all "whites" were complicit in the repression of "blacks"; "white" social activists were disempowering "blacks" by articulating their aspirations for them. As Bolnick remembers:

> "The only legitimate role for educated white activists, they told me, is to *create a space for social transformation, not to lead it."* (Bolnick in Wilson et al 2003).

Thus socially conscious Europeans could not be the vanguard of change for Africans, but they could still occupy a central role by facilitating capacity-building. Later this would extrapolate directly into SDI praxis, wherein, while only slumdwellers are seen as the genuine agents for social transformation, middle-class activists are crucial to setting up the spaces for them to act.

Associated with this rejection of external agency, South African Black Consciousness also called for the freedom from that subtle form of dependency, charity. Reliance on benevolence compelled the oppressed to be complicit within a binary logic of passive dependency to the aid and charity paternalistically dispensed by concerned elements of post-colonial countries. Breaking this link would force the oppressed to take back their livelihoods, compelling them to be active and autonomous. This self-reliance reinvigorated a sense of self-esteem and pride in them that built the necessary confidence that militancy demanded.

Black Consciousness as articulated by Robert Sobukwe and Bantu Steve Biko was located in the agency of autonomous activism centred on the re-invigoration of the everyday exclusively by and for the oppressed. The key legacy of Black Consciousness in South Africa, that informs SDI directly, is the demand it makes on the oppressed to acknowledge their active agency in history. The paralysing image of the victim as object was replaced by that of an active subject, the agent of history in all spheres of life. In particular it identified and celebrated the toil of daily-life as the terrain for the creation of identity and pride. This was the message of Bantu Steve Biko, according to his colleague Malusi Mpumlwana:

> "to awaken the people as to whom they are by getting them to state their identity. He thought that if you could do that then there was no stopping them from revolution." (Wilson 1991: p16)

Biko's vision grew into a formidable and militant student movement which conscientised young South African members to critically analyse their socio-political condition. It recognised that they could begin their own liberation through resisting their oppression with a revolutionary mental attitude. This praxis meant

refusing to live the lie that their subordination was fixed or pre-determined and that there was hope for change.

In this program of Third World praxis containing critical self-analysis and teaching, Biko was deeply informed by the praxis-pedagogy of Paulo Freire. He adapted Freire's methodology (that recognises that teaching is a political act directly related to production, health and social conditions) to a regular system of instruction and to an overall plan for the society still to be realised in the future. Biko followed the Freireian directive for the integration of teaching and learning, that learning is about unpacking and unveiling the lives, problems and experiences of the learners and that learning is about the critical comprehension of daily life.

Biko defined Black Consciousness as "an attitude of mind and a way of life" (Wilson1991: p50), the philosophy of which was to express "group pride and the determination of the black to rise and attain the envisaged self" (Wilson 1991: p50). Its realisation was to recognise that "the most potent weapon in the hands of the oppressor is the *mind* of the oppressed" (Wilson 1991: p50). Its methodology was to enable the evolution of ideas to flourish and thereby give a wider range of people the chance to voice opinions, even if some were inarticulate and hesitant at first. Those that lived and learnt through this method became a community and took that rootedness with them into whatever area of the struggle they later found themselves.

This philosophy would linger long after Biko's murder in 1977. Biko had embodied a counter-paradigm to Northern oppression and later, many liberated South Africans would find a deep resonance with these ideas, particularly those still poor and oppressed at the hands of a Northern-informed democratic government. For these poor under a global hegemony of neo-liberal capitalism, enfranchisement meant little more than that they now freely chose their oppressor. Biko's legacy provided an indigenous seed of hope and a local logic

to confront this, an approach that would be rejuvenated in time by SDI's South African Homeless Peoples Federation.

- **The Margin as the Center of a Theory of History driven by Women**

Looking at all the strands explored above, the logical outcome of the non-aligned discourse and the legacy of Black-Consciousness as a universalising Pan-Africanism of the oppressed lay in determining nodes of agency where the vectors of exploitation and dominance come to exert their greatest pressure. Identifying these focal points would provide the dialectical antithesis to the discourse of oppression. Early in the history of sociology, W.E.B. Du Bois (mentioned above) emphasized that gender, race and class intersected in the lives of black women to foster a key critical perspective. He developed a critique of Black Women's oppression, identifying black women's suffering as a social fact that provided this important and distinct angle of vision. Black women's roles made them an economic vanguard in society, their consignment to the social margins made them vital to the process of progressive social change (Du Bois 1996: p112).

Like C. Wright Mills, Du Bois felt that abstracted empiricism and grand theory emerged from a preoccupation with white male reality. In response to this bias Du Bois felt his responsibility was to articulate the African-American voice within a vision of an expanded democracy, including all voices on the social margins; "women...peasants...laborers...(and the) socially damned" (Du Bois 1996: p114). Their emancipation was necessary for social progress for they were the central motive force in making change in democratic society. The freeing of labourers, the freeing of women, the freeing of the Blacks and the freeing of the oppressed generally were all unfinished developments essential to the progress of society.

Black women for Du Bois, because of their gender, race and work role contributed to the many fronts of emancipation simultaneously, thus providing both an important sociological case and a vanguard role for the society:

> "the question of political rights for women, for the poor, for the unrepresented laboring millions throughout the world; there is the problem of economic justice in the distribution of income and in the democratisation of the whole industrial process... " (Du Bois 1996: p115)

Social movements of black women are a redemptive response to this suffering, Black women's action represent a situated response to social reality.

According to Du Bois, "economic independence is...the central fact in the struggle of women for equality" (Du Bois 1996: p126). The dialectics of black women-hood thus challenges hegemonic cultural norms and values. The historical consequences of the black female experience and the challenge of that experience to the dominant culture's prescriptions for women created a specially equipped community of women:

> "The result of this history of insult and degradation has been both fearful and glorious. It has birthed the haunting prostitute, the brawler and the beast of burden; but it has also given the world an efficient womanhood, whose strength lies in its freedom and chastity was won in the teeth of temptation and not in prison and swaddling clothes" (Du Bois 1996: p128).

Although Du Bois seems to place women on a pedestal, his vision of black (oppressed) women as the vector for social change as a consequence of their unique experience of multiple forms of oppression anticipates specific trends to emerge later in the feminist movement. As bell hooks echoes:

> "as a group, black women are in an unusual position in society, for not only are we collectively at the bottom of the occupational ladder, but our overall social status is lower than any other group. occupying such a position, we bear the brunt of sexist, racist and classist oppression, at the same time, we are the group that has not been socialised to assume the role of exploiter/oppressor in that we are allowed no institutionalised "other" that we can exploit or oppress" (bell hooks 1984: p13).

This position as hooks sees it, makes black (oppressed) women specially suited for the full articulation of a feminist theory and liberation praxis. This would strike a cord in the embodied and gendered experiences of oppression of the slums

and thereby, be borne out in the subsequent feminised history of SDI and its precursors.

Key Themes

Reflecting on the legacy of Gandhi, Black Consciousness and Bandung, a number of overlapping themes and areas of congruency can be seen to emerge. The narratives rose in response to the history of colonialism and modernity that had unavoidably both destroyed existing vernacular economies and imposed external Eurocentric structures and ideologies upon local populations. This imposition was seen as oppressive, but did contain the possibility for liberation and hope, provided the structures and values could be incorporated and transformed to reflect and advantage the native peoples. The priority of these counter-colonial strategies was to re-establish this domestic focus, in a sense, to create vernacular forms of modernity.

The key themes that emerged from these narratives can be summarised as follows: central is the idea that the marginalised or oppressed must find and construct their own solutions. The agent of change is the oppressed, and external actors move by corollary, from center-stage to occupying a critical role in setting up the spaces for this autonomous liberation to unfold. The oppressed must break with dependency in all its forms, find their own voice and reconfigure structural relations to favour local and social inclusion. This implies instituting systems that built democracy from below, located in the sharing of resources and mutual action. Key is an idea of self-determination based upon self-reliant, autonomous communities, a notion of collective social upliftment, which shifts away from commodified social relations to ones based upon an economy of affection. There is a consistent focus on the margins to create a non-hierarchical subjectivity that establishes power from below, and in so doing recognises the key role of women as the nexus of multiple forms of oppression as well as their status as the economic vanguard in oppressed society. This reflects the urge to create alternatives to power binaries such as coloniser-colonised, oppressor-

oppressed, or exploiter-exploited. Common to the narratives is a re-visioning of what constitutes the political by focussing on addressing the democratic deficit through creating economic democracy. There is also a shared attempt to avoid the pitfalls of enclave formation and lateral violence by creating a universally inclusive discourse of oppression and liberation that does not lose sight of particular struggles. The point of this is to build an aware double consciousness located in the self-conscious lives of specific struggle and the class-consciousness of the struggles of the oppressed everywhere. Consistent with this are notions of pedagogical praxis located in finding collective solutions to common themes of livelihood struggle, which activate the most powerful tool of agency, the mind of the oppressed.

B. Organisational Antecedents and Origins of SDI

The chapter will now go on to explore the origins and background of Shack/slum Dwellers International (SDI). This will draw from archival material produced by SDI and its allies. Building on the preceding discussion of SDI's discursive milieu, this section will be confined to examining the origins of two of their oldest organisational hubs, located in India and South Africa. This will exemplify the similarities and differences of ontology and thereby shed light on the common historical and social factors that have led to the growth of the social movement. The history as such will amount to an examination-archaeology of the discourse immediately generated by and surrounding the social movement. In so doing, particular attention will be paid to those elements that inform, validate and produce the particular praxiology that SDI manifests.

The key elements in this regard are those that describe the ideology from within such as: firstly, the establishment of a common agenda amongst the most oppressed in an extension the logic of Gandhi's Swaraj and Black Consciousness to a globally inclusive "meta-consciousness of the oppressed" that finds its bedrock in the Southern poor; secondly, in accord with the "logic of

the oppressed", the fulfilment of a "third way" steering a route exclusive of Northern agendas, reflective of a revitalised Bandung non-aligned imperative located in the extreme margins of the South; thirdly, a focus on these margins and thereby the centrality of women: fourthly, a social and material collectivity as the core ingredient to society, predicated on the premise that economic democracy supersedes political democracy for those engaged in "livelihood struggles"; fifthly, an autogenous pedagogy and development agenda located in these "livelihood struggles" and resonating with the Gandhian Sarvodaya and Freire's praxis pedagogy; and sixthly, the crucial link between land and livelihood, pioneering a new conception of ecology as inclusive of human beings.

Grassroots Cosmopolitanism

Shack/slumdwellers International refers to itself as a process. This appellation is used in different ways to explain that it is not a static "thing". Following a Freireian political grammar, it is not an object-noun, but rather a subject-verb, fluid and mobile. As a social movement, it is a process involving the steady and incremental union of community-based organisations of the poor across the globe, as the NGO, Peoples Dialogue notes:

> "The idea of a Slum Dwellers International (SDI) first came up in South Africa in 1996, when grassroots groups from Asia, Africa and South America came together to celebrate the fifth anniversary of the South African Homeless Peoples Federation. All the groups there had in common a belief that strong communities and strong savings and credit processes are fundamental tools in the world-wide struggle for decent, secure shelter, and that poor people are their own best teachers. This past year (1997), the SDI network has come alive . . . it has a strong sense of values and strategies which link them together." (SDIa 1997)

SDI represents the joining of multiple geographies and their specific histories into a common alliance. From this convergence of various grassroots social movements, SDI has no single beginning but rather many points of origin. Over time this coincidence became what it is today, a cosmopolitan social movement of the "poorest of the poor" and the various NGO's that support them. The discussion will now focus upon two of the sites of origin.

Site 1: India

- **National Slum Dwellers Federation (NSDF)**

The earliest social structure associated with what has become SDI is the National Slum Dweller's Federation (NSDF) of India. Slum community leaders in Bombay set up the NSDF in 1974 as a vehicle for their representation towards changing polices about the urban poor. In the twenty years preceding that, many slum dwellers and pavement dwellers had faced demolitions and evictions. They were frustrated at the activities of NGOs who came to provide health care or education but did not address issues of land security and tenure. As far as the poor communities were concerned, tenure remained at the heart of the problem. Without security of tenure there could be no creation of assets or wealth. Their lives would remain only survival strategies.

In response, the slum-dwellers formed their own "Federation" and worked towards their goal of highlighting issues of urban poverty. Essentially this amounted to a group of community leaders fighting demolitions in their settlements that sought to link communities being evicted or under threat of eviction under a common umbrella organisation. This Federation of evictees was located from its inception in the crisis of urbanisation that was beginning to define the Southern expression of industrial-modernity. The Federation was born through the practices and the legacies of community mobilisation in poor settlements during these confrontations, and its makeup reflects this bottom up tendency and autonomy.

Its president was the charismatic Jockin Arputham, renowned for his activism in the struggle for Manukhurd-Janata Colony. In 1963, at the age of 18 he had left his home in Bangalore to try his luck in Bombay (now Mumbai). Like countless others, he ended up on the streets, unable to speak the local language and struggling to survive. His only fixed point in the confusion and hostility of the city

was the Janata slum. Here he discovered his true calling when fellow slumdwellers facing eviction rallied to his leadership. As Arputham says:

> "Slum dwellers are treated like shit. There is no place for them in society. This is where I started my work – but not with any ideology or any commitment. I did not come here to do some social work. I happened to be in the slum and looking out for a job for my survival. And then I consciously or unconsciously started relating to the community and started doing things spontaneously" (Arputham in Nandy 2000).

He became an activist. Seeking strength in numbers to resist eviction and to secure land tenure and services, Arputham made common cause with leaders of other informal settlements. In 1969, he formed the Bombay Slum Dwellers Federation, which he expanded in 1974 to become the National Slum Dwellers Federation (NSDF). Often on the run from the authorities, he worked to block slum-clearance programs, including the demolition of his own district, the Janata Colony, which was earmarked for the Atomic Energy Department. His National Slum Dwellers Federation barricaded roads, organized mass demonstrations, secured stay orders and fought eviction orders all the way up to the Supreme Court. In the end, the residents lost Janata Colony, but many lessons had been learnt.

The lessons of these engagements saw the Federation soon spreading over 30 cities all over India as a loose coalition of grassroots Federations defending themselves against what they saw as the pro-rich agendas of state and private development. By 2004, the NSDF had a membership of 750,000 households spread around more than 50 towns and cities in India. Its main aim is to help slum dwellers obtain secure tenure so that they are not constantly threatened with eviction, and to assist them to develop basic infrastructure like access to water and sanitation.

The rise of the NSDF was aided by the tripartite alliance they made during the 1980's with the Mahila Milan collective of pavement dwelling women in Byculla, Mumbai, and a maverick Indian NGO, the Society for the Promotion of Area Resource Centres (SPARC). The alliance signalled an important shift in the

gender bias of the NSDF, the linkage to Mahila Milan network of women's groups making the new Federation structures predominantly women-based. In addition the SPARC connection facilitated the development of a wide range of activities to build local Federations and to formulate an educational and organisational strategy that allowed knowledge about the settlements to be created and articulated by the residents themselves (Mitlin and Patel in Mitlin and Satterthwaite 2003). This was the beginning of a highly visible platform of social activism, which in the period immediate to the end of the Cold War, led naturally to the creation of wide-reaching alliances with like minded activists all around the South, in the form of international Federations.

The NSDF resonated very well in the domestic arena of India during the 1970's, against a backdrop of Gandhian Sarvodaya fading to the real-economics of Indian development and industrialisation. The NSDF recognised the difficulties and inequalities implicit within grassroots activism and the inevitable middle-class agendas of NGOs. Their quest for autonomy was both in order to free themselves from the inherent class contradictions of this kind of NGO relationship and the perceived threat of Soviet style communism which permeated the then Cold War politics of resistance (Patel 2004). This meant that their community activism steered a third path between the dominant antagonists of the period, setting the stage for their ascendancy in the post-Cold War epoch. In ironic fulfilment of Marx's dictum that the ruling class's ideas are inevitably the ruling ideas, the Indian slumdwellers echoed the non-aligned orthodoxy formulated at Bandung. The construction of counter-logic to Eurocentric discourse of oppression trickled down and found a resonance in that most oppressed of milieus, the slums.

- **Mahila Milan, Bombay**

Mahila Milan means "women together" in Hindi. It was formed in 1986 in direct response to the constant demolitions faced by pavement dwellers at the time. According to the SDI archives, on the 14th October 1986 a fleet of municipal and

police vans came to demolish the huts at Apna-zopadpatti, a pavement settlement in Byculla, Mumbai comprising 100 huts. Demolition squads usually plunge people into panic and confusion. But on this occasion at Apna the women and children of the community turned the tables and encircled the police. Surprised and unsure of how to respond, the police sought a dialogue. They said they had orders to demolish the structures, to that the women replied:

> "It is unfortunate, the BMC will not listen to us. But since you must demolish, let us dismantle our own huts" (SPARC 1999).

In a situation taken directly from Gandhi's Satyagraha, the women destroyed their own homes in front of those tasked to do so. In this display of passive resistance they confronted and defanged the machismo and violence facing them. Through a display of orderly self-destruction it was an act of moral violence, shaming the police and officials threatening them. It was a spur-of-the-moment spectacle that elicited deep sympathy and support. Women from other pavements joined them. In what is now legend, not one pot or pan was misplaced (SPARC 1999). Significantly it was a moment of spontaneous agency, reflecting an underlying unity and collective action:

> "For the first time they also tasted the power of coming together as a collective and using the power of this coming together to stop the demolition squad from breaking their huts. The women and children had a lot of fun pulling down their houses. They played the role of police and the municipal officials. When the vans went back at the end of the day, they rebuilt their structures" (SPARC 1999).

The families were fed by other pavement dwellers in the locality that put their meagre resources together to make a collective meal, turning a disaster into a festival. It was the day people there remember as the "turning point" and the birth of Mahila Milan.

Up until this point all action to resist evictions had been dictated by NGO's. The language of resistance was based on demonstrations and agitation strategies rooted in the confrontational Eurocentric discourse of human rights and democracy. This assumed that the eviction crisis could be addressed through constitutional and juridical means. The premise was that the state could be

persuaded to change legislation and policy provided sufficient mass action could be contrived to bear upon it. However, this discourse of activism was generally directed from the ranks of the middleclass, whose proponents could only vicariously comprehend the Weltanschauung of the pavements. Alienated from the reality of oppression, middleclass and professional activism could not help but be in many ways contrary to the milieu it sought to speak for. Evictions were located in the far more basic and enduring livelihood struggles of the slumdwellers daily lives. The effects of eviction were immediate and sometimes fatal, there was simply no time for the due process of law. Their first issue was to survive rather than enter into a human rights debate. Desperation was the catalyst for agency and the slumdwellers had to learn to speak for themselves.

Records (SPARC 1999) show that the pavement dwellers were tired of the promises made to them by various NGO activists who appeared with typical bourgeois zeal and then disappeared when the crisis was over. To the slumdwellers, all politicians, NGO's, and trade union leaders had a similar pattern of behaviour; "They came and made a noise and disappeared after the crisis subsided" (SDIa 2000). While the politicians only surfaced during elections, NGOs surfaced after an eviction. There was nothing in the communities that endured throughout that allowed them to manage the next crisis better that the last one. For the struggle on the pavements was not a part-time affair, it was a relentless everyday battle.

Something that communities had learnt over the years was that all these external actors were similarly inconsistent and unreliable. While they came with the best intentions of helping the cause, none were ever able to stop demolitions or provide houses or even finding basic amenities for them. By using the confrontational approach derived from European traditions of activism, their actions generally had quite the reverse effect, ending any possible dialogue with the agents of evictions. It was by realising what did not work that pushed the

pavement women to seek a new way of speaking to the city, of coming together without external actors and acting autonomously for themselves:

> "Their collective response to the demolitions is what made the shift in the relationship between the women on the pavements and the Municipality" (SDIa 1999).

Mahila Milan's spontaneous and collective action caught the attention of SPARC (discussed below), an NGO trying to find an appropriate way of engaging with the poor, which would be supportive rather than speaking for them. The two parties entered into an unorthodox relationship, in which the community based organisation (CBO) of Mahila Milan would lead and direct the relationship and all further action, while the NGO, SPARC would simply be a resource provider and unconditionally support the actions of Mahila Milan. This reversal of the roles of engagement laid the foundation for the way in which SDI constructs its alliances between communities and external agents. Contra the prescriptive, intellectual-vanguardism of much NGO based activism, here the community would lead and the NGO would follow.

There were no more mass evictions that winter. By March 1987, Mahila Milan, resourced and supported by SPARC, had began to help poor and predominantly illiterate women in settlements across then Bombay to understand the politics of land tenure in the city and to develop a collective strategy to eviction. They began a series of practices derived from common sense approaches to their needs, located in the daily lives of their shared poverty that would become some of the core of SDI's praxis. As will be explored later in Chapter Eight, they conducted censuses and surveys amongst themselves to find out their exact numbers and livelihood patterns. This not only gave them some idea of their own size and society in a nascent class-consciousness but also would provide weight to their cause, for no one had any idea about the real demographics of poverty in India. This knowledge would transform them from being "unknown" into a "known" that could not be dismissed. It would provide irrefutable evidence of their existence, plight and needs. Self-knowledge would prove an invaluable resource both for them and as a tool when dealing with external power.

They located vacant land in the city and began to question why none of this vacant land was earmarked for the homeless. They began to collectively save money and talk to banks about why the poor could never get loans. They designed their future homes and began a dialogue with professionals about how they could reduce the cost of the house through self-management and began to examine the impact of relocation on their livelihoods and how they could mitigate those difficulties. Significantly, they began to exchange ideas and broaden their base by visiting each other, street to street, and city to city, incrementally creating a vast collective sisterhood in the slums and on the pavements. In this way the ingenious strategy of local-local dialogue known as "exchanges" was invented.

On this journey they were aided by SPARC, in a parallel South-South dialogue. As they evolved these collective strategies, their sorority-alliance with SPARC provided them with a conduit to the ruling elite, which meant they could dialogue these strategies with government and Municipal Corporation officials. By "using the kitchen door" (SDIa 2005) access provided by the women in SPARC, the pavement-women (often prostitutes) could bypass the conventional class and caste prohibitions and meet these officials (the fraternal and class/caste peers of the women from SPARC) directly. These authorities, which in response to Mahila Milan's actions had initially just temporally stopped evictions came over time to accept the logic of the solutions the Mahila Milan-SPARC alliance were recommending. The women pavement dwellers gave the whole process a visibility the civil servants had never experienced before and the long conversation between the masculine incumbents of power and the pavement-women began, as SPARC notes:

> "Today Mahila Milan can confidently negotiate directly with the various municipal departments like the water works, BEST, local ward officer, health department, land, estate and planning department. This also creates a new precedent inside these offices where officials also have to begin to learn to talk to this class of people who seek an engagement with the city" (SPARC 2000).

Soon groups from the predominantly male National Slum Dwellers Federation (initially from around Mumbai and later from other cities in India), began to visit

the women of Mahila Milan. The men by all accounts were fascinated by the women's strategies of self-education, their confidence to explore a direct dialogue with city officials and their "politics of patience" (Appadurai.2000) when solutions did not occur immediately. They began to participate too in Mahila Milan's exchanges, visiting other cities and assisting other communities to do what they had done.

With the men affiliated, the community was complete. It had been a circuitous route, the poor women of Mahila Milan acting collectively to reframe evictions (by the subterfuge of self-eviction in order to safeguard their possessions and allow them to rebuild immediately) were befriended by middle-class SPARC women seeking new ways of engaging with the poor. This sororiety in turn assisted them to extend their constituency by supporting their exchange of knowledge and development of socialising rituals around establishing a new spatial commons in the slums, thus creating the opportunity for the more pugilistic poor men to participate.

The entire process from self-eviction to cross-class and gender alliances, was located a priori in the livelihood struggles of the everyday for these slum women. It reflected a broad spectrum approach to self-determining their lives. In so doing it took power away from the diverse forms of oppression they were subject to, from the police during evictions, from men in daily lives, from the rich by resisting charity, from vanguard intellectual activists who sought to speak for them. By doing it all themselves, they empowered themselves. Viewed in totality, this was governance from below whose logic was predicated on the lives of the most exploited and oppressed sector of this Southern society, its pavement dwelling women.

- **Society for the Promotion of Area Resource Centres (SPARC)**

It is important at this point to describe the activities of the NGO, SPARC, with strong ties to the above grassroots organisations. The Society for Promotion of

Area Resource Centres, (SPARC) is a registered NGO established in 1984 in order:

> "to create new and innovative partnerships with communities of the poor and professionals who wish to work with them on issues of social justice and equity" (SDIa 1996).

SPARC's founders were mainly middle class professional women, social workers, researchers, students and doctors who wished to participate in the creation of an institution that would explore new forms of partnerships with the poor in their quest for equity and social justice.

There is a clear class divide between the lumpen social movement and the NGO, with an obvious contradiction between a mass movement of slumdwellers located in autonomous action, having a close relationship with middle-class professionals. This appears to defy all the elements of non-Eurocentric epistemology underpinning the social movement, that is, the autonomous village collectivity implied by Swaraj, the non-aligned legacy of Bandung, as well as the exclusive self-reliant militancy of Black Consciousness. How then is this contradiction reconciled? According to SDI archives, SPARC overcomes this problem by a novel approach to trans-class engagement, which by being rooted in pragmatism avoids contradicting the anti-vanguard, anti-expert imperative the slumdwellers demand. This claim suggests the strategic instrumentalism of political alliances inherent in Gramscian formulations of the historical bloc, and as such needs closer examination.

SPARC's rationale lies in events that occurred in 1984. According to SPARC archives, India had just experienced an unprecedented wave of urbanization, which led to massive proliferation of slum and pavement settlements. NGOs in cities were struggling to respond to the problem and their responses were clearly inadequate. This was compounded by India's national image as a land of predominantly agrarian villages, with most development occurring in rural areas. To engage with the now urban reality, SPARC was set up to create an NGO in

collaboration with poor communities in cities. As SPARC director Sheela Patel recalls:

> "It is an NGO which I set up in 1984, along with twelve other people who had been working on issues of urban poverty. We felt at the time that what we were doing was somehow not addressing the real issues of poverty and inequity in cities, that we needed to develop more effective ways to work with rather than for poor communities, and to try and find sustainable strategies which poor communities themselves can use to address their aspirations and problems. We had no fixed plan and no resources, only some insights from our earlier experience to guide us...(SPARC) attempts to fulfill a vision of our beliefs, strategies and roles. We believe that the poor must be organized, and in order to sustain this, it is they who need to develop skills. Hence it becomes essential to create a physical, emotional and social space for people to pool their human resources and facilitate learning" (SDIa 2000,).

The central premise to SPARC's agenda is that the poor needed to dictate the terms of engagement and direct the process. Critical for this was the need to create a sense of permanence and common purpose in the fragile insecure slums, to establish the collective social and material infrastructure that would supply sanctuary and access to resources. This, in a sense, recreated a slum equivalent of the commons. This is where the key concept of Area Resource Centres evolved.

An Area Resource Centre (ARC) is the term SPARC coined to recreate this form of commons (a "space" defined by the community) with the tenure-less confines of slums. This commons may or may not begin with a physical space but is always created out of the imaginary space that the community creates for itself, it is at the very least the "idea" of a community. SPARC's purpose is to create, strengthen and develop such ARCs, because they found that in creating such real or imagined commons, a community redefines its internal arrangements and acquires a new and empowered way of communicating with the outside world. In the relative sanctuary of the ARC, the community decides on the issues that it considers important, which usually concern shelter and infrastructure. As a SPARC document states:

> "to create equity through an oasis of resources, to create mechanisms by which those who migrate to cities have organisational networks to fall back upon in times of crisis or when they sought to fulfill their aspirations" (SDIa 1996).

SPARC's emphasis is to work with the poorest of the poor, anticipating, when it began, the now popular NGO development practice of "capacity building", as Patel notes:

> "When we began, we made a strong effort to ensure that the issues would be identified by the communities of the poor, and not by us. We decided to begin with the poorest of the urban poor. In Bombay, it was the pavement dwellers. Within them we focused on women, and we initiated the process by understanding their situation and their past and present styles of problem solving. Our intervention was to facilitate the formation of women's collectives whom we assisted in getting the support of their communities. These collectives and their communities are seen to be our partners, and they identify the issues on which to work. We concentrate on setting up processes of organizing, education and action. We were emphatic not to undertake service delivery, but we instead assist communities to do this themselves, whenever ready to do so" (Patel 2003).

SPARC began its work with pavement dwellers in 1984. From the outset they were engaged in responding to an intensely violent urban crisis. Early in 1985 the Supreme Court of India decreed that the Bombay Municipal Corporation could evict pavement dwellers and demolish their houses. It became clear that this was an insoluble problem, for there was simply no existing alternative to evictions. SPARC realised that in order to prepare any such alternative, all the actors involved, the slum communities, city and state would have to create a viable strategy that addressed the problems of all. Given the class contradictions, this would be impossible.

It was the dialectics of this impasse that determined SPARC's future role, functions and strategy. It forged the conversation between middle class social workers and slumdwellers. The humanitarian crisis generated by the evictions compelled them to interact and dialogue with women living on the pavements of Bombay. The traumatic events necessitated appropriate ways to work together. The message from the pavements and hutments was clear, secure shelter was the women's main priority. This issue emerged directly as an obvious response

to the terror and insecurity of eviction. In time both SPARC and the slumdwellers realized that:

> "secure habitat was the very foundation of any transformation from poverty, towards proper socialization and constructive community practice" (SDIa 2003).

In that it meant the appropriation and redistribution of property, it was the most difficult area to work in, as Patel recalls:

> "For most of 1986-87 we began to explore along with 600 women from seven pavement settlements (Mahila Milan), every area, issue and concern related to secure shelter. In the process, we educated ourselves: we had to learn about land, development planning, housing norms, construction standards and materials. We strengthened the internal organization of these settlements, created structures, leadership collectives and problem solving forums. And most powerful of all, we developed our own house and settlement model plan and began to acquire skills to articulate these dreams and aspirations and initiate ways to make the city and government listen to us. Savings groups for housing were started, construction skills were acquired and on this foundation we sought to build a movement of the urban poor with a central thrust on secure shelter" (SDIa 2003.)

Significantly at that moment, SPARC had no solutions to offer. The Eurocentric discourse embodied in these middle-class professionals, even if framed by a non-aligned epistemology, was incapable of formulating a strategy. Fulfilling Hegel's master-slave dialectic, the strategic impulse came instead directly from the Mahila Milan women themselves. In this way, the process that finally emerged was a joint exploration of possibilities between a few Northern elements of the South (SPARC's Indian bourgeois professionals), and the South of the South, the pavement women of Mahila Milan. The resulting cross-class collaboration suggests a way forward despite the contradictions implied. Its dialogic exploration of pragmatic activism created a process of education and resourcing, a mutual learning that became the central theme of the praxis of the subsequent social movement, SDI. In the current crisis of commodified property relations, the non-aligned spirit of Bandung was continued through the South-South co-operation and dialogue between SPARC and the slumdwellers. In relation to the Gramscian legacy of praxis, the now globalised historical conditions of engagement called for a fundamental alteration in the method of struggle. There was no room for the external, vanguard-intellectual and a

discrete mass that it engaged with. The roles of the intellectual activist and mass were entirely reconstructed, establishing a model of using the middle class in a tactical alliance. The NGO, SPARC as an external actor was retained at a specific class distance, and its member's skills, capacity, connections and power utilised as such. In their absence on the ground, authentic organic intellectuals rose up to fill the void.

Site 2: South Africa

- **Broederstroom**

A second key site for SDI was South Africa. Land occupations and their brutal suppression have characterised South Africa for generations. Accompanying this precarious quest for land is the proliferation of shantytowns on the urban periphery. In response, the State has always crushed the spontaneous order of these settlements and transformed them into squalid crime infested slums. This pattern repeats itself throughout the centuries of first colonial power, then the apartheid state and now democratic polity. The problem always lies in the issue of private property and its statutory defence.

At the same time however, the very precariousness of these informal, often illegal settlements of sprawling slums served a useful purpose for capitalism, housing the flexible labour-force that the nascent industrial economy of South Africa demanded. The insecurity of tenure that jeopardised the domestic reproduction of a formal working class compelled the labouring masses to live in a state of temporary and uncertain shelter. Compounding this domestic spatial insecurity was the fact that historically the little legal housing provided was often limited to the notorious single-sex hostels and barrack-like four-room houses for the migrant workers from neighbouring states and "independent homelands".

The liberation of South Africa from apartheid's oligarchy coincided with the rise of global neo-liberalism. This meta-hegemony, as seen in Chapter Two, facing a

crisis of increasing exhaustion is steadily reproducing a global form of apartheid that trickles down through its subaltern states. As a result, in South Africa the production of slums continues today, despite democracy. As SDI's Joel Bolnick observes:

> "...in the cynical delivery of corroding core houses by unscrupulous developers, given free rein by a government that measures poverty reduction in terms of delivery and numbers, not in terms of transformation and a capacity to equip poor communities with the wherewithal to transform their lives" (Peoples Dialogue 1998).

Prior to this in 1991, South Africa was in a state of great expectation. In the wake of the release of Nelson Mandela and other political prisoners, the country was clearly at the brink of a major historical watershed. The previously outlawed liberation movements were un-banned, and exiles had begun to return to the country en masse. Yet already, a number of far-sighted political activists recognised that globalising industrialisation and intensified commodification was deepening the spread of slums and that this would impact heavily on a South Africa liberated from the bell jar of isolation.

To address this looming issue, a five-day conference convened by and for South African shackdwellers was held in a town called Broederstroom. More than 120 community leaders came together from the shantytowns and squatter camps of South Africa to share ideas and experiences in an event that was called the South African Peoples Dialogue on Land and Shelter. Also invited were slumdwellers and development practitioners from other Southern nations, who after decades of apartheid, were keen to contribute to the emerging "new South Africa".

The foreign delegates to the shackdweller's conference came from many backgrounds, pavement dwellers from India, homeless from Zimbabwe, housing rights activists from the Philippines and Hong Kong, researchers from Kenya, Zambia and Colombia, grassroots net-workers from Thailand and Japan, as well as community leaders from a number of Asian and African slums. The contributions they made and the perspectives they represented laid out clearly

the landscape of development as it stood at that point. There were profound differences between old development paradigms and new practices that were emerging in a post-Cold War Southern context. As Bauman, Mitlin and Bolnick note:

> "On the one hand, there were the service-providing NGO's who mobilised communities around abstract "human rights" and generally maintained confrontational postures towards government and the private sector. For those that did work directly with poor communities, they tended to adopt a few settlements as pilots and work painstakingly toward upgrading them in terms of their professional image of what "development" should be. On the other hand, there were those who were struggling to reinvent their role. They saw their function as support organisations for the urban poor in their efforts to design and sustain their own institutions, through which they could determine development priorities and contest political space and city, regional and national resources" (Mitlin et al 2003: p212).

These differences were replicated amongst the community participants from South Africa. The majority believed emphatically that as soon as a non-racial democracy was in place and political rights secured, the new government would automatically deliver social and economic rights to the poor. They perceived any effort to organise autonomous institutions of the poor as reactionary and counter-productive. A significant minority however, encouraged and supported by grassroots community leaders from other, older Southern democracies did not see that political liberation would bring social and economic emancipation. Particularly influential was Jockin Arputham, the Mumbai slumdweller and president of India's NSDF. His constant reminder was that despite decades of democracy under a planned economy, India was no better for the poorest of the poor. His message was that political democracy without the democratisation of the economy was meaningless. As Arputham reflects:

> "I remember when I went to South Africa, this was before the release of Nelson Mandela. The people were expecting a big change in their lives after his release. I told them, "Don't be fools like we in India were before Independence. We thought freedom would fill our streets with milk and honey - but today, 40 years on, our poor don't even have a proper meal to eat"" (SDIa 2000).

The views he represented were that a democratic society was not a guarantee for a better life for the poor, but simply a way to opening up the space for the

poor to better contest power and resources within broader society. Democracy, he observed, is thus not a solution itself, but simply a lesser evil than overt authoritarianism. A change in government would not necessitate a change for the poor and homeless.

This sentiment struck a cord with a number of the South African poor. When the conference voted on the issue of how to proceed, the organisers were mandated to sustain a network of those communities whose leaders wanted to explore different ways of working together. As a result, using words echoing Paulo Freire, People's Dialogue on Land and Shelter was registered as an NGO in 1991, as a vehicle to explore ways to work with poor communities through partnerships, within a non-racial South Africa.

- **The South African Homeless Peoples Federation (SAHPF)**

In 1994, community leaders who emerged from the networking process that came out of the 1991 Broederstroom Conference and the dialogue that accompanied it, formed "uMfelandaWonye WaBantu BaseMjondolo" (we will die together), known in English as the South African Homeless Peoples Federation (SAHPF).

This social movement proved immensely popular. By April 2000 the Federation had grown to be a nation-wide poor people's movement which had 80 600 active households. Its membership was 85% female and average household income was under R700 (Au$155) per month. Its primary goal is to develop its member's capacity to conceive, control and implement their own poverty alleviation strategies utilising tools they already possess, that is their knowledge of daily survival linked to the knowledge of others. The defining axiom of the South African alliance is:

> "There is only one kind of specialist in homelessness. There is only one qualification you need. You need to be homeless" (People's Dialogue 1995).

From the outset the movement is located in the one inalienable thing its members possess, the knowledge of poverty.

Its key objective is the recreation of social communities in the spatiality of urban involution and anomie, produced by the legacy of colonialism, apartheid and now globalised capitalism. The primary vehicle, both organisationally and materially for this process, is collective savings and credit schemes (outlined in Chapter Five). According to Bauman, Mitlin and Bolnick this process:

> "...provides communities with a sense of ownership of development processes and a feeling of national identity as shack/slumdwellers within an International social movement of the poor. This creates confidence and reduces the sense of marginalisation that low-income communities feel when dealing with city officials to find solutions to their problems. The Federation process empowers communities to take charge of their lives, demand their entitlements and find sustainable solutions to the problems they face" (Mitlin et al 2000 p.213).

From its inception the Federation through its dialogic initiative has been motivated to building a broad-based coalition of the poor. The Federation is politically non-aligned. Initially it was directed to the urban poor but over the years this focus has shifted to include all the poor regardless of location, as well as forging alliances with any organisation, institution or authority that would further the agenda of the coalition. In this respect the driving logic of the coalition is pragmatism, rather than any normative ideological agenda. To understand the rationale behind this approach it is necessary to look at what the Federation sees as its defining influences.

- **Anti-Apartheid resistance and the Legacy of Community Mobilisation in South Africa.**

In a paper for the United Nations Centre for Human Settlement (UNCHS) entitled *Not for the Poor, but by the Poor* (1998) the South African Homeless Peoples Federation's support NGO, People's Dialogue observed that the legacies and practices of community mobilisation in poor settlements in South Africa as well as the rich history of local social movements have heavily influenced the Federation. Historical conditions under both colonial rule and apartheid meant that seizure of the state was perceived to be the pre-condition for social and economic emancipation. Although most of South Africa's political activism was "rights-

based" and directly attached to the liberation struggle, there have been some notable exceptions to this rights-based approach to mobilisation of social movements. The Industrial and Commercial Workers Union in the 1920's and the Black Consciousness Movement of the 1970's are probably the best known and arguably have been the most influential on the lives of the poor in the Federation constituencies. In addition to their highly decentralised form of organising, they shared in a common vision and strategy that located social and economic struggles at the level of livelihood struggles. Resonant with Biko's vision, they were "daily-life" orientated social movements. As such, they were dynamic organisations, characterised by loose affiliation, high levels of autonomy and the emphasis on collectives made up of radical subjects rather than disciplined cadres, as was the case with the rights-based liberation movements (CORC 2000).

The demise of white minority rule and the emergence of a new ruling elite identified as the "People's government" combined with a deeply rooted culture of entitlement has done much to weaken political activism and resolve. Twelve years of democratic rule has gone some way to discredit the myth that political liberation heralds social and economic emancipation but not sufficient to challenge the legitimacy of a government that is seen to have unseated the hated white regime. As a result one of the Federation's strategies has been to engage this new government and the old socio-economic order that still underpins South Africa in a highly pragmatic way. Rather than either capitulating before the state or antagonistically confronting it, it has developed a practice of constant constructive engagement with authority while retaining autonomy and self-reliance. Following the path of liberation, social activism in South Africa can be seen as having moved from clandestine movements operating beyond and in defiance of apartheid law to open community-based activism challenging the current democratically elected neo-liberal political dispensation.

These various influences and historical changes have had a very uneven impact on the organisation of the SAHPF. On a positive note they have provided the Federation with a cadre of articulate and confident leaders who have a strongly developed class identity and are highly politically astute. Economic and social deprivation in a context of political struggle sharpened the capacity of Federation leaders to mobilise poor people for action. It also gave them a healthy suspicion of politicians and of the rich. As a CORC observes

> "in the wake of the democratic liberation of the country, increasing numbers of people, particularly amongst the poor, are beginning to recognise that state power is not necessarily a guarantee of equality and the end to exploitation" (CORC 2000).

At the same time it equipped a considerable number of ordinary Federation members with a natural inclination for practical projects designed to enhance the common good.

However, in some cases the practices inherited from the anti-apartheid organisations have been decidedly negative. Many of the Federation's most profound challenges have been to overcome certain failings of the past that continue to express themselves in the present. One such problem is a tendency for authoritarian and intolerant systems of hierarchical leadership, a legacy of the anti-apartheid struggle discretely excised from national representations. The apartheid regime was highly effective in artificially prolonging the life of many cultural and social prejudices, particularly ultra-masculine, authoritarian and misogynistic tribal identities, located around myths of "impi" warrior and "indoda" man-hood identity. In the process, many of its most heroic opponents were imbued with an unfortunate penchant for intolerance and domination. The Federation has accordingly, been forced to constantly challenge such bigotry, as manifest in male-dominated community leadership in the settlements, which is reinforced constantly by the desperate struggle for scarce resources. So pervasive are these domineering and (often patriarchal) practices that the Federation has to devote a great deal of energy in combating them within its very own organisational structures, even though women are the overwhelming

majority. The irony of the dialectic of such practices is that sometimes the women adopt the same behaviour as the men who initiated it, the outcome being very powerful female "war-lord" type figures.

Directly linked to these authoritarian structures is the tendency to replicate the very fascism that apartheid manufactured. This manifests in the social movement as a predatory localism directly at odds with SDI's deep cosmopolitanism. Some communities use the Federation as a platform for their exclusive benefit, utilising its networks to access resources and establish legitimacy, yet reject the underlying premise of open engagement that the Federation represents. The specific social history of South Africa makes the eradicating of this tendency very difficult. In the same way that the legacy of Sarvodaya makes the resurrection of community consciousness easier in India, the history of apartheid makes the reversion to exclusive insularity a simple choice for many of South Africa's poor. At the same time, as noted, the enduring paradigm pioneered by Biko and Sobukwe provides a deep ideological bedrock for initiatives located in self-sufficiency and shared knowledge outside Eurocentric narratives of entitlement, rights and paternalistic expertise.

- **The University of Mahila Milan**

> "If poverty was uMfelandaWonye's mother and apartheid its father, then, quite extraordinarily, women pavement dwellers of Bombay, India were its midwives" (Peoples Dialogue 1998).

In 1991 and 1992 community leaders and support professionals who were linked to the South African NGO, People's Dialogue visited cities in Asia, Africa and Latin America. Equipped with little more than a conviction that even in a post-apartheid South Africa communities of the poor would have to be centrally involved in improving their own lives, they accepted an invitation from the Asian Coalition of Housing Rights and visited several shelter organisations (NGOs and CBO's) in Asia. They also forged links with organisations in Colombia, Brazil, Namibia and Zambia. They went on exposure programmes to a number of parts of the world: People's organisations in Bangkok, Thailand; housing activists in

Manila, Philippines; the Orangi Pilot Programme in Karachi, Pakistan; and the Mahila Mila, SPARC and NSDF alliance in Bombay, India.

It was in India that they found what they were looking for in the tripartite partnership that had developed between two poor People's organisations, the National Slum Dwellers Federation (NSDF) and Mahila Milan (Women Together) and the NGO, Society for the Promotion of Area Resources (SPARC). The autogenous and poor-generated practices of the Indians exposed the South Africans to several unique strategies that resonated with their own lived experience and were clearly effective mechanisms for mobilisation of the poor and for action. This is encapsulated in one of SAHPF's earliest slogans "Nobody is more interested in housing than the homeless themselves" (CORC 2000).

These mechanisms were explored by means of regular grassroots exchange programmes that enabled the South Africans to understand the Indians' inter-relationship and their development practices. Elements that were regarded as appropriate to the South African context were adapted to local conditions, systematised over time and rapidly replicated at scale.

- **Champions of Greed in South Africa**

As mentioned earlier, the demise of the apartheid government and white minority rule corresponded with the end of the Cold War and the surge of a triumphant neo-liberal globalising economy. The lifting of South Africa's isolation thus coincided with a rapid reduction, on a global scale, of barriers to international trade. This was accompanied by a diminishing role for public agencies, especially the state. This meant that SAHPF came of age as a social movement at a very contradictory time. A new non-racial government was promising large-scale intervention to redress the historical imbalances of apartheid, but without the space or the resources to make good on these promises (People's Dialogue 1998). The march of time revealed this contradiction. It became clear to both the new ANC-led government and its observers that it was unable to meet the

present and future demands of its citizens. Given its populist support base however, government promises, especially at the local level, continued to be made.

In keeping with the prevailing and dominant Northern hegemony of neo-liberalism, which the ruling elite unequivocally adopted, the now standard solution to this impasse has become market-based solutions. This is despite the fact that they are generally more costly and difficult to implement than voluntary or collective approaches. For the poor this is particularly taxing because the use of the market to address social and economic needs sees the developmental capital and skill benefits remain in the hands of the rich elites and private contractors, while the poor become the passive recipients of usually shoddy development. Neither profit nor costs could be shared across the community.

Instead of setting in motion processes that would lead to the equilibration and redistribution of South Africa's grotesquely skewed economy by implementing a proactive policy to herald in economic democratisation, the government opted for reinforcing a status quo of inequality beneficial to the elite (themselves included). The result has been that those essential services that the government cannot deliver simply tend to become inaccessible and unaffordable to the very poor. The resulting state of contradiction and crisis reflects a broader compliance with global neo-liberalism by the South African government. This realisation by the poor became a crucial element in the formation for the Federation alliance in South Africa. As activist Joel Bolnick polemically declared:

> "Recognising that the oppressed had become spectators in the increasing farce that was supposed to constitute their liberation, the new group sought to position themselves as strategic learners, whose role was to observe and add value to social struggle by creating situations in which the poor would increasingly recognise their own power, not simply serve as cannon fodder in the war to transfer the power of the rich to that of the intellectuals" (Bolnick 2001).

