Anarchism, the State and the Praxis of Contemporary Antisystemic Social Movements

Morgan Rodgers Gibson

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ABSTRACT

This thesis is dedicated to providing a theoretical and historical account of the way antisystemic movements have developed and changed. By examining the praxis of contemporary antisystemic movements and tracing the historical failure of 'state-centric' versions of these movements, this thesis will argue that an anarchistic praxis – though not a doctrinaire ideological programme – has become a primary point of reference for contemporary antisystemic social movements and that this can be seen, in many ways, as a response to the failure of ideologically motivated, state-centric versions to bring about substantial, transformative social change once assuming power. I utilise two different methodologies to this end: 1) narrative process-tracing, in order to demonstrate the 'failure' of the state and 2) two qualitative case studies to illustrate my theoretical argument. After tracing, firstly, how a 'state-centric' antisystemic praxis assumed centrality within antisystemic movements and, following this, the failure of this praxis and thus the 'failure' of the state as an agent of transformative social change, I explore what 'anarchism' and an 'anarchistic praxis' are. This is necessary due to the sheer depth of contestation and misconceptions surrounding anarchism. Central to an anarchistic praxis is the rejection of the state and externally imposed hierarchy, a conflation of means and ends and the pursuit of a directly democratic praxis independent from the state. This thesis then turns to illustrating its theoretical argument through two qualitative case studies: the Zapatistas of Chiapas, Mexico and the South African shack dweller's movement, Abahlali baseMjondolo.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

INTRODUCTION

In the study of political ideology, engagement with anarchism is often met with ridicule or dismissive condescension. Many consider an ideology or philosophy developed from an ontological rejection of externally imposed hierarchy and the state as incompatible with contemporary society and the modern world; either a recipe for destruction, violence and chaos, or a 'pre-modern' utopian fantasy. Indeed, these are the dominant positions held and taught by many within the academy (see, for instance, Heywood 2007: 182). To such observers, it must thus be all the more perplexing that anarchism is of substantial influence within contemporary social movements that oppose the status quo; what Immanuel Wallerstein labels 'antisystemic' social movements (2002: 29).

Much contemporary discussion identifies what I refer to as an anarchistic praxis as being at the centre of modern antisystemic social movements. For instance, Curran identifies the way in which a 'post-ideological' anarchism has assumed centrality in contemporary opposition to neoliberal globalisation (2006: 2):

> [T]he anarchism that [the forces of globalisation have] unleashed is a considerably reconfigured one. The term *post-ideological anarchism* is used to describe it. Post-ideological anarchism informs the impulse, culture and organisation of oppositional politics today. It refers to the looser and more flexible embrace of anarchist ideas and strategies in the armoury of radical dissent. Post-ideological anarchists are inspired by anarchism's principles and ideas, drawing from them freely and openly to construct their own autonomous politics. They reject doctrinaire positions and sectarian politics, preferring to mix their anarchism with an eclectic assortment of other political ideas and traditions (emphasis author's own).

Likewise, Wallerstein has analysed the way in which anarchism defines much contemporary antisystemic practice, particularly in the form of the Alter-Globalisation (sometimes misleadingly referred to as the 'anti-Globalisation') Movement (AGM) (2002). Similarly, Epstein (2001), Gordon (2007) and Graeber (2002, 2004) have all outlined the way in which an 'anarchist methodology' is central within contemporary antisystemic movements; that is, their political practice is defined by a commitment to some of the central tenets of anarchism, including decentralisation, the pursuit of direct democracy, recognition of the relationship between means and ends and the rejection of *externally imposed* hierarchy (inclusive of capitalism). However, most significant is the way in which such movements reject the state as an agent of change (Graeber 2002: 61). It is this final point that forms the core of my thesis. Whilst scholars, such as those mentioned, identify the centrality of anarchism within contemporary antisystemic praxis, particularly in the West, limited discussion has focused on why an anarchistic praxis has assumed such modern significance. Within the current literature, only limited attempts have been made to develop an understanding as to why many antisystemic movements now reject the state as an

agent of change. In light of this intellectual lacuna, the primary motivation in the development of this dissertation centres around contributing to a more thorough understanding of this. I thus seek to provide a theoretical (and in some ways, historical) account of the way in which antisystemic social movements have developed and changed. To do this, my thesis will analyse whether, in the wake of the continued failures of the 'state-centric' antisystemic movements of the nineteenth and twentieth century, an anarchistic praxis is increasingly utilised as an organisational principle within contemporary versions of such movements. Therefore, I will be looking to develop an understanding as to *why* an anarchistic praxis has become central within contemporary antisystemic movements.