The ascendant neo-liberal realpolitik has fulfilled and extended beyond the sharpest of Frantz Fanon's critiques of post-colonial society. Included in the new-

compradors of South Africa are the very intellectuals who led the anti-apartheid struggle. The Federation realised that it needed to respond to this contradiction in a pragmatic way beneficial to the poor. Firstly, it needed to sidestep the comprador intellectuals by developing the inherent intellectualism located a priori in the livelihood struggles of the poor. This approach both resonated with and continued the Freireian legacy of Bantu Steve Biko. Secondly, it aimed to utilise the populism underpinning the government's mandate to rule and strategically play upon the tension between its material lack of delivery and redistribution of resources as well as its commitment to the global "quest for democracy" and endorsement of "human rights".

The Federation clearly could not directly challenge the state head-on and needed to find a third way (beyond endorsement or antagonism). Four years after the first democratic election, in 1998, the NGO Peoples Dialogue observed that:

> "Whilst the uMfelandaWonye/People's Dialogue alliance is conscious of the fact that these global trends have negative consequences for the poor, they give less consideration to bemoaning them. Instead they focus their energies on efforts to design and improve practical strategies that the poor can use to secure their livelihoods, fight for resources, influence decision-makers and reduce their vulnerability" (People's Dialogue 1998).

This meant a constructive engagement with the state where possible, but more importantly shifting the focus away from a weak intercourse with authority, to creating a vehicle for the autogenous empowerment of the poor, which the state in its populist rhetoric was obliged to support. This would realign the way state and poor would engage, whereby instead of the poor receiving the largesse of the state, the state would be persuaded to support the poor on the their terms. This would fit in with the state's neo-liberal project, while exploiting its populist rhetoric to the advantage of the poor in an ironic "win-win" for both parties.

Common Themes emerging in India and South Africa

The NSDF, Mahila Milan and the SAHPF-FEDUP are all grassroots social movements produced by the contradictions of capitalised urbanisation. All reflect spontaneous collective agency in the ranks of the dismissed class of

lumpenproletariat. Despite orthodox misgivings about the class they represent, they have endured beyond the immediate crises that forged them. Contrary to expectations (with the exception of certain elements in the SAHPF) they have deepened their bonds to found broad local and regional coalitions of the urban poor unified in a common approach to poverty and insecurity of tenure. In keeping with hooks and Du Bois, women established themselves as the key agents in constituting the social movement. In this they paved the way for a form of trans-national cosmopolitanism from below, which as will be argued, characterises the confederation of SDI.

In India the linking of NSDF and Mahila Milan to the middleclass NGO, SPARC bridges many divisions of religion, caste, gender, age and class. The Indian alliance represents a secular, non-partisan similitude of agendas. In this plurality it provides a pragmatic synthesis of possibilities for each of the parties. Mahila Milan provides the strength of street-women schooled in hardship, capable of dealing with evictions, police, municipal authorities, slumlords and disaster. At the same time they provide the nurturing and sympathetic sociality that “holds” the community together. This capacity they bring to the commons they constitute in their collective savings, Area Resource Centres and exchanges. In many ways the Indian process reflects a feminisation of the struggle and politics of poverty which has proved itself an effective and pragmatic way through the impasse of traditional masculine politics and activism. These elements are not discarded altogether, rather subordinated. The NSDF, meanwhile, through its leaders like Jockin Arputham brings a militant grassroots radicalism and an anarchic historical-materialist political organisation in the form of their “Federation” model. In an apparent reversal of standard relationships, the NGO, SPARC is subordinate to the grassroots organisations. They claim that the terms of engagement are dictated by the slumdwellers and SPARC responds accordingly. Their task they say is to provide resources, access to state authorities and private sectors, as well as finding appropriate technical expertise and media knowledge to support the slum communities.

South Africa is far removed from the Indian experience, yet as events have proved, the structural reality of poverty provides ample common cause between these spatialities. There was much they could learn from each other through "exchange". What emerged through the dialogue between the Indian and South African community organisations was that the South African Federation recognised that it was necessary to break from the ossified "revolutionary" and "reformist" traditions of the 19th and 20th centuries, based largely on a strict labour-capital understanding of contemporary history. These traditions had developed their own contradictions, and by the 1980s, had been overwhelmed and co-opted by the dynamic reaction of an increasingly globalised ruling class. Recognising this, the emerging group of slum activists sought to supersede both the socio-economic status quo and the decayed formulations of the previous era.

Informed by their exchange visits to other countries with similar conditions, India in particular, they adopted a radical methodology whereby they reversed the established relationship between progressive intellectuals and the oppressed. Whereas in the older tradition intellectuals had conceived of themselves as an active vanguard whose insight was elevated over the instincts of the oppressed, in the new formulation, intellectuals were to act by not acting (Bolnick 2001). As Joel Bolnick observes:

> "In doing so, the new group recognised that they had to work through and within the framework of need and desire that governs the lived experience of the poor. This meant creating space for the poor to identify, understand, and articulate their own priorities. This was achieved by the practise of *daily saving*, focusing on women in poor urban slums and squatter camps. In the South African case, the dream was of a home. The latent social power reclaimed through mobilisation of poor women around daily savings was directed to the acquisition of land, houses, and finance. This was an appropriate and powerful strategic choice in the specific historical context of post-1991 South Africa. It has been parlayed into an unprecedented achievement: the amassing of an impressive array of material and institutional assets by an organisation of the poorest of the poor in the world's most brutally unequal society" (Bolnick 2001).

Thus to overcome the structural contradictions inherent in subscribing to methodologies originating ex-classé from the domain of the ruling class, this meant locating the activism within the daily-life of the poor, as an embedded praxis of the every-day. Echoing Biko, the social movement sought to orientate itself to self-sufficiency, rejecting the passivity of entitlement. As such, they sparked dynamic local organisations, with broad open affiliations that transcended and addressed the aftermath of apartheid. At the same time the Freireian tendency reflected Biko's legacy and provided a strong base for local initiatives for radical pedagogy and cultural action. High levels of autonomy typify these inclusive community organisations, and continuing South Africa's history of militant civic action, generally are made up of radical subjects with a commitment to collective action.

These various elements, located in a broad non-European epistemology and drawn together through international "exchanges" defined and created the trans-national constituency of what has become known as Shack/slum Dwellers International (SDI).

C. Shack/ slum Dwellers International (SDI)

In 1996 the South African Homeless Peoples Federation celebrated its fifth anniversary. It was cause for shared celebration amongst its various allies and supporters. From all around the global South, grassroots community groups, Federations of the poor and NGO's working with them converged for the occasion. For many people around the world engaged in livelihood struggles this event was cause for joy. It showed a social longevity exceeding daily survival and validated the process that had allowed it. In this triumph they also celebrated their own existence and encouraged newcomers to persevere. All attending were part of or involved in the survival of informal settlements of the poor around the world, defending them against evictions, seeking ways to improve their livelihood struggles and attempting to secure tenure and basic amenities. The strategies explored by the various allies were, as mentioned, all driven by a paradigm of

activism that had grown in dialectical opposition to the Northern episteme. This method reflected in part the intentions of the earlier "non-aligned movement" to steer a third way between dominant Eurocentric narratives, as well as the Black Consciousness call for an entirely non-European response to the ills Europe had inflicted upon the rest of the world. Located in this paradigm, the approach focussed on the margins as the source of social dynamism and sought praxis linking social-reproduction to agency.

In this way, women became key to the process, driving autonomous development strategies socially bonded around savings collectives. These in turn were locally and globally connected and informed by a system of horizontal exchanges. International allies were linked by similar livelihood struggles in a continuous flow of participant intelligence through sharing each other's lives in situ. The effect of this was the building a new form of cadre-activists who were simultaneously situated within their personal struggles (as poor-community members) as they were contributing to the social formation of the greater collective, and who, in so doing fused intellectualism with the rank and file of the movement.

Many of the early slumdweller Federations had developed considerable confidence in their actions, taking a more pro-active role in tackling their local crises of land security and tenure, lack of infrastructure and associated health and safety issues. Pooling the techniques and strategies that they had learnt in their various struggles, collectives of the poor were challenging and negotiating with governmental structures. They were independently acting toward workable solutions in their localities. At the same time, these community members, through exchange visits to other poor communities around the South, were extending their repertoire of engagement beyond their immediate horizons.

The ground was set for the next step of formalising these many discrete struggles into a unified platform through creating a transnational confederation of slumdwellers. As Indian activist Sundar Burra reflects:

> "In the last ten years, grassroots Federations in a number of countries have worked together to assist other groups of the urban poor. Inevitably, these groups have chosen some of the same principles, strategies and methods as those that have inspired them. The result is a family of affiliates who have many similarities and yet many differences. The major commonalities are: supporting a critical mass among the urban poor; creating local knowledge and understanding through community exchanges; maintaining a culture of daily saving to strengthen grassroots organizations and community loan funds; supporting women to collectively take charge of the development process; building capacities to dialogue with local officials through exchanges; and exploring precedent-setting activities to demonstrate what the poor can do. (Precedent-setting activities are those that demonstrate better development alternatives for the poor, perhaps on a small scale in the initial phases.) Many small and some larger-scale funds to provide loan capital to communities are now managed by these Federations. It is the strength of these commonalities that has resulted in the creation of the international network, SDI" (Burra in Patel et al 2001: p51).

Thus it was that during the anniversary meeting of the SAHPF in 1996 it was decided create a transnational network of slumdwellers, Shack/ slum Dwellers International (SDI). Beginning with the representatives of six Asian countries, four African countries and one country from Latin America, by 2005 the confederation had spread to twenty-eight countries across East and South East Asia, Africa and Latin America. This network of grassroots communities reflected the internationalising of the many local movements into a broad social movement of the Southern poor. In this SDI is a product of South-South cooperation, a people-people version of the Bandung spirit in an "International from below" (SDIa 2003).

Conclusion

When considering the linking of ideological strands, the earlier pre-SDI India-South Africa exchanges can be seen as providing an important synthesis of non-European and non-aligned elements that paved the way for SDI to emerge. This synthesis was not premeditated but rather resulted directly from an increasing culture of exchange and engagement between the poor of both countries. The

Indian and South African slumdwellers were both located in notions of autonomous "self-help" pragmatism, but differed considerably in their idea of what this meant. The fusing of the collectivist tradition of self-reliance within Gandhi's Sarvodaya to the militant South African legacy of Biko's "liberation of the mind" was key to this emerging identity. The shared structural crises affecting their national economies provided a framework for mutual alignment and action. The synthesis of their respective approaches allowed an ideological bridge to be built across the post Cold-War South, paving the way for a broad coalition of the Southern poor.

This alliance offered a challenge to the knee-jerk enclave formation, ghettofication and localism so often the first choice of struggling communities confronting the effects of deepening exhaustion and global apartheid capitalism. Responding to the weakening effects of such horizontal antagonism, SDI strategically constructed itself out of the reflex of local struggles in conjunction with the possibilities provided by a broad transnational front of engagement. Ideologically, the formalisation of the International of Shack/slum Dwellers made participating local settlements and poor communities feel that they were part of a common collective poor agenda that interwove their various struggles into a unified one. This was consolidated through the way the various Federations participated in each other's struggles through "horizontal exchanges" (explored in Chapter Six). Normatively, SDI became, as one shack/slumdweller, Nonkangelani Roji observed: "...one big family of the poorest of the poor" (SDIa 2003).

In effect, this collective agenda facilitates the construction of new commons situated in both intellectual and material space that answers the commodified relations produced by the neo-liberal urban industrial nexus. This is seen both in the re-claiming of commodified land through squatter camps or more sublimely in the constant recreation through exchanges of a commons of consciousness attached to the knowledge of poverty and its survival strategies. In this way, the

SDI methodology, as will be seen in the subsequent chapters, constructs sociality that emphasises collective responses rather than individualised ones. In this sense, the commons becomes a process too, a social commons integral to and constituent of SDI's praxis.

The key form of commons, though, interestingly enough is cash itself. SDI's primary building blocks are savings groups (explored in Chapter Five below) that create a cash commons, a pool of collective savings to address their specific needs. Akin in some ways to the shared productive modality of commons land in the feudal era, commons savings provides the productive circulatory mechanism ensuring collective survival beyond the means of individualised survival. As Bolnick notes:

> "The moment of genius in the SDI model is the linking survival strategies to savings. Where the defining principle of collectivity is located in daily life" (SDIa 2004).

The importance of Bolnick's observation is that it is the material antithesis to the individualized driving logic of neo-liberalism. Contra individual consumerism and the false consciousness of the aspirational society, savings collectives founded upon the social ecology of collective daily livelihood deconstruct the oppressive forces of neo-liberal capitalism and its current construction of industrial-modernity. It is through this reassertion of the commons as collective conservation and production of material and ideological resources that SDI, as a transnational social movement of the dispossessed, seeks to resist the steady overwriting of the world by neo-liberal, neo-apartheid market practice. SDI collectives, through their praxis tools and rituals, maintain and continue the legacy of those powerful alternative narratives exemplified at Bandung, while at the same time and in the same spirit, fundamentally shift the platform of agency from being elite agendas to broader people's agendas. It is this praxiology that the following chapters will explore.

Chapter Five - Savings as Praxis

Introduction

"Savings" is the first principle of SDI and guides all of its rituals. SDI savings groups are face-to-face communities based upon the daily collection of money for self-help or crisis needs. These small local savings groups link in hundreds across Southern cities, forming what SDI call "Federations" (explored in Chapter Seven). These are linked to regional affiliations, which in turn are attached to the transnational confederation of shack/slumdwellers that make up "Shack/slum Dwellers International" (SDI). What appears on the ground as a small self-help or crisis collection group is thus attached to a vast network of similar groups across the South, capable of pooling considerable resources and rallying masses of members in concerted action. Savings, as exercised by SDI, ties together consistent practices across the global South that are inevitably tailored to suit the contours of daily life in each location. Savings is thus many things to many people in many different places. It is made up of a number of similar procedures, yet it is never the same. Amongst these: it is a pragmatic, collective response to poverty; it is a social exercise; it is an instrument for pedagogy; it is a vehicle for advocacy; and it is a heuristic device. Fundamentally, savings is praxis.

This chapter will investigate SDI's praxis of "saving". This will be done in two parts. Section A will provide an introduction to the semantics informing SDI's understanding of the word. This will open by offering a basic background to the term and its origins in relation to SDI's particular conception of it. The ontology of savings will be considered with respect to its links to the building of sociality and autonomy and will include a brief overview of the way that savings is practised by SDI members.

Section B provides a detailed examination of savings as complex praxis though a number of themes. These are, firstly, its capacity to provide a neo-Freireian cultural action using cash as its instrument of dialogue. Secondly, the way it

operates as a mobilisation strategy. Thirdly, how it operates in overcoming alienation and engendering class-consciousness amongst the lumpenproletariat. Fourthly, it will look at how this tool serves to specifically empower and liberate women from shackles of current exploitation. Fifthly, it delves into how savings operates pedagogically, spontaneously schooling the illiterate via its daily rituals. Sixth, enquires into how the ritual of saving empowers the lumpenproletariat shack/slumdwellers to help themselves, control their own development and lever resources from the external world. Seventh, looks at how this praxis legitimates the "uncivil society" of the law defying slums. Lastly the chapter explores how savings operates as a pragmatic method of contention driving the political agenda of the shack/slumdwellers.

A. Semantics

Saving is SDI's core activity. They describe it as a survival strategy that follows the contours of poverty yet whose formulation and material location acts as a "ritual" (SDIa 2000) for social cohesion, uplift and agency. Succinctly, each day groups of women from slums go from home to home and collect savings from each other in order to collectively address the livelihood struggles they mutually share. It is important to note that savings is not simply a financial issue (as in the case of micro-finance institution) more importantly it is a social exercise. While this will be explored in greater detail below, this fact needs to established right from the outset. As SDI say, "when we save, we are collecting people as well as money" (SDIa 2003). This is a clear declaration by SDI that saving is not just about money, it is a method for collecting people, of creating social solidarity within the atomised milieu of poverty. According to slumdweller Jockin Arputham, "savings activity is the glue that holds together the community groups, and underlies their other activities" (Arputham in SDIa 2003).

- **Background to the Word**

Savings exemplifies the way in which SDI appropriates and reconfigures as praxis a clichéd and functionary verb of capitalist practice. Saving, to "save" is a

word with a useful ambiguity, it can mean both to set aside for later, to conserve, as well as to rescue and redeem. Saving can be understood in both material and ideological ways. Its use as praxis resonates closely to the Freireian project of a true word. In material terms, the idea of saving is of course not limited to the capitalist modality. As a conscious activity, anticipating and preparing for the future is a central element of what it means to be human. Theoretical constructions of the future imply the capacity to overcome temporal limitations, to survive beyond the moment and of being able to hold over for later. It is a significant existential indicator of the ability to endure, of having material surplus. It is central to a notion of hope, both materially and psychically, as it enables envisioning, of being able to imagine alternative outcomes from those dictated by circumstances, leading to transformation of existential conditions.

The concrete implications of saving stand in marked contrast to the survival struggles of the urban poor. For the poorest of the poor the immediacy of need and urgency of poverty often prohibits any consideration of the future. The desperation of urban involution restricts and inhibits this human practice. As slumdweller Jockin Arputham explains:

> "If you gave a chicken to two women, one wealthy and the poor, and you visit them both after three months, you will find that the wealthy woman now has that chicken which has become a hen, some more chicks and eggs, while the poor woman has no chicks, no hens, no nothing. Is the poor woman stupid? No her circumstances were such that when there was nothing to eat, she made chicken soup for her children." (SPARC 1999)

This captures SDI's milieu, multiple repetitions of this hopeless situation of crisis. As praxis, savings directly engages in challenging this limitation, constructing through collective practice from the many minute occasional surpluses of the individually poor, a common fund that represents material possibility beyond survival. In this way saving seeks to transcend the material and initiates the production of hope, critical to transformative imaginaries.

The creation of an imagined future brings the word's second level of meaning into play: redemption, linking the parallel religious meaning of saving (as in

saving souls) to the material one. As will be explained in greater detail below, the social aspects of collective saving provide an answer the anomie and mutual hostility of the slums. Members engage with each other in new sociable ways, imbuing them with a sense of deliverance from pervasive alienation and aloneness. Academic Arjun Appadurai captures this semantic duality:

> "Creating informal savings groups among the poor (now canonized by the donor world as "micro-credit") is a major world-wide technique for improving financial citizenship for the urban and rural poor throughout the world, often building on older ideas of revolving credit and loan facilities managed informally and locally, outside the purview of the state and the banking sector. But in the life of the Alliance (SDI), "savings" has a profound ideological, even salvational status." (Appadurai 2000)

Saving as a word and practice seems to offer the appropriate content and semantic complexity for an effective neo-Freireian praxis. It fuses material and ideological elements, combining pragmatism with salvationary qualities. In both cases the important premise is the implicit recognition of a trans-temporal possibility, of a future. To "save" is to recognise the possibility of a tomorrow, reflecting and offering the possibility of surviving the immediate. The material and social aspects of these savings schemes feeds back into the social character of the groups, breaking down hostility and building a sense of community.

Saving and savings groups are not new. One might say that they go back historically to the early moments in anthropological time when humans first began to collectively hoard surplus to carry them through lean times. They are critical to future survival. Whether it be grain-seed, herds of sheep or flakes of hard flint and obsidian for implements, saving has been a perennial shadow activity of the human social process, occurring spontaneously and repeatedly all over the world around diverse material needs. It can be argued that collective conservation practice is a direct corollary of gattungswesen, produced logically by the human collective capacity to imagine the future. Conservation and commonwealth are integral to conceptions of the commons. Savings groups de-individualise surplus, that by collectivising, suggests a commons approach to material scarcity. As a group formulation, saving has always provided a solution

to scarcity overcoming individual material and temporal limitations. In this sense, savings groups can be seen as an embodiment of hope.

One such saving collective is Mahila Milan (as described earlier in Chapter Four), the group of predominantly Muslim street women and sex-workers from the Byculla area of Central Mumbai. This community's history of saving encapsulates the organic spontaneity of the process as well as indicates the increasingly complex social relations that emerge with it. To understand this process it is worth quoting SPARC's director Sheela Patel:

> "Savings began with Mahila Milan saying, "We want to build a house. But no one will give us a free house; we will have to take a loan. How will we take a loan? No one will give us a loan. They will say, "you are bad girls, you don't have anything." So let's save money." They started to put some money aside. The minute they started putting a certain amount of money aside, there was a demand "why don't you give each other loans? That we should help each other." Then Lakshmi's husband was in trouble, so she came back to the group and said, "I need a loan". So they started this daily savings thing." (SDIa 2004)

Mahila Milan's idea of savings was in this case a spontaneous grass-roots answer to the pavement dwellers need for a secure home. But in addressing this question it also provided the capacity to deal with the many other immediate crises that were commonplace in their lives. As Patel continues:

> "The whole thing of starting a crisis and consumption savings and loans program emerged from the daily savings. They said, "OK we will have two savings schemes. We will put on one side the money for housing and we won't touch it, and then in case, we will put aside a little bit for when we desperately need it." So, they first gained the ability to protect their savings for the long term and then they produced the second one. When they produced the second one they realised that they still were all indebted to moneylenders... paying very high interest, and all they could afford to pay back each month was only interest. They were really desperate, which again forced the savings scheme to deal with this issue. Making it now a constantly borrowing and savings scheme. So now there are three types of loans and savings. For housing, for income generation, and for crisis and consumption. The same group of people manage all of these." (SDIa 2004)

Mahila Milan's "daily saving", located as it was in the immediacy of slum livelihood struggles contained an inherent dynamic and auto-didactical approach, through which it rapidly acquired increased significance. This was dialectical, the

practice gave it meaning as each question or obstacle it encountered provided the impulse for synthesising a new answer. What began as one kind of saving soon became three, crisis and consumption, income generation and for housing.

This ability to respond and overcome problems, indicative of a self-creating, self-reflecting instrument, synthesising action and imagination bears the hallmarks of praxis. In this case it represents an organic praxis located in the ranks of the lumpenproletariat. Mahila Milan took a commonplace idea and through the practice of daily life fashioned it to satisfy a broad spectrum of poverty needs. As it was practiced it responded directly to the concrete needs and demands placed upon it. It developed a life of its own and contrary to orthodox dismissal of lumpen agency, proved enduring beyond the immediacy of the crisis that created it. Defying the atomised opportunism generally attributed to lumpenproletariat, it has in fact become a sustained cultural practice.

At the close of the Cold War, when a triumphant neo-liberalism became the dominant hegemony, there were a great number of these schemes operating all over the globe with a specific focus on saving money for the poorest of the poor. They were in the South however, generally disconnected and localised, typical of the atomising impact of the super power conflict in the South. The opportunities provided by the new era in terms of communication and travel suggested the possibility of overcoming these divisions. The world was ready to accommodate expressions of grassroots banking. Micro-credit and micro-financing moved from the periphery to mainstream practice, allowing institutions like the Grameen Bank to flourish. In a sense, micro-financing has now become paradigmatic and key to notions of extending and deepening citizenship. The idea has spread all over the world and it is this common practice that SDI both helped establish and build upon. Savings, in its SDI formulation, is currently in practice in around thirty countries, with many hundreds of thousands of savings schemes linked together in Federations that are affiliated to the social movement.

- **Sociality and Autonomy**

The savings group is seen as the hub of the entire SDI federating process. It is not a singular axis, rather it appears repeated and replicated ad infinitum. Saving in this sense is a complex bundle of social practices generally expressed in a similar fashion, but which each location gives a unique expression. As the word "savings" indicates, these are loosely structured organisations that enable the poor to develop collective financial systems that they control and manage themselves. The exclusivity of formal banks effectively prohibits the lumpenproletariat from using their facilities; requiring identity documentation, legitimate addresses, basic numeracy and literacy, demanding bank charges, minimum balances, refusing to accept deposits in small coinage et al. As a result the shack/slumdwellers find it impossible to access banking and other formal institutions. This leaves what little cash they do acquire in jeopardy, always at risk of loss to fire, theft, extortion etc. This insecurity in turn, encourages the poor to squander the little they have so as not to run the risk of such loss, thereby prohibiting any conservation of assets and reifying the slough of poverty. Savings schemes are essentially informal and autonomous cash banks in the slums. They originate in the perennial collective banking practices of the poor, typified by South African "stokvels". They are a grassroots alternative to market created institutions that specifically address the social and material needs of shack/slumdwellers.

Savings groups in this sense provide an obvious material answer to the immediate and practical needs of the poor, enabling them to actually save money and, as mentioned, envision a future. It is to be noted in this regard, that a crucial element of these savings schemes is the fact that the majority of members are women, "In nine cases out of ten it is mostly women who show interest in starting of joining savings groups" (Patel in SDIa 2004). The importance of this is that generally amongst the poor, "it is the women who are in charge of keeping the hours, running household expenses, deciding where things are kept in the home and so on" (Patel in SDIa 2004). Savings groups create a buffer against the

many crises that poor women experience, allowing these women to ride out these crisis moments and to survive until alternatives arise. After that, the survivor's savings go to help others.

An additional limitation of formal banking institutions is the fact that should the poor actually manage to save in banks or post offices, their savings never entitle them to loans. As Bolnick points out, "they save their hard-earned cents so that the banks can lend that money to the wealthy and middle classes" (Bolnick in SDIa 2004). Savings schemes answer this need, coming close to the currently popular micro-finance principle. It is a system to allow the savers to benefit directly from their own savings. In savings groups the savings of the people work for the people themselves. Members of these schemes can take loans for small business ventures or for crises in their families.

Flexibility characterises the design of savings groups. There is no exact template, rather a series of practices that the group shapes and colours by their specific needs. It is what Joel Bolnick describes as "a survival mechanism, which follows the contours of poverty directly" (Bolnick in SDIa 2004). This is done generally in two ways, firstly, as "daily savings" it follows the temporal rhythm set by poverty. The goal of most saving groups is for savings to be collected daily. Daily saving matches informal earning patterns, and as such works with the rhythms of poverty. Secondly it sets no limitations on the amount saved, any amount large or small is accepted, it is the act of saving which counts.

A significant social factor is that collective saving works to reduce poverty's stigma. The shame of lack compounds the anomie of the slums. Savings challenges this directly; poverty is exposed, ritualised and accommodated. In going from shack to shack, pavement bedroll to bedroll, members of the savings group discover each other intimately. Little can be hidden and in this way poverty is shared, discovered, understood and through this dialogue, defanged. Adding pennies to the collective coffer, as a slumdweller remarked, "is the sound of

poverty laughing at itself" (SDI 2004). Savings becomes a social ritual, a time for sharing gossip and news, an all-embracing discipline of social inclusion providing a reassuring regularity in an otherwise chaotic and merciless environment. In this way saving mobilises and builds social cohesion within the ranks of the poor. The system is devised to be as inclusive of the "poorest of the poor" as possible, practiced so that no one member of a settlement is left out. By continually triggering new savings groups, including ever more people meeting everyday, the collective saving process steadily increases its scale.

When these savings groups are linked to the wider network of Federations, they amass considerable amounts of money and people. These funds are ploughed back into the communities through slum development projects such as collective sanitation blocks, land acquisitions etc. These projects represent an autonomous approach to development, reflecting grassroots initiative. This grassroots communal development contrasts with orthodox social theory's dismissal of the underclass capacity for anything beyond immediate self-interest. Drawing funds from their own savings provides them with the material autonomy to set their own terms. In this way saving seems to re-capture the essential spirit of non-aligned development and Biko's self-reliance and makes it core to the construction of the social movement.

The savings process has thus evolved a logic of aggregation identical to its collection methodology, incrementally building Federation networks into a large social movement, in effect creating webs of solidarity. A favoured metaphor used by the shack/slumdwellers is that they are like many small weak fish that combine in a school. The school acts as one, mimicking a large fish and as such they can they can enter the sea of big fish (SDIa 2004). The South African Federation observes:

> "When savings schemes collect money, they collect people. We need lots of people. Without big numbers, we can't get the kind of momentum to articulate our needs" (ACHR 2000).

This scale is important, as it is the key to the kind of power that allows development on their own terms rather than dispensed at the largesse and dictates of the rich, as Sheela Patel states:

> "... when people produce these big numbers... banks come to you and say, "Will you come and save in our place? Can we help you?" Then we say, "What are you offering?" These kinds of relations are not done for love but for what suits them. So it serves also your purpose of how to use this money to leverage other money. Another important aspect of savings, also of enumeration or any of the rituals is how your internal action can leverage external resources. Its what we call: Corporate means for revolutionary ends." (SDIa 2004)

By this is meant that SDI's poor "revolutionise" development, seizing control of the process and dictating the terms of its unfolding. This self-determination of the agenda of their upliftment within a paradigm of scarcity and commodification is both radical and problematic. While their prominence certainly amounts to a seizure of resources from below, the dialectics of engagement operate equally in all directions, and the structural implications of this replication of the hegemonic narrative seem contradictory to the ethos of collectivity and commons that rally the initial savings groups in the first place. Be that as it may, savings does provide a means of multiplying the power of the many few into a unified mass-movement of the Southern poor. This solidarity underpins SDI's quest for autonomy.

B. Savings Praxis

- **Dialoguing Cash as Cultural Action.**

As noted earlier in Chapter One, under globalised capitalism, cities are the inevitable spatial focus of the cash nexus. The contradictions of this subsumption express themselves clearly in urban spatialities. Slums are the spatial nexus of multiple crises of exhaustion, but under universal commodification, the paramount scarcity is felt in financial terms. Slums are concentrated sites of cash exhaustion. SDI's savings seek to contest this exhaustion by asserting cash as a new form of "the commons". In this radical form, cash ceases to be the instrument of oppression but the tool for liberation. Challenging this exhaustion

creates dialogue around cash, savings de-individualises cash and collectivises it. Savings thus identifies a primary obstacle that in a commodified world economy limits shack/slumdwellers humanisation: the lack of money. By creating a commons of shared savings SDI groups build the foundation for transforming this limitation and overcoming it. The SDI formulation of savings thus resonates closely with Freire's praxis of "cultural action" (Freire 1970). Savings, like Freireian dialogic practice, is capable of multiple unfoldings using cash to create social subjectivity.

As with Freire's methodology, the SDI praxis of savings creates dialogue between reflex and theory (as a "true" practice) as well as across the normative issues of what is and what ought to be. These normative imaginaries, to envision a better future, are key to social transformation. Like Freire observed, the SDI norms are not imposed but appear to evolve from the logic of social action. Savings collectives emerge from the concrete livelihood struggles of the oppressed themselves, the authenticity of which grounds their hope in reality. When these savings collectives start generating utopian imaginaries, they generally move from oppositional to dialogic intercourse and begin to establish degrees of autonomy from the forces that limit them. Freire observed that history places "limit situations" upon the poor (Freire 1970: p80). Generally these confine and inhibit those within them, but under the right conditions, these can be read positively, and limits become the points of envisioning what could be. SDI's savings groups as dialogical processes provide just such positive visions to transcend the slum as a limit situation. Their construction of a cash commons redefines "being" as being from more, rather than being from nothing. Savings it seems, as a praxis of dialogue, transcends the zero-sum nature of poverty, by providing options for change and a sense of what the future could be.

In a Freireian fashion, savings redefines the limitations of the cash nexus in a radical way: cash as social relations. Freire made the point of contrasting what he called the "banking" model of education with a "problem solving" model (Freire

1970: p54). Banking is passive and does not encourage active intervention (Freire 1970). For SDI, banks are closed, hermetic institutions that separate people from their money. As commodified service providers they are corporate accumulation devices, whose "bottom line" is profit. Deconstructing Freire's metaphor of "banking" in a literal sense, savings collectives move from banking money to dialoguing it. Dialogical saving is directed toward problem solving. It reflects a collective investigation of poverty and finds solutions to it. In this way, savings becomes a collective grassroots research process into the problems facing shack/slumdwellers. Savings, for SDI, is an embedded emancipatory action involving active participation in a material struggle. This provides dialogue between structure and agency, grounding action in a critical reading of reality. As pointed out, according to Freire this conversation creates a dialogic knowledge that avoids passive fatalism and false hope. It becomes praxis of conscientisation and mobilisation, creating a bottom up methodology of knowledge specific to poverty alleviation.

- **Mobilising through Saving**

Savings is the first step in SDI's mobilisation strategy. In around thirty countries across the South where SDI operates, a multitude of shack/slumdwellers practice savings. As mentioned earlier, this is the first node of aggregation in their social movement and the beginning point for all their activities. The day-to-day business of SDI is saving, and all else follows from it. The social movement is propagated by the sharing of the experience of poverty through the dialogue of saving. Through ritualised collective saving, shack/slumdwellers discover the similarities of their livelihood struggles and become conscientised of their shared plight. This act of recognition acts as a trigger to mobilise participation, as Ivy, a South African Federation member, remembers:

> "In 1991, Jerry played a cassette to us. We ladies listened to the hardships of others. We're all very poor. The cassette was about other poor people in India coming together in savings schemes to help each other. We then decided to do the same. We went out into the community and explained the "new idea" of savings scheme. We organized a dinner with the community. We called it a "night in India", where Joel and Jockin got together and explained

everything. Afterwards many people joined the movement. When we became strong in this group we set up savings schemes in other groups...we saw that it was good for other poor people. We are all shack dwellers, with no money, never able to escape from poverty. Savings helps us; it collects money and it collects people. Who learn to trust each other even over money, which is something we poor people don't have." (SDIa 2003)

Contrary to orthodox misgivings about the lumpenproletariat, Ivy reveals the capacity of the atomised poor to empathise with each other's struggles and how "savings" resonates with the material logic of their situation, revealing its structural limitations and possibilities for change. Realising the similarities of poverty around the world galvanises communities into sympathetic practice. A Namibian member echoes this:

"I am a poor man. In 1995, one of my friends introduced me to the Savings Scheme. I was explained the aims and how the Federation works. It is a good thing – I gain more information. I open my eyes. Savings is a mechanism to bring people together; to serve the needs of the poor people." (SDIa 2004)

Zambian urban poor activist, Patricia Makoro notes that savings is a technique used by SDI for mobilising and organising communities of the poor, but unlike credit unions and micro-enterprise initiatives, SDI's approach is that by collecting money, the Federation actually collects people and builds a social movement. Makoro observes, "savings is collectivity built by mobilizing people around collecting money" (SDIa 2004). This observation is repeated across the slums that SDI operates in, as expressed by a Swazi member:

"Savings makes people get together. By saving they get used to sharing, and seeing how little by little, small money becomes big money. People are like that. They learn to join together and become bigger. The money is only one thing. Saving money is saving people. All the people have problems. Together we can beat the problems." (SDIa 2004)

Savings appears to be clearly more than just a mechanism to meet small-scale financial need. The ritual of women going from shack to shack every day and sharing details of their lives in the practice of saving, builds deep social commitment to the collective. This is reflected in the words of a Zambian member:

"Savings- you are building your future through the group. Before collecting, the women (collectors) they ask me about my life; they ask- are you OK? Do you need anything? Is your

last-born daughter better? The Savings group looks out for each other. So you are not in your family alone, you are part of a bigger thing. Yes, a community!" (SDIa 2004)

Similarly, Sagira from Mahila Milan makes the following remark, "Daily saving is very important because it lets us meet each other every day, so we can know each other" (SDIa 1996). The consistent act of saving in this way cements communities together and draws others in. The lack of money is simply the common denominator amongst the many poor. According to the Indian Federation:

"The need for money is the one thing that binds all these communities with so many differences. Savings is not one separate activity, but the breathing that keeps you alive: inhale savings exhale credit! Savings can give life to people..." (ACHR 2000)

This anthropomorphic nuance is a commonly view of savings amongst the shack/slumdwellers, Jockin Arputham from India calls it, "the breath of life, the pulse, the lifeline" (SDI 2001).

The quality of social intimacy that savings collectives produce is the key to its capacity to mobilise the marginalised. This seems to override even the material considerations, as Zimbabwe activist, Beth Chitekwe-Biti points out:

"Actually saving in Zimbabwe does not make sense! Inflation is too great. If you save money it loses value! So for us in Zimbabwe, savings is a ritualistic effort of coming together. People asking about money is an excuse for more the social encounter. Money is just a way to make people come together!" (SDIa 2004)

Social ritual appears to be paramount, justified by the material linkages. The interplay between the material and the social in a situation of scarcity goes to provide an antidote for the anomie and hostility of urban involution, building trust and a sense of attendant community. The sociality arising from savings collectives challenge Marx's vision of the lumpenproletariat as irremediably criminal and dangerous class. SDI describes the issue of trust in a report:

"Trust is built up by a system which allows a person to take a loan for almost any purpose whatsoever - whether it is to buy one's freedom as a prostitute from the brothel-owner or to get a husband out of jail on bail. The idea is that people should not dip into their slowly growing savings when they face a crisis, but to take small affordable loans that they can pay back depending on their capacity. In fact, contrary to prevailing micro-credit logic, most

Federations in the SDI network are very clear that they will not punish those people who cannot repay immediately. Instead, after finding out the reason for the delay, they will issue a second loan. And a third. And this will continue until the person and their family is strong enough and supported enough to start earning an adequate income. After all, local Federation leaders ought to be living on the same street. Once they see that the person has the ability to stand on her own feet, they will visit her every day to ensure that she repays." (SDIa 1999)

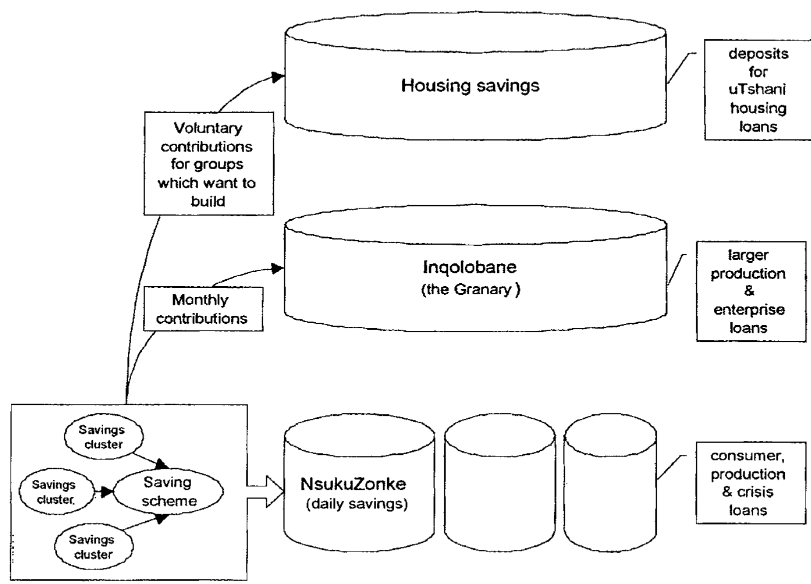
Savings builds trust amongst members through establishing materially collateral relationships. Members "take a risk" together and being in it altogether quite clearly goes to forging collective responsibility and a sense of group identity. This collective identity is in turn extended to the broader Federation and ultimately transnationally as SDI. Saving as praxis becomes a transnational mobilisation strategy that appears to breakdown and overcome the enclave formation and ghettofication generated by the apartheid logic of current market forces. It seems to reach deep into a common sense of alienation and exclusion and fosters an overarching social identity, what the slumdwellers call being the "poorest of the poor" (SDIa 2003). This sociality is located primarily in women, amongst whom the implications of a belonging to a mass sorority resonates profoundly, as Patel observes:

"There is an obsession about it, because in an indirect way, just as you pay your membership fees to join a union, so your savings book is your ID card in the Federation. For me over time, apart from the fact that it is an ID card, it produces a new focus on women's collectives within the community. It's always the women who do this, so it's an acknowledgement of the role women already play. It helps people, particularly women to understand themselves in society. So very often in today's world, money and monetisation is only seen in a very limited way, in terms of money transactions, but it's more than that. There is nothing more powerful than a group of women with their savings books going to the bank and saying; that's our system! It produces more credibility than all the money you take there. And when people reproduce this in big numbers its very powerful. Now in Bombay there are 100 000, 200 000 savings groups..." (SDIa 2004)

At odds with Marxist social theory, the process of mobilisation around savings seems to lead to the formation of enduring grassroots institutions amongst the lumpen shack/slumdwellers. In most parts of the world SDI's Federation allies generally operate three levels of savings and loan structures simultaneously.

These echo the three categories Sheela Patel described earlier of crisis and consumption saving; income generation saving; and saving for houses and larger projects. The following diagram of the South African Homeless People's Federation can best illustrate the way in which grassroots slum savings collectives scale up as autonomous institutions of the poor.

Federation saving system:



(People's Dialogue undated)

***NsukuZonke*:** (daily savings) for consumer, production and crisis loans, made amongst savings collective members. Each group is divided into smaller clusters for daily savings. Collectors visit members and collect whatever is available from one cent upward. Members' contributions are recorded in their own savings books as well as savings scheme record books. Savings are banked regularly. Withdrawals are allowed.

***Inqolobane*:** (the Granary) for larger production and enterprise loans. Inqolobane are regional funds to which all groups make monthly contributions.

uTshani: (Housing savings) deposits for uTshani housing loans, as a kind of collective insurance against low repayments. In this way the largest institutional form of savings assumes the collective responsibility for default. As the terms under which uTshani makes loans available to Federation members changes, savings towards land and infrastructure and housing will be treated differently. Savings may be used as deposits or collective guarantees. Savings towards housing may be used for deposits towards much smaller incremental loans

> for house building, or for direct investment in the house in order to construct a bigger house. (Baumann, Bolnick and Mitlin 2002)

These incremental and concentric institutions match the way SDI mobilises people. The process seeks to be horizontal, and social hierarchy is actively discouraged. The outcome is what the shack/ slumdwellers refer to as "Federation" (explored in Chapter Seven). Regional, national and transnational links via the Federation network provide the scale to create a mass-movement, while the focus on the primary unit of the savings scheme ensures that everywhere and everyone is as important. There is an inevitable and constant tension between these scales, the mass social movement on one hand and the local savings scheme on the other. This tension is communicated and mediated by the parallel praxis of "Exchanges" (to be examined in Chapter Six) thus creating deeply interwoven layers of connectedness. The cross-pollinating of people and process across the South compels consistency and cohesion. At the same time the specific local agendas and purposes of each group apply across the entire process, ensuring that savings schemes are malleable toward locality. In this way each slum savings collective is connected to others in a holographic way, each to all of the others, ensuring that everywhere and everyone is linked yet never losing the specificity of their needs. It is expressive of an organic "think globally, act locally" approach to change.

The "federated" informational components of the process intensify the qualitative capacity of the savings groups and further facilitates mobilisation. Further binding groups to the whole is their participation in an encyclopaedic linkage of knowledge that transcends their particularised experience. The concept of praxis of knowledge production again echoes the Freireian project. Celine D'Cruz, a long time SDI activist makes this point:

> "Communities realize that in order to find different ways they also need to create their own information base to be able to make informed choices. So savings and credit becomes a tool to mobilize communities rather than becoming and end in itself." (D'Cruz in SDIa 1996)

Savings as a collectivised money accumulation strategy in a milieu of individualised scarcity appears to provide an apposite vehicle for social mobilisation. While savings in many ways conforms to the concept of praxis found in the earlier "Hegelian" writings of Marx and in particular echoes Freireian methodology, it does challenge orthodox perceptions on the agency of the lumpenproletariat. As socially self-created activity in response to external conditions beyond individual control, it goes some way to restore the dialectical foundation of emancipation as a active reflex to material conditions rather than vanguardism. As a direct link to the conditions of oppression, savings seems to resonate immediately with shack/slumdwellers and ensures high levels of participation and mutual interaction. Daily savings produces regular and intimate social interaction and enables strong bonds to be created. Savings collectives usually provide reliable support systems for their members. Individuals see themselves in terms of the group. A collective self-interest is generated. Many members claim to feel that their "salvation" comes through the group. The group becomes the vehicle for their collective uplift and self-determination. Unlike the orthodox vanguard approach, in unifying intellectual and mass action defined by self-creating activity, they come to resemble Gramsci's chimerical understanding of the Modern Prince that could not be a concrete individual but had to be an organism of collective will (Gramsci. 1957). These sentient cadres then combine to form a transnational social movement with the same general characteristics, constructing as it were, an "intellectual-moral bloc" (Gramsci 1971) from below.