I argue that an *anarchistic praxis*[1] – though not a doctrinaire ideological programme – has become a primary point of reference for contemporary antisystemic social movements and that this can be seen, in many ways, as a response to the failure of state-centric versions to bring about substantial, transformative social change once assuming power. I will utilise two case studies, one of the Zapatistas (EZLN) of Chiapas, Mexico and the other of the South African Shack dwellers, Abahlali baseMjondolo (AbM), to illustrate this assertion. Admittedly, it is impossible to explain what *every* antisystemic social movement or actor claims. As such, I am not alleging that state-centric antisystemic movements no longer exist or that their ideological underpinnings are no longer a source of inspiration as this would be impossible to demonstrate. Instead, this thesis argues that the influence of state-centric antisystemic movements is on the wane and that, as a result of their failure, an anarchistic praxis is increasingly significant in the constitution of contemporary antisystemic radicalism. Furthermore, I am not arguing that this state-centric praxis is the only reason these forces have failed. However, it is the most significant shared feature of their praxis and, as such, it is the area I will be focusing on.

This thesis will make several significant contributions to contemporary political science: firstly, it will contribute to contemporary understandings of political ideology by exploring what anarchism and an anarchistic praxis are and their centrality within contemporary antisystemic social movements. Secondly, it will help to develop a deeper understanding of the character of contemporary antisystemicism; identifying a major source of counter-hegemony to the existing capitalist world system. Thirdly and connected with this, it will contribute to academic understandings of the left in a 'post- (state) communist' world. Finally, it will contribute to debates over the agency of the state and the limitations of state power.

This thesis will be separated into four substantive chapters in order to support the argument put forth and will be structured as follows. My first chapter will be dedicated to legitimising this thesis' pursuit of emancipatory knowledge interests and connected with this, defending my methodological choices. Developed from Frankfurt School 'critical theory', my ontological and epistemological position demands academic work of which the primary consideration is theory augmented towards emancipation or the study of political praxis that pursues emancipation from existing social structures (Linklater 2008: 47–48). It is because antisystemic social movements explicitly pursue emancipation that this thesis is concerned with the contemporary

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[1] As Graeber (2004a) says, "[e]verywhere from Eastern Europe to Argentina, from Seattle to Bombay, anarchist ideas and principles are generating new radical dreams and visions. Often their exponents do not call themselves "anarchists". There are a host of other names: autonomism, anti-authoritarianism, horizontality, Zapatismo, direct democracy... Still, everywhere one finds the same core principles: decentralisation, voluntary association, mutual aid, the network model, and above all, the rejection of any idea that the end justifies the means, let alone that the business of a revolutionary is to seize state power and then begin imposing one's vision at the point of a gun".

character of such movements; such a topic has immediate implications in people's experience of politics and the potentialities of emancipation. Furthermore, the methods used correspond with this critical-theoretical position. Narrative process-tracing, used in the second chapter, allows for the development of historical and theoretical understandings as to how state-centric antisystemic movements have 'failed', whilst case-studies allow for an in-depth illustration of my argument, and hence, the development of a deeper understanding of political praxis (Chapter Four). Within this chapter I will also explicate and justify the particular case study subjects selected and the source material used.

To adequately respond to my hypothesis and support my argument, I will necessarily respond to a number of secondary questions and problems that arise. These responses will form the basis of my subsequent chapters. Firstly, if an anarchistic praxis has become a primary point of reference, what previously bound antisystemic movements? That is, what common features did they share and can they be legitimately talked of as a totality, despite specific ideological differences? The second chapter will respond to these questions and, through narrative process-tracing, establish firstly, what 'state-centric' antisystemic movements are; secondly, how they came to dominate antisystemic praxis and finally, how they have 'failed'. Utilising Immanuel Wallerstein's typology of 'antisystemic' social movements (1990, 2002), I begin by tracing how antisystemic movements of the nineteenth and twentieth century advocated for and (broadly) adopted a 'state-centric' theoretical position – basically, that the state is the major agent of social change and thus state power must necessarily be taken to enact transformative social change – and how this came to dominate the praxis of both 'social' and 'national' antisystemic movements. I will then develop an understanding as to how these state-centric movements have not only 'failed' in enacting transformative social change, but have, in many cases, become functionaries of state power. It is for these reasons that many contemporary antisystemic movements subsequently reject the state as an agent of change and have instead adopted what can most accurately be described as an anarchistic praxis.

Since I am claiming that, in response to the 'failure' of the state as an agent of change, an anarchistic praxis has become central within contemporary antisystemic movements, my third chapter will be dedicated to developing a theoretical understanding of what 'anarchism' is and what an anarchistic praxis entails. This is necessary due to the sheer depth of variety within anarchism and the contestation and misconceptions surrounding it. Contrary to much popular opinion and hyperbole that posits it as simply chaos, violence and disorder, anarchism is an ideological and theoretical position that rejects not only the a priori legitimacy regularly conferred upon the state, but all *externally imposed hierarchy* (Graeber 2004a). This entails a rejection of all forms of hierarchy and authority that cannot be legitimised, justified and consented to by those impacted by them. As Noam Chomsky asserts, this means that the onus of justification falls on those advocating or perpetuating hierarchical social structures and coercive social relations (Chomsky 2003). Furthermore, central to anarchism is the deontological conflation of 'means and ends' and hence, the centrality of political praxis. Whilst, owing to its theoretical diversity, it is difficult to definitively define anarchism or an anarchistic praxis, there are key ideas central to anarchism. Besides the rejection of externally imposed hierarchy – and the rejection of the state that flows logically from this – the principles central to an anarchical praxis are decentralisation (so as to diffuse decision making and political power); direct democracy and confederalist forms of decision-making (to ensure participation and avoid hierarchy) and a rejection of capitalism

and the exploitation and hierarchy it engenders. An anarchistic praxis thus not only rejects the state, but all externally imposed, hierarchical social structures that perpetuate oppression.