- **Overcoming Alienation**

Urban involution alienates poor people in many different ways, but the overarching outcome is the way in which it atomises and individualises them. This alienation by separation is an amplification, intensification and reified expression of the neo-liberal imperative of individualism. The effect is one of ubiquitous xenophobia, isolation and mutual hostility. Social constructions in this Hobbesian milieu tend toward insular, intolerant proto-fascist groupings such as street gangs, mafias and militant religious sects. Standing against this tendency,

SDI's savings collectives appear to act as a catalyst for reconstructing the integration of the individual into a more open idea of community, reconstituting in a way the Hegelian and early Marxist focus upon gattungswesen. The broad, non-partisan and inclusive agenda of the social movement seeks to combine what Sartre termed a "group" with a cosmopolitan project directed to collective strategies of poverty alleviation. The sociality of the savings collectives seems to strike a cord in the slums, creating a welcoming and inclusive community of neighbours predicated on usefulness that seems to act as an antidote to the general hostility of urban involution. A Nepalese member, Nani Hera Shahi, of ward 8 Lonhla reflects on the impact of savings:

> "We used to spend all our time in the house. We were afraid to speak to a stranger. After getting involved in a savings group, fear and shyness left us. We learned many things. We became able to speak. These days we talk to the many people and organisations about our community development projects we also help to resolve conflict in the community. Now we are able to do something good for the community." (UPDF 2002: p3)

The savings collective appear to provide the conditions for the voiceless to find their voice and to overcome their inhibitions, as Zambian member remembers:

> "I meet many other women who are the same as me. The poor womens. At first I thought I was just alone, but now I find many the same as me, some in worse situation. But they are so confident. I also get now confidence. Because I am not alone." (SDIa 2004)

This form of social aggregation suggests the intimate and sympathetic bonds that families generally provide, bringing to mind the Hegelian Marxist notion of the great family of humanity, gattungswesen. Patrick Maghebula, a shack/slumdweller from South Africa describes it as, "our family" (SDIa 2001). As South Africa's Federation expresses it:

> "The savings scheme has given us a family. Bank managers don't know us. The savings scheme do, they are our people, they know where I live, they know when my daughter is sick, when I haven't got enough to buy potatoes or meat." (ACHR 2000)

Savings collectives are based upon daily social contact. By seeing the similarity of each other's plight and participating in each other's lives, savings scheme members overcome aloneness and reconvene as social group. The savings group's capacity to act as an extended "family" appears to be the key in this

regard. The spontaneous up welling of this familiarity suggests that it is based upon a pervasive common sentiment, akin to Fromm and Freire's "social unconsciousness", an immanent class-consciousness among the ranks of the lumpenproletariat. A Ghanaian member picks this up:

> "We started a saving scheme. First we build our faith and fate together. The saving together gets us talking to one another. We understand each other. Now we save together. We are one. We understand how the same we are." (SDIa 2004)

Saving schemes develop the capacity of mutual self-recognition through the company of others who are materially proximate; who share the same class. Another Zambian member describes the shift in mindset as follows:

> "I am renting a shack with my family. I was once a typist. I have been unemployed for 14 years. My husband passed away 1996. I must look after my children and grandchildren, even one great-grandchild! I am alone. For me, the Savings group saved my life. I learnt a lot –we share ideas with each other. I am especially learning the different characters I meet. Before I was cut off. Only knowing my family, or even before that my work. But now is different. Now I am learning the People. I am seeing them clearly." (SDIa 2004)

Poverty rather than any other criteria is the source of commonality and the common refrain of SDI is, "we, the poorest of the poor..."(SDIa 2003). A sentiment confirmed by a Ugandan member, "Maybe before you did not speak to that person, but now you do. Because you are together." (SDIa 2004)

By challenging the pervasive social character of alienated and hostile self-interest, savings collectives can have an improving effect on those who participate, providing a positive alternative to the anticipated criminality and corruption of the lumpenproletariat. A Zambian member caught defrauding his employer, confesses that:

> "I worked at National Milling for 18 years. I was fired without benefits in 2000. There was an accounting problem, you see. It was a big problem. Even my landlord evicted me. So with five kids I had to move back to my sister with all our belongings. We are now squeezed in with my sister. She also has a family of eight. Now we are 16 in one home! A small house. With no sanitation. We struggled. No employment. Affected children's education, no books, no school uniforms, no school fees paid. It was too much. In November 2002 my wife passed away. The stress killed her. Five kids and no job. I got sick. Terribly sick. I had to move again for me to be

> cared for. My parents looked after me. My children were left behind. When I got better, I did work for my sister. Here I learnt of the Federation, and joined a Savings group. It was a door opening for me- the answer to my prayers. I meet other colleagues like me, and we save as a group." (SDIa 2004)

Qualitative data like the above supports Appadurai's earlier observation that savings as collective action has a salvationary quality. This is in part due the collective's faculty for reconciling the selfish individual (whose criminality has further isolated) back into the social embrace of the community.

This redemptive communality goes hand in hand with an upwelling of hope, of having a future. The slumdweller's temporal alienation from the future is in this way challenged too by the ritual of saving. A South African Federation activist made the following observation:

> "There is a future. And it is found through the collective agency of the savings group. The savings group is a social crystalisation in the midst of poverty. Where the dominant feature is a futureless pattern of survival in a condition of temporal and associative alienation –in which the depersonalised individual, loses both their history and their future to the desperation of surviving the immediate, surrounded by a pressing throng of similarly desperate –each alienated from the rest of time and others." (SDIa 2004).

No longer trapped in a purgatory of day-to-day survival, members begin to connect through each other to an idea of a collective future. They rise above the limitations of the immediate and acquire a trans-temporality, a sense of a future founded upon a social history constructed by their collective action. This allows them the important political possibility to transcend the moment, reflect on their past and hope for better future. In summary, daily saving in the congestion of the slum appears to provide a solution to social and individual alienation. The inevitable domestic intimacy created by slum congestion provides a key potential that saving collectives capitalise upon. They use the spatial reflex to co-operate to break the boundaries of isolation and thereby overcoming the debilitating fear of loneliness and ostracism. The logic that SDI suggests is that through the praxis of collective saving, the individual is "saved" and bonded to a new social identity, and a new "family" is born within the milieu of poverty. While contrary to

orthodox theory, this logic resonates closely with neo-Marxist praxis and its dialectical relationship to gattungswesen.

- **Saving Women**

A key aspect of SDI is the fact that the bulk of its members are women, and that savings schemes deliberately focus upon foregrounding and empowering poor women. As noted earlier in Chapter One, Rosa Luxemburg observed that capital accumulation presupposes the exploitation of ever more "non-capitalist" milieu for the appropriation of more labour, more raw materials and more markets (Luxemburg 1951). Mies and Bennholdt-Thomsen continue this argument with specific reference to women and subsistence farmers, "we talk of the ongoing need for "ongoing primitive accumulation and colonisation"" (Mies et al 1999: p30). According to Mies, the work of women and small peasants is conditioned by a similar logic:

> "Their exploitation follows the example of the exploitation of nature as a resource which is allegedly free and inexhaustible. The means for the creation and maintenance of such an exploitative relationship is not the labour contract, as in the case of the wage labourer, but violence, physical and structural violence" (Mies et al 1999: p12).

Women like natural resources are considered "free goods" and are exploited and appropriated by the industrial system in the same way as life (Mies et al 1999). In the slums, this oppression is doubled. For just as capitalism requires a hinterland, so cities need the same. Under current conditions of external exhaustion, slums become satellite hinterlands attached conveniently within the city. Compounding the problem for women within slums (following Mies et al argument), women become embodied hinterlands within these other hinterlands, unilaterally exploited. Validating the Mies neo-Luxemburg conjecture, SDI's evidence shows that women are the moment of intersection of most of the material and social vectors in the slums. They represent the nexus for the social, biological and emotional reproduction of not just the class, but of the species, gattungswesen. Using Ariel Salleh's term, they are a "meta-industrial class" (Salleh 1997). Yet, while observation of the structural relations of the poor show that women are central to the creation, maintenance and wellbeing of the

community, this recognition is denied to them within their own terrain. They are unacknowledged and this lack of recognition is fundamental and complicit with the insidious frontier-like machismo that the apartheid form of hegemony takes in the slums. This insular patriarchy is so alienating that women themselves seem unaware of their oppression. Chicago based Indian academic-activist Srilatha Batliwala writes:

> "...so deep seated is the non acknowledgment of this role that women play, that even in the settlement itself, group discussions amongst women do not consciously articulate this. The stark difference in what is seen and what is told indicates a clear absence of linkage between the two. It is as though women retain their experiences at a very intra- personal level and do not move their "actually having done the task" to seeking acknowledgment for having done it. It is as though this is arrested at the doing stage itself. The spokespersons...the individual male leader on the other hand has learnt to opine... regardless of the accuracy of his generalizations, his ability to make these statements on behalf of all makes him the "agent" for communication between the outside and the inside." (Batliwala 2004)

Thus, women in the ranks of the poorest of the poor find that their Weltanschauung is entirely filtered and mediated by a reified masculine expression of domestic hegemony. As a result, there is a deep-seated disconnection and social amnesia about the real strategic role of poor women and they are taken for granted and denied even amongst themselves.

Contrary to neo-Platonic feminism which disembodies women (Mies et al 1999), SDI's savings collectives as a predominantly women's movement in the slums reflect an embodied feminism, located in an ontology of historical and material victimisation resonant with Du Bois' legacy found in hooks and eco-feminism. SDI views that women are simultaneously the center and the most exploited element in the slums. Their role as provider and nurturer confers upon women a deep and unrecognised burden of responsibility as the final repository of resources in the slums. Inevitably women are the "holders" (to use Ariel Salleh's sympathetic word) of material reserves, as Jockin Arputham observes:

> "If you take any Indian women rich or poor and you shake her, money will fall all over. It is traditional for all women to put some money aside. This has nothing to do with whether she has enough or not. She always puts a little bit away. The problem has been that there is never

> enough to put away; and whatever has been put away is often stolen by husband and children for their immediate wants leaving women angry and insecure about their inability to stop this. To make things worse, it is always the woman who has to go and borrow money when the family is in crisis." (SDIa 1996)

This material and social centrality also makes women the most significant vector for change. In dialectical terms, transform women and society is transformed. To affect this transformation requires praxis and SDI considers that the tool for this lies at the material core of poverty, the flow of money. By linking women and money in praxis of collective saving SDI seeks to transform patriarchy's power relations. By altering the position of women around money they alter their domestic hegemony.

When asked why savings became the core SDI praxis, Jockin Arputham said the following in a 2003 interview:

> "What I believe is if you want to have any real change at grassroots you need three ingredients, number one, information, number two, communication and number three, finance. When we looked for who had all three we found it were generally the women. Women in common, are absolutely information collectors. They have all the information; who is living on the street, what kind of a living. So we said that's number 1. And for number 2, who talks the most? Women. 3 who has money somewhere? Women. Always the women! That's money management for you. Is there a man? Ha-ha. That's how we started up Savings Schemes." (SDIa 2003)

Savings schemes in effect are the recognition that the locus of social possibility lies in the hands of women. Jockin's point is that women are the single most important subject for agency. Putting savings at the heart of the "moral politics" (Appadurai 2000) of the SDI alliance implicitly recognises the work of poor women as the very foundation of what they do in every other area. The normative agenda is not an external imposition, but derives from the ontology of the social movement. Savings in its SDI formulation is a spontaneous process begun originally by women of Mahila Milan who in reflecting upon their material situation, created the process from real given needs in the first place. This organic intellectual agency was "born of woman" at the outset. Hence, Appadurai emphasises the axiomatic formula:

> "without poor women joining together, there can be no savings. Without savings, there can be no federating. Without federating, there is no way for the poor to drive changes themselves in the arrangements that disempower them. Thus "savings" is an ethical principle, which forms the practical and moral core of the politics of patience, since it does not generate large resources quickly. It is also a moral discipline which produces persons who can raise the political force and material commitments most valued by the Federation" (Appadurai 2000).

This centrality and primacy means that by corollary, savings has the most immediate empowering effect for women, as Zimbabwean activist, Beth Chitekwe-Biti points out:

> "the Federation savings schemes assisted a lot of poor women break away from their isolation. Savings is less about building houses and businesses, than breaking isolation. Especially for poor women, who are cut off from everything" (SDIa 2004).

Yet, the manner in which this is done, does not directly threaten the prevalent systemic patriarchy, rather it is a process of pragmatic stealth. A Zambian member makes this strategy clear:

> "My husband does not work. I have 8 children and 7 grandchildren. I am renting the shack. I must feed my family. I want to start the business but my husband does not allow me. He gets very jealous. I must beg and scratch. I joined the Saving Group. I wanted to do something. My husband not encouraging. But He does not object! It's women's business. So Savings is approved! He does not suspect a hidden agenda. The savings group was good advice." (SDIa 2004)

Thus without overtly challenging the masculine status quo, SDI, by institutionalising their the centrality of women in savings collectives have created a counter-power base with a domestic focus. Srilatha Batliwala describes this as follows:

> "In reality what Mahila Milan NSDF and SPARC have created is a means to formally acknowledge what women in India have been doing and continue to do ... manage money. Apart from the money transactions, the daily contact keeps the whole community connected together and always in a positions to be of assistance. When women from other settlements come to Byculla, they spend time observing these rituals and see how the systems are developed, and they are encouraged to go and experiment what works for them. Although most women's groups end up doing most things in the same way, each arrives at this formulation through a different path. Allowing them is crucial as it gives the group a sense of ownership over that process and they get a real feel for the logic of why certain rules must be

made. Savings kept aside by the women's group ensures that women themselves have access to this money, and it is away from the husband and children. Yet women from Mahila Milan gives loans to men and women from their pool. This was considered strange by many people, who feel that women should use the money for women's use only. Mahila Milan takes a more strategic view. It believes that when women negotiate for a loan for their husbands and children, this action is useful to women for many reasons. Firstly, her status as the negotiator enhances her status at home. Secondly, because the group gives money to the family after strict scrutiny, family members assisted in turn reduces the pressure borne by the women. So she does not have to lie and pretend she is taking the loan for herself... which is what happens when only women can take the loan. Finally, Mahila Milan believes that men and women need to re-negotiate their roles and relationships. They want men to become responsible, have jobs, make more money most important to use this money on their family. When Mahila Milan controls this process, women too get some of that control within the house." (Batliwala 2004)

The coming out of slum women as the "holders" of the commons of cash, contributes to transforming them from being the object of plunder to subjects of power. Women, previously sidelined and abused by the frontier machismo of the slums and shantytowns are through their role in savings collectives, commanding respect as the creators of social and financial stability and possibility. Savings, although not ending deeply-entrenched gender bifurcation, does valorise and foreground the role of women. In some ways savings offers a technique of empowering women that brings them closer to civil society values. Considering the gangs of men that often characterize understandings of the uncivil society, savings collectives of women provide a useful political counterpoint. This status and recognition allows women re-negotiate their relationships with each other and within their society. Activist Celine D'Cruz observes:

"...for poor communities, savings and credit ... creates the space and time for collectives of women to redefine their priorities and finding ways of handling this." (D'Cruz SDIa 1996)

Savings schemes thus produce a new identity for women, as agents of change in their communities. As Batliwala notes:

"this introspection allows women to first see themselves as crucial and critical agents of change. Of viewing their experiences as being a process of their creation and worthy of becoming a reference point in discussions...Through the crisis savings schemes, women learn to manage money and prepare the basis of collectives of women...Women collecting money, managing it and making decisions to give loans, also acknowledge that women are

> and continue to be good managers. Once they begin to feel handling their own finances, women become prepared to manage loans and take larger amounts, and they begin to negotiate the terms of this lending. Once a process gets women to this level there is no going back." (Batliwala 2004.)

The evidence suggests that women are empowered by the savings process and their slum society is obliged to acknowledge them. This begins a new narrative with women as agents critical for change.

- **A Vehicle for Pedagogy**

An important aspect of saving is its relation to pedagogy in the slums. Throughout the South, and particularly in the slums, large numbers of people, both adult and juvenile are illiterate and innumerate, or partially so. This intensifies the anomic curtain of shame and isolation experienced by them, exacerbating their alienation and impotence. While SDI is adamant that their praxis is an organic response to material conditions and that no outside theory informed it, saving as praxis includes a broad pedagogical component that is consistent with the Freireian notion of "generative themes" (Freire 2000). By providing appropriate generative themes, savings complies largely with the kind of problem-solving education that characterises Freire's pedagogy of the oppressed. The daily practice of savings reveals to shack/slumdwellers their educational limitations in a positive and unthreatening way. Savings collection involves basic writing and accounting skills, and a needs-based incentive for learning. As Paulo Freire pointed out:

> "The educator's role is fundamentally to enter into dialogue with the illiterate about concrete situations and simply to offer him the instruments with which he can teach himself to read and write. This teaching cannot be done from the top down, but only from the inside out, by the illiterate himself or herself...(this method) would identify learning *content* with the learning *process."* (Freire 2000: p.86)

In the case of SDI savings schemes, the educator appears to be the process of savings itself. In itself, the word saving constitutes what might be considered a "true word", as a Namibian member expresses it:

> "Savings means a lot: it means more than just saving money. It is special this word, it does many things – saving experiences; gaining knowledge from others like you; learning new

> things. Saving knowledge, sharing knowledge. Saving people by sharing. People use saving as a teaching tool, if you can't read, savings teaches you. You learn counting, writing, bookkeeping. We teach each other these things. Savings builds upon poor skills. We all gain knowledge in different ways. Everyone is barely literate, yet we all know a little bit. We share this knowledge with others. We all grow, just like our money." (SDIa 2004)

There is no teacher or educator as such, rather a collective auto-didacticism. Those that are literate and numerate, or partially so, share this knowledge with their group. The daily collection of money, its entry into ledgers, the writing of member's names and other basic accounting activities offers ample opportunity for practical learning about numbers and words. As a Ugandan member describes it, "when you save as a group you get more ideas. You can seek knowledge from others. You can talk to them, share ideas." (SDIa 2004) Savings appears to be not just about collecting money it is also about collecting ideas and solving problems. This captures the significance of the Freireian premise that acquiring literacy is "an attitude of creation and re-creation, a self-transformation producing a stance of intervention in ones context." (Freire 2000: p86).

Savings clearly does affect a stance of intervention in the context of poverty. Celine D'Cruz makes the point:

> "The process of savings and credit also builds the capacity of women to prioritize their credit needs, manage their moneys and book-keeping. All these skills come to use when addressing other issues in the community whether it be housing, sanitation or solid waste so in fact the savings and credit process equips these communities to handle all the other issues that it wants to address." (D'Cruz in SDIa 1996)

This praxis of learning happens at the immediate level of everyday slum life amidst the shanties and on the pavements. However, this pedagogy does not stop here. In addition, the savings group through its everyday activity and its exchanges with other groups, shares knowledge amongst them, which in turn diffuses throughout the knowledge base of the social movement. As the process of savings is extended across space (networked to other Federation groups) and time, it matches the incrementalism of the Federation process as a whole. NGO observers to the process describe it as:

> "The experience of saving, lending and finance management provides a platform for further skills acquisition. It is facilitated through horizontal exchanges of information between saving schemes and their members' experience and through Exchange and Training Programs. These programs have both national and international dimensions. The purpose of this activity is the development of a capacity within each savings scheme to plan, manage and execute development processes which are controlled by the urban poor themselves" (Baumann, Bolnick and Mitlin 2002).

Probably the key element of the pedagogical process is that saving provides praxis to precipitate deep self-knowledge the poor possess about themselves and to convert it to a practical source of intellectual power. The linkage between knowledge and power provides the savings collectives with the critical consciousness needed forge their autonomy, of how to determine their agenda and implement it. While this issue of autonomy is explored explicitly again in later chapters, it is a point that needs to made now, as it reflects a consistent theme across SDI's entire praxiology. Supporting this, Joel Bolnick points out that:

> "Poor settlements have vast stores of knowledge. The people of the communities are the only ones who could have the experiential basis for determining their own hierarchy of needs. They are best equipped to create their own priorities." (Bolnick et al 1994: p56)

Considering the evidence, SDI's praxis of saving appears to provide a deep-reaching pedagogy closely resembling the Freireian methodology. By teaching not just literacy and accounting, but also complex social and technical skills, savings collectives seem to form the primary tutorial group in a social movement that seeks to be a slum university of everyday life (ACHR 2000).

- **Empowerment, self development and leverage**

Despite appearances and the obvious poverty, slums are not without power. Slums reflect a complex milieu of many different kinds of power, and its lack. This power is expressed in a number of ways, such as labour power, consumer power, political power, as well as the threatening power of criminal gangs or the moral-coercive power of militant religious sects. The great problem of slums is thus not so much the absence of power but rather its chaotic, entropic and self-defeating utilisation.

Savings collectives identify one source of material power, cash, and by consolidating it as a commons they create a praxis that leads to the unfolding of multiple other forms of empowerment. The recombination of these, in turn, grounds the social power of a transnational mass social movement contesting poverty in a global system of oppression. Joel Bolnick notes:

> "Savings remains the operating system of the Federation. Savings' represents triumph over poverty. It is an institutional tool that is critical and versatile. It enables the power to break out of the mindset of poverty and teaches the poor how to trust, how to collectivize. How to manage problems in a neo-liberal context." (Bolnick 2004)

Savings does not evolve in a vacuum but in direct reflex to real material needs. The strategy is an obvious one, located in the atavistic urge to conserve resources during a crisis. The Asian Coalition of Housing Rights and SDI pamphlet, *Face-to-Face*, describes this in the following way:

> "We've seen cities abandoned, governments overthrown, and currencies become worthless over night. It's no surprise that we've learned to keep our assets in gold or rice. During bad times, gold can be hidden or run with. Rice can be eaten or traded. But if we put 5,000 Riels into a gold chain, the money just hangs around our neck, doing nothing. If we put it into community savings, it gets busy. It can help start small businesses, help people in a crisis, help build our communities, help generate more money. Nobody else is gong to give us what we need. If we want to build good houses, start businesses, construct toilets or do anything, we need money." (ACHR 2000)

Savings praxis initiates a social response to crises that converts the atomised poor from passivity to agency and from dependence to autonomy.

The collective agency of the savings group provides many shack/slumdwellers with a focus of loyalty. It can become the house, khan, clan or tribe for a disconnected and alienated poor, adding an important secular and apolitical layer of identity superimposed upon their other prior and often restricting identities of religion, language, ethnicity, caste and tribe, that remain vestigial but ineradicable. This shared identity offers a mechanism of empowerment, overcoming the limitations of the individual, as a Ugandan member notes:

> "We are struggling for shelter. We do not own the land. Mostly when people save, they save for a particular thing. So you save for yourself, not for a group. But if you save first as a group you can buy the land. Later you can save to build a house or start a business." (SDla 2004)

By scaling up the individual into a communal entity the savings group can do what the disempowered individual often cannot do. The savings group represent an attempt to tackle the larger, objective conditions that contribute to poverty, as a Swazi member describes:

> "Things are going bad in Swaziland. No jobs, no money in the rural areas. Especially for us in the rural areas, savings is good. The city people think we are the very poor. They think we are foolish. Yes, most of us farmers just grow and eat. Sell and eat. Small market crop if we lucky, mainly subsistence - mielies (maize). Always problems. No rain. Then floods. Animals get sick. Savings you learn about what is money all about. You learn new things. New possibilities. You discuss your problems with the other members. You think ahead" (SDla 2004).

This leads to the next step, by thinking ahead and providing the idea of a future, savings group can instil the power of hope, that significant precursor to transformation, as a Zambian member remembers:

> "I met a friend who was a member of the Federation. She told me about Savings (schemes); "The way we are doing it, is we do it ourselves. We learn to do it ourselves." I ask her; "How do you do it?" "We contribute Kw 100 a day. Kw 3000 a month." I looked and it seemed a good idea. I like to participate. I started to have a vision- of a better future." (SDla 2004)

As described earlier, the everyday practice of savings offers its members a way to tackle their alienation from humanity's imaginary capacity to transcend time and thereby to objectively rise above their material limitations. Effecting a vital temporal transformation, another possible future is introduced and a sense of hope and of social history is acquired. This paves the way for a class vision amongst the poor, of a better world. A Zambian member notes, "...through the savings group I begin to think of the future. I hope one day to have a house to shelter my children, and live happily with them" (SDla 2004). Savings praxis seems to engage what C. Wright Mills saw as the power of sociological imagination or what Dale Carnegie is supposed to have described as the "power of positive thinking", as another Zambian member describes:

> "It makes me think that in ten years I can be "somebody". Savings is working hand in hand with others, fighting for our future. It's not just about money: But rather to give each other advice, to make each other stronger. Kw 100 is a little money, just like we are little people. But together it makes a lot. Put together it is big. Just like us. It gives confidence and builds community. We are the same as the money, small-small but put together we are BIG!" (SDIa 2004).

:onfidence is a crucial aspect of empowerment. It allows the poor to take wnership of the process and to drive it forward, as the South African Federation oasts: "We are the owners of the process. You cannot claim a process empty-anded. On a daily basis, people take control of their own lives" (ACHR 2000).

Resonant with Biko's vision of self-reliance and the restoration of the dignity of the oppressed, SDI claims that, "savings is rooted in an affirmation of the dignity and strength of the homeless" (SDIa 2000). From inception, the principle of savings challenges dependency and initiates autonomy, obliging the members to build and run their own organisations with their own resources, as a Zambian member notes: "Savings teaches people to look out for themselves. How small contributions build a big, big win" (SDIa 2004). This change in attitude is key to shifting the power relations that oppress them, to breaking away from formal structures that create dependency or inhibit them and toward creating autonomy. Indicative of this shift is the fact that for many savings schemes, their collectivised savings replace state and institutional charity as the provider in times of need and the provision of opportunity. According to a Zambian member:

> "The money we save we use as social welfare. We draw from the scheme for social crises. These are "soft loans" for funerals, food, school uniforms, medicines etc." (SDIa 2004)

A Swazi member echoes these words:

> "We can buy for our children the school books, pay for the funeral and get food for the table. I also get ideas for the small business – which I am saving for, (this is) just handcraft, making brooms to sell to locals. Mats as well. Then later, I will get a sewing machine." (SDIa 2004)

From this statement it becomes obvious too that this empowerment goes beyond the limitations of self-help, it also includes the premise of self-sufficient

development. This in turn provides possibilities for leverage in engaging with the formal world.

Saving's capacity to provide a range of options is apparent, from social welfare in times of crisis to providing opportunities for development. This is expressed on the SDI website:

> "Instead of waiting for the government to provide development, communities now study their own needs, study what state policy provides and formulate solutions that work for everybody. They begin looking at their own resources, and only what they don't have they demand from outside. Savings is a resource poor communities put together and use". (http//sdinet.org)

A priority evolved by savings has been to empower the poor to take command of the development agenda within their area. The strategy is to mobilise agency beyond the initiating crisis and turn it into a permanently ongoing process of social and material transformation. In this the methodology seems to aspire to a condition of permanent revolution, of continuously sustained community action. Whatever the underlying motivation, the evidence indicates that this strategy continues to resonate with communities, consolidating and reinforcing the sense of autonomy and collective pride, as the following comment by a savings scheme member reveals:

> "One community dollar is equal to a thousand development dollars! Because that community dollar represents the commitment of thousands of poor people to their own development. Without the direct commitment of a savings scheme, people will participate in any freebie that comes along. But when it's from your savings scheme, it's YOURS. That feeling comes only when you are saving. Without this, development and improvements have no meaning." (ACHR 2000)

As the history of SDI's development shows, savings has in many regions moved beyond being a system of crisis management and localised self-help to a general empowerment process for the poor at large to mark out their autonomy. The global crises of commodification and exhaustion, as well as natural disasters such as climate change and HIV-Aids, have created a broad-reaching commonality amongst its victims that challenges the enclave formation of increasingly apartheid-capitalist practice. Again, like the equalising destruction of revolution, these crises precipitate new social responses in reflex. The daily

exercise of saving has created the forum for poor communities from all over the South to come together to discuss and identify common problems and priorities, as the editorial of ACHR'S *Face-to-Face* states:

> "Why is so much exchange devoted to promoting, refining and extending savings and credit? For one thing, it's a strong idea that transfers well if you're looking for robust processes, here's one of the robustest. It's been carried in People's hands across the region, and around the globe. Savings members within the SDI network now number in the millions, divided into thousands of small, autonomous women-centred, people-managed groups, with millions of dollars in savings for housing, emergencies and income generation." (ACHR 2000)

SDI recognises the implications of global change and uses the rhetoric of engaging the neo-liberal system on its own terms. The social movement makes a bold attempt in some arenas to mimic the strategies of corporate resource management to set its own development agenda and lever external resources. Sheela Patel explains the rationale behind this:

> "Now many of the NGOs in India are trapped in the idea of "self-help", as an aberration of Gandhi's understanding of being self-sufficient. But for us, being self-sufficient is different from just dealing only your own resources. For being self-sufficient in a globalising environment, has a different meaning. It means; if you are able to understand what you want, and what you need then you can leverage what you have for what you don't have. This is what corporations do. A very important criterion for the rituals (saving) is how do they leverage external things that you need. The externality could be for an individual, a group, a Federation, for a country, for SDI, for all these levels. Savings in that sense reflects these multiple imageries of rituals more strongly than anything else. Corporate institutions use success in one location to leverage something in another place. Poor people if they operate in isolated environments can't do that, but as SDI we can do that! We can use successes here to show in South Africa, in that city its happening, so why not here? So it allows poor people to leverage using their peers success, or knowledge or capacity in their own dialogue. Even if they don't have it yet in their own back pocket. That's why it's for me a very important aspect of these kinds of things. It copies the corporate strategy for the benefit of the most needy." (SDIa 2004)

Synthesised in the dialectic of the globalised market economy, slumdwellers in SDI savings groups are learning to use corporate means for their collective social ends. It is an irony rooted in pragmatism.

- **Legitimising the Uncivil Society**

This section will look at the role savings schemes play in formalising and legitimising slumdwellers. Slums and shantytowns are informal and generally illegal settlements. They transgress and infringe a multitude of laws and procedures: criminally occupying and squatting land and houses that they do not possess title to; building structures in contravention of building codes; exceeding occupation densities; constituting a health and safety risk; providing shelter and sanctuary to criminals and criminal activities; concealing unregistered migrants and providing a home to countless marginal and dubious characters. Civic legislation, like Marx's social theory, excludes the lumpen masses from civil society. The poor are in a real sense illegitimate: the urban lumpen and their habitation thus constitute an "uncivil society."

Savings collectives give SDI the building blocks to construct social institutions that unlike the negative stereotypes, are enduring, consistent and most importantly possess financial assets. The aggregation of many savings collectives creates a unified financial and social front that has political implications, as the Thai Community Network notes:

> "When many small savings groups link to other groups, these larger networks provide access to greater financial resources and enhanced clout when negotiating for basic needs. This process has political implications, since the stronger status of their own networks enables the poor to deal with the larger, structural issues related to their problems." (ACHR 2000)

The galvanising of these small collectives into larger groupings transcends being just temporary crisis responses, self-help initiatives or micro-finance schemes. These institutions mean that the lumpenproletariat are no longer dismissed, and confront civil society with the fact that they will not go away, that they are a permanent feature of urban reality and have to be engaged with. SDI's Joel Bolnick explains:

> "Yes, savings is there to alleviate the immediate problems of poverty. To pay for shelter, medical care, school fees, whatever is desperately required. But beyond this, there is the need for constant mobilization and growth of savings collectives, in order to maintain a critical mass of sustainable Savings collectivity, to create recognizable scale - to work as vectors for

> engaging with the formal world. Savings are not "*a priori*" about housing or emergencies, but a social tool for galvanizing a community, which the government can take seriously. (Bolnick 2004)

Engagement implies de facto recognition, which in turn is a precondition for legitimacy. SDI's agenda is to broaden recognition of its constituency in order to pave the way to de jure inclusion. The way they seek to do this is by linking collective finances to a populist politics. This is exemplified in the following editorial comment:

> "Now in South Africa, we're engaging government at all levels. We come to these negotiations with resources in our hands. We have thousands of people and huge savings." (ACHR 2000)

Besides being a method of developing and building capacity, savings creates the conditions for a protracted engagement with civil and formal society leading to the creation of de facto relationships. Zimbabwean activist, Beth Chitekwe-Biti notes:

> "We use savings to build capacity. To build a track record of commonality. Which we can use as leverage – for access to land, partnerships, and dealing with the formal world. Savings in this case creates a wealth far more than just money." (SDIa 2004)

The overarching outcome of savings is to create degrees of autonomy amongst collectives of the poor. This autonomy shifts the lumpen engagement with civil society from passive dismissal to increasingly engaged subjectivity. This move to legitimacy paves the way for savings to become a force for contention.

- **A Politics of Pragmatism**

A key question relating to saving schemes, is what political role do they play? The core rhetorical premise that has informed SDI's savings praxis is that they are apolitical responses to material crises. This allows the social movement to pragmatically steer a neutral course through the many ideological divisions that fragment the poor and that inhibit their concerted social action. As a generative theme for a cosmopolitan project, savings seeks to be as inclusive as possible. In the same way that it attempts to provide a secular meta-identity that transcends religion, caste, tribe and ethnicity, savings collectives present themselves as a non-partisan social movement, whose first priority is addressing the material

needs of its constituency. This effectively allows SDI to avoid entering the political arena directly, yet without losing its underlying politics.

Some SDI activists draw cynical parallels between liberal economic discourse and liberal democratic practice, equating democracy with the market, wherein a parallel commodification occurs, only with political parties paid for in votes rather than cash (Bolnick 2003). In keeping with this critique, savings schemes try instead to be a progressive social agent, which transcends the "divisive strategy of political-democratic practise", as one Kenyan activist put it (SDIa 2004). What emerges from the combined efforts of the many savings groups is a Federation of the poor that seeks a different economic dispensation located in the idea of a redistribution of resources toward the poor by the poor themselves. This agenda resonates closely with earlier socialist and counter-hegemonic projects seeking economic democracy before political democracy. It would seem SDI skirts around politics to avoid dissipating its energy in what it perceives as futile and divisive pro-hegemonic politics. Instead it focuses upon building a broad-reaching local and transnational populism focussed upon a radical approach to ownership and production located upon a politics of social reproduction and a new commons. In a sense, savings praxis creates collective actors whose primary aim is to create fields of autonomy that in turn have a political impact, as one African SDI activist describes savings groups:

> "the vanguard of their insurrection against the system which has rendered them abject. These face-to-face associations are in effect economic cadres whose task is to sabotage the normal flow of capital, blocking and inhibiting its usual flow toward the rich and wealthy, undermining the established patterns of accumulation." (SDIa 2004)

While this view is not shared throughout SDI's rank and file, it does capture something about the way SDI operates. Certainly it confirms their self-conscious choice to refer to themselves as "Shack/slum Dwellers International", revitalising the traditional counter-hegemonic and socialist appellation of the "International".

Despite the lack of a revolutionary consensus, the general principle behind creating savings groups is that they are the precondition for an alternative, communal accumulation strategy located in the ranks of lumpen slumdwellers. Saving schemes are intended to be the repositories for the financial surplus of poor communities. One very important strategy that emerges is that instead of being absorbed back into the flows of the rich via the invisible hand of the market, this money is retained amongst the poor; circulated and made to work within the community and within the network of savings groups. This siphoning off and retention of their assets suggests a deliberate withholding of their funds, a cash boycott of the formal market. Certainly by resisting participation in the system of production that oppresses them, savings can redirect these resources to defending their social reproduction, "to saving people". In this way the material aggregation provided by saving sets in motion a materially-rooted social process of collective conscientisation that is located in social reproduction and carried by a broad-based transnational linkage of the Southern under-class. This opens up a radical possibility: to galvanise and unify members of the lumpen under-class into a common body with closer links to each other transnationally than to the other classes within their own nations. The "internationalisation" of their class under a self-conscious common identity approximates the Gramscian notion of a "moral-intellectual bloc", and in this way, is perhaps a precursor to the "historical bloc" capable of revolution.

Conclusion

SDI's praxis of savings appropriates the central material and ideological instrument of capitalism, cash. Savings in this sense, runs contrary to the dominant narrative of individualised commodification, for it turns money around and makes the saving of it, the core ritual for a collective agenda. Savings groups can be seen as the fundamental cells of SDI's conception of a transformatory social movement, what one might call an alternative transnational social "republic" of the Southern lumpenproletariat based upon economic rather than political issues, located as a self-help, contingent development, based around the

collectivisation of money. As praxis, savings evolve as the spontaneous reflex to the social and material dialectic of the milieu in which they occur. The generalised crises of the current globalised economy means that there are broad similarities between the material conditions faced by shack/slumdwellers as a class and hence in the expression of SDI's saving praxis. Contradicting orthodox social theory's accusations of fatalistic passivity and dependency limiting the lumpenproletariat, community savings creates a social response to crisis. Concurrent with the Freireian project of cultural action, savings is a complex generative theme that provides a material base to active dialogue for social change. It does this across a range of oppressive relations that bear down upon the poor. In this chapter, some of the more obvious of these were looked at. It was seen that saving proved effective across the South as a material catalyst for mobilising the lumpenproletariat and establishing the basis for broad reaching class-consciousness and agency of the poorest of the poor. It was noted that saving prioritised women, recognising the intensified oppression of their situation and whose specific social roles made them the critical agents for change and a new politics focussed upon reproduction. Saving also acted in classic Freireian sense by schooling the illiterate through the daily practice of writing and accounting. These factors were all seen to empower and legitimate the weak and uncivil underclass of shack/slumdwellers. Finally it was observed how savings offers a means of contesting oppressive relations of production, by providing material alternatives based upon a new commons and logic of social reproduction. By linking of theory and action, saving can be been seen as a heuristic process, using embedded cultural action to give the lumpen masses a practical class-consciousness based upon the economic realities that underlie their social situation. At the same time, they are also functional cells of a new order, organised on a collective and transnational basis, prefiguring but never completing a globalised network that embraces the poor universally – in an International of Slum Dwellers.

Chapter Six - Horizontal Exchanges.

Introduction

Horizontal exchanges describe how members of poor community groups within SDI link with similar groups across distances. At any moment in time, SDI savings group members are travelling across the South and visiting each other. In these exchange visits they bond, share and most importantly, learn from each other's lives in poverty. Exchanges are the mechanism for intellectual and social connection within the social movement. As an ever-expanding internal communication it is metaphorically the movement's neural system, with people as the transmission device. It is a sentient process, made up of constant and incessant traffic of slumdwellers amongst each other sharing experiences of their daily lives. SDI calls this sharing of livelihood struggles through embodied knowledge, "horizontal exchange".

This chapter will explore this key operational principle of the social movement. As with savings above (and Federation to follow) Section A of this chapter looks at the narrative and semantic origins of "exchanges" for SDI, as well as providing an overview of what SDI means by the term. Section B will examine the praxis in terms of themes similar to the ones used earlier in the case of saving and to be used again later in the chapter on Federation. This will question: firstly, how exchanges operate as a neo-Freireian generative processes that dialogue discrete lumpen livelihood struggles and how this dialogic praxis unfolds across a number of interrelated areas. Secondly, how exchanges mobilise disparate slumdwellers in common cause. Thirdly, how exchanges are a means of overcoming slumdweller alienation, both from themselves as individuals and as a class. Fourthly, how exchanges work as an instrument of slum pedagogy. Fifthly, how these exchanges of knowledge empower SDI at the local and global level. Sixthly, how exchanges provide a platform for legitimising the slums. Finally the chapter will question how this praxis advances the political agenda of SDI and offers a pragmatic means to contest the dispensation that impoverishes them.

A. Semantics

For SDI, horizontal exchange is a term charged with ideological and material significance. As with saving, the ambiguity of the word makes it particularly suitable for dialogic praxis. Again it utilises a core functionary verb of economics, "exchange", which is generally meant in relation to the exchange of commodities. At the same time, however, an exchange also suggests: a conversation, a dialogue and an interaction between social beings, including the cordial diplomacy as seen by exchange students. In a third sense too, exchange also has a reference, now somewhat obsolete in the North, but still relevant in much of the South, to the complex systems of connection and communication provided by telephone exchanges.

Key is the idea of it being a horizontal exchange. This declares its intention to be a relationship of exchange between equals, that it is not about exchange for profit, or of being paternalistic or authoritative, but is instead about spreading outward rather than upward. Horizontal exchange begins with the sharing of livelihood struggles amongst the shack/slumdwellers. In this conversation there is no hierarchy to experience, no scale of value and each is equal to any other, therefore the exchange is always in parity. It is the sharing and creation of a commons of knowledge located in the transnational ranks of the Southern lumpenproletariat.

History reveals that humans have always travelled. The demographic spread of humanity across the globe is testament to our various peregrinations. The reasons for travel are infinite, yet one thing is certain; a journey is one of our clichés for life and the acquisition of knowledge. In the course of these migrations, people have always copied and learned from each other. This tradition underpins the SDI process of horizontal exchange as a SDI member remarks:

> "In traditional societies, people who travel get wisdom. Wisdom and insight have always been associated with traveling to distant places. Think of the *Hajj*, think of pilgrimages and wandering sages. It's not much different with groups of the poor" (ACHR 1999).

During the last few hundred years of dominance by the bordered and hermetic nation-state, travel became politically limited. Rising in dialectical opposition to this regime of exclusion, counter-hegemonic "old" social movements of workers, representing various strands of socialism sought to directly confront this by travelling far and wide to proselytise their cause. Wherever capitalists set up shop, cadres of determined workers travelled to confront them. Based upon anti-capitalist and redistributive aims these social movements sought to encourage feelings of working class identity and to mobilise workers on the basis of perceived common needs and interests in contrast to those who were more affluent (Burgmann 2003). From the IWW and the Communist International to Labor and union organisations, the movements were a major source of social cohesion and workers representation. They created a class identity that was largely cosmopolitan (at least within a Eurocentric connotation) and transnational. This class saw itself in an "international" sense as the advance stage of resistance to capitalist oppression.

During the anti-colonial and independence struggles of the twentieth century, the idea of travelling mobilisation reached its apotheosis in Mao's Long March. The march directly engaged disparate communities by bringing the revolution to them. This face-to-face approach was routinised in India by Vinoba Bhave, whose protracted walks across the country visited communities in situ in order to bring the teachings of Gandhi's Swaraj directly to them. In the present globalised economy based upon neo-liberal economics and apartheid politics, SDI recaptures both the Comintern and Third World liberation strategy of travelling propaganda and knowledge exchanges, in this instance to build a social movement amongst the lumpenproletariat of the slums. Horizontal exchanges in this sense represent "old social movement" methodology in a new age of class oppression. Thus while the methodology of exchange is not new, its use amongst

the lumpenproletariat is unprecedented at this scale. The SDI publication *Face to Face* describes the workings of this new class segregation:

> "Exchange is nothing new. Linking with like-minded people, across distances, is probably humanity's most natural impulse. There are exchanges of administrators, politicians, development professionals and NGO activists all the time, who move out of their own situations to learn, to meet peers and to fortify themselves with fresh ideas from elsewhere. But poverty is a relentless isolator, and puts formidable constraints on this kind of mobility and the linkages it engenders or at least reduces the sphere of mobility to a single lane or a slum which is nobody's idea of a larger world." (ACHR 2000: p1)

The genesis of SDI's horizontal exchanges lie in the ideas of community exposure initiated during the 1970's and 1980's by a Franciscan priest working amongst Latin American and Asian poor communities, Father Jorge Anzorena. This early champion of direct, people-to-people learning, is quoted in SDI/ ACHR's *Face to Face*, as saying:

> "Why should professionals like me have a monopoly on all this vast experience, while the poor are stuck in their settlements? Why shouldn't they, with such hunger to improve their lives, also be able to travel, to see the best of Asia's development?" (ACHR 2000: p4)

According to the SDI archives, Anzorena's "community exposures" began the exchange experiment. With "modest funds" (ACHR 2000) from Selavip (Latin American and Asian Low Income Housing Service), he set up and supported some exploratory grassroots exchanges amongst the communities he was working with. During the 1980's Father Jorge introduced this idea to Mahila Milan and its support NGO, SPARC. They had already forged links with the slum grass-roots movement, National Slumdwellers Federation (NSDF). This relationship meant that members of these different constituencies began to meet each other regularly to share strategies and tactics. Quite naturally of course, an organic transfer of knowledge took place alongside as members from these community organisations caught glimpses of each other's lives and were informed by them. Anzorena's community exposures took this a step further. Rather than being visits of autonomous enclaves to each other for strategic or pragmatic reasons, they began to build a common movement based upon broad social issues, using exchanges to generate dialogue and cohesion. Unlike earlier social movements

this new mobilisation was centred upon the issue of social reproduction rather than production. Horizontal exchanges became the praxis for building this solidarity and mobilising its agenda.

In 1988, the Mahila Milan-NSDF-SPARC alliance began to participate in sharing ideas with other NGO-CBO groups in Asia and held the first Women's Exchange in which the alliance hosted 56 women from eight countries. Later that year they participated in the Peoples Assembly in Korea where many communities gathered in solidarity with Seoul's urban poor, 800 000 of whom were being evicted from their homes to beautify the city for the Olympic Games. According to a witness "It was the greatest crisis that the city's poor had ever dealt with" (ACHR 2003). This eviction crisis brought together a large number of grassroots groups, community leaders, activists, and concerned professionals from all around Asia to focus attention and protest against this and other evictions taking place throughout Asia. The "Regional Eviction Campaign" implemented by the gathering, used the Olympic evictions as catalyst for broader action. The transnational links that the alliance made with other grassroots organisations facing similar crises paved the way to the first international horizontal exchanges between grassroots slum groups. The alliance went on to develop links with slumdwellers in a number of other Asian countries including Cambodia, Nepal and the Philippines. During the1990's the alliance began a regular programme of exchanges with South African squatter communities.

Financially of course the slumdwellers were incapable of developing these transnational connections and initially the exchanges were supported by a number of NGO's like Homeless International and the Asian Coalition of Housing Rights (an NGO formed in specific response to the Seoul evictions and directed subsequently to evictions in Asia in general). The external NGO input meant that exchanges inevitably carried a double agenda, firstly as global-local activism contesting development, while the second was of local-local knowledge sharing. The former is largely a response to a production crisis. The latter, located in

reproduction, is more appropriately horizontal exchange. This contradiction of agendas continues today within SDI and suggests the clichéd pragmatism of the lumpenproletariat, that beggars can't be choosers. But despite the compromise of being funded by external agencies contesting production, exchanges have succeeded in building a significant coalition of grassroots communities sharing the knowledge of their livelihood struggles. In many ways this process recapitulates the South-South model of Bandung, only in a de-statised way. This agenda has in a sense been carried stealthily within the overt NGO counter-development agenda as increasing numbers of poor community groups began moving around and visiting each other in their own slums, cities and countries. Journeying became possible in lives of inescapable struggle as this account describes:

> "Four and a half years ago, Lunghi Nzama got on a plane with a group from South Africa and flew to Bombay. It was the first time she'd ever left her country, the first time she'd been on an airplane. Lunghi is a community leader in a squatter settlement in Piesang River, outside Durban. In Bombay, she was welcomed enthusiastically by women who live in similarly impoverished but quite different conditions in pavement slums, accomplished women who have much to say about savings, about negotiating with cities for land and entitlements, about designing and building affordable houses about many things. Several of these women had even been in South Africa and know a lot about Lunghi's situation...until a few years ago, these kinds of exchange of poor people were rare. There are now increasing numbers of poor community groups moving around visiting each other in their own cities and countries and in other countries." (ACHR 2000: p1)

By 1996 the scale and spread of exchanges, the alliances forged and the overlaps of interest and realisation of common ground led to the logical formation of Shack/Slum Dwellers International (SDI) described earlier. Since this point, exchanges have become a constant and many-layered process, involving thousands of shack/slumdwellers annually at both international and local levels. Grassroots communities are visiting each other constantly, regional teams are meeting each other, national groups are travelling with their peers and broad multinational exchanges are taking place, all over Africa, Asia and Latin America (see appendix 3). Representing the mobilisation of numerous lumpen

communities across the South, the praxis of exchange has contributed largely to the creation of the transnational social movement.

The practice of poor women ostensibly collecting savings and in so doing visiting, socialising and discovering each other and thereby building a social movement is actually a microcosm of the exchange formula. Like savings, horizontal exchanges operate across scale and register throughout SDI. Visiting each other, seeing, hearing and doing each other's lives is the central principle of the whole social movement, and every level reflects this self-constituting sociality. In this sense, horizontal exchanges and the entire SDI social movement can be described as an incremental process of this self-discovery through shared livelihood struggles. According to Sheela Patel exchanges are the product of communities reflecting upon themselves and their situation, visiting each other in order to mutually resolve their common problems:

> "Together, neighbours identify their problems and explore possible solutions. They then either visit a group close by or invite them to their own settlement. Within the city, these exchanges happen often and spontaneously. Initially the more experienced core trainers of the local Federation facilitate the first visits, then community members organise their own exchanges, as they grow more confident. Over time, groups visit each other of their own accord, as the need emerges. In this two phases emerge; one in which core trainers travel to assist city level groups, in the other, local community groups and leaders, now confident and capable, visit other nearby settlements. Gradually groups begin to visit each other in other cities, regions, countries and continents... Most exchanges involve groups of four or five women and one or two men, reflective of SDI's gender emphasis –which views women as the paramount agents of change." (Patel in SDIa 2004)

While savings collectives form the core cadres in SDI, horizontal exchanges provide a communication and mobilising praxis that reaches beyond these, yet provides the means to link them. Mutual problem solving and knowledge sharing directly challenges the totalising commodification of current market practice, as well as providing a means for proselytising savings collectivity. A member of the SAHPF in Piesang River, Kwa-Zulu, reflects upon this:

> "On the 1st October 1998, we held a meeting with the Cape Town people. Their aim was to see how we were working. They saw how our daily savings work and they wished to see how

> a staircase is built and to find out whether there are any problems they can solve concerning the savings schemes. We told them the reason why daily savings and meetings are so important is because it is where problems are identified, analysed and perhaps solved or a step leading to a solution is taken." (Patel et al 2000: p 6)

In this way, horizontal exchanges contribute to create a fabric of cohesion and common vision amongst the disparate lumpenproletariat. This social fabric is made up from the SDI rituals of savings, exchanges and Federation working together as a praxiology that can engage, mobilise and conscientise this previously dismissed class by accessing different needs and providing solutions to them. This idea of a cross-woven praxiology, is in fact used by SDI in describing itself:

> "Warp and weft: A federating process is a new learning system and exchange is it's chief tool. What's the connection between the two? Exchange and Federation are what one leader describes as the warp and weft of a change process, which really belongs to poor people. The two fit together in complimentary ways - exchanges help build Federations and Federations help maximize the learning benefits of exchange." (ACHR 2000: p 18)

Each operational principle of the SDI praxiology acts to create multiple entry points for the social movement to mobilise. Horizontal exchanges provide the shared consciousness of the lumpen shack/slumdwellers to realise themselves as part of a class able to act for itself.

B. Exchange Praxis

- **Livelihood struggles as the Point of Dialogue**

As suggested by observers such as Connell and Goodman (Connell 2002; Goodman 2003) the shared logic of domination and resulting exhaustion offers hope for it creates the foundations for shared responses, providing the impetus for new connections between forms of social agency and mobilisation. Certainly this crisis dialectically affords SDI with the key for a generative theme: knowledge as praxis. Contra hyper-commodification, SDI exchanges reinvigorate the archaic and now counter-hegemonic notion of an intellectual commons, with dialogue as the key. Knowledge is the base for this dialogue, information is "horizontally

exchanged". The praxis is located in creating a commons of experience and knowledge based upon the many specific understandings of daily life experienced by the Southern poor.

Horizontal exchanges link these myriad particular livelihood struggles and their solutions to each other, creating a point of dialogue and the base for a shared consciousness. In so doing exchanges tie the bonds of solidarity, the "face-to-face" connectivity that constitutes the social movement. In this social commons, the knowledge of the poor is shared freely for common purpose. The cloning of ideas, plagiarism, is encouraged, as a Zimbabwean member describes:

> "We learn by copying each other, so we copied Federation from the South Africans. It brought awareness to people about people who themselves were poor, and how powerful they could be. It creates a platform for the poor to learn from each other, especially women, who can look at each other and share their experiences." (SDIa 2004)

This de-commodification of knowledge within a market-economy allows the poor to make up some ground that they have lost to systemic domination. Again, it corresponds closely to Freireian praxis and literally challenges the "banking" method of current knowledge production. SDI's horizontal exchanges appear to be a spontaneous form of Freire's "problem-solving education" (Freire 2000: p78), the point of departure of which (again echoing Freire) lies in the people themselves. Although when funded by NGO's, productive knowledge sharing such as "skills training" is emphasised, exchanges are primarily located in reproductive knowledge, fulfilling the Freireian premise about sharing ways of being rather than having. Horizontal exchanges give the lumpenproletariat the possibility to become subjects of their own knowledge, instilling in the ranks, despite orthodox pessimism, the key awareness of a class-in-itself and for-itself.

The core aspects of horizontal exchange as praxis interconnect as a continuous flow of mutually reinforcing components. Its capacity to mobilise relies on the way it overcomes alienation, which again influences and is influenced by the capacity to critically learn and teach. These elements all loop positively into each other, and it is hard to say precisely where one area ends and another begins. While for

the purposes of this analysis each will be dealt with as a separate category, inevitably overlapping will occur.

- **Finding Common Cause**

Knowledge as commons is predicated upon being an open cosmopolitan project. As James Goodman points out:

> "Different commons are not just interrelated but embedded inside a larger biospheric whole: they fit inside each other. The concept of the commons thus transcends problems of disconnection... Central to this connectivity is the presence of a shared consciousness, and a clear frontier between "us" and "them"..." (Goodman 2003: p7)

In this sense, horizontal exchanges are effective tools for mobilisation. As opportunities for engagement they show the lumpen their shared struggles and goals, through which they are able to find ways to co-operate and collectively transform them. Exchanges are as far as possible the synthesising of the dissimilar into similar, of fusing experience across space and bridging contextual difference. The practice in the locality acts as the catalyst for dialogue between them, as Diana Mitlin a research-activist from the International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED) working with SDI, observes:

> "For all the groups involved, international exchanges are expected to contribute to on-going day to day activities of the host community organization. But, at the same time, they contribute to a global process. This global process is a movement of solidarity and mutual understanding between the urban poor. It is not a global process that focuses on international policies and practices, rather it is global in outreach, strengthening groups capacity to deal with what is oppressive and exploitative within their local environment. From this international exchange program, the Shack/Slum Dwellers International has been conceived and launched." (SDIa 1999)

The dialogic praxis provided by horizontal exchanges links the local to the global, transcending insularity, yet recognising particularity and in so doing builds solidarity with recognition.

In this regard, if savings is like "breathing" to SDI then exchanges as the medium for linking the local grassroots communities to the transnational social movement, provide what Appadurai calls "...a circulatory counterpart to the building of deep

democracies locally" (Appadurai 2000). The metaphor is explained in more detail in the following NGO report:

> "The exchange programs ... are effectively the life-blood of all these organisations. From the most basic form of exposure to another settlement to complex multi-country exchange programs such as the one hosted in Bombay by SPARC and ACHR, these exchange programs set the scene for horizontal information sharing and for the consolidation of linkages that are vital for the replication of the process. One savings scheme on its own has neither the experience, the resources, nor the ability to develop the critical mass necessary for this redistributive approach to have any significant impact on the overall development process. Exchange programs link savings schemes, multiplying the capacity and the strength of the groups involved." (Peoples Dialogue 1996)

This praxis is challenging and disconcerting as it ruptures the dominant and unavoidable master narrative of difference and otherness that permeates slums through involution. Exchanges wean those on them of the naïve adherence to hegemony's dominant apartheid script and show them their true position as a class of similarly poor, bringing a critical realisation of overarching sameness to their ranks, as Mitlin continues:

> "When the South Africans first visited India, they were shattered and shell-shocked. But after the initial shock, there are many benefits. Seeing other communities in situations of great need, stops people feeling sorry for themselves and helps move them forward. When international guests visit local groups, share their local situation, understanding their ambitions and their strategies, there is an immense feeling of solidarity. Suddenly people realise that, all over the world, there are others who want the same thing, and they see new alternatives and possibilities. (SDIa 1999)

The key point of overlap in all the struggles of the lumpenproletariat is in social reproduction. Horizontal exchanges help break down the isolation of the slums and deconstructing the myopia of poverty. It mobilises by establishing the real commonality of slumdwellers despite spatial difference through actual experiences of participating in each other's lives, as a South African squatter describes on returning from an exchange to India:

> "We went to India with many assumptions and presumptions of homeless people and poverty – why people become homeless and how they were finding the solutions to their problems. I understood it only in terms of the differences between us and them... I had not accounted for the similarities. Nor I believe, had the members of Mahila Milan and NSDF who we spent time

> with. But that's it. That's exchange! Learning things for ourselves, by seeing them for ourselves, meeting new people, sharing new experiences and broadening our perspectives." (SDIa 1996)

The exchanging of lives across spatial divides goes to building deep and authentic bonds of connection between disparate lumpenproletariat, as a Northern observer, Toby Blume noted after participating in an exchange to India:

> "I cannot over estimate the power of this process in bringing people together. I learnt about the lives of people who I thought I knew (who I'd traveled to India with) but I hadn't even begun to really understand. This bonding experience – both for us as a group and with our hosts has given us a tremendous sense of shared purpose and togetherness, in essence "community". Which is, after all, what it's all about." (SDIa 1999)

In so doing the praxis is underpinned by the capacity to mobilise by inclusion, to mobilise through human embrace. This brings to mind Ariel Salleh's notion of "holding labour" (Salleh 2001) and her idea of a "meta-industrial" class as a key agent under advancing exhaustion. By means of horizontal exchanges, the lumpenproletariat of the slums, particularly women, realise themselves through their engagement in various common forms of reproductive labour. Understanding their similar location in such "metabolic" labour, rather than "instrumental" productive labour allows them to consolidate their forces and move from the margins of exclusion to valorisation.

- **Self and Class Knowledge**

Horizontal exchange as mobilisation praxis is directly linked to its capacity to reveal and overcome the alienation of the lumpenproletariat from each other. Exchanges mobilise by showing the true configuration of poverty as a class issue, rather than a local or national problem. Exchanges provide praxis for this crucial class-consciousness to emerge and be sustained. This class-consciousness tied to revelatory and critical self-awareness is explicit in this poem by South African shackdweller Patrick Maghebula:

"Face to Face"

Face to face with one another.
Face to face with reality.
Face to face with poverty.
It is for real we are poor.
It is for real we need each other.
The grass cannot live without its roots.
Government cannot survive without its people.
Fish cannot live without water.
We have to live for each other.
We have to come face to face with reality.
It is for real that we need each other.
The city cannot survive without hobos who will eat
the crumbs that fall from the rich.
We are part of daily city life.
We have to come face to face with other squatters.
We have come to learn from each other.
Yes, we saw pain, courage, endurance and perseverance
in one another's eyes.
There were no solutions to our needs
We only had each other's unity, strength and experience
We were face to face with reality and poverty.
We cannot live without India and India will suffer without South Africa.
(Maghebula in SDIa 1999)

The complexities of advanced industrial capitalist relations reify alienation in many ways, all of which are heightened in the confines of Southern slums. Even the capacity to act is itself frustrated by alienation as multiple contradictory narratives come to bear upon the shack/slumdwellers. These contradictions mean that they are caught in a schizoid reality of superimposed Weltanschauung, captured in this slumdweller quote:

> "For we are not only embedded in our own realities but in others! All these guys living in London and New York can be embedded in your reality, but you are not allowed to be embedded in their reality. They can tell you what to do, but you can't tell them what to do. There's a centre and a periphery... If their view of the world is vertical, then you develop vertical hierarchies, and then you put power in the relationships, but whose up and whose down? and you say the people whose lives are involved in the process are at the centre! We're saying that all of us, communities and NGOs, by getting more and more involved in

> understanding each other's situations... We need to put that same emphasis to the horizontal axis..." (ACHR 2000)

The paternalistic interventions that objectify the poor as a charity project underpinning Northern engagement with the Southern poor intensify the poor's alienation. Not only do they deny the poor the capacity to be the agents of their own transformation, but also they de-valorise their entire milieu. The issue is the subordination of local discourse to Northern dictates, of the horizontal to the vertical, of the poor to the expert. In evolving the horizontal exchange process, SDI challenges the contradictory engagement between Northern and Southern narratives. Clearly dissatisfied, SDI seeks to contest this alienated conversation by critically refashioning it through the direct dialogue between its members provided by horizontal exchanges.

What this has done is to deconstruct a key contradiction of developmental practice that critics like Shiva, Mies and Escobar share, where the knowledge claim of the "scientism" of the expert and intellectual appropriates the power of those being "developed," thereby further weakening them. This reification of the poor's alienation is the direct corollary of having others, "experts", development consultants, governments, aid agencies, and human-rights activists, seek to transform, "better" the lives of the poor for them or on their behalf. An editorial comment in the SDI/ACHR publication *Face to Face* raised this issue in 2000:

> "There are haves and have-nots at every scale: within communities, cities, countries and regions, and between the North and the South. In every context, it's generally the haves, who take the prerogative to solve problems. In the case of cities, solutions put forward by the haves have not worked at all, but have made much harsher the have-not's burden... Why does this keep happening? The non-involvement of the have-nots in these kinds of solutions is critical... Most externally propagated alternatives are not providing the kind of solutions anticipated. Development interventions, which sought to deal with a single issue, no matter how well designed, have not been able to deal with the reality that human beings have needs that are multi-faceted and interconnected. Needs which cannot be cubby holed and resolved in discrete bits. Although very few resources get allocated to problems affecting the poor, even these get withdrawn when the poor fail to participate in change processes, which either scare them away or seem useless... So how do you shake off an age-old tradition, which excludes

> the poor from participating in the exploration and testing of solutions to problems, which affect their own lives? And how do you help poor communities to replace the isolation of despair with the kind of solidarity and stamina they need to work towards such solutions? Horizontal Exchanges – a Poor Peoples Pedagogy!" (ACHR 2000: p4)

Horizontal exchanges go some way to overcome the poor's alienation from themselves. It allows them to recognise the inherent value of their own survival strategies, of discovering that they are the only true experts in their milieu. In the exchange model, learning and knowledge is both spontaneous and autonomous, it arises within communities because the vehicle is the people, who are rooted in their local process, as support NGO Peoples Dialogue explains:

> "Exchanges lead to good sharing of experience and therefore a new set of people learning new skills.... Exchanges between communities have been continually developed because they serve many ends: The exchanges are a means to draw large numbers of people into a process of change. They enable the poor to reach out and federate, thereby developing a collective vision. They help create personalised and strong bonds between communities who share common problems, both presenting them with a wide range of options to choose from and negotiate for, and ensuring them they are not alone in their struggles." (Peoples Dialogue 1996)

A horizontal exchange is a journey of discovery, both of self and the world. It is both a real and symbolic journey that begins by going outwards and away, only to find that the capacity to act on the world is done not by others, but by oneself acting in concert with others.

In this case exchanges offer a means of overcoming a broad spectrum of alienation by creating a meta-slum identity, as the "poorest of the poor". This alternative culture built on the reproductive logic of the lumpenproletariat informs them how to act in accord with their class interests, as a shack/slumdweller observes:

> "when we meet in each other's settlements, we're developing our own culture, which is not NGO culture. This new culture means sharing stories, telling where you've come from, who are you? This is a way of building a culture, a sense of belonging, a place. This is a way of ironing out dependence. This is our learning. This is our education." (SDIa 2000)

The spontaneous origins of this process, the fact that it is born of the slums, means it is often deeply socially confronting, as a Zimbabwean member admitted:

> "Often exchanges are painful- when we see others. I thought I was only one suffering, now I see others suffering. Makes me touched by suffering. Its terrible how the world is. The suffering is terrible." (SDIa 2004)

Exchanges confront participants with the pervasive reality of poverty, both in terms of its spatial extent and the depths of human misery within it. This realisation does two things; firstly it breaks the sense of individual alienation, the aloneness of the slums, of passive victim-hood. Secondly, it shocks participants into knowing that there is no outside salvation beside their own active volition. These realisations are followed by the reassurance of witnessing what their peers in poverty have achieved and sharing in this knowledge, at the same time seeing how their peers are positively shaped by the knowledge that they have provided. Exchanges thus both confront and validate the alienated participants.

- **Exchanges as Slum Pedagogy**

Closely connected to the theme of alienation in the preceding discussion, horizontal exchanges seek to address the class alienation the poor experience from many aspects of the formal education process. Horizontal exchange is all about sharing knowledge. It is SDI's key pedagogical tool. In order to outline how horizontal exchanges operate as praxis it is useful to quote at length from the following SPARC description:

> "(Exchanges provide) the identification and creation of local knowledge: Exchange processes take what is happening in a local community, and "shake it all up." It is only when the exchange is over, that things begin to settle down. Local residents gain a new understanding as they repeat what they know if a different environment. As they look at themselves through the eyes of others, they gain in knowledge. They start to explore some of their own frailties in a non-defensive way as they talk about their experiences, positive and negative, in order to assist the development of others. The SPARC/Mahila Milan/NSDF experience has shown that solutions to the problems low-income communities face require them to collectively reflect on these problems in order to deconstruct them and then enable solutions to be identified. Communities need to explore their expanding options, they need to allow time and space for

exploring all the possible choices, they need to examine the feasibility of the options available and look at the resource implications, and they need to be able to understand the degree of control which they, as communities, can have over the solutions. And they need to have a sense of solidarity with the groups with which they have such an exploration. Peer exchanges or horizontal exchanges between communities of the poor bring about a tremendous learning between communities. Poor people, especially poor women, are sceptical about professional experts who tell them what's good for them. But, unprepared, they are unable to respond in kind. Through exchanges, the capacity to teach, to disseminate new ideas, to explore current events and to analyse beyond the level of an individual settlement is vested in individuals who are inside the community. The opportunities for growth and development are now controlled by the poor themselves. Through exchanges with other groups similarly placed, communities better understand the political and other dimensions behind these issues, they learn why they must persist even if it appears impossible to influence those making the decisions." (SDIa 1996)

From the above it is clear that horizontal exchanges seek to address the structural alienation of the poor from education. SDI focuses upon relocating the agenda and control of education back to the ranks of the poor themselves rather than in external teachers or experts. They do this by emphasising slums as sites of important knowledge and by developing the ability amongst the poor to critique external knowledge, as the NGO, Peoples Dialogue in South Africa realised:

"One of the persistent myths in developing countries is that the poor aren't improving their lot better because they lack skills to do so, and that if trained in skills, they will stop suffering and start prospering. As if the poor alone were responsible for complex field of economic and political causes and effects which landed them in an under-serviced squatter settlement! In fact, the issues which inhibit the poor from participating in the economy and getting access to resources go way beyond managerial and technical skills, and right back to that same old exclusion and bad planning by the haves. The poor do have skills, they have ideas, they have the seeds of the best solutions of all but what they don't have is the space and the support to explore and refine them." (Peoples Dialogue 1996)

Contrary to the Northern discourses of learning that Freire described as "banking education", SDI does not impose an external, institutionalised pedagogy upon their members. Instead they use a method of "exposure" through horizontal exchanges. Like Freire's pedagogical praxis, exchanges work not so much by teaching what is not known, rather by revealing what is known and how to use

this knowledge. By bringing the poor face-to-face with each other, horizontal exchanges act as a revealing mirror, showing the poor themselves and what they are capable of, valorising their knowledges and making them their own teachers. It is a method of shared auto-didactics, predicated upon the premise that no one is a greater expert or intellectual authority than the poor themselves within their milieu, as Jockin Apurtham declared to his fellow shack/slumdwellers:

> "No university has taught you to come from the village, to squat on land, to build your own house, to find work. Nobody gave you this training, but you have all that knowledge. We learn from each other. If you tell your story to another person, she will learn from you: how you came here, what you did to survive. It's the same with how to deal with money, how to negotiate with government, how to build a house, how to lay a drain... We make what we need, we don't wait for government to solve our problems." (SDIa 2000)

Yet as Freire pointed out, pedagogy of the oppressed is problematic. Although the truth lies within, that the oppressed contain knowledge within themselves as a class, they still have to give "birth" to this knowledge. This birthing process was for Freire the central problem of pedagogy of the oppressed, and he asked:

> "How can the oppressed, as divided, unauthentic beings, participate in developing the pedagogy of their liberation? Only as they discover themselves to be "hosts" of the oppressor can they contribute to the midwifery of their liberating pedagogy. As long as they live in the duality in which *to be* is *to be like,* and *to be like* is *to be like the oppressor*, this contribution is impossible. The pedagogy of the oppressed is an instrument for their critical discovery that both they and their oppressors are manifestations of dehumanisation. Liberation is thus a childbirth, and a painful one." (Freire 1998: p5-6)

Liberation pedagogy, as Freire observed, is a discomforting process. It involves breaking with hegemonic knowledge, exorcising what he termed "the internal oppressor consciousness" (1970) and revealing the nascent wisdom within. The excision of false consciousness is a shock. SDI's horizontal exchanges validate and echo Freire's observations, constantly referring to the pain of this praxis as a "thwack", as one exchange participant recounts:

> "Some experiences are like that. You can be told all about it, you can be shown the pictures and have it explained to you over and over again, in the greatest of detail, and you can say Yes, yes, I understand! But often times, it's not until you actually go there and see that thing yourself, and experience it with your own five senses that you really get it that "thwack!" This is something we've all experienced, and in exchange and exposure, that "thwack" is the most

> sought-after sensation of all, the coveted blow that starts loosening up fixed ideas, shaking rusty gears loose so they can start turning again. Exposure participants and exposure supporters become collectors of and connoisseurs of that "thwack". This is especially so the first time out. After a while, of course, if you come a second time and a third, that sense of shock diminishes and you progress to other insights, to deeper levels of understanding and the life of an exchange relationship moves ahead. You progress from being shocked by something to understanding it, and from comparing that situation to your own to having ideas to improve it. Each place provides its own unique "thwack", and it's own way of aiming it, to help visitors open up room for the next, more important part, which is the learning." (SDIa 2000)

Amongst SDI rank and file, this "thwack!" is a telling metaphor for breaking through the fetters of alienation, and liberating the critical vision of the person within. It concurs with what Freire saw as the first stage of praxis pedagogy:

> "In the first, the oppressed unveil the world of oppression and through the praxis commit themselves to its transformation... it is through action in depth that the culture of domination is culturally confronted...The pedagogy of the first stage must deal with the problem of the oppressed consciousness and the oppressor consciousness...a particular problem is the duality of the oppressed: they are contradictory, divided beings, shaped by and existing in a concrete situation of oppression and violence." (Freire 1998: p10-11)

The act of annulling this contradiction provides the catharsis that leads to a generative, liberated human being capable of realising their class role.

However this is not prescriptive, rather it emerges from the way individuals work within the exchange as a group experience and the knowledge that dialectically emerges, as Sheela Patel, director of SPARC points out:

> "When the Poor are in control of their own learning... learning systems of the poor have a certain *character*. This character is based on a critical consciousness among poor about what form of learning works for them and what does not.... and also on locating uses of learning. Initially, the character of their learning may be rather crude and even dysfunctional, but gradually it develops into a complete process, if supported. Horizontal exchanges, which create a large pool of exchange partners, expand the insights available to community groups for such an understanding. In exchanges, nobody ever feels solely responsible for anybody's welfare or happiness or intellectual evolution - it's not like that! You're pretty much responsible for your own education. In that sense, exchange learning is ...peer exchange: "I'm not responsible to educate you, I'm responsible to share what I'm doing. It's your

responsibility to pick it up or argue about it or discuss it or bypass it, discard it, share it." (SPARC 1999)

Similarly, the praxis itself does not appear to be ideologically predetermined. Rather the logic emerges in Freire-like fashion over time as the dialectical synthesis of action and practice, as SPARC notes, "The exchange process builds upon the logic of "doing is knowing"" (SDIa 2000). It is in this sense a revolutionary logic, beginning in chaos and evolving order, as a shack/slumdweller describes:

"What Exchange really looks like? Everything in the Federation is in a mess, open any issue and you'll find a can of worms, chaos. But also so many things going on, nobody can keep track of it all - negotiations for land, building, savings, exchanges, etc. Compare this with the sanitized, disciplined, planned reality, with bubble diagrams, which is controlled and projectish! During the model house exhibition, same thing - lots of stuff happening, bewilderment, gaps, confusion - but this is real learning. It is our learning, it is nobody else's agenda. Exposures don't specify *what* you learn (unlike "training programs" where somebody else decides *exactly* what, when, and how much you're to learn). Exposure gives people slack, to simply *see* what others are doing, to take what's useful to them and discard what isn't. Exposures happen, they defy any "Plans", plans which are like straight lines, in which logical step follows logical step, in tidy sequence. This works fine in theory, or in the controlled atmosphere of a laboratory, but in a slum? Forget it! In slums, where the only rules are crisis and uncertainty and improvisation - the very antithesis of logic - the only regularity is going to the toilet, moving the bowels and for many without access to toilets, even the body's most basic function is subjected to chance, made to adjust to irregular opportunities... Reality is like that - it's messy: Messy. Making mistakes, golden booboos, foot-in-mouth disease, saying and doing stupid things, communities cheat, lie, steal, extort - after all, we're all a reflection of the society we're in, we start like that, and then we say, OK if we want to do it together, we can't do it like that. We've got to make a choice, have to change - and that is what this process is about. You don't hide it. Reality is like that - it is messy, it's difficult, it's not this imagery of synchronized swimming..." (ACHR 2000)

Located in the daily life of lumpen slumdwellers, horizontal exchange often defies rationality. As an uncivil discourse it is on occasion the total antithesis of the hegemonic civil paradigm, yet there is something familiar about it.

Pedagogy in SDI terms is a positive "revealing" of knowledge shared amongst the class of shack/slumdwellers through the vehicle of horizontal exchanges, as Sheela Patel notes:

> "That's where exchange learning comes in, as a tool which helps people ... build capacities to deal with the root issues of poverty and homelessness, and to work out their own means to participate in decision-making which affects their lives locally, nationally and globally. In exchange, people are not being trained to do things. They decide themselves what to pick up and what to discard, by visiting others in the same boat. It is learning without an agenda or anybody else's atmosphere it's on-site and vital learning, direct from the source, unfiltered. Nobody's telling who what or when to learn." (SDIa 2000)

The material reality of the lives of the poor is the testing ground for exchange knowledge. Descriptions in SDI archives represent the exchange experience as an ever-refining, intensifying critical consciousness, which is constantly expanding its reach using horizontal exchanges as its delivery mechanism. What begins as individual or community knowledge, founded upon a specific set of livelihood struggles, is disseminated through the process of horizontal exchanges into the movement at large. Finding a resonance in the ubiquitous conditions of poverty, it becomes the common knowledge of the social movement. Horizontal exchanges provide a commons of learning, an open resource for the lumpenproletariat to access. The praxis would seem to be reliant on being able to access and disseminate class knowledge, what Freire referred to as "conscientisation" (Freire 2000). Utilising class-consciousness provides the momentum necessary for transformation, as Patel summarises:

> "This roots the learning process *within* communities through using a methodology based on community-to-community exchanges. By encouraging the explanation and articulation of past events and new plans, exchanges help in the description and analysis of community activities. Exchanges, firstly acknowledge the knowledge that people, especially the very poor *already have due to their survival strategies*. This knowledge is rarely acknowledged, and although it forms the basis of all their activities, it is rarely the foundation on which formal learning occurs. By sharing what each individual knows in a group, and with communities sharing their experiences, a powerful process is triggered... (A)s knowledge is confirmed and consolidated, there is a more systematic articulation of what occurs to each other and to the outside world where such methods are used by people to tell outsiders about themselves and their situation. Only here, the concepts, the language and ideas emerge from internal processes and remain

> with communities. As more people experiment with this new learning it gets refined, its usage scaled up and where it works, it is replicated and where it needs to be adapted, that too occurs. What is vital is that the poor, as both teachers and consumers of this knowledge use it to serve their own interests and out of that emerges strong sustained and mobilised networks of communities whose sheer critical mass creates the basis for change." (SDIa 2000)

While horizontal exchanges have much in common with Freireian praxis, the process also seems to spontaneously construct an approximation of Gramsci's vision of an "intellectual-moral bloc". Horizontal exchanges generally attempt to rub out the categories of "intellectual", "activist" and "mass", instead creating a chimerical intellectual-activist-mass. Exchanges in this sense represent the articulations of grassroots intellectualism across geography, drawn from their survival strategies as slumdwellers. In this sense, exchanges go some way to prefigure a lumpen class-consciousness.

- **Knowledge for Power**

As with all its praxiology, SDI emphasises that horizontal exchanges are apolitical. This does not mean that they do not have a political impact. Exchanges have evolved as a means of communication between slumdwellers from across the South in order to specifically bypass divisive, hegemonic politics and build social links between disparate lumpen communities universally. Ostensibly the praxis seeks to hold in cosmopolitan embrace the multitudes of poor through the horizontal exchange of social knowledge. The non-partisan, inclusive capacity of the social movement does however give it political potential. Exchanges act to draw together multiple struggles into a combined transnational source of power.

Contrary to the atomised, apartheid discontent useful to dominant neo-liberal hegemony, horizontal exchanges attempt to unify Southern discontent. The exchanging of livelihood struggles goes some way to affecting a "collectivised grievance" (Burgmann 2003) held by an increasingly self-conscious, articulate mass. This identification of a common interest in opposition to an "enemy" means that the social movement is, according to Verity Burgmann:

> "...capable of effecting social and/or political change, because they engage in deliberately collective action towards challenging this enemy and promoting the common interest identified. The forging of a common self-identity enables the group to have a political impact, because it makes a collection of a collectivity, a mass a coherent political actor." (Burgmann 2003:p6)

The enemy in this case is poverty and the structural conditions of its production. The key source of power lies in establishing coherent collectivity. Horizontal exchanges suggest a means to bind together the many victims of poverty in a common front, to link numbers of lumpenproletariat in an articulate mass.

Originating as simple exchanges between neighbouring shack and pavement dwellers, horizontal exchanges build social power from grassroots up to a transnational scale, as SPARC's Sheela Patel describes:

> "Beginning on the pavements and the streets of the squatter-camps and slums there are immediate benefits for those within the neighbourhoods participating in the exchange program, of being able to transcend their temporal and spatial fixedness in poverty and exchange experiences with similar but different others. In so doing exchanges build consensus both across and inclusive of difference. The understanding of poverty issues and problems is broadened beyond the immediate needs of the settlement, encouraging the establishment and expansion of networks or Federations of community activists. Community members then start to be involved in articulating and exploring citywide strategies to address their problems. This emerging network of active communities forms a local Federation. These Federations together come together internationally as Slum Dwellers International. Exchanges are therefore the primary catalyst for the formation of the Federation process. Membership provides communities with a feeling of ownership over the Federation and a consciousness of being a part of a much larger collective. The exchange-learning process initiated at the community-specific level reduces their sense of marginalization. In addition, significant capacity can also be realised citywide through the impact that exchanges have on the perspective of community leaders. It helps them to develop confidence and determination to seek out city officials, government departments and other resource-providing organizations." (Patel in SDIa 2004)

Exchange is not only horizontal. Because the methodology is one of dialogue, the social movement can use it to engage with the external world too, including

antagonists. An exchange can thus be an act of political diplomacy that transcends class for pragmatic purposes, as this account reflects:

> "Years ago, women living on the pavements in Byculla were afraid of the police, would run the other way if they saw one. For them, police meant demolition, arrest, harassment. One of Mahila Milan's first negotiations with the state, as a collective, was with the police. What did they do? They invited their local police chief, Mr. Zende, to tea on the pavements! 500 women turned up, and so did Mr. Zende, who answered questions, explained what the laws and their rights are, told them how to file a first-information report, introduced the precinct officers. Later, the Mahila Milan used a similar strategy with hospitals, ration cards, and finance institutions. That fear was transformed into a relationship of mutual cooperation." (ACHR 2000)

This exemplifies the power of exchange as a tool for instrumental empowerment. From it can be seen that exchanges appear to operate in two ways. Firstly as a mechanism of internal empowerment and solidarity-building provided by the horizontal exchanging of shared livelihood struggles. This can be termed reproductive empowerment. Secondly, exchanges operate as means to overcome weakness through collectivity and engage with external institutions, what can be called productive empowerment. Power in both cases emerges from the exchanges process to provide a voice for the poor, as Patel continues:

> "The Federation consciousness generated through exchanges galvanises communities to take charge of their lives, demand entitlements and find solutions to the problems they face. Thus, another benefit of exchanges is that by empowering poor communities (by teaching them how to articulate and voice their demands) they constitute a real force working towards the extension of local democratic governance, without choosing political sides. Moving beyond the local, exchanges between different cities and countries create a growing solidarity and sharing of experience between poor communities on an international level, magnifying the local power base to an international, global scale, and further expanding their repertoire of skills, knowledge and capacities." (Patel in SDIa 2004)

Exchanges in this way help to act as a mediating instrument between classes, exposing the lumpenproletariat to civil society and vice-versa. This is particularly true in the case of exchanges supported by NGO's with a development agenda. In these exchanges both reproductive and productive empowerment are explicit as the following extract from the Asian Coalition for Housing Rights reveals:

> "Exchange has proven to be a useful and many-sided development tool. As an isolation-buster, confidence-booster, option-expander and network-builder, horizontal exchange is one of the most powerful antidotes to that old non-involvement problem. The exchange process represents a collective commitment of organisations of the poor to communicate with each other, to examine their problems, set priorities and explore solutions, to use each other as allies. Then to evaluate these solutions, refine them and spread them around. These kinds of solutions and these explorations invariably mean working with other development actors with municipal and state governments, with NGOs and bilateral development agencies. Here, too, exchange is a powerful builder of networks and working alliances with sufficient scale and clout to strengthen representation of the poor in development debates and to expand the role the poor can play in bringing about equity and social justice. The large networks, which exchanges create, become a channel for the direct, rapid transfer of ideas, strategies, and options. In this way, solutions that are worked out locally become the building blocks for scaling up with global applicability." (ACHR 2000)

SDI claims to have no overt ideology other than being a platform for the poorest of the poor. Exchanges are a deliberate attempt to allow the process of sharing in each other's lives to produce the norms, demands and strategy of SDI. What might be deemed SDI's ideology emerges from the action of exchange. Horizontal exchanges help channel many lumpen voices into one voice. The praxis provides the living text of multiple locations and Weltanschauung of many different groups across a world of differentiated poverty. The common ingredient throughout is that exchanges pool the survival strategies of the lumpenproletariat. Starting from these strategies and collaborations, exchanges build up collective power across the South, bridging geographical and historical divides by linking multiple discrete expressions of poverty into a unified voice.

- **Legitimacy through Visibility**

For northern observers, exchanges do not appear extraordinary. Activities such as travelling to other countries, communicating with foreigners, accommodating visitors, sharing expertise and acquiring new skills and training colleagues are elements of any run of the mill conference. Meeting with officials, hosting events and such conferences, engaging with institutions and governments are also not unusual actions for articulate and active members of civil society. However none

of these activities are ordinary in the uncivil society of the lumpen slums. In this milieu, much of what northerners take for granted are extraordinary if not impossible. For instance, acquiring a passport requires at least a birth certificate, a formal address, and bank details, letters of guarantee and invitation, and of course sufficient literacy to sign documentation, to say nothing of the costs involved for someone living below the poverty line. SDI surveys reveal the bulk of shack/slumdwellers to be incapable of complying with most of these requirements, making them not only invisible, but also unrecognised as legitimate citizens.

Yet as mentioned, shack/slumdwellers are constantly travelling across the globe on exchanges and doing many of the things listed above. In so doing, simply the physical action of transnational travel by the Southern poor across the formal world blurs the lines between civil and uncivil society and between legitimate and illegitimate citizen. Exchanges temporarily confer formal status upon the informal slumdweller by rupturing the hermetic order of civil society to allow these uncivil citizens to pass through and participate in it.

The dialectical engagement between civil society and the slums is inevitable. Slums are an ineradicable and de facto feature of urbanisation in the South: forbidding and outlawing them is practically meaningless. Exchanges provide an avenue for dialogue between formal society and the slumdwellers, paving the way to engagement. Legitimacy parallels power: as the lumpenproletariat gain more power, they gain the recognition that anticipates legitimacy. This of course has two sides, one of which is the fact that as the lumpen is drawn into the formal world through exchanges so the formal rubs off on them in the form of compliance with outside legitimacy. The second is that as they become more powerful they create legitimacy on their own terms by establishing new customs of engagement. By making the formal outside world deal with them is to recognise and comply with their legitimacy. These differences have both reproductive and productive implications.

In reproductive terms, the internal order of slums becomes to a degree homogenised by the praxis of horizontal exchange. Slums begin to regulate themselves according to the social movement logic, which is itself, the mean of norms drawn from the different slums. Exchange activities can be used as catalysts for addressing other problems within the community. In so doing, becomes a practical training in autonomous grassroots governance and thereby the maintenance of the conditions of its social reproduction. For instance, the exchange process imbues local communities and their leaders with the ability to organise and manage exchanges and the events associated with them. Exposing leaders and exchange participants to other communities challenges them to affect changes in their own lives and relations with others, enskilling them in social management useful within their own communities, as Patel describes:

> "With respect to learning new skills in managing relationships, community leaders from the visiting community...have much to gain. (At home) Federation leaders often have to deal with guests brought to their settlements by the city officials or NGOs but, during such visits, they are passive observers. With an international exchange, the host community reverses the role; they "create the wave of excitement", they call the press and TV and they give their officials and local dignitaries a chance to meet these outsiders. They may have to present their work to the local mayor, be interviewed by TV and radio journalists, and suddenly find that they are the valued "experts". Being drawn into these new roles transforms these individuals; they find themselves invited to take up positions from which they have long been excluded. This process makes them re-examine their expectations for themselves and other community members. Once they have played these roles in another country, they are more ready and confident at home as well." (Patel et al 2000: pp 9-10)

The collective organisation of local communities and their leadership in accord with the wishes of the broader social movement, establishes a counter civil society in the slums. This collective-will stands in marked contrast to the atomised actions of the involuted poor. The community has to work together, overcoming its differences. Significantly in this regard, the construction of this alternative civil society is contingent on the social mores of the slum. It is located a priori in the contours of their social reality, not in the norms of hegemonic legitimacy. This then, is the establishment of an internal legitimacy, based upon

norms made customary by the social movement and implemented through exchanges. Its focus is usually upon reproductive issues: such as exposing divisive criminality, empowering women or addressing health issues.

In productive terms, legitimacy is closely associated with the ability of exchanges to introduce its lumpen participants to the instrumental and pragmatic benefits of complying with formal society. Exchanges, as seen in the above quote, can show the uncivil how to utilise hegemonic civil skills for collective lumpen benefit. At the same time, and more importantly, exchanges shift the boundaries of legitimacy toward the slums. Key to this legitimising action is the role of the exchange as a spectacle, and while denying outside influences, certain SDI activists have admitted admiration for the radical strategy of the Situationists (SDIa 2004). Based on the logic that to be seen is to be recognised, exchanges utilise the political power of the spectacle to oblige civil society to recognise them. Manipulating media and public discourse for the lumpen agenda precipitates dialogue with formal society as Joel Bolnick states:

> "The activities arising from the "spectacle" of the exchange open up a number of "legitimising opportunities" for the host community and prompt local government and service providers to respond more effectively to the community's needs. Further such opportunities for "building relationships" with government officials, the formal world arise...again through utilising the discourse of the spectacle... as communities learn how to articulate principles and purpose through exchange based public events, like "house-modelling", "enumeration launches" and the celebratory opening of community toilets. Clearly the high level of public exposure associated with exchanges, particularly international exchanges and the events associated with them, moves the previously excluded slums into the public gaze, and in so doing initiates the possibility of their legitimacy. Exchanges are at once a medium, as spectacle - event and the method of learning how to manipulate media. Exchanges teach communities the skills of exploiting the various media to their advantage and in so doing furthering the legitimacy of these communities." (SDIa 2004)

Exchanges as political spectacle provide the opportunity to act as a strategic device for articulating the demands of the shack/slumdwellers. SDI expressly declares this as a key objective of exchanges. In the publication *Face to Face*, they list in this regard the following

"Different Strategic uses of Exchange:
Strategy: Using exchange as a negotiation apprenticeship.
Strategy: Using exchange visitors to score points locally.
Strategy: Using exposure to whet official appetites.
Strategy: Using exchange to dissolve the fright factor in officialdom.
Strategy: Using exposure to pry open rusty official minds.
Strategy: Using exchange to convert the willing.
Strategy: Using exchange to extract commitments from the reluctant.
Strategy: Using exchange to highlight a community's credentials.
Strategy: Using exposure to negotiate around common problems. "
(ACHR1999. The full text of these appears in Appendix 4)

All of these are strategies to gaining community recognition and ultimately thereby, legitimacy. Exchanges offer SDI the means for this kind of strategic dialogue both with themselves internally and with the formal world outside, as this editorial by the ACHR describes:

"Exchange is also being increasingly used as part of People's negotiations with other actors in their cities local and national governments, financial institutions, professionals, activists. Exchange is a versatile negotiating tool, offering many very practical strategies for turning upside down the power equations which have perpetuated the long stand-off between the poor and the state, and which isn't getting anybody anywhere. The collective influence of international exchange has led to new ways of doing things...new ways of managing policy, new ways of making room for the poor in planning. As we look around the region, poor People's Federations are actually providing the means for people to start a dialogue with whatever kind of state there is no matter how democratic, how transparent or how pro-poor it may be. Because people are not demanding that the state play the role of the linchpin. People are saying, we'll play that role you just do what we can't do. This is very different than demanding; you do this thing and that thing for us!" (ACHR 2000)

SDI's pragmatism is clearly apparent in this quote: they desire legitimacy, but on their own terms. Making the most of the social neglect of the neo-liberal state, exchanges provide a mechanism for the slums to share techniques for exerting their autonomy. They reframe this apolitical autonomy in terms of self-help development initiatives that are recognised by formal institutions, and thus contribute to their legitimacy. At the same time, by demonstrating through exchanges the extent of the international network of shack/slumdwellers, local

Federation communities can collectively lobby local authorities for recognition. Exchanges thus provide a means to legitimacy by extending to each location the full transnational weight of the social movement as a whole.

In summary, exchanges provide legitimacy in a double sense. They play a key role in creating dialogue between the formal world and the slums around their external legitimacy. At the same time they help facilitate internal order better suited to their social reproduction. Exchanges are not just about engaging with authorities but also give the poor a stronger sense of their legitimacy of-themselves and for-themselves based upon the norms derived from the social movement.

- **Counter-hegemony**

Moving beyond the dialogue of legitimacy, exchanges also provide fora for challenge and contestation. Exchange as praxis negotiates between the concrete facts that on one hand the lumpenproletariat is inherently weak, but on the other, as the burgeoning statistics cited in Chapter One reveal, cannot be dismissed. SDI exchange praxis begins in the material logic of the dispossessed. In other words it is a logic driven by the materially weak against the materially strong. Contrary to the orthodox productive resistance action such as worker's strikes, labour unrest and union pickets, the lumpenproletariat, as Marx pointed out, cannot be relied upon to openly resist. The reason for this is obvious, as the lumpenproletariat have no real productive power. They do however have constitutive power, the power to become autonomous, including the power to socially reproduce themselves. This is the fundamental strength of the slums, and the praxis of exchange seeks to exploit this by creating a ubiquitous realisation amongst SDI that, as slumdweller Jockin Arputham put it:

> "We are the poorest of the poor! We are here, we will not go away nor will we be forced to go away. We are a permanent presence, and this is our power: you have to recognise us!" (SDIa 2004)

The distinction between productive and reproductive logic impacts across the South. Wherever the poor have no orthodox power as Fanon pointed out (Fanon

1967) their struggles are subsumed by other struggles. It needs to be remembered that challenges by the poor are drawn initially from earlier anti-colonial repertoires of populist resistance, where the poor's interests were banded together with that of the middle-classes and compradors to forge a mass-democratic front against the colonial oppressors. This form of contention, as Fanon perceptively anticipated, fails the poor after independence and new repertoires of resistance have to be acquired, in what can be termed a second stage of resistance, what might be termed a new "Bandung" from below. Resistance for SDI amounts to this kind of resistance-after-resistance, and exchanges serve to articulate this. Joel Bolnick, a long time anti-apartheid activist who moved from this struggle to SDI, reflects how exchanges achieved this shift:

> "(The) shift in the way in which the South African Federation handled negotiations with the formal world can be traced to what they learnt from India. Because in South Africa, especially before 1994, we were operating in a context in which *"resistance politics"* was the order of the day. And the South Africans needed to learn a new style, which is dialogue politics... to seek solutions. This is one of the things that emerged very strongly out of the exchange programmes and emerged very strongly in a number of ways. When the South Africans first started coming to India, there was a very strong assumption amongst poor South Africans that with political change would come social and economic change, and all that was needed was an ANC government, and then the poor would be *uplifted*. It was an eye-opening experience coming to India and seeing that after forty-odd years of independence, the urban poor were still living in conditions of poverty. This was then immediately reinforced by the way in which the Mahila Milan and the NSDF used a negotiation strategy rather than a resistance strategy to gain entitlements for their members." (Bolnick 1999)

The South African shackdwellers were confronted through a horizontal exchange to India by the realisation of the full extent and complexity of the struggle the poor face. The first contention of exchange praxis is to attack the myths of popular representation that hamstrings the poor. The initial enemy is the enemy within, the false consciousness of false allegiance. Exchanges provide the eye-opening exposure to the enduring contradictions between the concrete outcomes of neo-liberal production and its normative ideology of democracy. They also expose what might be seen as the deceit of Development: the failure of external agency to change the fundamental conditions that produce and reproduce poverty. Once

this realisation has been made, exchanges generally set about showing how mastery of the discourse of their livelihood can be turned to their advantage, and how this valorisation of the daily lives of the multitudes of the poor can provide a source of resistance.

There are then two main types of exchange practice that fulfil this function. The first emerges from the repertoire of legitimation strategies when dialogue fails. The second are those actions that are deployed deliberately in order to provoke engagement with authority, to establish a dialogue at all costs. The latter is only a last resort, as a SDI activist rephrased Von Clausewitz's maxim, the "extension of Federation policy by other means", held in reserve as a threat.

Looking at the first type it is worth recounting the following SDI anecdote of how exchange was used to extract commitments from a previous freedom fighter but now reluctant politician:

> "Here's an example of how a strategic triangle formed by two pushy Federations and one reluctant housing minister advanced partnerships on both sides. For many years, the South African Federation in Gauteng Province had tried to develop links with the Provincial Housing Minister, Dan Mofokeng. Even though his department prided itself on being pro-poor and progressive, it had so far avoided the Federation and downplayed its contribution to housing in the province. The Federation caught up with the minister when he went on a state visit to India in 1997. While in India, he was invited and made a point of visiting Mahila Milan. Little did he realise that Mahila Milan are close allies with the SA Federation, and there to greet him on his arrival to Byculla were leaders from the South African Federations! He could not avoid them. They spent the day together, going around NSDF/MM work in the city, and the minister saw for himself how much poor people can do daily savings, credit, house construction, house modelling, building-component manufacturing, negotiating with the city. It was an education for the minister, and you can bet our heroes - both Indian and South African lost no opportunity to drive home their points:
>
> • that people should be allowed to build their own houses and the government should play the role of facilitator
>
> • that if land and finance are available, the poor can build their own houses and settlements better, cheaper and at a larger scale with no need for any outside builders or developers.
>
> • that working in partnership with the Federation can help the minister deliver on housing

> While in Bombay, in the glare of the international media, the minister agreed to set up pilot programs with the Federation in SA. A year later, there was a joint working group in place in Gauteng, and there were promising signs of a good working relationship between the country's richest province and the Federation's fastest growing region." (ACHR 2000)

Using exchange, the social movement could bring slum/shackdwellers from one country to confront a dubious politician in the last place he or she expected it, in another country. Furthermore, they made sure that the encounter was a public spectacle with powerful media witnesses compelling the politician to dialogue and make commitments they could hold them to. In an exercise of normative power, SDI uses the media to name and shame the enemy. SDI exchanges in this sense make use of the same field of power that politicians do, the "democratic spectacle" of public awareness to articulate their contention.

With respect to the second strategy of contention provided by exchanges, this is not so much a new approach, rather the use of familiar populist resistance methods such as land invasions, protest marches and rallies, facilitated in a different way. To exemplify this, the following exchange, the "planned response" of the land invasion by the Ruo Emoh (our home backwards) savings scheme is typical:

> "The frustration of the community reached boiling point in June 1999. Papers to the housing committee in March 1999 made it clear that land was available, although it was not offered to them. To add to the frustration, the council were allocating sites to their own newly devised show-program, the Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV)... Ruo Emoh saw the council's land and its enthusiasm being directed at a program which could never reach their poorest members and in which even their richest would have difficulties in participating. Feeling ignored by the council, they wanted to protest. But they did not want their protest to be a negative pressure rather they wanted to demonstrate their capacities and their strengths. Through June and July 1999, Ruo Emoh planned their action. On the weekend before Women's Day, they would build a Federation show house alongside the SPV houses. Then on national Women's Day they would have a rally and opening. Ruo Emoh declared; "We built the house to be a practical statement. Of course we knew that it was illegal. We knew that we would have to suffer the consequences. We did not try to break negotiations, at every time we were ready to talk. All

> we wanted was to make a statement. To ask them to come and look at the house on national women's day. To see that the People's process is better than the SPV."" (SDIa 2000)

Using the exchange methodology the Ruo Emoh savings scheme turned the land invasion into a spectacle, inviting other Federation groups from around the South to join them. It was an exchange-based land-invasion and a house-building exercise, at once a learning experience and a provocation. Using populist discourse of governance and democracy they strategically targeted the event for National Women's Day, arranging a large rally and media presence. Crack building squads were brought in from across the Federation; crowds of supporters, helpers and observers were bussed in from afar. Foreign delegates were represented and worked alongside the community. The exchange blurred the distinction between local and foreign Federation member, it was an international display of solidarity. Unfortunately, the event failed to secure the land and:

> "...on Tuesday morning, just at mid-day, that the bulldozer appeared. The driver moved close to the house and paused. The people, Federation members who had gathered there, moved around the house, their voices rising in song. The bulldozer watched and then retreated. Squad cars arrived. For an hour, the police stood and watched. Then a plain-clothes policeman came forward. He explained that the council had ordered the demolition of the house. They said that it was an illegal building." (SDIa 2000)

What is clear from this "resistance" exchange is that orthodox forms of populist contention provoke orthodox forms of authoritarian response. The lesson that many took away from the exchange was that a dialogic approach would have been more effective strategy. In this way, although the attempt to acquire land failed, the praxis of exchange did not. For it is only through such engagement that the limitations of old repertoires can be uncovered. SDI exchanges appear to provide an open empirical approach to evolving strategies for lumpen contention. By using the tools of productive resistance, the Ruo Emoh was using an ex-classé strategy and having no power in this field, was easily defeated. In an exercise of collective learning, the social movement made no ideological decisions and allowed the praxis to test the local hypothesis and all learnt from it.

Exchanges therefore provide a praxis of contention that constantly explores avenues for expressing the discontent of the Shack/slumdwellers. Success has been found in provocative actions that force dialogue with adversaries, and a repertoire of exchange knowledge has been built up and is used to effect. At the same time SDI's non-prescriptive approach allows communities and the social movement through exchanges to learn from their own mistakes. This process challenges ineffective strategies of resistance, allowing SDI to expose and resolve its own contradictions. This amounts to a contestation of the self wherein the lumpen constituency discover their limitations and possibilities. Exchanges seem to prove that the strength of the poor lies not in orthodox resistance but in the oxymoronic idea of dialogic contention, tying threat to dialogue. In this way, exchanges seem to provide praxis for winning the hearts and the minds of the poor away from collusion with hegemony and its narratives, debunking the ubiquitous false consciousness of political democracy under a capitalist industrial mode of production and moving them toward mutually reliant collectives associated transnationally.

Conclusion

Exchanges as praxis operate in many ways. In class terms, the most important is how it circulates both locally and transnationally the reproductive knowledge and power of the lumpenproletariat. At the same time, the support SDI receives from development-orientated NGOs, contributes to the insertion of a productive knowledge agenda, particularly within transnational-exchanges. This is an ambiguity that SDI has to accommodate and responds to with varying degrees of compromise. With respect to the former, exchange seems work as pedagogy that creates an intellectual-commons based upon the daily lives of the poor. In this regard, exchanges appear to act like neo-Freireian generative exercises, going some way to lifting the veils of false consciousness that inhibit the poor and confronting their alienation. By revealing to the Southern poor their mutual oppression and valorising their survival struggles as knowledge, exchange resonates with the underclass, seeming to capture and disseminate their class-

consciousness. This praxis of sharing knowledge acts as a vehicle for mobilisation and contributes to the creation of broad coalition of the poor sharing a common Weltanschauung and agenda. In a sense, the praxis of exchanges constructs an approximation of the Gramscian idea of an "intellectual-moral bloc" based upon the reproductive knowledge of the ineluctable lumpenproletariat. The linking of the multitudes of the South through exchanges, despite NGO developmental agendas, creates a powerful constituency united in grievance and with a common enemy: the material conditions that oppress them. Exchanges help as a binding mechanism for this Southern discontent, as well as providing a means to articulate it. As the exchange praxis develops, it enters the domain of formal, civil society as both a challenger and a conversation partner. The key to exchange is that it is dialogue. Exchanges establish dialogue both within and across classes that through their visibility, initiate recognition, thus offering a means to legitimising the slums. Ultimately exchanges forge deep local and transnational ties amongst the lumpenproletariat that provide them with constitutive power. The subjectivity so provided, drawn as it is from multiple sources of grassroots knowledge, prefigures lumpen class-in-itself becoming aware of itself as a class-for-itself.

Chapter Seven - Federation Praxis

Introduction

A "Federation" for SDI, means a horizontal linkage of independent savings groups across settlements, cities and regions into a singular national network, such as the Ghanaian Homeless Peoples Federation (GHPF). This national Federation, as the unified social mass of slumdwellers from a specific geo-political milieu, is linked to other national Federations from around the South to create the transnational confederation of shack/slumdwellers, Shack/slum Dwellers International (SDI). Federation is primarily an organisational and institutional formation, which, in practice by the slumdwellers, generates rich semantic and cultural nuances that make it praxis in its own right.

As mentioned, Federation is the third core operational principle within SDI's praxiology. It needs to be noted that Federation is the result of the prior interaction of savings collectives and exchanges with each other across the South and is therefore dependent upon them as preconditions. Federation builds incrementally upon these two primary operational principles. As a result many aspects of it repeat what occurs in these, only at a larger scale. However, it does provide unique and additional characteristics to the social movement. Federation, as understood by SDI, is pivotal to identity formation in difference, of forging a common front across multiple struggles that empowers without diminishing local communities. It creates an identity that contains multiple localisms (and all that they imply in terms of communality and territoriality) linked transnationally (and hence across localisms). Federation, for SDI, constitutes a praxis that forges a subjectivity of trans-localism, as such it is pivotal to its counter-globalism agency. At the same time it is praxis that constitutes deep, cosmopolitan democratic practice across slums. Federation's key contribution is thus to create a meta-identity that resolves the tension between local and global, without creating hierarchy. The construction of this mass-subjectivity seems to exemplify a significant constituency of the lumpen class in-itself acting for-itself.

Section A of this chapter will explore the semantics of federation, looking at its origins and background in order to provide an overview of the term useful for understanding SDI's appropriation of the word. Section B will investigate SDI's use of it as praxis. As with the preceding chapters on Savings and Exchanges, Federation will be examined in relation to a number of key themes. The first of these looks at how SDI's notion of Federation approaches the Freireian methodology of being a "true word" in institutional form. Secondly, Federation is questioned in terms of its performance as a vehicle for mass-mobilisation. Thirdly, looks at how Federation overcomes class-alienation by providing a platform for mass-dialogue. Fourthly, examines Federations as institutions for creating a critical mass of knowledge for change. Fifthly, explores how Federations empowers lumpen slumdwellers through large-scale collective-action. Sixthly, evaluates Federations as institutions that legitimise slums and the uncivil society living in them. Finally, Federations will be looked as counter-hegemony from below.

A. Semantics

Entering SDI's domain one constantly hears the word "Federation". At first this seems to be merely a generic name for the social movement, but it soon becomes clear that a great deal more is meant, as academic Appadurai notes:

> "Possibly the central norm... embodied in a common usage among the members of the Alliance and its partners around the world... (is) the idea of Federation, used as a noun, and the words "federate", "federated" etc. as verbs. This innocuous term from elementary political science textbooks has a special meaning and magic for the Alliance which I am still in the process of exploring." (Appadurai 2001: p11)

Appadurai's observation reflects the complexity of meaning involved. Initially, there is the generalised semantic change when encountering the living discourse of the slumdwellers: these subalterns appropriate and reinvigorate words from dominant hegemonic lexicons with the same creative utilitarianism that they recycle scrap. In addition though, "Federation" proves to be a complex theme,

which parallel to savings and exchanges, has evolved specifically to reconcile a number of tensions and contradictions that have emerged within the social movement and its milieu. Primarily, Federation is about identity formation in an environment of difference, which seeks to foster linkages and solidarity across the South, while retaining autonomy and recognition at the local level. Federation helps to create a meta-identity of the Southern poor that unifies across localisms without rubbing out difference. In addition, it is also praxis to building deep democracy and a platform for representation and mass action. In these ways, Federation is an institutional praxis that provides both a meta-identity for the lumpenproletariat and a means of achieving it. SDI's use of Federation thus ameliorates and broadens existing meanings of the term, as well as injecting a normative component into its practice. The main origins of meaning lie firstly, as Appadurai points out, in a political science term referring to decentralised institutions of power. Secondly, it appears to be consistent with certain anarchist or communitarian conceptions of social democracy and order. In the SDI usage, these meanings appear to have been drawn together and invigorated.

- **Federation in Political Science**

The porous nature of globalism has done much to undermine national identities in the post-Cold War world, leading to new "imagined communities of fate" (Smith 1995: p296). The politics of place and group identity provides an ambiguous potential. On one hand it challenges old national divisions and suggests the possibility of greater cosmopolitanism. On the other, it provides the dangerous impetus for the kind of proto-fascist local identities that fed into the Balkan and Rwandan crises as well as offering justification to the increasingly apartheid practices of the dominant economic countries.

Federalism offers a means to the global regionalism, such as the European Union (with its implications of limited cosmopolitan unity), that is particularly suited to economic activity in a globalised market place. This has led to what Elazar sees as "...a federal revolution sweeping the world" (Elazar 1998: p7). At

the same time it provides a reliable solution to inter-group conflict, as Wheare notes:

> "one of the most urgent problems in the world today is to preserve diversities... At the same time to introduce such a measure of unity as will prevent and facilitate co-operation. Federalism is one way of reconciling these two ends." (Wheare 1963: p244-5)

Federalism is generally considered an institutional format and ideology that facilitates unity and diversity. It challenges the dangers of political fragmentation and uneven economic development by calling for, as Smith points out:

> "greater devolution of power towards self-governing units... often linked to pragmatic projects designed to secure, within deeply divided societies, social unity and political stability." (Smith 1995: p5)

In this way, federalism provides a means to unifying multiple and overlapping communities of imagination (Anderson 1990). By providing symbolic meaning to an overarching identity, federalism acts as an antidote to destructive insularities. The key to federalism is its capacity to construct dual identity. This refocusing of the politics of identity by going simultaneously local and larger, to as in the case of SDI, inter-continental federalism, contributes to a more general trend in transnational politics that has been labelled "globalisation from below" (Camilleri and Falk 1992; Smith 1995).

- **Anarchist roots of Federation**

The ideas of deep democracy provided by current understandings of federation reflect a continuous anarchist tendency contained within the idea from its inception and classically laid out in Proudhon's 1863 Du Principe Federatif (in Proudhon 1969). For Proudhon, described as the founder of modern federalism, a loose federal state provides the only effective solution to the key problem of socio-political organisation: the reconciliation of authority and liberty. Proudhon suggested that the federal principle operate from the simplest level in society, that is, individuals start the process by federating into collectives and associations. The organisation of administration begins locally and under direct control of the people. Above that primary level the organisation is often less an organ of administration than of coordination between local or regional units in

federal alliance. This federation would extend horizontally in a broad project of union containing multiple autonomous collectives. This understanding of federalism, as the institutional means to democracy from below, is carried through much anarchist discourse. Bakunin made it clear that:

> "The future organisation of society should be carried out entirely from below upwards, by the free association and federation of the toilers, in associations first of all, then in communes, in regions, in nations, and finally, in a great international and universal federation" (Bakunin 1910)

Similarly, George Woodcock declared in 1972 that:

> "Federalism will guarantee the people true sovereignty, since power will rise from below and rest on "natural groups" united in coordinating bodies to implement the general will." (Woodcock 1972: p119)

Federalism in the communitarian tradition seeks to abolish the state and replace it with a socio-economic federation that secures local autonomy, territorial decentralisation and the greater devolution of power (Kropotkin 1975).

- **Discursive Links and Slums**

The key issue in both political science and anarchist epistemologies is that federalism is a doctrine of balance (Smith 1995), of finding equilibrium between centralisation and decentralisation and reflecting the societal desire for union but not unity (Dicey 1908). The federal idea is generally conceived as a compromise between unity and diversity, local autonomy and collective sovereignty. A federation in this common understanding is a decentralised political system possessing a form of unifying governance in which the constituent territorial units are involved in a politics of accommodation. Significantly, as Saint-Simon pointed out in 1814, it was only through the establishment of common institutions, in tandem with preserving the independence of each of its peoples, that war could be avoided and peace prevail (Saint-Simon in Smith 1995). Federation provides the benefit of union transcending geo-political fragmentation and as such is an effective antidote to apartheid capitalism.

These political science and anarchist intellectual traditions of federalism find a resonance in the Southern slums, particularly as a result of the shifting pattern

social history in the last fifty years (described in Chapter One). The emergence of the South African Homeless People's Federation typifies this ontology, as the following NGO editorial describes:

> "All over the world urbanisation and progress have left a tide of human deprivation in their wake. The physical manifestation of the depredations of development are to be found in the squatter camps, shack dwellings and slums in all the major cities of the modern world. It is to this environment that *uMfelandaWonye WaBantu BaseMjondolo* (the South African Homeless Peoples Federation)...proudly traces its origins. This is where its members live. It is the context out of which it has emerged, which it seeks to transform and which provides it with its inspiration and its vision. Since uMfelandaWonye is a thoroughly modern organisation, having emerged in the post cold-war 1990s, it claims its pedigree in the slum settlements of the entire globe. The informal settlements of South Africa might provide the organisation with its culture and its context. Nevertheless its identification and direct association with urban poverty on a global scale runs deep and is reinforced and sustained through ongoing association and experience-sharing with organisations of the urban poor in other African countries, in Asia, Latin America and Europe." (People's Dialogue 1999)

SDI Federations bridge the local and global divide of poverty that the post-Cold War politics of globalisation has tacitly allowed. But the actual origins of the process predate this era and lie in the earlier model of federation developed and applied by British Colonial administrations in their colonies. This colonial legacy is what Indian born academic Arjun Appadurai picks up on when he suggests that SDI's ideas of Federation evolved firstly in Indian slums and only later conveyed during the information age to slums at large:

> "The National Slum Dwellers Federation (NSDF) is clearly their own actual model of this norm. The critical importance of this image of organization is that it does two things: it emphasizes the importance of political union among already pre-existing collectives thus, federating, rather than simply "uniting", "joining", "lobbying" etc. As an image, it also mirrors the language of the Indian national state, which is referred to as the Indian Union, but is in fact a "federal" model with remarkable powers for its constituent states." (Appadurai 2000:p5).

According to Appadurai, the roots of SDI's Federation model owe their source to events in India prior to the era of globalisation, specifically the political milieu of India after independence. The current internationalisation of the slumdweller's federal project is coincidental to the decline in national fixedness and the emergence of a changing, globalised social landscape. In South Africa, another

ex-British colony, encountering the NSDF ideas of Federation had a profound impact on shack/slumdwellers who wished to broaden their support base while retaining local autonomy. The practice took off rapidly as the NGO, Peoples Dialogue observed:

> "By 1993, there were more than 50 active savings schemes in South Africa, which were organised into an informal national "Federation" of Housing Savings Schemes. By 1994, the number of savings schemes had reached two hundred and the Federation was officially launched under the name "uMfelandaWonye WaBantu BaseMjondolo", the South African Homeless People's Federation." (Peoples Dialogue 1999)

By 1998 the model of federating savings collectives that had been pioneered in India had been replicated in nine other countries in Asia and Africa, and by 2004 they were operating Federations across twenty-eight countries in the South. It seems that the very idea of an overarching transnational "Federation" of poor people offered a key to catalysing, challenging, and universalising the SDI message. This suggests that poor people identify strongly with other poor people, regardless of where they come from, as this Federation exchange report reflects:

> "When the South Africans visited cities in Asia and Africa, countries such as Namibia, Zambia and Tanzania, the cast of characters all changed. So too did the local cultures, languages, histories and politics. The one thing that remained constant was the fact that the primary instruments for change in settlements of the poor were always the people, not politicians, academics, officials or professionals. This resonated well with their experience..." (Peoples Dialogue 1999)

The observation points to the recognition by the shack/slumdwellers themselves of the overriding similarity of their slum livelihood-struggles. The rapid spread of SDI Federations across the South, suggests that the institution corresponded with a grassroots reflex to belong to a social movement that represented them. SDI's Federations, by providing an answer to the generic weaknesses of the poor, while retaining the capacity to focus on the specific, help resolve key contradiction within the under-classes of the South, as SPARC's Sheela Patel notes:

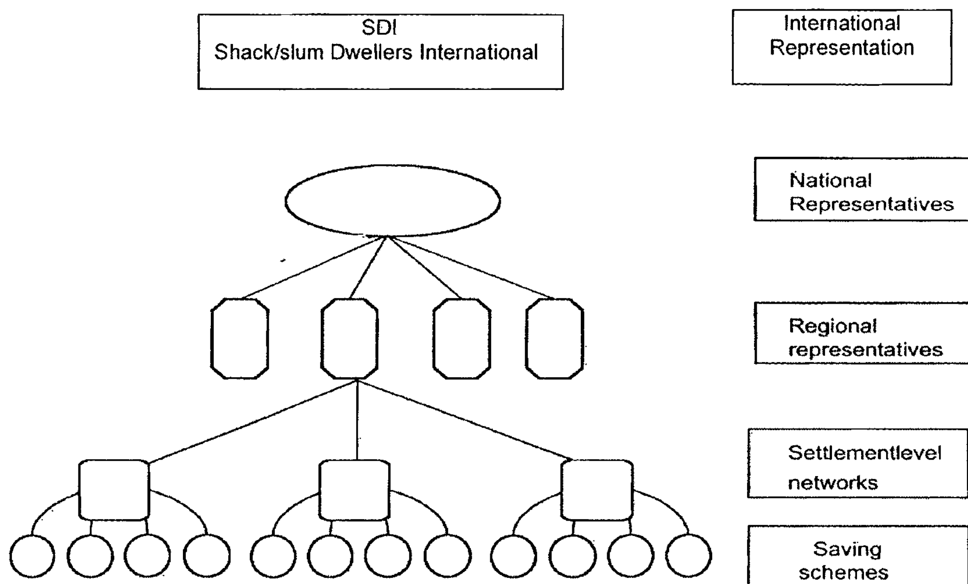
> "It is widely recognised that the urban poor are weak and disunited, particularly the millions of people throughout the world who live in slums or shack settlements. They lack a sense of common identity, a common organisational base. They do not have a common vision or

common strategies to fight poverty. Weakness as a result of a lack of unity is a factor at community level, city level, regional level, national level and international level. At the same time it is also recognised that there is no formula for the resolution of need. What applies in one settlement let alone one country, may not apply in another. Whilst there is a need for unity there is a parallel need to ensure diversity: diversity of systems, structures and processes. There is also a need to preserve local autonomy within an umbrella framework of urban poor organisations. For these reasons SDI affiliates take the form of Federations and in some cases Federations of Federations. Federations are the organisational format of many collective savings schemes in a non-hierarchical, horizontal network." (Patel 2002)

The federation model seems to offer the appropriate linkages of unity while retaining diversity that accord broadly with the sentiments of the Southern lumpenproletariat. Their appropriation of the word federation is based upon an understanding that appeals to their sense of commonality without imposing uniformity, hierarchy or diminishing their fragile autonomy. In this sense, their understanding of federalism is a very loose form of federation that is more correctly, confederal, rather than federal and so by federation they actually mean the non-hierarchy of confederation. Thus SDI appropriates the word "federation", but their practice contradicts standard political usage. Having established this semantic shift, the discussion will use the term Federation as SDI does (with a capital F to distinguish it from conventional usage).

In summary, Federation as SDI understands it, is rooted in autonomous community-based organisations (CBO's), normally savings collectives, each with its own decision-making structure and constitution, operating at the settlement level and grouped into local networks. Mirroring levels of politics, these are then networked at the city level and in turn at the regional and national levels (see figure below). The amalgamation of these networks constitutes a Federation. The national level is responsible for the operational management of the Federation. The national Federation is also the interface with SDI. SDI represents the confederation at a transnational scale of around thirty national Federations. To date these have all come from Southern nations.

Figure: *Federation Model.*



Most groups in a Federation have their own informal practices and rituals of convocation and election, although these are closely linked to the guiding principles common across all the organisations affiliated with the Federation. Some of these key principles underpinning the Federation process are, as the NGO, Peoples Dialogue noted during their first exposures to the Indian Federation:

> "A recognition that only the poor themselves can truly understand their situation in the context of developing strategies to address poverty. Only they understand their needs and priorities, the resources that they can offer, the social and political constraints that need to be overcome, and the opportunities that each context offers. Moreover, only the poor themselves know what they are prepared to do in order to address their needs.
>
> The central role of savings and credit as a means to constitute communities around their own resources and capacities, to build self-reliance and self-awareness and to shift the relationship between poor communities and the formal world from ones of patronage and paternalism to ones of dialogue and alliance.
>
> The central participation of women, not only in the articulation of community problems and in finding solutions, but also in the management of development interventions, dialogue with the state and taking care of community assets.

> The importance of community level exchange programmes in which the first communities in the alliance repay the alliance by training new communities as mechanisms for the replication and the reinforcement of grassroots development practice." (Peoples Dialogue 1999: p4)

While these shared values are reproduced by exchanges (described earlier) it is because they are mediated by the Federation process that a roughly homogenous paradigm of norms shared throughout the social movement is produced. This principle of a simultaneous focus on the local as well as across the social movement as a whole, in a system of balance, underpins SDI's conception of federating. It can be considered both a process and an institutional form that provides a unifying identity without seceding local autonomy.

B. "Federation" as Praxis

- **A "True" Institution**

Paulo Freire's praxis of cultural action is predicated upon "decodifying" the way the world is represented (Freire 2000). Globalised apartheid capitalism, as noted in Chapter 2, represents the world in terms of a plethora of competing choices and differences. Competition between differences is taken up across cultural, ideological and political levels, often with dire consequences. In the slums of the South, the productive pressures of urban involution and apartheid practice are especially intense, so accepting hegemonic representations mean that the poor "dismiss from life" (Freire 2000) people most like themselves, fuelling hostile forms of insularity and difference that manifest in ghettos and enclaves. As Freire noted, this makes them easy prey for domestication. Hostile representations of each other as the "other" weaken and fragment the slumdwellers, leading often to violent conflict between groups and gangs, destroying their capacity to act in concert as a class. The key to overcoming this problem is to formulate praxis of cultural action, which challenges and liberates the slumdwellers from this hegemonic construction of difference and hostility.

SDI Federations provide an alternative institutional formation that allows the slumdwellers to break away from conforming to hegemonic representations that reify oppression. In common with Freire, Federations "invite" the oppressed to look at themselves as real people living and producing in a specific society in relation to others in similar conditions. Federations are unifying institutions built across the global South upon multiple differences. This institutional exposure to difference acts to conscientise insular slumdwellers, bridging caste, ethnicity, religion, language or nationality to build a meta-culture based upon their livelihood struggles and shared poverty. In this way Federations take up Freire's methodological challenge:

> "..to become literate at the level of being…begins with…discovering other people, discovering a different world, with different things, different gestures, different hands, different bodies…And yet the differences are the starting point for this learning process. You discover people who are different and, linked, with that discovery of other people, the need to be tolerant of them." (Faundez to Freire in Freire 2000:p207)

Federations provide a concrete alternative society that overcomes the paralysing fear of isolation and anomie of the slumdwellers. The institution recodes slumdwellers self-representation as inclusive rather than exclusive. As a concrete social institution, Federations are both produced by and reproduce a social character specific to the slums, that valorises the poor and their lives. Federations challenge the poor's vision of themselves as dismissed, weak, and atomised, leading them to understand that they are themselves the makers of culture and institution. This in turn leads them to understand the anthropological meaning of culture, to realising that their status of "being less" than others, of being poor and dispossessed is not to be understood as divine determination or fate, but rather as determined by the economic-political-ideological context of society. Through Federations the slumdwellers realise themselves as the makers of culture, and take the first important step to becoming politically literate. Thus Federations act in the Freireian sense, as "true" institutions.

- **Pragmatic Mobilisation**

The faculty Federation has of linking disparate lumpenproletarians into a social movement that transcends national and local spatiality, acts in part as a social magnet, drawing shack/slumdwellers into its fold. Initially, this appears to rely on the pragmatic benefits to the poor of binding their social and material assets into common cause. A transcript of audio material from SPARC describes this in Mumbai:

> "The alliance of Mahila Milan, SPARC and NSDF *federates* communities facing similar problems and helps them relate to each other. This creates conditions for communities and especially women to pool their ideas and thoughts together to search for a solution. These solutions may take time, but they are based on common sense and work for everyone..." (SPARC audio archives 2002)

Once this common ground has been established, the Federation begins to develop the subjective and qualitative aspect of identity formation through the deep sharing and socialisation of exchanges. As with the rest of SDI's praxiology, the Federation follows the contours of the poor's lives: it first addresses the instrumental demands of the local community and then, over time, reveals deeper social and political possibilities. This mixture of pragmatism and sociality works as a tool for primary mobilisation to constituencies caught in livelihood struggles. For the "poorest of the poor," Federations appear to act as institutions of hope, drawing upon similarities of circumstance and need across geography and despite history, as a South Africa slum leader observes:

> "These experiences of Federation lead us to know the real conditions of homelessness in our country. We are always comparing to what we saw in other countries. We can look around the world and this gives us confidence." (SDIa 2003)

There is of course too, an important sense of belonging to a Federation, as Appadurai remarks:

> "There is a formal property to membership in the Federation and members of the Alliance have on-going debates about slum-families, neighbourhoods and communities in Mumbai which are not yet part of "the Federation." (Appadurai 2002: p11)

Responding to the context of urban involution, Federations provide a significant source of social attachment. In this they echo, in many respects, the earlier

socialist clubs and societies, and of course fulfil much the same function of socialisation and conscientisation. Federations offer a sense of belonging to the disaggregated slumdwellers, binding them together across geography and history in a shared "imagined fate".

Poverty in an era of commodification is represented by the lack of choice. A key point about SDI's Federations is that they are constructed entirely by the voluntary association of shack/slumdwellers. This represents the question of choice, the sublime issue of agency, as Appadurai notes:

> "In the usage of the Alliance, the idea of the "Federation" is a constant reminder that groups (even families) with real existing powers have chosen to combine their political and material forces. The primacy of the principle of Federation also serves to remind all members...that the power of the Alliance lies not in its donors, its technical expertise, or its administration but in the **will to federate** among poor families and communities..." (Appadurai 2000: p5).

Federations unify the agency of many small groups and individuals. They are institutions that suggest the possibility of the slumdweller's collective will. As such, Federations comply with the normative demands and basic tenets of democracy. They are the demos kratos, the people-power of the disparate slumdwelling multitude. Key to Federations as democratic praxis, are that they remain apolitical. They emphasise instead, an economic approach to democracy ahead of any political form, as a South African slum leader reveals

> "The Federation and the similar organisations are in this way actually working as a better more democratic method of organising... The way in which the Federation is working is not looking at political lines, we accommodate each and every individual who is coming from wherever without looking at which political affiliate are you, we look at them as an individual. We decided not to dare to talk about politics. We only talk about the development and challenges and policy in the country. These are the things which we organising in the country, to organising ourselves. It is easy to use such organisation as the SAHPF because there are no links to any politicians, no political agendas, there are no hidden agendas..." (SDIa 2003)

This non-partisan approach is of course a pragmatic mobilisation strategy (like all of SDI's praxiology). By being "above" formal politics Federations can be as inclusive as possible. Yet it also provides an important answer to the divisive and dangerous tendency of weak communities to retreat into enclaves. Federations in

this way, advances deep cosmopolitanism via an institutional praxis of democracy that is predicated upon common economic and social cause. This in turn challenges the dominant hegemony of increasingly apartheid relations of production, of which the lumpenproletariat is the first victim.

- **Challenging Class Alienation through a Dialogue of Localisms**

The fundamental basis of Shack/slum Dwellers International is that its constituency identify themselves primarily not as workers (or suchlike) but in terms of Federations of shack and slum dwellers. The point of association is primarily domestic and social. As stated throughout the thesis, SDI's logic is located in the social reproduction of the class of shack and slumdwellers. Also to repeat, the dialectics of this lumpenproletariat history provides new opportunities for engagement and agency. Federations as a manifestation of this dialectic go some way to articulating and consolidating the specific class-consciousness of this constituency, as Appadurai observes:

> "... this is not a politics of poverty as such. Drawing from the ideas of Paulo Freire and others, there is a strong sense that the poor often fail because they do not know how to exploit their numbers, their knowledge and their potential for large-scale mobilization as citizens. Here is where the concept of "federating" becomes the key to finding the poor "for themselves" among the large ocean of poor "in themselves". (Appadurai 2000)

In an interesting use of political language, Appadurai alludes to Marx's notion of class-consciousness (Marx 1844: p156), suggesting thereby that "the poor" is now a class. Although he does not explain exactly how the poor are so, his remark does acknowledge the way SDI's program of federating provides a key to confronting the structural entausserung (alienation) of slumdwellers and providing a critical meta-identity to overcome it. Challenging orthodox Marxist theory by their location in the ranks of the lumpenproletariat, Federations transcend being just organisations and instead contain crucial constitutive, generative and agentic qualities that the social theorists discussed in Chapter Three, have sought in praxis. The strength and authenticity of this praxis lies in Federation's appeal to a powerful sense of shared fate, which by unifying a

multitude of slumdwellers creates what might be called a meta-class of the poorest of the poor, conscious of itself as such.

The key to federating as a means to tackling the generic alienation of the lumpenproletariat is that it provides the platform for deep dialogue. Federations are both fora for this dialogue and correspondingly also the crystallisation of this meta-dialogue, as Sheela Patel notes:

> "I think one of the first things that we do is that there is a (Federation) process that prepares...dialogue. And that preparation allows for an exploration. An exploration of other communities to come and see how people are, where they are, what they are doing and for them to move to a point of saying – we like what you are doing right now but we don't know how to start or we don't know how to convince everybody else. What we've begun to do is to almost create a universal system of assessment of need that people do of themselves...Solutions get scaled up and refined through ...the basic building blocks of the Federation." (Patel 2002)

Dialogue is the core theme throughout SDI's praxiology. It constructs the autonomy of savings collectives and is the meaning of exchanges. In Federations this dialogue is broadened to capture the voices of the multitude without losing their specificity. In this way, federating captures the local while linking to the global, creating in effect a trans-localism. This is driven by a powerful creative vitality that circulates and appropriates ideas freely and without restraint. Linking the many Southern lumpen into a loose Federation allows this creative element to flourish, as Sheela Patel reflects:

> "Ideas, strategies, ways to say things, create myths and legends in the Federation...all Federation leaders men and women are story tellers...that is how they communicate...and when something works for you, you just tell it to everyone... it blows in the wind...And it belongs to everyone... Each group who received it then takes it and uses it to serve their own situation... And what began as a single solution, now moves all over the world beyond national boundaries and gets changed and adapted..." (Patel 2002)

This describes Federations as a praxis for creating an imaginary and intellectual commons of scale. This constitutes a powerful immaterial force to confront the exogenous false consciousness that Freire called the "oppressor consciousness", which impinges upon the lumpen from without. Federating

provides an intellectual dialogue between slumdwellers at a mass scale (see below), thereby creating an apposite idea-scape of the Southern slums. The coherence of this paradigm proffers a means by which the estrangement of the masses from each other is overcome. Federations are conduits for this new culture of the Southern poor to find its critical mass and acquire agency. In this sense, Federations approximate, or at least prefigure, many of the elements of what Gramsci called a class-conscious "historical bloc" based upon the free dialogue of many localisms in concert.

- **Creating a Critical Mass of Knowledge**

From the perspective of its lumpen constituency, federating is seen as an obvious means to building networks that through their scale, facilitate options that smaller groupings would find impossible. Intellectually speaking, it appears to be more than this. As seen above, the construction of an intellectual and imaginary commons implies that federating contains the potential of transformatory knowledge and a radical pedagogy. According to SPARC's Sheela Patel, the scale of the international Federation process has reached an important stage that allows it to become transformatory knowledge:

> "You need a critical mass of people exploring this process. Because unless you have a critical mass, change is not going to lead to transformation. What we feel is that there needs to be a critical mass of people who want to explore this transformation because it's a very slow process. It requires people to get a lot of support from each other. It requires people to be able to cope with the disbelievers. So there's a sort of a collective exploration that is very critical. When thousands upon thousands want the same solution, that critical mass creates the solution - it leads to a breaking down of the barriers between poor people and resources." (SPARC 2002)

The transnational linkage of many Federations across the South provides a vast repertoire of knowledge to differentiated milieu of poverty that transcends the limited geographies and histories of each location. This intellectual access is a powerful resource for the poor, providing what can be termed, a critical mass of knowledge that can surmount these limitations. A repeated claim by SDI Federation members is that "the Federation is a university of life!" (SDIa 2000)

Federations in this respect constitute living archives of human knowledge, the circulation of which, at a certain critical point begins to generate solutions to the myriad problems confounding the lumpenproletariat. Sheela Patel describes how this works as such:

> "The Federation creates a communication network through which ideas and information and knowledge created in one community is shared with others...this is community based training and it goes on all the time... It's all about learning to bring out the experiences each woman man and child in the community pools together in their knowledge pot...When many, many people begin to believe in the same solution, change has to take place...Doing is believing, and when you can do, so can you teach...And in a Federation, this learning teaching cycle once set into motion can have hundreds upon hundreds of people mapping their settlements...Over time exchanges have themselves developed and progressed. The process is kept alive with 100s of small connected communities linked to each other across cities and regions, sharing their knowledge and ideas...its the cooking of a 100 khichdi pots, like having hundreds and hundreds of knowledge pots on the boil at the same time..." (SPARC 2002)

Like all SDI praxis, federating echoes Paulo Freire's point that education is about the illiterate entering into a dialogue with the "existential universe" and concrete situations of their lives, as "...an attitude of creation and recreation, a self-transformation producing a stance of intervention in ones context" (Freire 2000: p86). Located in the concrete lives of slumdwellers, the Federation's knowledge base contains all of the discourse of this uncivil society. As such, it is often unexpected, disorderly and illogical. Yet this very heterodoxy is what makes it appropriate to the conditions that the lumpen face as a class, and lays the seed of its radical possibility, as Paulo Freire points out:

> "The pedagogy of the oppressed... must take into account their behaviour, their view of the world and their ethics. A particular problem is the duality of the oppressed: they are contradictory, divided beings, shaped by and existing in a concrete situation of oppression and violence." (Freire 2000: p54-5)

Unlike Freire though, SDI does not reject the inherent contingency, transgressive and apparently contradictory ideas of the oppressed. In accord with the dialectic of their lives, they welcome it and pass no judgement on this knowledge. Any means of survival is to be respected and shared, even if it is dubious. Their approach to pedagogy is autopoeitic, it derives from the unified intellects of its

mass of members, as activist Ted Baumann remarks, "some of whom can read, can write, do sums, lay bricks, turn tricks, extort money, sell drugs, steal a car..." (SDIa 2003) The confederation of slumdweller knowledge locates itself in these specific knowledges of survival and as such it is necessarily amoral. In this SDI's knowledge extends beyond Freire's dialogic model and as mentioned earlier, becomes a dialectical knowledge inclusive of conflicting elements. Patel in this regard observes that:

> "Federation processes are robust, dynamic and replicable precisely because Federation members are encouraged by their social movement to learn from mistakes as well as successes." (SDIa 2004)

The process, in this regard, is clearly empirical and there are no normative constraints on learning. Whatever the outcome, federating creates the conditions for collective learning and this in turn strengthens the Federation process as a whole. This approach accounts for the huge divide that separates Federations from formal learning institutions such as schools, universities and NGOs around the world. As this division is located primarily in class differences of knowledge it also comes to head where development is concerned.

Federation teaching is radically different from formal pedagogy, particularly that from a development agenda, as the NGO, People's Dialogue wrote:

> "Development practitioners are still hooked into the "best practice" mystique. In other words they come from a position that the best way to teach poor people how to develop is to show them examples of best practice projects or models. These best practices have become the basis for university curricula (where universities even bother to teach students about poverty) and for step-by-step primers for NGOs. Once learning institutions get trapped into a "best practice" methodology they struggle with the process of peer learning and learning through everyday experience - which is at the heart of Federation practice." (Peoples Dialogue 2002)

SDI stands opposed to conventional top-down expertise. They declare themselves to be "anti-expert" (SDIa 2003). In their view, only the poor themselves are qualified to deal with poverty and anyone else is an impostor. The Federation conception of knowledge challenges, if not refutes the approach of those who wish to intervene in their lives, as People's Dialogue points out:

> "It is only in the exceptional instances that experts approach the Federation and say: We might well have complementary skills. Allow us to participate in the anti-poverty processes you have developed and let us see if we can add value to your strategies and practices. In the Federation, training is taboo. We have removed the word. Training is a very strong word to be sitting on your head. The minute you take it off, you're free because you can now become a partner with communities." (Peoples Dialogue 2002)

For SDI, real learning lies embedded in the messy attempts of poor communities to navigate towards a better life, and these attempts are constantly being re-invested in new initiatives.

While Federations provide a non-prescriptive approach to knowledge, they do contain a consistent normative theme of being strongly opposed to hierarchical relations of knowledge and hierarchy itself. A constant challenge of Federations is coping with this negative contingency, derivative of exterior structural relations, which inevitably makes its way into the process. There is an ever present and ineradicable tension between elements which foster open source knowledge and learning in association with flat, non-exploitative and collectivist agendas, and those which are aimed at limiting knowledge for self-gain, creating hierarchy and corruption. While not rubbing out power dynamics, federating does provide a forum for these contradictions to play themselves out across many locations. Over time, from this wide field of engagement, a consensus emerges. This set of shared values represents many different answers rather than any single spontaneous source. In this way, Federation praxis is always an expression of the specific contradictions of poverty within many terrains of local culture and practice.

This open scrutiny of each to all, what I call the "poly-opticon" of the masses, acts to inhibit enclave formation and the insularity that encourages corruption. In this way, the experience and knowledge of the total Federation is always available as a mediating influence, which can be brought to bear upon a location at any moment in time. Local processes that have become regressive are confronted by their international associates and brought into line with the general consensus or

face the risk of excommunication. This was powerfully demonstrated by the 2005 expulsion of the Western Cape flagship of the South African Homeless People's Federation when a enclave orientated hierarchy under the formidable Patricia Matolengwe seized control of the local process for their own needs. The broader constituency of South African homeless people not within Matolengwe fiefdom and supported by SDI expelled this group from SDI and reconstituted in its place FEDUP, the Federation of the Urban Poor. This conflictual interplay mediated by the meta-Federation of SDI appears to drive the process forward. It seems that the attachment to the greater social movement identity provides the key impulse to conform to collective trans-local needs rather than individual demands.

In conclusion, because the lumpen struggle is such a long frontier, many forms of knowledge and practice are experimented with at any moment in time. As a consequence, what becomes the intellectual and normative commons has a broad consensual and empirical base. Federating puts the uncivil encyclopaedia to test and in so doing draws out certain consistent themes and practices. These are adopted by Federations to construct their alternative civil society based upon the specific demands of the slumdwellers as a class. These are not necessarily the best values, but usually those most expedient to use at the time. As a result, Federations as a "civic society from below" should not be confused with orthodox civil society discourse, for they are in a class of their own. The lumpenproletariat and their combined logic are rooted in pragmatism. What federating achieves is to bring this alternative society to the fore through spontaneous ontology. This new social ideology as such derives from the lumpen in-itself, for-itself.

- **Extending the Power of Collective Action**

Federations both derive from and initiate poor-centred activities. These activities include community mobilisation, management of collective finances, information gathering, organisation building, house and sanitation construction, health programs and livelihood creation. The building and pooling of these deep initiatives across the Federation as praxis of agency constructs a wide reaching

grassroots power base for tackling the conditions of their poverty, as the UK based NGO, Homeless International describes:

> "Poor families living in poverty can achieve far more collectively than they can in isolation...poor families (organised) into community savings groups, which link together in strong local and national networks called Federations. Through Federations, poor families tackle poverty by collecting information about their settlements, sharing experiences with each other, developing and showcasing their own solutions to poverty, and communicating with authorities and other local stakeholders through a single voice." (HI undated)

A significant aspect of Federation praxis is to break the alienation the poor have from their own power, of breaking the cycle of systemic disempowerment that confronts them at every level, including that of external interventions such as aid. The following editorial by SDI partner, the Cambodian Urban Poor Development Fund (UPDF) newsletter of May 2002 reveals that:

> "...in 1994, the Solidarity for the Urban Poor Federation (SUPF) was established, a city-wide Federation of community savings groups...the central element of which (is) to promote people-driven development in Cambodia. To break the "hand-out" mentality, which has done so much to disempower the country's poor communities...to strengthen and SUPF's community savings groups as a strategy for people to organise themselves, strengthen their communities, learn from each other and manage their own development. Strong community savings groups- *and a large Federation of these savings groups*- are the building blocks of a people-driven development process and are vitally connected to housing and environmental improvement and negotiation. So boosting savings and credit activities on a large scale through Federating is a way to boost the basic mechanism by which poor people will begin dealing with their problems collectively, with strength, rather than in weakness and isolation... SUPF's various management committees and its seven *sub-Federations* (*khan-units*) bring poor communities within their districts together, pool their own resources and work out their own solutions to problems of land security, housing, toilets, basic services and access to credit for livelihood and housing." (UPDF 2003)

What the Cambodians describe, is how Federations act as conduits for collective action, which is further focussed, disciplined and strengthened through Federation processes such as savings and credit activities. This intensified collective action empowers the poor to break the cycle of dependency they are subject to. At one level, federating the poor simply ties many small struggles for autonomy into a common struggle with common solutions. But implicit too, in the

Cambodian example, is the suggestion, which is repeated across SDI, that Federations act holistically, that the outcome of their shared action exceeds the sum of the separate localisms. Clearly federating acts as a social lens for the lumpenproletariat, focussing their multiple discrete actions into union, as a SAHPF leader observes:

> "The organisation process makes people stronger. It gives them power. It makes them work together, all pushing in the same direction. Whereas if they were by themselves they would have no power, they would all be pushing against each other." (SDIa 2003)

At the very least, Federations provide direction and clarity to the many lumpen struggles and limit in-fighting that hamstring their efforts. Furthermore, the scale provided by federating, ties a critical mass of skills and knowledge (discussed earlier) to a popular movement of the lumpenproletariat in an effective way to put forward their demands and challenge their limit situations, as a SAHPF leader explains:

> "The Federation as a community structure does a number of things; it gives us the skills and capacity to challenge government; it also, through its international links gives us a bigger picture of the world relations of land redistribution. We can therefore compare our situation with other places how best to operate. The Federation is not just a little local community but is a big worldwide thing, which gives the big picture. This gives it power. The power comes from these networks." (SDIa 2003)

SPARC echoes this observation:

> "The Federations of poor communities are vital because unless large numbers believe in the same thing and they work together to achieve it...they can get no resources." (SPARC audio archives 1999)

The key strength of Federations is thus the weight of numbers of the poor, bound in common cause and with a shared critical consciousness. In this respect, Federations as vehicles for collective action, act as an important catalyst for generating transformatory class-consciousness and agency in the lumpenproletariat. By changing the way the poor perceive themselves, federating turns them into being the primary agents of their own destiny, as Appadurai describes:

> "At another level, the reference to the Federation is a reference to the primacy of the poor in driving their own politics..." (Appadurai 2000)

In this understanding, federating empowers the poor to drive their own agenda. By amassing of the multitude into a critical mass, federating appears to fulfil both of Gramsci's definitions of hegemony described earlier in Chapter 3. In terms of the first definition of hegemony as a political system with a consensual basis, the central foundation of SDI's power lies in its construction of an alternative democracy, a counter-hegemony of the lumpenproletariat, within the existing civil society that oppresses them. In respect to Gramsci's second form of hegemony, the class-consciousness engendered by Federation allows this uncivil counter-hegemony to resist the dominant "economic-corporative" oppressing it. Here class is understood not only economically but also in terms of a common intellectual and moral awareness, a common culture (Gramsci 1971: p56). This counter-hegemony allows for a new dialectic to be established between formal civil society and its contender, the counter-civil society of lumpen slumdwellers.

- **Legitimating the Uncivil Society**

When reviewing the criticism of the lumpenproletariat from all quarters, it is clear that they represent, at least normatively, a kind of perennial class of the "other". They not only threaten bourgeois values, but they also trigger deep unease amongst the orthodox Left, who, as seen in Chapter Two, describe them as the "criminal classes". This othering has mostly been uncontested, for, besides the likes of Fanon and Huey Newton, the lumpenproletariat has had few advocates. Yet the evidence presented in Chapter One clearly indicates the fact that this class can no longer be dismissed. They are, as repeatedly stated, a permanent and expanding category that is becoming increasingly discontent with their exclusion, as this SPARC audio file reflects:

> "Anywhere in the world today, the poor have no land tenure or security. They have no water, sanitation or services that other citizens take for granted. Cities don't want to give resources to the poor. The strategy of waiting to be given something has tested the patience of poor people for many decades now..." (SPARC audio files 1999).

SDI's Federations represent one solution that has evolved in response to this impatience, providing a means to convert the ochlos into a coherent force and a platform to voice its demands. The significance of a Federation is that it provides

a scale of mass action that cannot be ignored. This recognition moves the lumpen from the margins toward the centre and initiates the process of their legitimation.

The history of federating traces SDI's shift from exclusion to inclusion. This ontology is repeated roughly in all new spaces that they begin to operate. At the outset of a Federation's formation, the sense of exclusion is at it's highest. The lumpen's pariah status combined with their impatience means that the new Federation's members are understandably restive. As the Federation gathers momentum and becomes a recognisable social actor representing the nation's poor, formal society begins to engage with it. SDI describes this engagement as "dialogue", although it enduringly contains degrees of conflict, which makes this conversation more dialectical than dialogical. This conversation both reveals, and changes the agendas of both parties. Formal authority often moves erratically between hostility, as seen in Zimbabwe; truculence, seen in Kenya; through to collaboration such as "The Three Cities Alliance" of Durban City Metro, South Africa, Quezon City, Philippines and Mumbai, India in conjunction with SDI and the respective homeless people's Federations of those cities. Federation agency, on the other hand, generally ameliorates in accord with their recognition, as has been observed in the following NGO report on the South African Homeless Peoples Federation:

> "The key objectives of the Federation in the early nineties were overcoming socio-economic and political marginalisation and access to housing. From 1991 to 1998, the Alliance's strategy was broadly non-collaborationist. Non-collaboration was significant at the time as it enabled mobilisation around a sense of shared identity and belonging and the emergence of a movement of the urban poor in the form of the Federation. By early 1998, this situation began to change, with a shift in strategy towards partnerships with other agencies, "in order to address needs and demands on a much larger scale" and to play "an even greater role in poverty eradication in the future"... Since then, the Federation has played a key role in shifting the People's Housing Process to the centre of government housing policy." (People's Dialogue 1999)

What is clear from this quote is the shifting dynamic between a Federation and the formal society it converses with. It moves from overt antagonism expressed

in contestation to mutual compromise and dialogue. This type of intercourse moves the poor from outside society and thereby as outlaws, to at least being recognised as an actor within society. In the best cases, over time this leads to what is optimistically called a "partnership" between these antithetical formations. One such example is the so-called partnership between the Kwa-Zulu Natal chapter of the SAHPF and the City of Durban within the terms of the Three Cities Alliance, as described by Peoples Dialogue:

> "In some cases, like Durban, the partners are finding common ground with a mutually agreed three-phase engagement strategy which will give both sides the chance for some short terms gains while both sides prove themselves and the promise of a more formal, structured and sustained partnership in the longer term. This kind of engagement creates the potential for the "win-win" situation described by the Indians." (Peoples Dialogue 2002: p45)

It is hard to convey the depth of feeling that recognition and legitimacy conveys. Citizens outside the slums who are blessed with legal entitlements and rights rarely comprehend the significance that this change in status brings, or of the struggle that goes to producing it, as SPARC describes

> "July 1999 was a red letter day for the pavement women of Byculla. They rushed into the Byculla Community centre waving the land tenure papers they had just collected. It was a special historical event. One everyone dreamed of ... about the day when pavement dwellers would have the right to obtain land for relocation. It was the culmination of a journey which began fifteen years ago." (SPARC 2000)

Federations thus can provide the scale of popular association engaged in collective action that allows the poor to pursue sustained strategies of critical engagement with formal society. This engagement paves the way to their recognition and ultimately their legitimacy.

- **Federations: Counter-hegemony from Below**

What has to be understood about this conversation are the class contradictions producing it never really change. Despite the rhetoric, the "partners" are always in tension, as the following NGO observation reveals:

> "a key concern on both sides of the social movement / state partnership is the basis and nature of the engagement. Public officials talk of "risk management" and "unprofessional

> behaviour", while the Alliance rejects participation in processes that the poor have had no role in defining." (Peoples Dialogue 2002. p45)

It is palpable that the relationship between the formal and informal is rooted not in altruism, but in expediency that both sides seek to make the most out of, either for political or social gain. Their relationship as partners is, as described in Chapter One, the product of inevitable forces beyond their control. It plays out as the need to serve different "public" interests, one civil and the other uncivil, and the contestation over this, is primarily a politics of visibility. SDI therefore, has to maintain a highly visible, constant and sustained pressure to force state authority to concede and then adhere to their demands. To achieve this pressure means sustaining high levels of grassroots popular support. Federations provide a means to achieving this enduring visibility of mass action.

The evolution of Federations reflect an understanding by an increasingly coherent and mobilised poor that formal society, particularly governments, rarely respond to the needs of the poor unless the poor are organised and politically adept at putting pressure on them. Federations, through their transnational linkages to SDI, have access to many precedents of action used in other places and tested in the field. The repertoire of strategies that can be deployed by Federations is thus considerable. At the same time, this repertoire is never closed, it is always an open, living empirical praxis derived from the social movement as a whole. A Federation can therefore prefigure and anticipate the engagement with formal society based upon its broader knowledge. This gives Federations a rare, but significant advantage when dealing with the comparatively inert bureaucracies of authority. Often a Federation can set the terms of engagement well in advance, subtly directing formal society to comply with its agenda, as a South African slum leader describes:

> "Now, the Federation, although the process still takes time, organises it. We take control of the process. We make our own investigation of what needs to be done and what to make it happen like that. We do the negotiations. We are aware...waiting for local authorities, government to deliver does not solve the problem of land. So as a group, as a team, the Federation worked much better ways to do this. The authorities could not solve this problem.

> The Municipalities do not have the capacity, really, to do these things. They are always dealing with the individual. To deal with the group we showed them it is easier, because groupings are organised. We are organised, therefore it is easy for them to communicate with us as a whole... Being in a community – we can show them; we do enumerations, we collect the data, we compile a database. So when we finally talk with them we have done a lot of work already. Which is valuable to local government. That is like a handshake to local government, which is a link between us. It makes it easier for local government to deal with groupings rather than with individuals. There are many, many individuals, but fewer groups. Federation is a practical solution." (SDIa 2003)

This reflects a key SDI premise that dialogue with the state would be of little value to the poor if they lacked the ability at grass-roots level to gain control of this process themselves. Federations then are the mediating bodies between the poor and resources.

Over and above visible politics, national Federations of the poor linked to the transnational confederation of SDI represent a formidable unified mass of disaffected people, as Peoples Dialogue noted:

> "There are those... who feel threatened by the Federation. They perceive it as a threat instead of a movement with an extraordinary wealth of experience (bad as well as good)..." (Peoples Dialogue 2002)

This negative perception is drawn from and continues the vision of the lumpenproletariat as dangerous, which although alienating, does up the ante of what is at stake and who the protagonists are. This forces the frame of engagement to move accordingly. Federations evolved in the first place because normal channels of political communication were closed to the lumpen. A key source of Federation leverage thus lies in their capability to deploy the disorderly and criminal classes, of being able to utilise the direct action of a mobilised uncivility and of having recourse to threaten as a tool when behaving reasonably fails. The power to threaten means Federations can shift the summit of conflict to their terms of engagement, to move from the ideological to the material zone of conflict. In this way federating goes beyond visibility and provides a militant opposition to the structures that oppress them. People's Dialogue captures some of this ambivalence in the following statement:

> "Indeed in the long run the state has a great deal to fear from an unorganised under-class inhabiting this country's burgeoning slums (including the many new ones with their concrete cores), since, by its own admission, the state is unable to deliver entitlements on a scale that can even begin to meet the needs. This is precisely the reason why an autonomous movement of the urban and rural poor with a clearly defined objective to empower its members (so that they can play a central role in their own upliftment) is one of the most crucial allies needed by the Mbeki Government. That social movement is already in existence. It is the SA Homeless People's Federation." (Peoples Dialogue 2002)

Federations become a fixture in this political landscape. Using their power to threaten as a goad and their capacity for autonomous development as a lure, Federations become a pragmatic ally of the Southern state, itself caught in a "livelihood struggle" of sorts in a world order under "adjustment" that has hollowed out its capacity to rule. The interaction between lumpen Federations and Southern formal society is thus a constant dialectic ever in tension. At the same time, this dialectical relationship is caught within a greater world system governed by the forces and contradictions of globalisation, which allows instrumental alliances to be formed that benefit both the subaltern South's state and lumpenproletariat.

The greatest significance of SDI's Federations is that they seem to capture the institutional territory of the state. Federations effectively create a parallel state within the state, a counter-state of the dispossessed, providing the functional role of the state in the places where the state cannot reach or operate: the slums, squatter-camps, ghettos, and favelas of the South. In this way federating, as discussed earlier, is praxis to the hegemony of the lumpenproletariat, providing recognition, legitimacy and setting the terms of engagement and contestation with formal society.

Conclusion

Relying on a loose understanding of federation that comes close to confederation, SDI Federations represent the constitutive power of the lumpenproletariat. Federations provide a vehicle for creating an articulate and

self-aware meta-identity of the dispossessed that captures the possibility of a transnational constituency without losing the specific qualities of each local community. Federating is thus a means to attaining a trans-localism unified around common cause. This lumpen collective actor challenges orthodox social theory as it represents a new and unforeseen historical agent in an old history. Federations are institutions that consolidate the disparate energies of the lumpenproletariat into a coherent class agent, tackling their historical weakness as a class. The pooling of this force rests upon the keystone of shared livelihood struggles in a time of multiple crises. By mobilising the poor around pragmatic approaches to these struggles, Federations provide praxis to deep democratic organisation. In time, these identity-institutions of shack/slumdwellers grow to challenge their alienation and contribute to awakening lumpen class-consciousness. This self-realisation is tied to Federations being what might be called "deep universities". Through their local and transnational linkages within the confederation of SDI these supply the critical mass of interconnected knowledges needed to become transformative knowledge. Federating, in this way, offers a way for the poor to exert their knowledge productively and challenge established development. In addition, Federations are collective action by the underclass that offers them sustained institutions of power in a constantly fluid terrain of many politics. As visible and enduring institutions representing the inescapable masses of the urban poor, Federations are recognised by the formal world. This recognition paves the way to their legitimation. However, this engagement with civil society is in constant dialectic tension. The collective agency provided by national Federations not only offers the formal world a "partner" but also holds the potential of threat by the concerted action of the uncivil society. Federating thus creates a platform for the lumpen to exercise their power and to some degree, engage with the outside world on their own terms. Federating provides a means to creating a counter-hegemony in the ranks of the lumpenproletariat. When this counter-hegemony of the uncivil society is linked to the weight of the transnational confederation of SDI, the praxis of federating goes

a long way to creating real political power for the dispossessed. This political power anticipates in a number of ways the Gramscian notion of a "historic bloc".

Chapter Eight - SDI Tools of Vanguard Praxis

Introduction

This chapter considers SDI's praxis on the frontline of their struggles, what this thesis, as mentioned at the outset of Part Two, calls vanguard praxis, as opposed to the systemic praxis of the operational principles: savings, exchanges and Federations, discussed in the preceding three chapters. The focus in this chapter will be on four of the "tools" SDI has created to pioneer and introduce the operational principles, as well as to elaborate and deepen their logic. The first is what SDI calls "enumeration," the practice of self-census and survey of slums by SDI. Secondly, "house modelling", which is their embedded practices of architecture and design. Thirdly, "house building", SDI's lumpen auto-development and housing construction in the slums. Finally, "collective waste management and sanitation," their construction of communal toilet blocks to create social hubs for the lumpenproletariat.

The tools are premeditated activities that extend the social frontier of the movement as well as intensifying and maintaining its systemic functioning. Where the previously discussed operational "rituals" simultaneously create and are created by the collective action and consciousness of the movement, these tools are specifically conscious actions by the social movement. They are deliberate interventions into the conflict between the material forces of production and the social forces of lumpen reproduction. Both in practice and terminology, they approximate a discourse of action located in the autogenous production of self-knowledge that calls to mind Michel Foucault's revolutionary logic. Foucault's archaeologies revealed the close network of interactions between knowledge and power in various social systems. He was aware, too, that while his own discourse was itself located within the power structure of modern society, it was both a product of this logic and a "box of tools" that might be used to undermine the very society, which precipitated its creation. As he extravagantly declared

> "I am a tool merchant, a tactician, an indicator of targets, a cartographer, a draftsman, an armourer." (Foucault in Major-Poetzl 1983: p43).

At the same time the tools reflect the template of the broader SDI praxiology and as such contain much in common with them. As such the analysis offered by this chapter will seek to reveal these continuities as well as describe the unique characteristics offered by each of the tools. Part A of the chapter examines the strategic background from which the tools emerge. A clear symptom of globalised apartheid is the ubiquitous rise across the South of forced removals, land clearances, coerced resettlement and widespread eviction of the poor. SDI in many ways has emerged directly in response to this crisis. SDI consequently has evolved a discourse and set of strategies to confront evictions. It is from these that the tools under discussion emerge. Part B takes the focus to these vanguard tools. The first section looks at the slumdweller praxis of survey and census called "Enumeration". The second section takes up the analysis of slumdweller architecture and design, "House-modelling". Section 3 examines SDI's construction and engineering work, "House-building". The final section 4 investigates SDI sanitation projects, its "Poop praxis".

A. Counter-eviction Strategy

> *"They hang the man and flog the woman*
> *That steal the goose from off the common.*
> *But they let the greater villain loose*
> *That steals the common from the goose."* (18th century children's rhyme referring to the Enclosure Movement in England.)

Responding to market demands during 2001 and 2002, in Asia alone, 1.8 million poor people were evicted from their homes and another 3.9 million were under immediate threat of eviction (ACHR 2003). This pattern is repeated throughout the South. The scale of displacement of people is colossal. Evictions are symptomatic of the conflict between the forces of capital accumulation and the livelihood struggles of the poorest of the poor. Evictions destroy the very

conditions of social reproduction of the lumpenproletariat.

Corresponding to this situation, SDI has developed a discourse of eviction to identify and highlight this trend to its constituency. The special *Eviction* issue of the journal *Housing by People* by SDI's Asian Coalition of Housing Rights (ACHR) notes four main causes for evictions:

> "(1) Increasing urbanisation...(2) Large infrastructure projects funded by international finance... (3) Land politics: the powerful nexus between developers, bureaucrats and politicians removes the poor from valuable land... (4) The absence of laws to protect communities from eviction or to provide tenure security" (ACHR 2003).

The journal observes that as urbanisation intensifies, informal settlements of the poor that for reasons of mutual convenience used to be tolerated by formal society are no longer acceptable as the latter increasingly appropriates this land for development. Under globalism's rules of engagement in the "adjusted" South, the large infrastructure projects needed to service this development are generally outsourced to foreign financiers. This sees joint ventures between local entrepreneurs and the international corporate sector, whose association shifts values from being endogenous and social, to exogenous and financial, breaking the significant link to "place". The ACHR observes that the increased value of land makes it a political issue, listing the corruption that emerges from this global penetration of capital into underdeveloped national economies. They describe how alliances between developers, bureaucrats and politicians to build commercial real-estate, force the poor from valuable land often in violation of state laws and procedures. The ACHR claim these commercial allies often manipulate development projects to maximise displacement in order to advance political agendas. They describe how developers fund political parties and their candidates so as to have direct links to the corridors of power. These links are used to manipulate land records, obscure title-deeds, influence city planning and change city plans they consider hostile to their interests. These examples of deliberate dispossession in the South are facilitated by the general lack of legislation either to protect communities from eviction or to provide security of tenure. Where such laws do exist, the ACHR points out, they are violated with

impunity because of the unequal power relationship between the poor and the developer-bureaucrat-politician nexus. As the editorial observes, "There is no recognition of common tenure / informal tenure for the poor, ironically in an age of increasing informalisation." (ACHR 2003)

The journal observes that evictions intensify the plight of the poor; "making the poor get poorer" (ACHR 2003). This is because the poor are moved away from the city, pushing them into un-serviced peri-urban areas far away from their places of work. This puts additional burdens of time and transport burdens upon them, and alters the social relations of labour, for instance, making it difficult for mothers to work outside the home or settlement. Evictions also distance the poor from proper health care and educational institutions. All of which reduces the inflow of cash to the community, while increasing the outflow, deepening the rich-poor divide in Southern cities. The social impacts of evictions are profound, the violence and destruction of forced removals severely affects communities, leaving them deeply traumatized. In breaking up their personal and household goods as well as scattering the family, evictions destroy the idea of a home in all its forms. This includes both the material investments in the shacks themselves and the intense social and psychological implications of a home as a safe and nurturing refuge. It also interrupts schooling and fractures the delicate social support systems in informal communities and neighbourhoods. These factors deepen social alienation and escalate levels of conflict, exacerbating crime and violence (ACHR 2003). The increased criminality of the lumpen is a reflex reaction to their dispossession that unfortunately affirms the power of the strong. This further deepens the divide between them to the poor's disadvantage. Their actions in this regard are a mode of uncompromised engagement that serve no greater strategic purpose.

In response, SDI Federations have sought to channel this reflexive action into more effective modes engagement. To capture the terrain of popular discourse and bring their agenda to the foreground of lumpen awareness, they have

evolved several techniques of communication. This includes very visible grassroots campaigns and associated anti-eviction slogans, such as "Prevent Evictions With Information!"; "Prevent Evictions With Alternative Planning!"; and "Prevent Evictions With Collective Action!" These slogans and campaigns characterise the way SDI uses eviction as a "true" word to build popular awareness. In this Freireian sense, eviction operates as a generative theme that focuses the reflexive anger of the dispossessed toward self-conscious collective action directed toward securing tenure and autonomous slum development. These anti-eviction campaigns and their language not only challenge evictions but also seek to shift the bias so that fringe dwelling becomes the centre, building a normative case for legitimacy by valorising slums in terms of community and identity. The clear intention is to explain and define the lines of conflict to the shack/slumdwellers, to identify and name the enemy as well as to mark out key approaches to resistance. Exemplary of the way in which SDI creates its own language of resistance, is the way it simplifies oppressive forces of production into what it calls on occasions, the "developer-bureaucrat-politician nexus" (SDIa 2004). This appellation seems to be used by SDI to encompass a host of its adversaries, including the entirety of neo-liberal capitalism, Southern civic authority opportunism, corrupt politics as well as the systemic anti-poor mechanisms of the formal world.

The SDI discourse of action in regards to evictions crystallises their entire praxis. SDI is in the first instance and perhaps also in some cases the last instance, primarily an anti-eviction initiative. As a result, they are geared toward survival, legitimacy and autonomy of the slum/shackdwellers. Their constitutive rationale is predicated upon building power amongst lumpen slumdwellers. Following from this, SDI's resistance praxis to evictions is specifically located in the tools of enumeration, house modelling, house building and sanitation.

- **Challenging Neo-liberal Land Dynamics**

The central focus of SDI's resistance is to challenge the developer-bureaucrat-politician nexus and identify and obtain land on their own terms. To facilitate this, many SDI national Federations adopt clear strategies that lay out step-by-step methods for this, as demonstrated by the following plan by the South African Homeless Peoples Federation in 1996:

"24 Point Plan to Secure Land

1. Land to be identified (plus at least two alternatives).
2. Negotiation Team, Security Team, Legal Team, Construction Team, uTshani Team to be set up.
3. Land owner to be identified. Negotiations to be started. (on all identified pieces of land).
4. Deed search to be conducted. Zoning regulations to be established. Bulk Service connection to be investigated.
5. Report back meeting on negotiations and deed search to all members. (These meetings to happen at least once a fortnight from the day the land search begins).
6. Complete list of families (to secure land by purchase or occupation) to be compiled, and held by the Savings scheme. Copies to be submitted to the nearest uFundu Zufe or to the landless steering committee.
7. R100 contribution (for expenses to be incurred) to be deposited in name of Housing Savings collective/ scheme (to be refunded if expenses are not incurred).
8. Provisional layout completed, sites allocated. Information held by Savings scheme and submitted to nearest uFundu Zufe or Steering Committee of the landless.
9. ID documents issued to all families, indicating that they have a stake in the negotiations and that this is recorded by the Federation.
10. House modelling and costing completed.
11. Negotiations begin in earnest with the local authorities.
12. Subsidy applications completed. uTshani Loan applications completed and submitted to Cape Town.

If land has been secured legally:

13. Media, officials and Ministries informed. Transport ready.
14. House modelling exercise or ceremony to hand over title organised with uFundu Zufe support.
15. Officials are invited to officiate at the ceremony to be held on the land.
16. Planning approval secured.
17. uTshani Loans used to purchase building materials.
18. Subsidy applications submitted.

19. Families move onto the land.

20. Development proceeds.

If all negotiations fail

21. After consultation with the regional leadership of the landless Federation, a decision is taken to occupy land, with unanimous Housing Savings collective/ scheme support and a full understanding of the risks.

Regional leadership and the national Federation will only agree to support such an action in extreme cases and only when Steps 1 –12 have been thoroughly conducted.

22. Security teams and negotiation teams prepare themselves for reaction from the State. Technical team finalises layout and allocates sites.

23. Media is contacted. Documentation on the plight of the community is prepared. Lawyers are consulted. Savings scheme informs members of date and time of action and secures their commitment to the action.

24. Technical team cuts sites. Families move together onto sites that have been allocated to them. Regional and national Federation and PD prepare to defend the action to the extent that this is possible." (SAHPF1996)

Clearly, plans like these rely on high levels of community cohesion and mobilisation. They require specialised and trained cadres to initiate, implement and evaluate the process as it unfolds. They demand great discipline and fortitude to withstand the consequences of their actions. They rely on a firmly united, sentient collective, which acts deliberately. Unfortunately, these qualities rarely, if ever occur in the broken-community settlements after evictions. If migration to the city is based on hope, evictions end that. In these cases, post-eviction equates post-hope. Evicted settlements are more like refugee camps than socially integrated communities. It was in specific answer to these conditions of reproductive crisis that SDI evolved the set of praxis tools that are the subject of this chapter. For SDI, the process of rehabilitation and community building begins through applying the tools. As this praxis deploys over time, the qualities required for securing land appear to catalyse, and the community moves forward to pro-actively challenge and address the market dispensation and state power. This is done both within and against the logic of ruling class power and the key contention is over knowledge and information. Recognising that the primary ground of this conflict is knowledge and information and the key

protagonists are the market and state on one side and the slum/shackdwellers on the other, SDI's tools evolved to equip Federation members with tangible powers of transformative knowledge that would allow them not only to be privy to the logic of productive forces but also to capture this terrain for their own ends.

B. Tools of Vanguard Praxis

1. "Enumeration" (shack/slumdweller's census and surveys.)

> "How does an enumeration happen? One might as well ask: "How long is a piece of string?" Each context and situation is different and requires different strategies and responses." (Peoples Dialogue 1996)

Enumeration is primarily a technique for community mobilisation around the issue of land. It is about the autogenous survey, census, cartography and statistics of a community or settlement in terms of its social and geographical axes. No two settlements are the same, each shack/slum community is unique with specific conditions, restraints and possibilities, which impede or encourage community mobilisation. Enumerations, like all other SDI processes are predicated upon the logic that actions in communities must follow the contours of everyday life of that location. As a result, every application of the "tools" is tailored to the particular conditions of that social space. However there are certain procedures that are consistent in most enumeration exercises. In general terms then, a Federation-driven enumeration (be it in Nairobi, Mumbai or Sao Paulo) will take the following form:

- **Hut Counting.**

When a Federation visits a settlement for the first time, this is usually done by a group of Federation members entering the settlement, meeting with the residents and engaging in conversation. The Federation members talk about themselves, their work and what they have come for. In most cases, the communities are already aware of the Federation's work, and credibility is easily established. The direct engagement of the local community is imperative. Any interventionary

praxis requires local consent so in order to avoid creating conflict the presence of the Federation must be mutually arbitrated. To trigger the process of participation, the Federation leaders query the community as to their numbers. Inevitably there is uncertainty and confusion, as no one ever really knows how many people actually live there, or how many shacks there are. This dearth of knowledge, the Federation points out, plays into the hands of those seeking to evict them, as the absence of data equates an absence of legitimacy. This is contrasted with other places which possess this kind of information and who have been able to capitalise upon the power that this knowledge offers. It is explained that possessing such data is very useful to those that have it, for the data confers legitimacy and becomes the basis for contention. It is then suggested that community residents together with Federation members embark on a simple exercise to take pieces of chalk and begin to number the doors of houses, as the South African Homeless Peoples Federation observes:

> "The strategy is simple. Women who have mastered the training process work with men and women from other settlements who are also eager to learn. This is all done in an atmosphere of excitement, festivity and camaraderie, which help to create a good learning environment. After an initial evening of socializing, the community volunteers plan the exercise. First groups are formed and each is allocated an area in the settlement. Through the first day, each team goes over their assigned area at least four times, doing different tasks each time. In this way they become completely familiar with the physical layout and the population profile of their area." (SAHPF 1998)

It is clear from the repetition of area covered and the festive atmosphere that it not just about the tasks, but also about the social process involved in doing them. This participatory activity evolved to push the local community immediately to the front of the process. Since the domestic structures of slums are generally chaotic, with little if any clear-cut demarcation as to where one house or plot ends and the next one begins, local knowledge is the vital foundation to the survey. The community itself is best positioned to establish criteria for the numbering of the houses in their neighbourhood, SAHPF continues:

> "What happens on the first day is that the energy of local residents and residents from other areas creates the conditions for taking entire settlements through an educational process

> through which they can talk about their own areas, their structures and their layouts in a collective way." (SAHPF 1998)

Hut counting obliges the lumpen communities to shift from a passive, subaltern condition, to an active primary one. In the doing of it, the community begins to realise that its everyday knowledge is useful, that its members are the experts within their specific milieu. This self-valorisation is the key to advancing their collective agency.

The exercise also establishes the terms of the relationship between the Federation and the settlement. The settlement is the source and possessor of the information, while the Federation provides the peer-training methodology on how to capture and deploy this data. This binary links the settlement to the broader Federation and exchanges begin between them, melding them ever closer, as the SAHPF observes:

> "Each settlement in need of such community driven enumeration automatically becomes a training and learning ground for a number of other areas. Collectives of men and women belonging to housing Savings schemes from many areas gather together and participate in this process." (SAHPF 1998)

The community thus "owns" itself and the Federation.

Where the situation allows, the Federation also points out that participation by local government at some stage in the process is useful for the community and uses its influence to triangulate the conversation, as Peoples Dialogue notes:

> "The second day (usually) begins with a public event to which dignitaries are invited in order to demonstrate a commitment to partnership and to draw officials and politicians into the process." (Peoples Dialogue 1996)

Again, the engagement around a "formal" exercise like a census is used to facilitate dialogue between the community and the local authorities which otherwise might not be possible. The survey gives them a "neutral" platform to converse. It also reveals to the community that the authorities know less about their settlement than they do, and that the information that they already possess gives them a modicum of power in the ensuing dialogue. The community begins

to see itself in a new light in respect to authority, building the social realisation for their active autonomy. In addition, the survey lays the foundation for households to engage authorities in the identification of disputes and the future redress of grievances concerning property rights and entitlements. It exposes the contradictions of their existence and opens up conversation between the settlement, the social movement and local authority. It initiates the key change from passive object to active subject.

- **Rough Mapping.**

The next step is the rough mapping of the settlement. This deepens the link between the external Federation enumerators and the active members of the community in a collective exercise of grassroots knowledge sharing: embedded cartography. This translates the complex multi-dimensionality of the settlement into a flat, two-dimensional representation, allowing the data generated to be used later as a basis for the more precisely measured diagrams. The SAHPF notes:

> "Members of the team draw detailed maps of the streets in which they walk – demarcating every structure (shack, spaza shop, formal house, toilets, churches, public amenities)." (SAHPF 1998)

Rough mapping helps communities to graphically understand what surveys represent, acting as a generative pedagogical device that makes the community reflect on diagrammatic representations of their own community. This is a process of double consciousness, one of which is visio-spatial, the other objective self-awareness.

During the mapping exercise, a community profile is constructed therefore reflecting on community needs beyond these provisions. This involves the identification of all toilets, water-sources (wells, taps etc), facilities (schools, crèches, clinics), services (electricity, sewerage, roads), and amenities. Note is also taken as to how households get goods and services, where they shop, what transportation systems they use and so on. The exercise creates an important non-verbal understanding of the settlement, allowing the community to get a

topographical perspective on themselves. The architectural discourse seems to provide a certain objectivity that allows them to be able to strategically distance themselves from their emotively embedded comprehensions of their spatiality, initiating thereby the beginnings of the critical consciousness necessary for effective agency.

- **Numbering.**

The third step is to match house numbers with the map and even to redo the chalk numbers on each dwelling in more permanent paint. This shift from easily erasable numbering to fixed and permanent numbering is explained as symbolising the deepening self-knowledge of the settlement and the strengthening links to the Federation, as Peoples Dialogue observe:

> "The next morning the teams re-convene to start the measuring, numbering and surveying exercises. The teams go back to the area they covered the previous day. One part of each team measures the area of each shack and notes the material from which it is constructed. They also give the houses numbers that will correspond with the surveys that will be completed by another part of the team." (Peoples Dialogue 1996)

Ensuring accuracy is essential to establish the good faith and credibility in the eyes of the community about itself and to others. Communities are normally encouraged at this point to again invite local authorities, or government and city officials to participate in checking on this process. This tells the local authorities that the community is willing to dialogue, yet also demonstrates their level of cohesion, mobilisation and capacity to act as a unified subject. It becomes a subtle display of their collective power through an exercise of knowledge collection.

- **Cadastral Survey.**

At this point, skilled Federation surveyors called "technicals," step in to demonstrate accurate demarking and measurement of the settlement. This is done both to show the community how ordinary people like themselves can claim discursive power by become technically proficient; using unfamiliar gadgetry and equipment like GPS, computers etc. as well as introducing a neutral and

experienced interlocutor for the type of information that emerges. For as SDI's records show, this is usually the point where socially problematic information surfaces, "when the worms come out of the woodwork" (SAHPF 1998). That this information arises at this point is due to the way the enumeration process forces the contradictions around internal power relations and resource allocation to the fore, as Peoples Dialogue states:

> "As soon as the survey starts community leaders with vested interests in the prevailing situation of inequality (relations of insecure tenure) are quick to step forward in attempts to obstruct or derail the information gathering exercise. In these situations it is natural for community surveyors to tend to walk away or ignore the contradictions, instead of attempting to tackle the situation or to defuse it." (Peoples Dialogue 1996)

This is where the role of the Federation leaders and "technicals" becomes critical. For it is they, as a credible third party, who can deflect and address these issues drawing on the experience they have gained from similar situations. They become the mediating channel that can offer a way forward out of the situation, by having recourse and access to an archive of experience which can be used to demonstrate resolution to the problems. In addition, horizontal exchanges to other slums are often brought into play to show stakeholders how similar issues, antagonisms and contradictions were resolved elsewhere.

- **The Household Survey.**

The purpose and use of household surveys are to measure the extent of poverty and needs in the community. Survey teams are chosen which are made up of local community members, plus experienced Federation enumerators. This combined group work as a team that operates under the coordination of grassroots leaders and Federation advisors (usually including some NGO professionals) who monitor and verify the data as it is collected. The household survey has a standard basic format that is modified to suit the situation in each settlement. The survey gathers information about household size, education levels, occupation, income and access to government grants. The surveys also establish migration histories, savings and investment history and participation in community life. On average, a single enumerator is able to complete about thirty

household surveys every day. The co-ordinators verify the information and create a database by transferring it to spreadsheets. Members trained to do so later capture this data on Federation/ NGO computers. In this way, a permanent and concise archive of information is acquired, allowing check-registers to be prepared for further community verification.

This verification process is crucial since it enables the areas of dispute to begin to be mediated by the community members themselves. The survey reframes community problems in a neutral and simplified way. What often appear to be deep and seemingly irreconcilable conflicts, are reduced to a two-dimensional format This allows a critical distance and objectivity to be attained by the parties involved, as a South African NGO observer notes, "What was obscured by subjective immersion is exposed and defused by objective distance" (SDIa 2004).

It also initiates more sophisticated community learning with respect to conducting quantitative and qualitative surveys, compiling statistics and computer literacy. This demonstrates the lumpenproletariat's appropriation, mastery and demystification of technical knowledge appropriate to the formal world. This construction of intellectual autonomy furthers SDI's project of breaking the alienated, psychological-power the formal world holds over them. In its final form the completed information is usually printed into a booklet that can be used by the communities for their purposes, generally in their negotiations for tenure and resources.

- **Settlement Profile.**

Based on the more accurate information emerging from the survey of houses, the settlement information is refined and up-dated. The various information profiles showing population density and housing numbers, the maps of settlement showing houses, services and amenities, ownership and tenure details, etc. are unified in an ongoing settlement-archive. This provides an overall and living

picture of its many dimensions. A key characteristic is that objective data is balanced by the inclusion of subjective narrative reports by people involved in the process. The mixture of quantitative and qualitative material goes some way to capturing a real sense of the specific community in question. SDI amasses this data in what one NGO observer describes as "an ongoing archaeology of the moment" (Burra in SDIa 2004).

- **Group Formation.**

Wherever communities are willing, households are grouped into units of fifty and another round of data checking is undertaken. This horizontal data exchange becomes part of collection and verification. The units are neighbourhood based, so, much like more familiar street committees they become spatially organised social cadres. In this case however, SDI emphasises that the building of this spatial sociability is specifically centred on women (see below). This is a further step in cementing the formal bonds between settlement members, converting them from an atomised inchoate superimposition of people over space into tightly knit groups attended to the social reproduction of the community. These units are encouraged to form savings-collectives, initiating the primary SDI building block, which places them formally within the Federation. From this stage, the Federation group-work begins in earnest and much of the qualitative information collection and capacity building is done through these cadres. It should be noted that although households are initially grouped together by numbers, SDI feels that each resident has the freedom to move from one group to another. Ultimately, these groups will be sub-units who, (if they are ever relocated) will live next to each other and the things they do together strengthen their natural gravitation toward each other.

- **Women's Participation.**

Special mention needs to be made that women's groups are deliberately encouraged. SDI sees women as the fulcrum around which the settlements revolve and therefore the primary vector for change in communities, the South African Federation notes in this regard:

> "Because the process purposely creates conditions to allow women to take a central role in the proceedings, it unlocks the knowledge and skill women have developed in the creation and management of their homes." (SAHPF 1998)

While not excluding men, the information sharing process of enumeration is encouraged to take place mainly between women. Here the Federation focus on following the contours of daily life capitalises upon and reinforces an obvious tendency in settlements: the agency of women in the slum communities that asserts itself in various ways, particularly in the revelation that women are the inevitable source of knowledge that is produced in the slums. SDI and its allies repeatedly observe that women are the primary medium for the flow and dissemination of information in the milieu of the poor (SDIa 2000-4; SPARC 1996-2000). This makes them accordingly, the logical repository of the knowledge generated by the enumeration process. By paying attention to the area of knowledge control and formalising women as the "holders" (in the sense of Salleh) of this responsibility, the tool of enumeration quietly shifts the play of power from the strongly gendered systems of control located around men (who generally dominate the settlements) to the women. Communities are encouraged to allow women to take the lead. In the course of this process women's savings collectives are formed or strengthened. These savings groups focus on developing skills amongst the women to access municipal and state government services, get involved in house and settlement design and hopefully prevent eviction by supervising and managing the acquisition of tenure or the transition phase of a negotiated resettlement. The intention is the cumulative building on the existing strengths of women by the acquisition of practical knowledge that moves them from the margins to the centre of power in communities. This represents a fundamental repositioning of women in their settlements. The recognition of their expertise and planning ability means that their knowledge becomes specifically gendered and effectively moves them from subaltern status to the holders of the knowledge base and power that goes with that.

- **Outcomes.**

The implications of enumerations as a praxis, can be read in the following commentary on a survey done in Cato Crest in South Africa by the SAHPF in 2002:

> "A people-driven survey generates the following important results: First and foremost, it means that the homeless poor become centrally involved in planning shelter for themselves. By conducting a survey the people of Cato Crest have begun a journey of learning and discovery that will have a visible, multi-dimensional empowering effect. It equips the community with essential knowledge and understanding of its collective material predicament. This understanding can become the basis for a more appropriate planning of the settlement than the many plans that have failed to date. It has also started to draw Cato Crest into a larger network of informal settlements, thereby giving its inhabitants access to national community-level linkages and to an institution in the form of the Federation, which has ever-increasing lobbying capacity at regional, national and international levels. Via this process, the collective needs of the poor men and women of Cato Crest, are being defined by themselves. This self-definition of needs and priorities can become, given a supportive government, the basis for effective mechanisms of housing delivery, predicated upon the central and informed participation of the people themselves (SAHPF 2002)

This quote reveals how enumeration initiates a fundamental change in the agency of the slums it takes place in. Through enumeration, shack/slumdwellers particularly women, gain control and possession of the informational "capital" about themselves. Enumeration appears to deliberately construct collective social power through the vehicle of knowledge, to facilitate the production of transformative knowledge through collective action. The praxis catalyses key shifts from verbalism to activism and from distance to involvement. It is essentially a process of category construction that aggregates, collectivises and operationalises everyday knowledge and experience.

SDI's enumeration achieves what the state and the formal world cannot: survey the slums. This initiates a process of valorisation of the class knowledge of the slums. It makes it clear that the lumpen are the only qualified experts on poverty and the spaces and places that they inhabit. Enumerations begin to acknowledge and develop this class-knowledge, transforming the latent and dismissed

knowledge of slums into a source of power. The poor become the sole repository of this archive. By holding and possessing this knowledge slums extend their autonomy, adopting what is usually the state function of archivist.

Enumeration's capacity to tap into and engage for agency the information of the lumpenproletariat's own social geography echoes Torraine's observation that the praxis of applied sociology needs to be based upon an:

> "image of a society working upon itself and building up its practices on the basis of its own historicity and its class conflicts." (Torraine 1978: pp141-142)

The connection between self-analysis and intervention is key to the praxis. The process disentangles the multitude of conflicting individual subjectivities in the settlement and refocuses them upon the community as a whole. The self-naming of its parts by the community leads to its increased collective subjectivity. By participating in the research intervention of enumeration the grassroots actors as a community begin to adopt a critical objectivity to their situation. This realisation of historicity allows them the distance to better direct their own actions, to act strategically. The acquisition of self-knowledge appears to catalyse a deep politics that as Torraine pointed out, is the action of a sociology that is itself the sociology of action (Torraine 1978).

Historically it has been a general case that the dominant hegemony commands knowledge as a tool of control if not overt repression. In part SDI seeks through enumeration to access, comprehend, and utilise the discourse of the world it is excluded from, that is, the informational society of the North, in order to challenge it. SDI in this sense makes use of a primary weapon of its oppressors in order to challenge and manipulate them. Enumeration can be described as an attempt by the lumpenproletariat to acquire the tools and discourse of their oppression and turn them against their oppressors (Scott 1998, Robins 2003).

- **The Power of Knowledge.**

The entire enumeration process is predicated upon the realisation of the power of knowledge, in particular the way systems and archives of knowledge underpin modern constructions of autonomy, identity and rule. As mentioned above, whether consciously or unconsciously, the shack/slumdwellers pick up on one of the foundations of modern authority, as academic Appadurai notes:

> "As we now know, censuses and various other forms of enumeration were applied to populations by modern states throughout the world after the seventeenth century, so that it has been observed (particularly by Michel Foucault) that the modern state and the very idea of a countable population were co-productions, tied up with specifically modern ideas of governance, territory and citizenship." (Appadurai 2001)

Although census's and surveys are in fact much older, and Foucault's point was not the exact temporal overlap of surveys and the modern episteme, Appadurai's argument is that the hegemonic acquisition of systemic categorisation as an implement of rule has been most consistently applied during the modern period. In other words, censuses are a central technique of the authority-control logic lying at the heart of current governance. Tied up by their initial proliferation with the rise of the modern state, classification, surveillance and censuses remain at the core of every modern state archive. These are politically charged processes whose procedures are always authority driven, the results of which are usually only available in a highly formalised package, comprehensible to only the literate. A core goal of governance is thus to produce a perception of the state as an omnipotent pan-opticon: ever watchful, all knowing and all-seeing. It is SDI's realisation of this as a fallacy (that in reality the state is ignorant of the slums) that they seek to build their own counter-logic of power to fill this void. The cyclopean failure of the state in this respect gives SDI the opportunity to appropriate the hegemonic discourse of survey and census and give it a new validity as an "archive from below". Adopting this methodology provides the key to their counter-hegemony. The following argument by the NGO, Peoples Dialogue's (quoted at length) fully captures their logic as well as demonstrates the commons of knowledge that SDI subscribe to:

"Against this backdrop, and *without any conscious theory of governmentality or opposition to it*, the Alliance of People's Dialogue and the Homeless People's Federation has adopted a conscious strategy of self-enumeration and self-surveying, by teaching its members a variety of ways of gathering reliable and complete data about households and families in their own communities. They have codified these techniques into a series of practical tips for their members and have thus created a revolutionary system that we may call *govern-mentality* from below. Not only have they placed self-surveys at the heart of their own archives, the Alliance is deeply aware of the radical power that this kind of knowledge (and ability) gives them in their dealings with local and central State organizations and also with multilateral agencies and other regulatory bodies. This kind of knowledge is a central part of the political capability of the Alliance and is a critical lever for their dealings with formal authorities. The reasons for this special leverage are of particular relevance to places like Katlehong, where a host of local, provincial and national entities exist with a mandate to provide tenure security and enable the delivery of decent housing. But none of them know *exactly* who the slum-dwellers are, where they live or how they are to be identified. This is a fact of central relevance to the entire politics of knowledge in which the Alliance is engaged. All state-sponsored land and housing policies have an abstract population of informal settlement dwellers as their target and no knowledge of its concrete, human components. Since these populations are by definition socially, legally and spatially marginal, (invisible citizens as it were), they are by definition uncounted and uncountable except in the most general terms. By rendering them statistically visible to themselves, the Alliance controls a central piece of any actual policy process, which is the knowledge of exactly who lives where, how they make their livelihood, how long they have lived there and so forth. At the same time, the creation and use of self-surveys is a powerful tool for internal democratic practice, since the major mode of evidence used by the Alliance for claims to actual space needs by slum-dwellers is the testimony of neighbours, rather than other forms of documentation such as rent-receipts, and other civic insignia of occupancy that can be used by the more securely housed classes in the city. The very absence of these amenities opens the door to radical techniques of mutual identification in the matter of location and legitimacy for shack-dwellers. For, as Alliance leaders are the first to admit, the poor are not exempt from greed, conflict and jealousy and there are always families who are prepared to lie or cheat to advance themselves in the context of crisis or new opportunities. Such problems are resolved by informal mechanisms in which the testimony of neighbours is utterly decisive since the social life of informal settlements is in fact characterized by almost complete lack of privacy. Here social visibility to each other (*and invisibility in the eyes of the state*) become mutual strengths in deepening mechanisms of self-monitoring, self-enumerating, and self-regulation in the crucial link between family, land and dwelling which is the central negotiable material good in urban life." (Peoples Dialogue 2002)

Reading this is somewhat like unpacking an epistemic Russian doll. Inside lies an entire archaeology of sub-texts. The fact that enumeration's census and survey is a spontaneous strategy of the slum community itself, suggests the action of a community acting for-itself. As the subjective agent in this case is the lumpenproletariat, the observation runs entirely at odds with Marx's dismissal of the class. This conscious activity has furthermore been codified so as to create en masse what SDI call a *"govern-mentality"* from below. The emphasis on "mentality" captures the key aspect of enumeration as praxis: it is activity that creates critical consciousness for autonomous self-governance. This "mentality" recognises the power that quantifiable, verifiable and empirical knowledge of the unknown, unmeasured slums gives them as the surveyor-possessors of this knowledge in relation to the adversarial, external formal world. In capturing this data, the lumpen cease for a moment being the subaltern and become the expert, the authority on the subject of slums holding the information key to any policy process involving their terrain.

At the same time, enumeration is praxis to building deep internal democracy in the slums, which bolsters its constitution of an authentic and autonomous counter-hegemony. Underpinning the constitution of this democracy from below is the fact that it relies not on individualised self-identification, but on a process of community recognition, a culture of mutual identification. To be recognised by others creates social visibility, constituting social value and mutual significance. This understanding of what constitutes identity not only breaks the anomie of urban involution and makes the invisible visible, it is also a profound challenge to dominant narratives of individualism and its corollary of individualised self interest.

It is clear that SDI, in response to a deep critical reconnaissance of the logic of power has evolved praxis to invert these central tools of authority and to capture the possibilities held by them. In so doing, SDI extends beyond the limits of Foucault's vision to implement Freire-like generative themes that incrementally

teach a political literacy: building objective knowledge of their political weight in numbers. SDI's focus is upon the key tension between power and counter-power, and the important use of knowledge as a social mirror to forge collective identity. Enumeration praxis is a conscious and deliberate act of appropriation of statistical methods to create a tool for their use as counter-power discourse. In the deep practice of this appropriation it is constitutive praxis to subjectivity, creating a community based not only in-itself but on the realisation of itself, for-itself.

2. "House-modelling" (slum architecture and design).

- **Challenging the Architecture of Class**

"When I asked the technician (from Dakar) to show us how layout plans are designed, he used such sophisticated jargon that I barely understood a word he said. However, when we were in Protea South (South Africa) during our last evening, we asked one of the women to draw us a plan. When she explained house-modelling, I understood perfectly and felt that I too could do it." (Aminata Mbaye, Senegalese Savings and Loan Network in Patel et al 2000.)

Architecture and design of the formal world, like many professional skills is a class expression, a codified discourse that protects its class interests and reinforces the exclusion of the poor. This exclusive semiotics extends beyond being just a defensive class parole for it is intimately tied to hegemony's legislative discourse that prohibits the lumpenproletariat the autonomy to transform their slums. This compels the underclass to be dependent upon professionals and experts from outside their class to act as the interlocutors of their upliftment on their behalf. SDI responds to this paternalistic oppression by challenging the very way architectural design and representation is codified and practiced. Their solution to this alienating discourse, like all SDI praxiology emerges from the practice of daily life, as slumdweller Jockin Apurtham recalls:

"Ya, I think when we found this was... because people never knew what is the size they are living in: people in South Africa used to talk about 80 metres, 200 metres, 300 metres but they didn't really know what is a metre mean... You ask anybody - You go to Thailand and you say you want 500 metres. You go to Philippines you say you want 3000 metres. you ask them

> to measure it. The whole utensils they are holding in their house will not even suit one corner of this 300 metres! Then they realise, "ah this is not right!" Like Bombay pavement dwellers they are all uneducated, illiterate. They don't know anything. Therefore they don't know what is a measurement. But in Bombay they found out something! They took a sari, you know Indian women wear a 5 yard sari? They put it the length of the sari and turned into 3 times the width of the sari. And when the women are able to use the sari to see the size, then they realise exactly what the square metre means! That became the size of the house today... it was a means of *making an abstract word real*. Into reality. And it came from people who don't know! Then when the exchanges came to India they were able to see what a metre means. First time in their lives they realised what does a metre mean. Its very important to understand - that's why we use this "mass media" of house-modelling: the mass is doing housing for masses, using their own ideas and metaphors of design. Before, the mass were kept out, it was only Indian professional practitioners were doing it. But now the eye-opener has come! When the poor can map, measure and model, they can tell everybody: "what you are using today, you are demanding tomorrow! " (SDIa 2003)

SDI seeks to effectively deconstruct the exclusive semiotics of architectural design and refashion it in a heuristic way to match the milieu of its application (and at the same time giving new meaning to mass media). SDI's attempt to redefine this epistemology draws from and reflects the shack/slumdweller's spontaneous understanding of shack building knowledge. By tying what they already know to the strange language of formal architecture they go quite some way to democratise hegemony's oppressive knowledge. Through this synthesis of discourse the slumdwellers formulate a tool of their empowerment.

- **Hope as an Imaginary Home**

House modelling begins either during the enumeration of a settlement or an exchange visit set up for this purpose. Each of these organised practices complement each other and are dovetailed to this effect. In the case of an enumeration while the survey information is being compiled, Federation specialists, the "technicals", begin to work with sections of the community to begin house and settlement modelling. Because of the preceding enumeration and mapping exercises, everyone has already a detailed understanding of the settlement. Using this information, they begin to interrogate the community as to

their desires and ideas for a home. Similarly, in an exchange, the imagined "home" is questioned, as Peoples Dialogue notes:

> "House-modelling exercise begins with a dream. People who are driven to change their lives must take their dreams for reality since all they have is their dreams. Members of the community that is host to the training program are encouraged by the "training team" to imagine the house they would like to live in, and to put that dream to paper. This expression of desire is the starting point of a sustained system of concrete learning." (Peoples Dialogue 1994)

By modelling the house of their dreams the poor begin to visualise possibilities not just of a home but also of a different possible life. These first crystallisations of hope are deep but often unclear. In the steps that follow, the participants themselves realign their aspirations, through a process of criticism and exploration, as Peoples Dialogue states:

> "Invariably these dreams are extravagant. The houses of People's imaginings are usually too elaborate and costly for their meagre earnings or resources. So the people come together to explain the homes they have imagined, to give details about the structure. This group dialogue is crucial to the process. It brings people together and gives them the chance to adjust their dreams in response to insights and practicalities. This exercise is repeated and elaborated over and over again in different ways." (Peoples Dialogue 1994)

House modelling appears to be a spontaneous generative theme that parallels Freireian praxis (see below) to overcome the "oppressor consciousness" of architectural semiotics and move toward critical conscientisation containing hope. The praxis leads disaffected lumpen communities toward pragmatic aspirations based upon autonomous collective transformation of their domestic conditions. In this sense it can be described as praxis of objective hope.

- **Spontaneous Freire**

The house modelling exercise takes the group or settlement on a collective learning experience punctuated by different house modelling activities. Each practical step of the house modelling is followed by reflections and evaluations between the different groups involved in the process. When compiling observations by SPARC, Peoples Dialogue and ACHR, house modelling generally adheres to the following steps:

1. Individual members of the settlement draw their dream house. People come together to discuss and analyse the drawing.
2. Settlement members form groups to make "toy"-scale model houses from cardboard, paper, string, wood etc, based on the discussion.
3. The community come together to reflect and discuss the toy models (often repeatedly).
4. A house-modelling competition is held in the settlement.
5. The community get together to choose the most appropriate model(s).
6. The chosen design(s) are built accurately to scale.
7. The community discuss these results and modify accordingly.
8. Groups are tasked to cost the building materials for their house.
9. In the light of these costs, the community reflects on the affordability of the design. The model is refined to suit the community's financial means.
10. It is decided to hold a house-exhibition. A *life size model house* is built in the settlement, using cloth, paper, wood and metal sheeting.
11. A spectacle is created, a formal event where guests from other communities and Federations as well as local authorities are invited to an "official opening" of the house-model to see what it looks like. (SPARC 2000; Peoples Dialogue 1999. ACHR 2000; SDla 2003)

House modelling begins as "play", kindling a sense of hope in the community that through a process of increasing reflection finally ends up as a public event with a political agenda. This praxis of cultural action rooted in social pedagogy calls to mind once more the generative exercises of Paulo Freire. It builds up the size of the model in accord with the community's rising objectivity, until hope and material possibility meet at 1:1 scale.

The use of scale tied directly to community perceptions and comprehension is further significant, as it challenges the standard exclusive, class-based formulations of architecture. Jockin Apurtham, made the following observation in an interview in 2003:

> "Because it's the intellectual, the educated, it's the architect, it's the planner, who can look at the map (plan). How do you expect the community to understand what a map is meaning? In just four lines, ten lines, sixteen lines! People cannot be understanding what is the meaning of a metre. So, you have to have a life-size house for people to go and see and all. For people

> must go and dance and sit and sleep and cook and talk and walk around it; to find out if you need it." (SDIa 2003)

Beginning as an imaginary exercise, then as a toy, the house model is constantly under reflection, analysis and criticism that finally becomes a public exhibition of a model house built by the settlement and Federation "technicals". Using brightly coloured material in a life-size facsimile of the real thing, a house model is a heuristic device as Joel Bolnick of SDI, observes:

> "It's a didactic tool rather than a delivery tool. (It is a delivery tool as well, of course.) But first and foremost it's a heuristic house! For after the settlement has come together, after they have enumeration, they have to think; what do they want? Then they must dream their house. Where is your bed? Where is your kitchen? Where is your toilet? Who sleeps where? Where will the kids sleep? What kind of area? What can you afford? So they dream a house, and put up a housing exhibition." (SDIa 2003)

This creation of a populist spectacle around community knowledge might be described as a political pedagogy of applied wish-fulfilment. Certainly there is a deliberate shift from play by means of toy modelling through to increasingly more concrete applied knowledge. There is an incremental scaling up of the expression of ideas from the abstract and imaginary to life size facsimile homes. This shift from an intangible dream home to an exact facsimile of a real house, instils in the community the realisation that the impossible can be become possible.

House modelling challenges the way in which slumdwellers think about the built environment and their living space. Through it they comprehend the interplay between what is not given and that, which is created. In this sense, house modelling is praxis of creativity. It initiates a shift in thinking from a passive determined existence to contemplating a range of possibilities of their own making. From waiting fatalistically for an external actor to provide a solution to their problems they become agents of their own transformation. House modelling becomes the architecture of agency.

Because the process deliberately creates conditions for women to take the lead, it specifically challenges the gendered way in which power is convened in the slums and shacklands. House modelling praxis unlocks the knowledge and skills that women have already: the everyday, unacknowledged knowledge they developed in creating homes and in managing domestic life in the settlements. House modelling takes the key aspect of social reproduction, the home and makes it the praxis for transforming social relations in the slums. Yet house modelling appears to work to liberate and valorise women while not excluding men. To achieve this balance, the collective agenda is emphasised: the foregrounding and valorisation of women's knowledge is carefully framed in collective action to avoid creating a new feminised oppressive structure. House modelling as praxis of the home valorises feminine knowledge but also includes the whole household and neighbourhood too.

- **Collectivity through Collective Learning**

House modelling takes the fundamentals of architecture from a position of exclusion through to a theatrical and political performance of collective design that publicly displays the conversion of the imagined into visual and tangible reality. Group dialogue is critical to the house-modelling exercise. The modelling exercise seems to facilitate community cohesion by constantly bringing people in the settlement or savings scheme together, helping them develop practical insights regarding organising, planning, building technologies, materials, regulations, land ownership etc. In this way it involves everybody in a hands-on acquisition of shared knowledge. Throughout the process the community talks about what they have learnt. It is a process of action and reflection leading to new action in an evolving praxis that builds collectivity as much as it builds knowledge. The imagined and constructed representations of the settlement recapitulate the ideas that the community formulate, creating the conditions for the whole settlement to talk about their area, their structures and their layouts collectively. Moving between abstract aspirations to practical possibility parallels

the interplay between individual self-interest and the transformative potential of the collective.

- **Politics of the Spectacle**

By making the house model a public exhibition, an event that is the focus of various public media, attended by an audience of dignitaries, slumdwellers, state officials, and NGO representatives, the poor demonstrate their competences and creativity in public. SDI uses the politics of the spectacle to move the marginalised slum community from the periphery to the centre, to enter, as Appadurai notes:

> " (the) space of public sociability, official recognition and technical legitimation...with their own creativity as the main exhibit. Thus technical and cultural capital are co-created in these events, creating new levers for further guerrilla exercises in capturing civic space and pieces of the public space hitherto denied to them. This is a particular politics of visibility which inverts the harm of the default condition of civic invisibility which characterise the urban poor." (Appadurai 2000: p14)

While the idea of reducing the process to "technical and cultural capital" might not sit comfortably with the spirit of guerrilla exercises, Appadurai's recognition of the insurrectionary possibility of these exhibitions is valid: house modelling is a subversion of the class-based knowledge culture of the formal world. These exhibitions provide an opportunity for a united front of Southern lumpenproletariat to make its presence felt through public media. House modelling is an attempt to draw attention to the slums through bold public demonstrations of designs drawn from the logic of the poorest of the poor, and thereby to make the invisible poor visible. This politics of visibility attempts to bring recognition to bear upon the slums and in part legitimate their autonomous and alternative discourse. House modelling is a spectacle declaring the line of conflict to be drawn through the homes of the poor. The model house made of brightly coloured fabric and standing proud amidst a festival of singing and dancing shack/slumdwellers from around the globe carries the flag in the battle for lumpen social reproduction.

3. "House building" (lumpen-construction and engineering)

"We build houses in order to build people." (Shack/slumdweller slogan in SDIa. 2003).

- **Slums as the Solution**

The beginning point for SDI is the acknowledgement that poor people living in shack settlements are and will continue to be the major producers of houses in the South. In the globalised South, squatter camps, slums and shantytowns represent a real solution to the housing crisis experienced by the poorest of the poor. Contrary to the vision of civil society, the houses and structures constructed out of the detritus of urban waste and surplus are the logical answer to the need for shelter without tenure. Reflecting on this, Joel Bolnick of SDI had the following to say:

> "What we used to say around housing is; *shacks are not a problem, they are the solution to a problem.* The State and the market create the problem. They don't provide access to land, services and housing to a significant set of their city's population. Shacks are poor People's solution to this problem. Shacks are a solution, but a grossly inadequate solution to this problem. They're a solution to the problem that provides people with shelter but in a way that doesn't help them in a significant way, or to move out of the implied problems related to inadequate shelter that come with poverty. Because they have to deal with a whole lot of other elements, like lack of the security of tenure, the potential for evictions, they have to deal with health problems, they have to deal with lack of proper sanitation. But its better than what the State or the markets assumption is, which is that there should be no shacks at all, and that the poor must just disappear. This is the nexus, and the heart of what causes evictions, because the State feels that there must be no informal houses, but they don't have the capacity to provide formal houses. So what do they expect should happen to those who can't afford to buy a formal house? They basically wish them away. That's why they have the argument; that the poor should go back to the rural areas." (SDIa 2003)

This cuts to the core of current structural contradictions. SDI itself is a grassroots response to this conflict. As described in Chapter One, the lumpenproletariat can no longer be wished away. The structural forces of current production make them a permanent and expanding feature of urban reality that ii increasingly providing the crucial resource of cheap labour. As such they cannot be dismissed. In their challenge to the systemic lack of provision of housing, SDI tackles the

fundamental contradiction between land and labour in the South within the current globalised market economy. This is aptly pointed out by an Indian shackdweller:

> "you want us to work for you in the city, but you don't allow us to live there! Where else can we live but on the pavements and squattercamps?" (SDIa 2003)

As a result the issue of domestic construction by the poor becomes key to the entire conflict between the forces of production and lumpen reproduction. Slums exist as marginal to the productive modality and as noted repeatedly, the lumpenproletariat has been historically dismissed for being unproductive elements in society, parasitic on the system. This exclusion compounds their poverty. Legitimate domestic construction by slumdwellers brings them back into the productive loop, engaging them in productive labour, building their skills and allowing them to move inward from the margins. This autonomous development also implies shifting the flows of capital attached to the building sector of industrial society in the unlikely direction of toward the poor, thus allowing capital to circulate in the locales of the poor rather than being siphoned off into hands of the "haves".

- **House Building: Reconstructing the Common Knowledge of Construction**

SDI's alternative vision of building offers a significant critique of the very way knowledge about housing is produced and circulated. SDI is consistently conscious of the fact that the South continues to suffer from an acute Northern bias in its approach to knowledge and skills. What one South African shackdweller calls a "comprador discourse" (SDIa 2003) is nothing more than the class relations of industrial modernity transposed and reified in the South, where it is reinforced by an obsession with professionalism. This is in turn strengthened by the teaching methodologies of elitist tertiary institutions modelled on a European fashion or left-over from the colonial days and never de-constructed. As a result policy makers, planners and development experts have an understanding of the sociology and economics of poor communities which has

more to do with their own class thinking than it has to do with the reality on the ground. This makes them in SDI's perception, inappropriate teachers of poor communities. For SDI's Federations this is a serious problem because communities tend to adopt these disempowering misconceptions and believe that only professionals can train, design, plan, and build houses. Consequently, poor people become inclined to abdicate from contributing in a significant way to the changes that are needed for the construction of their homes and overall settlement improvement. This deskilling of their capacity to create their own shelter further impoverishes the poor. Instead professionals are given license to make major shelter related interventions, not seeking to know what the people want, but rather finding entry points into communities so that their externally devised development targets can be met as efficiently and profitably as possible (Peoples Dialogue 2002).

This is unacceptable to SDI's Federations for whom the communities themselves are best equipped to awaken fellow shack-dwellers by means of knowledge transfer and action. Through its transnational and local community-based house building and shelter training programs, SDI is committed to reversing the social norms around housing construction in its constituencies. The point of these programs SDI claims is not to train poor people in new skills but rather awaken their latent capacities and skills for building secure and "decent" homes in accord with the community's values. In most cases it is women who respond to and are inspired by the Federation's community-based shelter training programs. This has led to an important insight that Federations capitalise on, which is the central role of women in creating the social and material milieu of communities in crisis. As result through the praxis of house and shelter building, this unacknowledged role of women is fore-grounded and they move from the fringes to play the central role of planners and designers in the house building process. According to Peoples Dialogue:

> "Much more than the men, women are driven to want to live in better conditions, to construct homes with better materials, to create basic amenities such as toilets and water, to get safe places for their children to play."(Peoples Dialogue 2002)

This pro-women bias informs the entire SDI methodology about the construction of houses (SPARC 1999; SDIa 2000; Peoples Dialogue 1999, 2002).

- **Building Houses: Building Slumdweller Agency**

The agenda underpinning SDI's vanguard praxis of house building is legitimising the poor's claim on the "city", to teach in situ how poor people not only survive in cities but how, more than any other class, they give cities their shape and their definition. SDI is directed toward ensuring that this capacity is recognised, valorised and utilised within broader, systemic developmental agendas. At the same time it is informed by a radical agenda, which seeks through realigning the relations of production in the favour of the poor to challenge Northern narratives on democracy and participation, as SDI's Joel Bolnick states:

> "We must make a distinction between mechanisms of learning and mechanisms of delivery. We are more interested in mechanisms of learning (and bringing) communities closer to participatory, democratic, accountable systems of governance." (SDIa 2000)

Bolnick's distinction makes it clear that SDI views its praxiology primarily as a means to a social end. The creation of generic horizontal relations and networks that encourage the poor to build their own domains in the face of the market's (hegemony) demands creates the possibility of a new social framework. By locating the building process within the milieu of the poor, and ordering the knowledge base around this mode of production in a horizontal, non-hierarchical and transnational form, SDI has evolved a praxis of housing production embedded in the conditions of social reproduction of the lumpenproletariat that reconfigures social relations in a deeper democratic form so that the poorest of the poor become a transformatory force from below. In this sense, building houses is a means to lumpen collective agency.

4. Sanitation – The Praxis of Poop (communal toilet blocks).

> *"If you want to mobilise people, go to the public toilets."* (Slumdweller Jockin Apurtham, President of the NSDF and SDI)

- **Politics of Shit**

The politics of consumption in the current era generally conceals the economics of waste. This is particularly so in respect to human excretion. The ideological core of prevailing "civil" society is defined by a coded etiquette that turns its gaze away from the excretory functions of humanity. In its place, it posits a fetishlike conception of hygiene that reinforces the divorce between the productive logic of consumption and its corollary of waste. The emphasis on the oral, clean, scented and beautiful distracts the focus from the sordid truth of our biology as living organisms: the need to shit.

This peculiar false consciousness is experienced as a class expression, whereby the "haves" exist in an artificially created utopia where waste, death and excreta are divorced from everyday life by an elaborate system of collection, containment and plumbing which removes the evidence of their biology in a strange fulfilment of Nietschean ubermenscheid. On the other side of the class barrier, the "have-nots" live in a dystopia built on and from the refuse and waste of the haves. Here they eke out an existence characterised more by survival than anything else due to their distance from the possibilities of consumption. In this latter realm an uncivil purgatory prevails, where there is no escape from shit. One might say that contra the terrain of middle class consumer fetishism and the reified cleanliness which surround the haves, the poor are dumped by their position in the very opposite, a terrain of excreta.

While the material existence of the lumpen is unavoidably located at the waste-end of society, their idea-scape is as unavoidably, constructed by the dominant hegemony of cleanliness and the coda of hygiene. In this ubiquitous landscape of bio-cultural contradiction, according to the scatologically intrigued academic Appadurai, one finds that:

> "Human waste management... is perhaps the key arena where every problem of the urban poor arrives at a single point of extrusion, so to speak." (Appadurai 2000: p15)

Congested to the exclusion of privacy, heavily polluted, and poorly ventilated, whilst often without sewage disposal, clean water or basic services, the living space of the poor is the antithesis of civility. For this reason, it is the logical entry point for the "bottom-up" approach of SDI and its Federations in what they call the politics of shit (SDIa 2004).

- **Diversity in practice, Collectivity in Praxis**

Blatantly confronting this state of affairs, SDI makes use of a provocative but necessary tool known as "toilet festivals". Characteristically, these invert the privation and loss of dignity, turning them into an insurrectionary instrument: the "formal" opening of SDI-built toilet-blocks in a public spectacle of co-operative triumph over squalor through innovative technology produced in the slums themselves. These events are once again, loud, festively "in-your-face" occasions, often with music, dance and humorous speeches that deliberately engage representatives of the formal world; the media, public officials, NGO's and other civil society members in a carnival-like dialogue around this taboo subject. These toilet festivals are the celebration and exhibition of real, functioning public toilets, made by and for the local poor community.

Their usefulness has seen their rapid deployment around the South in a marriage of practicality and the capacity to mobilise. In Mumbai alone, the Indian Federation built over 240 toilet blocks in two years. These are of every possible type; water-borne sewers, pit latrines, buckets, septic tanks, bio-recyclable, truck pumped. There is no fixed method and in each spatial circumstance the local committees create the appropriate waste technology for the specific location. Furthermore, in every case the construction details are uniquely tailored. There are multiple forms of construction capacity: individual contractors, team-built projects, externally aided or exclusively Federation built. According to Jockin Apurtham:

> "The five most important things about toilet building are; number one, location. Number two, building community. Three, design. Fourthly, the construction model. And fifth, toilet maintenance!" (SDIa 2004)

The toilets are in a multitude of different areas. In all, poverty prevails, yet each has a unique quality, fusing the inimitable qualities of its inhabitants, their diet and terrain. Most are in deeply congested locations. Before the building of the Federation toilet blocks in Mumbai, one toilet would service nearly 1000 people. The joke at the time was that at an average of ten minutes per person, if you waited in line to use the toilet you would have to wait for a week to get in! Which meant that being poor also meant you could not afford to get diarrhoea.

Each toilet collective has it's own management arrangement and constitution. The toilet-blocks are clean and hospitable ablution facilities, providing islands of "civility" and hygiene in a sea of filth and urban squalor. Well maintained by either a resident manager, or a committee, they provide toilets, clean water, bathing, laundry and importantly a community meeting room. They often have childcare facilities, and some even go as far as to provide the luxury of TV's in common areas. Many have large, bright and cheerful loos for children, often designed by children themselves. Reflecting their needs, the commodes are built on a smaller scale to accommodate their size, the rooms are well lit and ventilated, and significantly, are collectively open to prohibit molestation. Toilet-blocks are often run like Northern health-gym clubs, with a caucus of toilet-collective members, each with a photo-id card, who contribute over and above an initial joining fee, a small monthly sum to belong. It needs to be borne in mind that due to the lack of infrastructure, the poor, for instance often pay up to ten times the amounts that others pay for potable water. Thus, these fees sometimes paid for through a micro-loan from their saving scheme, actually amount to a considerable saving on what they, as the poor would have had to pay for water before the facility.

The construction and maintenance of these facilities are a demonstration of the poor's ability through their collectivity, to transcend the limitations of their realm and display their competence and innovation. In turning their humiliation and deprivation around and into a concrete example of skill and expertise, they muster a dignity, which confronts the inherent hypocrisy of bourgeois politeness.

In an important sense, toilet-blocks become "town halls" for slumdwellers. Unlike the civic monuments to authority, these uncivil civic spaces begin as pragmatic responses to dire need and serve to enhance the quality of the community's social reproduction.

- **Poop Praxis**

This tool has been called "poop-praxis" (SDIa 2003) and appropriately so. By examining the contours of poverty closely the shack/slumdwellers have identified a key area of crisis and seized upon it as an opportunity rather than as an obstacle. Through this pragmatism, they have created a remarkable tool for challenging a fundamental element of the class process, reconfiguring the oppressive and humiliating status quo not only for their advantage and benefit, but also for the purpose of building a politics of lumpen citizenship. Drawing from Charles Taylor's politics of recognition from below (Taylor 1992), Appadurai notes that:

> "When a World Bank official has to examine the virtues of a public toilet and discuss the merits of this form of shit-management with the shitters themselves, the materiality of poverty turns from abjectivity to subjectivity. The politics of shit (as Gandhi showed in his own efforts to liberate Indian untouchables from the task of carrying away the shit of their upper-caste superiors) is a meeting point of the human body, dignity and technology, which the poor are now redefining with the help of movements like the SDI Alliance. In India, where distance from your own shit is the virtual marker of class distinction, the poor, too long living in their shit, are finding ways to place some distance between their shit and themselves. The toilet exhibitions are a transgressive display of this faecal politics, itself a critical material feature of deep democracy." (Appadurai 2001)

Whatever the specific constitution or construction of the toilet block, the outcome is generally the same; they become sites of collectivity and agency. Thus SDI's communal toilets deepen the participatory democracy of the uncivil society and forge community around that most "civilized" of topics, sanitation. As Erich Maria Remarque noted in *All Quiet on the Western Front*, defecating together returns its "natural innocence" (1996: pp5-6), building openness, collectivity and community, in one word, citizenship. In this case the citizen reflected has what Paulo Freire and Erich Fromm call a "revolutionary social character" (Freire 2000;

Fromm 1970) that can accommodate the truth about being human and hence their existential situation. This social character is appropriate class-consciousness to the lumpenproletariat that live in and off the milieu of waste. Considering the implications of increasing ecological crisis, this social character has much to inform the rest of humanity.

Conclusion

- **Challenging the Master-narrative**

What is obvious from the above examination, is that SDI's set of tools as vanguard praxis emerges from the dialectic between Northern discourse and Southern slums. It evolves in response to this collision of epistemes. These tools, while using the master-narrative in a nominative sense, pluralize, alter and reconfigure the content and practice in terms of the material conditions of the shacklands and slums. In this way much of hegemony's discourse pertaining to citizenship, legitimacy, development etc. are appropriated, refashioned and revitalised by the Southern lumpenproletariat. They become in this transformation exemplary of an alternative, living discourse of modernity and progress. Essentially these tools of praxis seek to promote deep autonomous development embedded in lives of the Southern poor.

While this appropriation is semantically enriching, there is at the same time a sense of deliberateness about SDI's choice of terminology when using the tools, a self-conscious targeting of certain key words and terms from the lexicon of rule. The praxis uses familiar themes from hegemonic discourse: census and survey; architecture; construction and engineering as well as sanitation. Yet it seems that there is profound difference in SDI's agenda. While it is used to construct counter-hegemony from below it is not carried through to reproducing hierarchical state power. In effect it reframes autonomy. Contrary to being used to encode exclusivity and rule, SDI seems to be using these tools to promote a radical alternative that is located not in individualised commodified production but

in the reproduction of collective autonomy. By using familiar terminology for radical outcomes, through simply speaking what seems to be the same language, these agendas of the poor can enter the intellectual and hence material realms of the "haves" (joining and subverting the North's "epistemic community"). In this sense the tools are Trojan horses designed to carry the lumpen agenda beyond their dominated milieu.

It must be borne in mind however, that hidden in this dialogue there is a real dialectical engagement whereby both sides are inevitably altered: civil society ameliorates the uncivil society, which in turn changes civil society. During the long conversation between the shack/slumdwellers and civil society, both are transformed. At the same time as SDI uses this vanguard praxis to penetrate the terrain of its exclusion, it is subject to compromise. In a sense it can be argued that in evolving this praxis of deep Development it unconsciously colludes with hegemony by becoming a form of outsourced government in a market society. This pessimistic view would infer that the positive response that SDI has received from major institutions such as the UN, DFID, CARE, Homeless International, Live Aid, Misereor, CODI and others, as well as a growing number of governments both in the North and South, reflects this buying-off of the restive underclass. Time will reveal the whether counter-hegemony or proxy governance will triumph.

In the short term however, the reproduction of the master narrative is only partial and as has been shown offers a way of turning the weapons of oppressive discourse around and using them against the oppressors. In this respect, SDI's use of these tools, like Foucault's archaeology, is both predicated upon and reveals the interactions between knowledge and power in various social systems. Foucault deferentially recognised his inevitable location within the discourse of hegemony. His response was to attempt to demonstrate that despite the determinism inherent in social systems and the fragmented way change occurs, a "progressive political intervention" was possible (Foucault 1972). SDI tools are

not only consistent with this reasoning, but extend beyond Foucault in the way a multitude of minds in a multitude of concrete livelihood struggles can exceed the intellectual practice of an individual in a singular reality. SDI takes on the Foucaultian idea of a “box of tools” for “progressive political intervention” organically forged in the confrontation between a globalised underclass and the strictures of power oppressing them. Unlike Foucault whose methodology is at best déclassé, SDI tools move from the depths of the “poorest of the poor” below to challenge the very paradigm that both oppresses and creates them. It is an insurgent action, a form of ideological insurrection, which seizes the very discourse of oppression and reverses its thrust.

- **Vanguard Praxis for Recognition and initiating New Commons**

Discourse aside, SDI's tools of vanguard praxis clearly evolve from and are embedded in the livelihood struggles of the Southern poor. It is also about a politics of recognition that validates slum practices and foregrounds their agenda and demands. This is done at once outwardly and inwardly. The tools are highly visible exercises that attract public media attention and through this visibility pave the way to legitimising the lumpenproletariat and their agenda.

At the same time they also work to proselytise the SDI message across the South, particularly to other slums. Here the recognition and valorisation of slum practices implicit in the tools work toward unifying their many discrete struggles. They appear to be deliberate attempts by the social movement to initiate new commons in the Southern slums founded on social sustainability. This new commons is situated both in material and intellectual space. The vanguard praxis thus is the means to asserting the commons through the repossession and re-appropriation of land, issues and techniques that have become commodified and alienated. The tools set out to create at least partially non-commodified zones both materially and immaterially (in terms of knowledge) of social interaction, offering an alternative to private property relations (Goodman 2003) The intention seems to be to address the both the underlying ideological origins of

commodification and its associated exhaustion crisis, while providing real solutions to where these contradictions come to bear: the slums of the South. As Goodman observes: "Struggles for the "commons" are thus struggles for a world beyond capitalist social relations" (Goodman 2003.p6).

- **Tools to Conscientise Agency**

The purpose of the tools seems to be about creating a shared consciousness amongst lumpen slumdwellers, based upon their livelihood struggles and the knowledge, techniques and skills developed in the slums. They are rooted in the internal dialogue of slum communities, but they also create dialectic with the external world. This draws a line between the lumpenproletariat and those without, between slum social reproduction and the instrumental rationality of production. The line of difference runs through the "homes" of the poor and the tools make domestic spatiality the key to praxis. The tools in this sense constitute what Salleh calls "metabolic" praxis (Salleh 2001). Essentially the tools create sites of social relevance that supersede false divisions in the settlement to create community. The tools are thus both rational applications and social processes, simultaneously instrumental and metabolic. In this regard the praxis set out to initiate a common identity amongst the Southern slums based upon what this thesis calls reproductive identity.

Consistent with SDI's entire praxiology the tools as vanguard praxis have much in common with Freireian methodology. They can be seen as exemplary generative themes that not only share and valorise the inherent knowledge of poor communities but that are grounded in a process of social envisioning. The key aspect in this regard is the tools capacity to balance critical objectivity while instilling hope for an alternative future, to create a normative aspect that is transformative. This Freireian "conscientisation" reconciles subjective engagement together with objective analysis of reality and alternatives.

Crucially, through this conscientisation, the tools prepare the ground for the systemic praxiology to follow. The tools are thus the vanguard of a spontaneous neo-Gramscian praxis for the incremental building of counter-hegemony, then an intellectual-moral bloc and finally the historical bloc capable of class dialectics. In this case the key line of antagonism anticipated through the tool's application is the conflict between the oppression of a totalising productive modality of industrialised commodification and the social forces of lumpen reproduction.

Conclusion

This thesis has explored the praxiology of the transnational social movement organisation, Shack/slum Dwellers International (SDI). The thesis was organised around the concept of class for-itself, beginning in Part 1 with the structural context of slum dwelling lumpen class in-itself, moving in Part 2 to how the class becomes class for-itself through SDI. Part 1 established a theoretical perspective and laid out a framework for analysis. This began in Chapter One by determining the broad geo-political milieu in which the social movement is located. Chapter Two followed with a theoretical discussion on the nature of class conflict within the current milieu and the implications for the slum constituencies that SDI represents. Chapter Three explored key theoretical positions on praxis to provide a template for assessment. Part 2 focussed upon SDI as slum praxis, beginning with its history and moving to its praxiology. Throughout Part 2, archival and interview material was used to illustrate SDI's methodology and exemplify trends in their praxis, as well as providing the basis for evaluation. The analysis was split into three sections. Chapter Four sketched the historical background of SDI in order to situate the movement within the context of the broader geo-political milieu and the various discourses influencing it. Following this historical analysis, there was close examination of SDI's actual praxiology in relation to the set of themes that emerged out of the preceding theoretical discussion. Chapters Five, Six and Seven analysed the core operational principles of the social movement, known as "rituals". Chapter Five looked at the ritual of "Savings"; Chapter Six, the ritual of "Exchanges"; and Chapter Seven the ritual of "Federation". The third and final section in Chapter Eight focussed upon the vanguard praxis of SDI. Here the mobilising tools of "Enumeration"; "House-modelling"; "House Building" and "Sanitation" were unpacked and examined. This final concluding chapter summarises the key points of the preceding parts and draws out some of their broader implications.

Class in itself:

1. Geo-political milieu of multiple crises and intensified urbanisation leads to the inevitable rise of the slum.

The evidence gathered in Chapter One pointed unequivocally to a fundamental change in the structural conditions of human production and concomitantly, an unprecedented shift in the spatiality of human population. Data presented shows that cities will in future account for the bulk of world population growth. In this sense it was inferred that a new chapter has opened in human geography. The future is urban and thus all alternatives have been subsumed into the city. However as the data reveals, urbanisation has not led to a parallel increase in growth and prosperity, but instead to an overwhelming rise in poverty and the precipitation of this poverty in the form of slums. In addition the sustained effect of industrial production upon global resources and ecology has been profound. Multiple crises of exhaustion and ecological degradation are impacting upon life (in all its forms) on earth. This situation has been exacerbated by the rise to dominance of the globalised market economy and its associated neo-liberal hegemony. The general result of neo-liberalism in the South, particularly the effect of the Washington Consensus Structural Adjustment Programs (SAPS) has been to totalise the South's integration into the urban-cash nexus, subsuming and collapsing Southern traditional rural relations as well as their domestic urban reproduction and production. This has generated an impossible surplus population that is exceeding domestic capacity for labour absorption. This situation and the deeply alienating social relations associated with it conform to what Geertz defined as "urban involution" (Geertz 1963).

The spatial form that this involuted urbanisation takes is the slum. Contrary to the classical economic model, what neo-liberal policy and SAPs in particular show is that without the state, development became de-linked from growth. This has proved to be the dominant outcome in the South. Evidence suggested that the excluded urban surplus population is rapidly becoming representative of the

largest section of the global population. It was noted that by 2050 in excess of 85% world's population will probably be urban and most of this will be living in slums (Wakely 2000). This led to the conclusion that the future of the majority of humanity lies in the globalised meta-slum. The situation was seen as creating an urban binary of formal civil society on one side and the informal uncivil slum on the other. The slums fall outside the legitimate territory of the city and thereby the slumdwellers forgo the rights and entitlements that this inclusion bestows: slumdwellers become de facto criminalised. As this binary intensifies within a paradigm of scarcity, capitalist construction of the built environment is increasingly driven to create a system of fortified enclosure, limitation of access and manipulation of space. It was observed that this urban logic is repeated as the global logic too, in a global segregation and containment of the Southern labouring population against the fluid mobility of Northern elites and their finances.

The paradigm of global and urban apartheid, it was noted, is not unanticipated. In particular, Rosa Luxemburg's work on imperialism offers an explanation of why capitalism, contrary to Marx, requires "non-capitalistic classes", societies and milieu in order to start and maintain the "extended reproduction of capital" (Luxemburg 1951: p15). It is at this point that possibilities for transformative resistance begin to express, it was noted that the failure of the market to deliver the professed benefits of progress in conjunction with the increasing global apartheid singularises the form of oppression and thereby simplifies the contradiction. This facilitates greater congruence in forms of resistance, providing the possibility for counter-hegemonic forces to coalesce in common cause. The idea of transnational resistance becomes increasingly logical, bringing together relatively autonomous constituencies into a "coalition of the dispossessed" (Bolnick 2003) that locates them loosely between globalism and localism, strategically positioning them to capture the possibilities of both. The material location of this resistance by the dispossessed appears to be inevitably located in the meta-slum of the global South.

2. The slum as the site of subjectivity for ascendant class of the lumpenproletariat.

Chapter Two examined the issue of class in the current neo-liberal era. It was argued that in the current era of globalisation a new historically significant binary has been established that crudely divides the world into class antagonists, the developed North and the underdeveloped South. In a simple sense global North and South represent the familiar tension between expanding capital and the slums of exploitable labour, re-establishing the "internationalisation" of the class struggle.

This crude North-South class binary was contrasted against the backdrop of deep and persistent inconsistencies that define the material and social world. Using Trotsky's exposition of the general law of uneven historical process, it was observed that the causal structure of development is both uneven and combined. This led to the inference that humanity, as the subject of the historical process, is similarly internally complex and differentiated. The chaotic nature of development reproduces political instability as well as social connection. This impacts directly upon class dynamics, fundamentally altering the landscape of crisis and possibility, affecting the capacity of labour to constitute itself socially and reproduce itself as a class. It also creates an unstable environment for the capitalist process to function, similarly providing opportunities and crises. Under unified capitalism sustained by global apartheid, the class condition is universalised. North versus South is thus a simplified class-struggle superimposed upon a real world of myriad local complexities. The current class problematic reflects this tension between global flows and local process.

From this situation two overriding factors were seen to emerge. The first relates to the composition and continuance of the dominant class. The plethora of differentiated states of development provides this opportunity. The US-led "war on terror" tied to its program of universalising democracy exemplifies this

contradiction, allowing the continuation of capitalism by recreating boundaries made porous by the end of the Cold War, while demanding the unrestricted spread of the market. The effect of this is to allow capital to flow unbounded while restricting the flow of labour. This policy of labour containment and segregation underwritten by military coercion, it was noted, has a key precedent: apartheid. The global apartheid model diffuses, manufactures and controls diversity in a fluid and globalised market, providing the North with the possibility for its continuance.

The second key issue relates to the composition of the globalised labouring classes. Here it was noted that the conditions of developmental differentiation in conjunction with global apartheid means that the bulk of the globalised workforce no longer exists as a formal working class. What constitutes the globalised industrial work force is a highly pluralized and variable mass of informalised labour, a reserve army within a context of urban involution. This led to the conclusion that the disparate labouring multitude as a class now most closely resembles an informalised lumpenproletariat. Contrary to orthodox social theory's dismissal of the lumpenproletariat as a "dead and dangerous class", under current conditions of production and reproduction, the lumpen were seen to contain the potential of a new class actor. In this regard the specific conditions of dispossession mean that, although the workplace and factory are no longer the site of co-operation, the domestic spatiality of the slum is. Furthermore, it was noted that when the constitutive power of the slum is seen in combination with the increasing use of informalised labour, the lumpen class is seen to have a strong potential for subjectivity and agency. Thus the current patterns of urbanisation are changing the structural dynamics of production toward increasing instability on one hand and the inclusion of the lumpenproletariat as a reserve labour force on the other. These alterations in the relations of production provide the lumpenproletariat with the strategic openings they require to galvanise and act, bringing to the fore the civil-uncivil distinction and the threat of the uncivil overwhelming the civil.

Given the transnational character of these slum classes, the crucial issue is how to constitute mass solidarity with local recognition. Here the burgeoning slums provide a solution. The slums as sites of domestic co-operation provide the key to multi-scalar dialogue. This dialogue establishes a universalising identity as slumdwellers, providing connections that transcend locality, culture and language and which lay the foundation for class agency. The production of revolutionary class-consciousness in this case is embedded in the contours of the daily lives of struggle within the slum itself. Under these conditions the lumpen emerge as having an unanticipated role to play in history.

3. Praxis, creating subjectivity for-itself

In Chapter Three selective accounts of social theory revealed the role praxis plays in transforming society even when structural conditions appear able to sublimate resistance indefinitely, as they do today. According to Marx, revolution requires a component that is compelled to "practical-critical activity" (praxis). Praxis is seen as unified action-theory that overcomes the passivity of economic determinism and provides the key to change. By linking consciousness to agency praxis allows the subjective possibility for transcending structural limitation. But crucially this is not a return to idealism for praxis has to be a philosophy produced as a reflex to material conditions: reality must drive itself toward thought. The contours of material dispossession, the livelihood struggle of the underclass necessitates a philosophy of action, a slumdweller praxis.

In this way philosophy finds in the dispossessed its material weapon, catalysing a class in-itself to being a class for-itself. To draw out the dynamics of this praxis, the ideas of Freire, Fanon and Gramsci were outlined. Gramsci's notion of a unified intellectual-mass actor based upon the idea of organic intellectuals is a useful departure from the orthodox vanguard model and offers hope to constituencies resistant to external intellectual intervention. His vision of counter-hegemony as an incremental process moving from periphery to center, cadre to

party, intellectual-moral bloc to historical bloc gives a key insight into the mechanism of sustained praxis. Paulo Freire's project of cultural action for social change revealed the efficacy of a "dialogic praxis of conscientisation" to overcome the "culture of silence" that prevents the oppressed from emerging as a class-conscious actor. Within this schemata, Freire made use "generative themes" and "true words" to initiate subjectivity and agency. These practices were aimed at awakening the oppressed to their condition of oppression, galvanising a sense of class identity amongst them and provoking them to action. The analysis of Frantz Fanon focussed upon the key issue that any action had to be the reflex expression of authentic culture emerging from livelihood struggles of the slum dwelling masses. A sub-theme Fanon introduced to qualify this was that it be the praxis of labour-violence. This would have the effect of democratising revolution, for it would make all equally culpable in social transformation and would capture the undercurrent of uncivil and criminal action existent in the slum as both survival strategy and for political direct action.

From these theorists three key themes of praxis were summarised. The first is the question of authenticity and origin; praxis must be the reflex action-theory of the most marginalised. It must emerge from, and follow the contours of the survival struggles of the "poorest of the poor", including thereby the uncivil, "dangerous" aspects too. The second is an issue of methodology; in order succeed in the fragile conditions of lumpen anomie, the praxis has to be located in a dialogic process of conscientisation, using appropriate elements from the milieu of dispossession to generate a culture of action. The third theme is political; praxis has to be able to create a politics of scale, of being able to scale up counter-hegemony to the point of transformative agency.

Class for-itself:

4. Historical counter-hegemonic struggles pave the way for SDI

A limited overview of the intellectual and historical roots of SDI revealed that a number of counter-hegemonic movements and ideas set the precedents for the social movement to emerge. In this regard, SDI's discursive origins were seen to lie generally in the non-aligned movement of Bandung and specifically in Gandhi's Sarvodaya as well as Black Consciousness, particularly its South African anti-apartheid formulation. Common to all these perspectives, is the focus upon autonomy through self-constructed solutions, free from external intervention, non-aligned to dominant forces of hegemony and directed to the periphery. Bandung suggested the possibility of a "third way", an approach to development free from dominant Eurocentric discourse that fostered heterogeneous cooperation to break dependency created by the colonial encounter. Gandhi introduced an idea of self-determination claimed by a decentralised society comprised of autonomous, self-reliant communities tied together by an overarching program of collective social upliftment and welfare, known as Sarvodaya. Black Consciousness in its broadest sense is an emphatic anti-Eurocentric discourse, implying a universal resistance politics to colonial oppression and its legacy. Hereby black becomes a synonym for the oppressed and dispossessed anywhere. In so doing it set out to create a singular identity politics that would transcend the divisive issues of tradition, language and religion etc. This identity contained a new but aware double consciousness located in the self-conscious daily life of specific oppression and the class-conscious meta-identity (nominally "Black") of the multitude of oppressed, subject to ongoing Eurocentric oppression. Black Consciousness in its South African formulation under Biko re-embedded this discourse in an African context of colonialism of a special type (apartheid), tying together traditional African ideas of a non-commodified "economy of affection" to Freireian conscientisation. At the same time Black Consciousness emphasised determining nodes of agency where the vectors of oppression exert their greatest pressure, which is, as Du Bois and

hooks observed, in the lives of non-European women living in the slums of the post-colonial South.

From this historical overview of intellectual influences on SDI, the chapter moved on to offer an outline to organisational antecedents and origins of the movement. It was noted that the social movement represents the joining of many local community based organisations in a transnational alliance. From this convergence of grassroots organisations, SDI was said to have no single point of origin but rather multiple origins, creating in effect a cosmopolitan social movement of the "poorest of the poor". Rather than attempt to provide insight to all of these, the focus turned to two dominant geographical hubs of SDI, India and South Africa.

In India, a number of anti-eviction struggles were linked together. These were the National Slum Dwellers Federation (NSDF), Mahila Milan and an NGO, SPARC. The NSDF's institutional principle of bottom up "federation" was to become one of the core operational principles of SDI. The NSDF project of autonomy and self-reliance captured and contained much of the non-aligned strategy. Mahila Milan, "women together" was a spontaneous outburst of direct action by pavement women in Mumbai facing evictions in the mid eighties. Mahila Milan developed a set of constitutive social practices rooted in common sense which would become key elements within SDI's praxiology. They instituted daily savings (initially as a crisis fund) as well as implementing censuses and surveys to establish their exact numbers and livelihood patterns. Mahila Milan entered an alliance with an NGO, SPARC, which set itself up to unconditionally support them. As quoted, SPARC sought to create material and social spaces for slumdwellers to pool their human resources and facilitate learning (SDIa 2000). This commons approach directly challenges commodified relations in the city and dovetailed with Mahila Milan needs. In time the NSDF, Mahila Milan and SPARC formed a unifying alliance that would set the terms of SDI's cross-class collaborations: the strategic

impulses would come directly from the slumdwellers, while the NGO would support them.

In South Africa (as throughout the South), similar threats of eviction, lack of land tenure and rising poverty levels triggered in 1991, the South African Peoples Dialogue and Shelter and Homelessness, a conference for shack/slumdwellers that brought together homeless people from around the country as well as from around the South. This event showed some South African lumpen delegates the similar struggles they were fighting and supported by foreign slumdwellers, in 1994 they set up a movement to autonomously overcome homelessness and poverty, uMfelandaWonye WaBantu BaseMjondolo ("we will die together") otherwise known as the South African Homeless Peoples Federation. This tied together the legacy of struggle in South Africa, in particular community-based activism and "daily life" (rather than "rights based") orientated social movements with insights drawn from the Indian alliance. It was also noted that anti-apartheid resistance provided the SAHPF with politically articulate and class-conscious cadres operating amongst constituencies of already mobilised poor, while the economic and social deprivation in the context of a militant struggle also gave the movement a healthy suspicion of politicians and the middle-class.

When in 1996 the SAHPF celebrated its fifth anniversary, friends and allies from slums across the South came to celebrate. This confluence of the "poorest of the poor" decided to band together in common cause and create a transnational alliance of grassroots organisations, Shack/slum Dwellers International. The alliance was broadly directed to the survival of informal settlements of the poor around the South, defending them against evictions, seeking ways to improve their livelihood struggles and attempting to secure tenure and basic amenities. It was noted that the impulse driving SDI originated in the periphery, representing a paradigm of agency and activism that had grown in dialectical opposition to the Northern episteme of top-down welfarism. In part this reflected the spirit of the earlier "non-aligned movement" to steer a third way between dominant

Eurocentric narratives, drawing upon Gandhian principles of Swaraj, Sarvodaya and Satyagraha, as well as the call by Black Consciousness for an entirely non-European form of development. Informed by these traditions SDI was deeply anti-hierarchical. It was focussed on the margins as the source of social dynamism and sought praxis linking social-reproduction to agency and production. As a result women are the central dynamo of the movement, creating autonomous development strategies socially bonded around savings collectives, in turn connected locally and transnationally, and informed by a system of "horizontal exchanges". SDI thus linked communities with similar livelihood struggles across the South in a continuous flow of participant knowledge through sharing each other's lives in situ. The effect of this was the building a new form of cadre-activists who were simultaneously situated within their personal struggles (as poor-community members) and contributing to the social formation of the greater collective, and who, in so doing fused intellectualism to the rank and file of the movement. This hybridity of subjectivity, agency and organic intellectualism underpinned by a rejection of hierarchy and a quest for autonomy is what characterises SDI and is reflected in their praxiology.

5. Core operational ritual of Savings

Chapter Five explored SDI's ritual of "savings". It was observed that SDI uses saving money as its core constitutive principle. This is expressed succinctly in their slogan, "saving money, saving people". Savings provides the key to SDI's autonomy and how it forges social collectivity in the anomie of slums. In this sense, savings schemes are the basic building block that SDI uses to create itself as a social movement. The praxis evolved initially in spontaneous reflex to the many crises slumdwellers face on a daily basis. The generalised crises accompanying the globalised economy have meant that there are broad similarities and congruencies between the livelihood struggles of the poor across the South. This commonality of material experience it was inferred, constitutes a class experience and provides the source of a common response, namely, collective savings. Initially deployed as a crisis fund, savings rapidly evolved into

a complex practice directed as much to social as financial ends. By providing a solution to crises, savings also provided a sense of a future, lifting the slumdweller gaze from the immediacy of survival to consider alternatives. It came to be seen to provide the key to recreating social relations in the slums, foregrounding and transforming women into the "holders" of community social and material wealth. Savings also provided literacy training that in the Freireian way doubled-up as generative themes for conscientisation. At its center, savings challenged the material conditions of poverty by creating dialogue around cash. Saving money together on a daily basis was seen to build a sustained social cohesion around autogenous solutions to dispossession. Suggesting a literal deconstruction of Freire's metaphor of "banking," savings was seen to be an embedded emancipatory action involving active participation in material struggles, providing systemic dialogic approach to crises. The dialogues established in saving forged the social construction of a common subjectivity amongst Southern slumdwellers, who began to see themselves as "the poorest of the poor" as well as providing the first step to acting in concert, to claim collective agency. In this regard, savings groups are seen to be at once self-help schemes of multiple localisms and constitutive of the core cadres of SDI as an alternative transnational social republic of the Southern lumpenproletariat. This overtly pragmatic approach laid the foundation too for dialogue across the class-divide, providing the slumdwellers with recognition and unprecedented legitimacy, allowing them to engage with the formal world on their own terms.

Rooted in an authentic reflex to material conditions, savings typifies the practical-critical activity arising from the ranks of the lumpenproletariat in slums across the South. In the domesticity of the slums, savings solidifies co-operative relations made precarious by urban involution, and rekindles sociality fragmented by the overwriting of vernacular economies. Challenging the effects of a totalising commodification regime and its systemic reproduction of atomised, individualised consumers desperately competing with each other, savings collectives provide a radical alternative born from common sense. In answer to material lack and

dispossession, SDI had thus recreated a collective response. They had, literally, taken the core instrument of capitalism: cash, and appropriated it in a radical way, turning it around as a weapon for their own collective agenda. Despite orthodox misgivings, the lumpen of the slums have overcome their passivity and mutual competitiveness to forge a social response to their struggles. This autogenous re-writing of their fate appears in a real sense to establish a new vernacular economy within the city. This is an urban vernacular born (pace Marx) in the lumpen slums that seeks (pace neo-liberals) to recreate a commons approach toward money. In so doing it sets in place a mechanism that creates a transnational collective subject, rooted in the authentic reflex of dispossession, as well as sets up the agency for its liberation. The operational principle of saving money together as daily ritual thus lays the material and social foundation for the dispossessed to construct themselves as a conscious class for-itself.

6. Core operational ritual of Horizontal Exchanges

Horizontal exchanges were seen to be the means by which SDI circulates knowledge (particularly reproductive knowledge) and people across Southern slums. Through the ritual of exchanges, slumdwellers were observed to "exchange" lives with each other, intimately participating in the everyday struggles of other slumdwellers across the South. It forms SDI's core operational principle for creating an authentically shared identity and common cause amongst lumpen ranks. It is key to SDI's awakening of class-consciousness and class knowledge for-itself.

Exchanges were noted to be a complex praxis that operates in multi-scalar fashion from the local to the transnational, as well as across class lines. Beginning as an instrument of slum pedagogy to confront crises and survival struggles, exchanges soon developed as more than a strategy for skills development. In time they became ritualised heuristic processes for conscientisation. The key to this was that exchanges operate as generative

processes in the Freireian sense that transform lumpen survival struggles into the point of dialogue, intimately binding disparate slumdwellers across the South.

Where savings established dialogue through cash links between slumdwellers, exchanges create a platform for a dialogue based upon the premise of an intellectual commons drawn from the shared experiences and livelihood struggles of the poor. This reflexive knowledge shows the true configuration of poverty as a class issue rather than a local or national problem. Horizontal exchanges were seen to tackle directly the poor's alienation from themselves as the solution to the problem. In this regard exchanges challenged the false consciousness that inhibit the poor by revealing the world (of similar struggles, dispossession and oppression) to them. In confronting their alienation by providing an authentic body of knowledge rooted in their concrete experiences, exchanges valorise their struggles and provide a pedagogy capable of sharing and transferring this knowledge.

In this praxis of sharing knowledge, exchanges act as a vehicle for mobilisation and contribute to the creation of broad coalition of the poor sharing a common Weltanschauung and agenda for change. The fabric of connection provided through the process of exchanging lives with each other is a key source of cohesion for the movement, empowering slumdwellers both at the local and transnational level. This mass of embodied knowledge and its utilisation have proved to be powerful levers for recognition and legitimacy. The public spectacle of exchanges give the hidden mass of toilers a visibility, moving them from the periphery and situating them centrally in the public gaze. This recognition provides the key to legitimising slumdwellers and their struggles.

These various elements, it was noted, combine to provide exchanges with a certain weight to quietly advance the political agenda of SDI to contest the systemic construction of poverty. As such, exchanges approximate the Gramscian notion of an "intellectual-moral bloc." Exchange praxis is the key to

slum subjectivity, for this class-in-itself to become aware of itself as a class-for-itself.

7. Core operational ritual of Federation.

Relying on a loose understanding of federation that comes close to confederation, SDI Federations were seen to offer the core operational principle enabling the construction of a meta-identity of Southern slumdwellers. Federations were noted to be “true” institutions (in the Freireian sense) of the slum dwelling milieu. They challenge the enclave formation of globalised apartheid by creating a broad transnational confederation of the urban poor founded on the commonality of the conditions of their social reproduction. The pooling of this force rests upon the keystone of shared livelihood struggles in a time of multiple crises. The Federation linkage across the South houses a vast repertoire of knowledge of the differentiated milieu of poverty. This forges a transnational culture of the Southern poor unified to challenge conditions of their oppression. Federating in this way offers a way for the poor to exert their knowledge productively and challenge their systemic dispossession. In so doing Federations confront the slumdweller’s class alienation by creating a permanent institutional dialogue of localisms that conscientise unified transnational agency.

It was noted that by mobilising the poor around pragmatic approaches to these struggles, Federations offer the possibility of deeply democratic organisation. The key strength of Federations was seen to be their flexibility. They provide a platform for the poor across the global South, bound in common cause and with a shared critical consciousness. Federations are collective action by the underclass that offers them sustained institutions of power in a constantly fluid terrain of many politics. Representing the constitutive power of the lumpenproletariat, Federating is a means of allowing local autonomy unified around common cause. Significantly, a Federation provides a scale of mass action that cannot be ignored. This recognition moves the lumpen from the margins toward the centre and initiates the process of their legitimation.

The engagement with wider civil society was however, observed to be in constant dialectical tension. The collective agency provided by national Federations on one hand appears to provide Southern states and the formal world with a developmental "partner," but also contains the threat of concerted action of uncivil society. Federating was seen to thereby establish a platform for the lumpen to express their power and to in some degree engage with the outside world on their own terms. Federating in this way provides a means to creating counter-hegemony in the lumpenproletariat, establishing an alternative civil society in the ranks of the so-called criminal classes. This lumpen collective actor challenges orthodox social theory as it represents a new and unforeseen historical agent in an old history of class conflict. When this counter-hegemony of the uncivil society is linked to the weight of the transnational confederation of SDI (approximating the Gramscian notion of a "historic bloc"), the praxis of federating goes a long way to creating real political power for the dispossessed. It was thus argued that SDI Federations are institutions that consolidate the disparate energies of the lumpenproletariat into a coherent class agent, tackling their historical weakness as a class, constructing what can be considered class in-itself, for-itself.

8. Vanguard tools

It was observed that SDI is in the first instance and often in the last instance, primarily an anti-eviction initiative. This crisis-based imperative orients the entire praxiology of the social movement reflexively toward the survival, legitimacy and autonomy of the slum/shackdwellers. While the core operational "rituals" are predominantly directed to the systemic construction of the social movement as a whole, SDI was noted to deploy in addition a set of "tools" to promote its agenda. The multiple crises impinging upon Southern slums means that the social movement is constantly responding to new situations and compelled to extend its presence into these spatialities. This frontier of crisis has led to the evolution of

specialised tools to galvanise agency. The thesis called these tools "vanguard praxis".

The first tool examined was that of Enumeration. Enumeration was described as a pioneering technique to mobilise communities under threat. It was noted that this involved a number of exercises combined as components. These were autogenous surveys of land and shelter, population censuses, cartography and statistical self-gathering of the community in terms of its social, economic and geographic axes. It was observed that enumeration was fluidly applied to the idiosyncrasies of each settlement, tailored in effect to match the contours of everyday life of that location and social space. SDI was seen to use these exercises as a constitutive process, to initiate, dialogue and develop an increasing sense of subjectivity and engagement in new communities. By learning to self-name its parts, the slum settlement, in a powerful sense, becomes itself. In providing settlements with the skills for their own self-discovery SDI introduces a discourse of action that catalyses the important shift from verbalism to activism, and from alienation to involvement. Enumeration is a process of collective category construction that operationalises the everyday knowledge and experience of the slums, a sociology of action. In so doing it valorises the class-knowledge of the lumpen, who become significantly, the sole repository of this knowledge. This is an important step as it initiates a crucial change in the lumpen community: they discover their own significance, the fact that they cannot be dismissed and are in fact the only real authority on the subject of themselves. The key aspect of enumeration is thus that it provides a set of exercises that facilitates lumpen communities to rise above themself as a dismissed category, to shift from being a passive subaltern object to being an active subject.

The second vanguard tool examined was that of house modelling, namely SDI's practice of slum architecture and design. The exclusion of the poor, and thus the slums, was seen to be paradigmatic, extending to the way in which the ruling

class protects its interests through codified "professional" discourses coercively tied to the legislative process. Architecture and urban design exemplify this apartheid semiotics, prohibiting the dispossessed from exercising the autonomy to transform their slums themselves, and compelling them to subordination to formal experts providing this developmental service for them. House modelling, it was noted, was SDI's challenge to this denial of autonomy through the institution of a genuinely "democratic" dispensation of knowledge and skill. House modelling provides a radical approach to design that utilises the knowledge, materials and expertise of the slums and slumdwellers to reconfigure an empowering counter-expertise from below. In addition to these obviously practical aspects, the praxis was also seen to have a deep significance in terms of conscientisation. Through the process of visualising an imaginary home and building a model of it, the lumpen slumdwellers also begin to visualise the possibility of a different life, giving them hope and a means to overcome the "oppressor consciousness" shackling them. House modelling it was said, is a heuristic device that begins as play, building real skills at grassroots level and facilitating collective practices and which ends in social and intellectual transformation. It was also seen to be a political demonstration of slum strength, providing a spectacle of collective and transnational solidarity in the face of dispossession.

The third tool examined was that of house building. It was noted that the beginning point for SDI is the fact that shacks, shantytowns and squatter-camps of the global South are not a problem but a solution to the real problem of homelessness and lack of tenure produced by the prevailing market economy. While formal society has constructed relations of production forcing the poor to work in the city, there is no provision for the poor to live in the city. In the face of this contradiction SDI asserts that shack/slumdwellers are and will continue to be the major producers of housing in the South. In this sense SDI reverses the social norms around housing construction in its constituencies. It was noted that through its transnational and local community-based house building and shelter

training programs, SDI does not so much train shackdwellers in new skills but rather awakens their latent capacities and skills for building secure homes in accord with the community's values. Again this process adheres closely to the contours of slum reality, valorising the poor's capacity to provide shelter in the urban scree and turning this knowledge around, to offer a counterpoint, and to construct a new sense of collective identity and action. Building houses by the poor for the poor can be said to be constructing a new society from below on its own terms.

The final tool considered was that of Sanitation, or the praxis of poop. The observation was made that the current politics of consumption conceals the real economics of excretion. The ruling classes, protected by deepening apartheid practices are increasingly divorced from the waste they generate, while the dispossessed, existing in the interstices of urban landscape inevitably end up domestically superimposed upon this waste. Slums represent the antithesis of bourgeois hygiene, congested to the exclusion of privacy, extremely polluted and often dangerously located. This makes them the logical point of entry for SDI's "bottom-up" approach to the politics of shit. The social movement was described manipulating the issue through public spectacles such as the staging of toilet-festivals. These events challenge bourgeois taboos of defecation, inverting privation and turning the issue into an insurrectionary celebration of the poor's triumph over the shit they live in and on. These festivals deliberately engage representatives of the formal world, government officials, the media, NGO and civil society officials in the exhibition of real, functioning public toilet blocks built by the local slum community. These collective toilet blocks were described as islands of reprieve from the relentless filth of slums, expressing a vision of ablution facilities as a new commons and social hub. Again flexibility characterised the praxis, with many different types of toilet block constructed, each shaped to the specific needs of the community and spatiality in question. In all cases the toilets were communal places, and generally became the site of community focus much like town halls for bourgeois society. In this case of

course, the monument to civic co-operation was first and foremost a pragmatic response to real need. The construction and maintenance of the toilet blocks is thus made manifest the poor's collective ability to demonstrate their ingenuity and resourcefulness, to reverse their deprivation and transcend the limitations of their milieu.

It was suggested that all the tools of vanguard praxis emerged as a result of the conflict between Northern systemic rule and Southern dispossession. The dialectic of these epistemes was seen to allow the slumdwellers to nominally appropriate elements from the master-narrative, while redirecting them in a revolutionary way by pluralizing, altering and reconfiguring the content and practice of these to suit the material contours of their condition. The key aspect of the tools was that they acted as generative themes for the conscientisation of a class awareness and knowledge, tying together hope with reality and subjective engagement with objective analysis. At the same time the tools allowed SDI to manipulate the politics of recognition by valorising and legitimating slum practices, placing them as spectacles in the centre of public gaze. This approach was seen to work both internally and externally to consolidate the many discrete struggles of the southern poor. In so doing the social movement was described as evoking a new commons in the slums founded upon social sustainability. In this they were described as constituting what Salleh termed "metabolic" praxis (2001), challenging the myriad false divisions of poverty through provision of sites of social relevance that transcend these. In superseding these divisions the vanguard tools pave the way for the core operational praxiology to follow. The tools were thus described as prefiguring the Gramscian praxis of incremental counter-hegemony of a class for-itself located in the ranks of the slum dwelling lumpenproletariat.

Appendix 1: SDI Enumeration Survey

Questionnaire Template

- Personal information (age, place of birth,)
- Family background (occupation of father and mother, status, caste, ethnicity etc)
- Current family details (whether they have children or not, whereabouts of family, whether they maintain contact with family)
- Migration history (where they originate from, where do they call home)
- How long have they been living in the slum
- Tenure details (squatter, backyard shack renter, landlord)
- Occupation
- Health
- Federation (whether member or not, opinion on federation)
- Exchanges (whether they had been on one, hosted one, participated in exchange events, opinion on)
- Savings (whether they were a savings group member, regularity of savings, why they save with group, do they save with other groups, opinion on)
- Enumeration (had they been involved, what did it achieve)
- House-modelling (participation, opinion)
- House-building (participation, opinion)
- Sanitation (participation, opinion)
- Personal feelings on control over life
- Personal feelings on the future

Appendix 2:

THE ENUMERATION PROCESS OF THE INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION.

1) A local enumeration team is selected. Ideally this is made up of city Federation leaders, members of the community to be surveyed, representatives of the local authority, members of a local college or university and NGO support professionals with experience in enumeration and mobilisation.
2) National and international Federation members will be informed of the pending enumeration and be requested to participate at certain key moments.
3) The enumeration team will meet with local community leaders and city officials to complete a slum or settlement profile. This profile will give a general sense of the kind of issues that need to be tackled by the enumeration process.
4) The enumeration team will work with the local community organisations to divide the settlement into manageable sections.
5) Survey forms will be prepared. Stationery will be provided.
6) A date for the launch of the enumeration will be set (usually on a weekend). Dignitaries will be invited to the launch as will delegates from the national Federation and from other Federations in Africa, Asia or Latin America (if warranted).
7) A test survey will be conducted one week before the launch in a sample section of the settlement (about 50 – 100) shacks. This will follow every step to be taken by the bigger enumeration (see below) and will be used to build the local, community-based enumeration team.
8) A community mapping exercise will begin three days before the opening ceremony. It will focus at the very least on the first section of the settlement to be enumerated.
9) A brief opening ceremony will be prepared – normally for the Friday evening. At such a ceremony a minister or a mayor will provide an opening address. Local actors like the community leader, the ward councillor, the local police commissioner etc. will also be asked to speak. Entertainment will be prepared –usually community performances - at a central venue which will become the HQ for the enumeration for its duration.
10) The local committees will mobilise the community members to attend the opening event. They will also inform them about the coming enumeration – either verbally or with leaflets.
11) During the evening opening event the plans for the enumeration will be explained publicly to the community. The enumeration teams will report back on the results of the trial enumeration and the community map will be displayed.
12) On Saturday morning teams of enumerators will take questionnaires, chalk or paint, pencils, booklets and tape measures. They will proceed shack to shack in the designated

area(s). They will number and measure every structure and get the household heads to fill out the survey form.

13) Information will be conveyed to the central point where an additional team will check the forms and the measurements, begin to compile the data on a spreadsheet and return incomplete or suspect forms to the enumerators to be re-done.
14) This exercise will continue all day. In the morning the national and city based enumeration experts in the Federation will conduct the surveys but as the morning progresses, they will supervise new local members of the team as they fill in the forms, and number and measure the houses.
15) As they go along they will encourage community members to congregate at the centre, or at a public open space on Sunday afternoon.
16) On Sunday morning the enumeration, shack counting, measuring and mapping exercises will continue.
17) After lunch the people will begin to gather and Federation leaders will take the community through a cloth house modelling exhibition. Community members will help design the house they would like to build. People will be encouraged to make drawings and cardboard models of their "dream houses".
18) At the same time Federation leaders will mobilise women (and men who might be interested) into a section-based savings scheme, starting the scheme there and then, electing treasurers and showing them how records are kept.
19) In the late afternoon there can be another community mass meeting to report back on the weekend"s events. The guests from other parts of the country and from other international Federations will depart in the evening or the following morning.
20) From the Monday onwards the local enumeration team will take over the task until all shacks have been surveyed. They will get daily support from the city Federation and from the designated professional enumeration support person, fortnightly support from the national Federation, and regular visits from international Federation members to revitalise and re-focus the process.
21) As each section is completed the crunched numbers will be computerised and detailed documentation, providing all the raw data plus graphs and charts and brief narratives will be prepared by the professional support organisation and reported back to the section, the community organisations, the city officials and other relevant stakeholders.
22) The Federation leadership and the professional support organisation will supplement this with in depth interviews of community members and targeted video recordings of the process. (Peoples Dialogue.1996)

Appendix 3:

A Quick Glance at a month on the Exchange circuit: [ACHR. 1999]

The scale what's happening in exchanges in the Asia and Africa networks has grown very large, the process has developed a life of its own. Here at ACHR we try to keep up on who's going where, but this is becoming a lion's task. To give you a sense of this, we gathered together details of exchange visits which took place between October 2 and November 15, 1999. The list draws on myriad reports, e-mails, faxes and phone calls, and is by no means complete. By our count, a total of 1,711 people went on 367 national exchanges and 141 people went on 19 international exchanges during that period. These figures don't even begin to look at exchanges within cities, which almost everybody has given up trying to monitor (we asked!). The numbers are impressive, but it's essential to look at the number of people these leaders are linked to, through communication networks in their own communities, cities and federations. Without that, all these numbers can't add up to transformation.

October 2: 18 members of Women's Development Bank Federation (WDBF) from Matara District in Sri Lanka visit Malwathe Primary Branch in Gampaha District, Colombo, to see how the branch operates. Up to November 15, another 146 women from 8 districts go on 16 exposure visits within WDBF to help build and strengthen savings groups, deal with problems, share stories and experiences.

October: Exchanges inside India: Between October 1 and November 15, 93 people from Mumbai go on 18 visits to 13 cities to help with issues of toilet and house building, land tenure, negotiation with local officials, and post-cyclone relief planning. During the same period, 90 people from 12 cities visit Mumbai to look at what the local federations are doing in strategies for land tenure, sanitation, credit management, planning model house exhibitions, and dialogue with government. 112 people go on 16 exchanges between 16 South Indian cities. Another 140 people go on 20 exchanges between 7 cities in the western state of Maharashtra (not including Mumbai), and 12 people go on 2 exchanges between Lucknow and Kanpur in northern India. 21 people go on 3 exchanges between 3 cities in the eastern state of Orissa to work on crisis management after the devastating cyclone.

October 3: 40 people from Utaradit, Tak and Sukhothai, in Thailand, go to Chiangmai, to see the Chiang Mai network's community-based welfare projects and talk about the new Miyazawa Fund. 50 Thai cities are now involved in exchanges within the Urban Poor Community Community Network. In Sri Lanka 20 Day-Bank members (pavement hawkers) from around Colombo visit rural Women's Bank branches at Hambantota and Puttalama to build up a marketing partnership between these rural producers and urban sellers. Agree to hold joint sale-exhibitions every 6 months in Colombo.

October 4: 2 leaders from Johannesburg South Africa visit Kimberly for 7 days for technical support and 7 leaders from Kimberly visit Johannesburg for 7 days, to help Kimberly prepare for house building. In Zimbabwe, 3 South African federation leaders from Gauteng (experienced with uTshani Fund) visit Harare and Victoria Falls for 5 days to discuss Gungano Fund, Zimbabwe's new housing fund which just started giving out loans. 4 leaders from Harare visit Victoria Falls with the SA team for 5 days to work on building components. In Zimbabwe, within-city exchanges are too numerous to mention. In Harare, on average, one exchange takes place every day between saving schemes.

October 5: 6 leaders from Johannesburg South Africa visit VukuZenzele in Cape Town for 6 days. Zenzeleni Housing Savings Scheme is about to undertake a green field development for 800 families and learns from VukuZenzele's mistakes.

October: Exchanges inside Namibia: 37 people go on 10 exchange visits 15 between savings schemes inside Windhoek, to share experiences with small business loans, starting new savings groups, bookkeeping, handling repayment problems, community enumeration. 24 people go on 5 exchanges between towns in the Namibia's Central Region to help strengthen new savings schemes. 14 people go on 5 exchanges between savings schemes in the North West Region. Another 55 people go on exchanges in the Oshakati and Northern Regions of Namibia. There are also three Big Event model house exhibitions in Mariental, Tsumeb and Oshakati, to which 41 community people from savings schemes in 11 towns and cities come, along with large numbers of local community people and local officials.

October 10 : 6 leaders from Piesang River, Durban South Africa visit Cape Town for 6 days to help VukuZenzele with their green field development and Ruo Emoh with their search for land. 8 leaders from Johannesburg visit Durban for 7 days to have East Rand members share their experiences with Durban members, and to push forward developments in East Rand, where people are struggling to get subsidies, because the provincial government will only release them to commercial developers. 6 leaders from Johannesburg visit Port Elizabeth for 6 days to assist with land strategies. The visitors had all secured land through invasion strategies, so they could provide useful advise and moral support. In Sri Lanka, 5 members from Kalutara Day Bank visit Borella branch to learn more about running a bank effectively.
October 14: 150 leaders from five zones in Bangkok Thailand meet to strengthen community networks within and between these zones. In Sri Lanka, 2 Women's Bank leaders from Colombo visit 4 branches in Kaluthara District to share experiences and discuss interest rates for bigger loans, formation of new groups. Later in October, another 5 teams of Colombo leaders visit WB branches in 5 districts to help strengthen branch operations and discuss welfare funds, alternative marketing systems in Colombo for village goods.
October 17 : 56 Savings groups members from Sampong Tai, Thailand visit the Nak Pi Run Housing Cooperative to study group management and learn about inexpensive construction systems people have used in the project. In South Africa, 2 leaders from Durban visit Johannesburg for 6 days for technical support.
October 18 : 17 people (community, local officials and project officers) from Saigon, Hue, Danang, and Hanoi, Vietnam, visit Danang City, to look at savings and credit for infrastructure, economic and environmental improvement. 3 saving groups are formed in Hanoi. 3 federation leaders from Mumbai India visit Cambodia to work with the federation on the Urban Poor Development Fund management and relocation projects.
October 20: 5 community leaders from Hugpong-Kabus People's Network in Davao City, Philippines visit Aroma and Davao, to set up savings groups in a new area. In South Africa, 6 leaders from Durban visit Port Elizabeth for 14 days to support struggle against eviction at Liberty Housing Savings Scheme, where 300 families had invaded municipal land designated for low-income housing. The municipality wants to evict them. In Zimbabwe, 4 members from Victoria Falls visit Oukasie for 6 days for house modeling exercise, daily saving and cluster formation.
October 21: 3 leaders from Johannesburg South Africa visit Port Elizabeth for 7 days, to support Joe Slovo Housing Savings Scheme, infrastructure installation for 300 families.
October 23: 10 community leaders, 3 District officials, 3 NGOs from Cambodia spend a week in Sri Lanka, visiting seeing various community based development processes CDC system, infrastructure by community contract system, Day Bank, Women's Bank, Women's Development Bank Federation.
October 25: 3 people from Nepal visit Mumbai India for 5 days to look at strategies for NGO and federation linkages and to plan upcoming model house exhibition in Kathmandu. In Philippines, 8 railway community members from Sucat, under threat of eviction, visit Payatas Savings Federation to talk about strategies for strengthening local organisation, S&C and land acquisition. In South Africa, 2 leaders from Durban visit Johannesburg for 4 days for media support. 12 leaders from all over SA visit Port Elizabeth for 4 days to discuss management of loans. An agreement is made to use interest on deposits to help the families of those borrowers who die. 2 South Africans visit Mumbai, India for 7 days to look at high-density, low-rise housing strategies of MM/NSDF, and continue on the Nepal, to participate in the Model House Exhibition there.
October 27: 40 leaders from Bangkok Thailand visit Ayutthaya and Nakhon Patom Provinces to exchange ideas about community enterprise and to visit community-built environmental projects. In Sri Lanka, 5 women vegetable hawkers from Galle visit Obesekarapura Day Bank branch to see the activities, prior to starting their own branch. 3 women from communities involved in ENDA Vietnam visit the Payatas settlement in Philippines for exposure to savings schemes. 6 people (2 NGO, 4 community) from Almaty, Kazakhstan spend a week in Mumbai with MM/NSDF looking at S&C, toilet building, relocation and house building, slums, footpath settlements.
November 1: The Nepal Women's Federation holds their first Model House Exhibition, attended by 5,000 women from communities in two cities in the Kathmandu valley, 36 leaders from 6 Indian cities, 6 Cambodians, 3 Sri Lankans, 3 from Philippines, 2 from Tibet and 1 from South Africa, along with Asian Mayor delegates to the Citynet Meeting, which happened concurrently. A

programme of local exchanges between women in savings groups within Kathmandu and Patan is the main link between 53 communities in the federation. In Philippines, 3 members of the federation in Cebu City visit Payatas to strengthen local process and exposure to Payatas savings system. In South Africa, technical teams from Harare Zimbabwe and Namibia visit Durban for 10 days to help build model house in preparation for upcoming exhibition.
November 3: 21 leaders from all over South Africa visit Durban for 12 days for uMlazi Model House Exhibition, which coincides with the Commonwealth Meeting. Teams from India, Zimbabwe, Namibia and Senegal attend. 3 leaders from Cape Town visit Port Elizabeth for 6 days to check on financial systems. 8 leaders from Johannesburg visit Durban for 12 days for technical support. 3 leaders from Johannesburg visit Port Elizabeth for 5 days to help Joe Slovo finalize their water connection. In Sri Lanka, 3 WB leaders visit Kegalle District to discuss the National Council. Later in November, another 6 teams of leaders from Colombo visit branches in 3 districts to strengthen internal procedures and discuss district forums, fixed term deposits. Exchanges between primary branches within districts, cities and towns every month number in the hundreds, and nobody can keep track!
November 5: 20 people from Binh Trung Dong, District 2, Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam who will be relocated at the end of 1999, visit a community-managed development project at Ward 5, District 11, Tam Thong Hiep, to look at housing savings. 4 saving groups are formed in Binh Trung Dong. In South Africa, 2 leaders from Cape Town visit Johannesburg for 3 days for technical support.
November 6: 17 leaders from all over South Africa visit Johannesburg for 5 days for treasurers national meeting. In Sri Lanka, 24 representatives of Women's Development Bank Federation from 8 districts meet in Gampaha for monthly meeting, and to talk about the visit to Nepal. In the rest of November, another 40 women from 8 districts will travel to other branches. 5 community leaders, 2 government officials and 1 NGO from Cambodia spend a week in Karachi, Pakistan with Orangi Pilot Project (OPP), looking at community-managed sewerage, sanitation and water supply, and spend 3 days in Bangkok, Thailand on the way back home, seeing community processes in Bangkok. In South Africa, 3 leaders from Queenstown visit Johannesburg for 4 days, to enable Nomzamo to learn from Protea South both savings schemes which have faced strong opposition from their local councils.
November 11: 15 people from An Khanh, District 2, HCMC, Vietnam (a new community development project area) visit Ward 12, Go Vap District, Ho Chi Minh City to look at community level waste treatment, biogas, pig-raising. In Zimbabwe, 5 people from Bulawayo visit Beitbridge for 5 days to help with house construction. 4 people from Harare visit Beitbridge for 5 days to help with Gungano loan fund. 4 people from Harare visit Kariba for 4 days to help saving scheme and land negotiations in a new area for federation activity.
November 12: 60 Women leaders from Nakhon Sawan Province, Thailand visit women's groups in Chiang Mai to share ideas about women's role in development of urban areas. 3 federation leaders from Mumbai, India visit Phnom Penh, Cambodia to work with district federation units, eviction crisis in riverside settlements, and new relocation projects. In Zimbabwe, 4 people from Harare and Karoi visit new area at Chinhoyi for 3 days for housing saving scheme support. 6 people from Harare visit Mutare, Chiredzi, Chipinge, Gutu and Masvingo to help with follow-up meetings. This is a roving 8-day tour to touch base with groups and find out about problems and issues.
November 15: 4 Community Development Council leaders and officials from Colombo Municipal Council and Housing Ministry in Sri Lanka visit Badowita and Mahawatta settlements to study community-driven redevelopment processes and expose officials to a successful examples of community contract construction system organised through CDCs. 4 people (2 professionals and 2 pavement dwellers) from Cape Town, South Africa visit Mumbai, India to look at pavement dwellers strategies of Mahila Milan. 20 community leaders from Si Sa Ket and Buriram Provinces in Thailand visit Surin province to talk about increasing inter-provincial cooperation in the Northeast area. In Sri Lanka, 80 CDC leaders (who have formed their own federation in Colombo District 4) hold workshop with local authorities and other development actors to make a development plan for their district. 46 CDC leaders from other districts attend, some wish to form similar federations. In Zimbabwe, 4 people from Harare visit Bulawayo for 4 days for building components training, savings, loans, housing.

Appendix 4

Strategy: Using exchange as a negotiation apprenticeship
In 1998, shack-dwellers from South Africa, Namibia and Kenya came to help carry out a survey in poor settlements in Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe. On the first day, the international visitors and the local Federation met with the Town Council. It was a very important meeting. This was a country with a highly centralized and repressive government, in which only organizations linked to the ruling party are tolerated, a town where government authorities exercise absolute control, and a Town Council which since 1995 had been extremely hostile to the savings Federation. The visitors knew the Council would feel obliged to meet with the foreign delegates, even if they refused to meet with Federation members themselves, and it was their presence which opened the door for negotiations, for their colleagues in Victoria Falls.
At one point in the meeting, the Town Clerk said he opposed the savings schemes because if they succeeded, would only encourage more migration into Victoria Falls from the rural areas. Somebody might have asserted that it was the constitutional right of all Zimbabweans to live wherever they chose to live. But the South Africans took another tack, immediately assuring the Town Clerk he had nothing to fear, that once savings schemes were working in partnership with the council, then the Federation would assist the council by opening up savings schemes in the rural areas. This would improve people"s lives out there, so they"d be less likely to move into town. The South Africans had shown that effective negotiations with government officials do not depend challenging prejudices or scoring political or ideological points, but on finding common strategies which lead to mutual benefit. Their strategy then was to side-step the debate so that a common strategy could emerge.

Strategy: Using exchange visitors to score points locally:
In some exchange events, when a community, or Federation or city network knows that some people are coming, they work out a Federation event which is useful to them, so they can use those visitors. That way, there is a quid pro quo. Often times, hosts take their exchange visitors and negotiate their business in front of them. When communities in Pune, for example, were trying to get land tenure for settlements and exploring house building in 1992, they utilized the presence of exchange visitors from South Africa, Bombay and Bangalore to draw the city"s attention to their ideas. Foreigners are foreigners, and in many places that carries weight. The day after a big community house design jamboree in Pandavnagar, the local headlines ran South African Team Faults India for neglecting the Poor.
Foreign visitors are also used to link with sources of finance. In Bombay, communities are now exploring credit lines, negotiating with new resource-providers of finance, and looking at how to use this finance to negotiate for employment, housing and land. Nowadays, visitors to Byculla are often taken to meet the people at Citibank and Unit Trust of India, which have now entered into financial project partnerships with Mahila Milan. These visits are mutually reinforcing the local Federation transacts its business, the visiting groups see partnerships between the poor and finance institutions in action, and the finance guys get a perspective on another country through the eyes of slum dwellers.

Strategy: Using exposure to whet official appetites
When communities invite a government official along with them on exchanges, it turns the tables, and helps change the whole equation of how people relate to each other. Instead of a community leader going as the official's tail you take the official as your tail. A good example of this is the Federation in Cambodia, which has leveraged many benefits from integrated exposure trips where municipal officials and community leaders travel together.
During the 1997 model house exhibition in Phnom Penh, the Indian Federations invited the Cambodians to India, and the Cambodians in their turn invited along Mann Choeurn, the Municipal Cabinet Chief, and Lor Rhy, the enthusiastic District Chief of Khan Chamkar Mon. (The number two man in the municipality travelling with 7 squatters!) Bombay fired everyone up and set balls rolling that led to housing projects, policy changes and strong working relationships back in Phnom Penh. All much fuelled and supported by the visible success of the Bombay projects.

Now Mann Choeurn is a confirmed champion of savings and community-driven shelter. When asked why, he laughingly recounts how in Bombay, he was rustled out, along with everyone else, at the crack of dawn, to collect daily savings on Sophia Zauber Road with Laxmi. Even a senior official like him being sent out to learn like this got the message that people can do it.

Strategy: Using exchange to dissolve the fright factor in officialdom

Years ago, women living on the pavements in Byculla were afraid of the police, would run the other way if they saw one. For them, police meant demolition, arrest, harassment. One of Mahila Milan's first negotiations with the state, as a collective, was with the police. What did they do? They invited their local police chief, Mr. Zende, to tea on the pavements! 500 women turned up, and so did Mr. Zende, who answered questions, explained what the laws and their rights are, told them how to file a first-information report, introduced the precinct officers. Later, the Mahila Milan used a similar strategy with hospitals, ration cards, finance institutions. That fear was transformed into a relationship of mutual cooperation.

In a country where the poor are so cowed by officialdom that most won"t even sit on the chairs in public waiting rooms but squat on the floor, these intrepid women have gradually familiarized themselves with policies that affect them and learned their way around the corridors of power. In fact, they"ve became regulars, going confidently around in their brightly coloured saris, applying for water and sewer connections, collecting no-objection certificates and construction permits, submitting beneficiary lists. They"ve not only sat in those chairs, but been invited into the inner-most air-conditioned cabins, where they"ve asked hard policy questions and submitted proposals (and where they have not hesitated to ask some of Bombay"s top-most bureaucrats where they should spit out their betel juice, since there didn"t seem to be any spittoons ...).

An important part of the strategy is that nobody ever goes alone! There are always others in the train, for moral support, for bulk, for learning, for passing on. Over the years, community people from around India and around the world have learned many lessons sitting in on these meetings and watching how these women use their alliance to deal with local, state and central governments. For those who have never met with their officials in non-hostile conditions, it's a novel experience.

Strategy: Using exposure to pry open rusty official minds:

Exchange is probably the most immediately effective way of showing officials who believe it can't be done that in fact it can! Here's a good example: Piped rural water supply in Pakistan is designed by the Public Health Engineering Department. It's more or less a gift to the people, but its maintenance costs are enormous. The Government had been looking for alternatives for a long time, and decided to take 3 pilot projects, using the Orangi Pilot Project's approach: government provides water source and communities build and pay for the supply network within their villages

When an exposure programme was set up to OPP in Karachi, the community people were sceptical, the NGOs were sceptical, and the Public Health Engineers said this is simply not possible the communities have no skills, they are too poor, they won't be able to do it! Everybody listened to the presentations and then spent four days in the lanes of the Orangi slum, talking to very poor people who had built their own sewers. It was a simple case of seeing is believing afterwards everyone was ready to get started the transformation was complete, right from community to NGO to government engineers. Ultimately, those communities invested, built their own water supply, and when the first tap was installed, the whole neighbourhood was on hand to see it opened. When the first stream of water came out, rumour has it that even those engineers wept!

Strategy: Using exchange to convert the willing

Building partnerships requires more than public relations events or good intentions. South Africa's former Land Minister Derek Hanekom, for example, learned the hard way that an invitation to a Federation gathering meant more than a good PR opportunity he would likely be pressed very pointedly, persistently and publicly for concrete support. Other less well-intentioned politicians, inexperienced with the Federation, have assumed the exchange of favours would be largely one-

way the politician gets a good photo op in exchange for vague statements of support implying nothing practical. Initially, you can provide exposure to officials, like Hanekom, you want to initiate into partnership, by taking them elsewhere, to see what poor people do. Later you take them along as a partner, to demonstrate to other officials, in other countries, what such partnerships can do. It works like a spiral. Here's the word from Derek Hanekom:
My first real, quality contact and dialogue with the South African Homeless People's Federation was far away in India. It was my first visit. The Indians inspired all of us. There in Bombay we found people living in tiny houses made of plastic, but the people are strong, they shine, they stand up straight, they are proud of the work they are doing, and of the way they are helping each other survive. We have learned such a lot from what they are doing there, from the ideas they have developed. It has come back with us and we will take it a little further. I think it is now South Africa's turn and the SA Federation's turn to inspire other people in different countries of the world. Your turn to show other people in the world what you are doing here in South Africa. And people are watching us and learning from us. And it is a privilege for us now that our turn has come to be able to share with other poor people in the world.

Strategy: Using exchange to extract commitments from the reluctant
Here's an example of how a strategic triangle formed by two pushy Federations and one reluctant housing minister advanced partnerships on both sides. For many years, the South African Federation in Gauteng Province had tried to develop links with the Provincial Housing Minister, Dan Mofokeng. Even though his department prided itself on being pro-poor and progressive, it had so far avoided the Federation and downplayed it's contribution to housing in the province. The Federation caught up with the minister when he went on a state visit to India in 1997. While in India, he made a point of visiting Mahila Milan, close allies with the SA Federation, and there to greet him on his arrival to Byculla were leaders from the South African Federations! They spent the day together, going around NSDF/MM work in the city, and the minister saw for himself how much poor people can do daily savings, credit, house construction, house modeling, building component manufacturing, negotiating with the city. It was an education for the minister, and you can bet our heroes both Indian and South African lost no opportunity to drive home their points:
• that people should be allowed to build their own houses and the government should play the role of facilitator
• that if land and finance are available, the poor can build their own houses and settlements better, cheaper and at a larger scale no need for any outside builders or developers.
• that working in partnership with the Federation can help the minister deliver on housing
While in Bombay, the minister agreed to set up pilot programs with the Federation in SA. A year later, there was a joint working group in place in Gauteng, and there were promising signs of a good working relationship between the country's richest province and the Federation's fastest growing region.

Strategy: Using exchange to highlight a community's credentials
Going into negotiations with hand full: A good way for community organisations to establish their worth as a development partner is by showing the government a lot of good ideas, backed up with large numbers of people. This is especially important where poor communities are generally perceived as having no ideas, no skills, nothing to offer, no bargaining chip. The Railway Slum Dwellers Federation (RSDF) in Bombay, which is part of the National Slum Dwellers Federation, used years of intense preparation and continuous mobilisation to carve out a resettlement scheme for thousands of families living within metres of the railway tracks. It makes a good case for the power of going into negotiations with your hands full.
This is both a negotiating strategy and an overall exchange curriculum item and a very important one.
When the city finally got serious about expanding Bombay's suburban rail tracks, the RSDF found itself in the middle of a complex resettlement negotiation process which included more agencies than can be counted on your fingers and toes the Railways, the State, the BMRDA, the SRA, the NGOs to name only a few. And in the end, it was the Federation's solution which won out.

What was the RSDF's bargaining chip? Enough ideas and resources to make any bureaucrat get dizzy in his swivel-chair. They did it all enumerations, savings and credit, hut counting, house numbering, settlement mapping, ID cards, ration cards, house modelling, model house exhibitions, exchanges they did pilot projects to move back 30 feet from the tracks. They did so many things and made so much noise over the years that their numbers swelled to include 35,000 families. Even in teeming India, that's something.
The Indian Railways are a central government body, but they flow through all the states and cities. Back when the RSDF began, in 1987, the state and central governments were always arguing about the squatters along the tracks how many of them there were? what to do about them? whose responsibility it was to either evict or resettle them? There were big problems with suburban trains having to slow down because of railway slums so close to the tracks. Forty trains were being cancelled a day and angry commuters were rioting. Nobody was happy the city and the railway had headaches, and the railway settlers themselves had no option but to live in constant danger, a couple of metres away from the tracks.
When the idea of resettlement cam up, and it came down to numbers and budgets, there was only more confusion. The state said 10,000 squatters and the Railways said 5,000 squatters. Who would give the right number? Enter the NSDF/MM, who, along with their support NGO (SPARC), persuaded the state to subcontract the railway slumdwellers to survey their own slums. All the counting, house-numbering and surveying was done by community people, then SPARC helped tally the data and make a report. Big crowds were involved every step of the way, from settlements all over the city (as well as one railway and one government guy...), in which settlements were divided and classified by stations and houses were identified by the numbered electric poles which line the tracks.
As the survey went ahead, all the Federation tricks were applied meetings along the way, women starting savings groups, alternative land searches, house designing workshops, settlement layout planning sessions, model house exhibitions. And constant exchanges, through which this process was shared with women and men in other settlements, each step of the way. This is how it spread.
It took about a year, and at the end, the new railway Federation staged a big model house exhibition to present to the state the alternative plans they had by now worked out in detail: people design, build and maintain their own houses, government and railways provide alternative land close by and basic services. It took government another 8 years to finally release land, and when that happened, the RSDF was ready to go. In the mean time, the people kept saving, preparing, exchanging and went from being prepared to being super prepared! All this process is seen as training for all other cities, other feds, other countries.

Strategy: Using exposure to negotiate around common problems
As Federations around the region grow larger and deepen in their own society, classifications within them get refined. Within national networks and Federations, you'll have typologies if there is a critical mass of certain typologies, then those people exchange, and exchanges lead naturally to forming networks and sub-Federations around those particular problems or land-owners. These groupings become the vehicle for exploring common solutions and negotiating as a block, on a larger scale, for everyone. There are several examples around the region:
Canal side settlements networks in Thailand, Vietnam, Lao PDR, Philippines and India
Railway community Federations in India, Thailand and Philippines
Pavement dwellers Federations in India, South Africa
Networks of communities under traffic bridges in Bangkok
Federations of slums on airport land in India and on Port Authority land in Thailand
Dumpsite communities in India, Philippines, Indonesia and Cambodia.
All these national networks were formed chiefly through exchange. Besides being able to benefit from the solidarity of numbers, breaking isolation, coming together with others, these networks and sub-Federations allow communities with the same landlords, the same problems to negotiate for things as a block this can be very powerful. If one community under a traffic bridge goes to the city to get an electric or water connection, the cards are stacked against them. But if 60 under-bridge communities come together and negotiate as a block, they have numbers and preparation behind them can't turn them away. They share many things with each other.

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