After fleshing out what 'anarchism' is and what an 'anarchistic praxis' entails in Chapter Three, my final chapter will be devoted to empirically illustrating the theoretical argument made in this thesis; that an *anarchistic praxis* has become a primary point of reference for contemporary antisystemic social movements and that this can be seen, in many ways, as a response to the failure of 'state-centric' versions to bringing about transformative social change. This will be done on the basis of two case studies. Both the Zapatistas and AbM illustrate the way in which contemporary antisystemic movements are increasingly adopting a praxis, though not a doctrinaire ideological programme, in line with anarchism. Entailed in this is not only a rejection of the state as an agent of change, but a rejection of externally imposed hierarchy and the pursuit of an anti-hierarchical, participatory praxis independent from the state; essentially, the praxis explored in Chapter Three. Significantly, these movements thus illustrate the ever-increasing recognition, by antisystemic actors, of the way in which traditional antisystemic programmes – specifically those state-centric movements that advocate the capture of the state apparatus in bringing about liberating change – have failed to fundamentally transform society and achieve the liberty, equality and justice so long immanent to the great majority of humanity. Moreover, they represent a new 'politics of freedom' (Gibson 2008: 707) in which the principles of direct democracy, liberty and equality are not abstract concepts, but the source of social life and political enlightenment that can serve as an outline in the realisation of a more just, equal and free world.

CHAPTER ONE: THEORY AND METHODOLOGY

THE FRANKFURT SCHOOL AND THE PURSUIT OF EMANCIPATORY KNOWLEDGE INTERESTS

> "Philosophers have hitherto only interpreted the world in various ways; the point is to change it." – Karl Marx and Frederick Engels (2004: 123)

Before delving into the theoretical and empirical work that will form the majority of this thesis, it is necessary to defend my ontological and epistemological assumptions and explore how they have impacted on the formation of this dissertation. As a self-identified work of Frankfurt School critical theory, this thesis will explicitly explore and pursue knowledge constitutive to 'emancipatory' interests (Habermas 1987 [1971]: 310–311). For a critical theorist, the primary purpose of pursuing knowledge is for the construction of a world free from domination and coercion, to contribute to the latent potential for the emancipation of humanity. Due to the dominant influence of positivism, contemporary academia has become ostensibly preoccupied with notions of 'objectivity' and 'value neutrality'. It is thus necessary to justify such a seemingly radical pursuit. Initially, this chapter will explore and justify my pursuit of 'emancipatory' knowledge interests. I will show how, in contrast to positivist assumptions, knowledge and human interests are intimately connected and that, whether conscious of it or not, *knowledge is always used by someone for some purpose*. Following this, I will explore how this influences my methodological approach and subsequent adoption of the two different qualitative methods to be used throughout this thesis. Initially, I will utilise narrative process-tracing to construct a theoretical argument outlining the failure of 'state-centric' antisystemic movements and how this influenced the rise of an anarchistic praxis within antisystemic movements (Chapter Two). The other method, qualitative case studies, will be employed to illustrate the theoretical argument developed throughout the thesis. In exploring the use of qualitative case studies, I will also legitimise the particular case studies chosen: the Zapatistas and Abahlali baseMjondolo (explored in Chapter Four). The final section of this chapter will briefly engage with how these choices influenced the source material to be used in this thesis; which, outside of scholarly pieces, will be direct participant contributions (such as media releases and interviews). This chapter will thus be dedicated to exploring and legitimising my thesis' pursuit of emancipatory knowledge interests and outline the subsequent methodological implications resultant from this.

ONTOLOGY, EPISTEMOLOGY AND 'EMANCIPATORY' KNOWLEDGE INTERESTS

The pursuit of 'emancipatory' interests entails the assumption that current social structures are oppressive and constitute forms of institutional domination. Neoliberal capitalism consigns the vast majority of humanity to exploitation, oppression and toil. The institutionalised methods of exploitation central to its efficacy have been central in my motivations for developing this thesis and as such, my attempts to offer hope and promote counter-hegemonic agency through critical analysis of the current historical situation. This pursuit is born from my particular ontological and epistemological positions, which developed from and bear close resemblance to 'Frankfurt School' critical theory. It is within this theoretical tradition that I justify this thesis' pursuit of the emancipatory knowledge interests outlined above. Though rejecting much of its deterministic focus on labour and production as the driving force of history (historical materialism), Frankfurt School critical theory defends the Marxian commitment to an emancipatory social science which purports that the purpose of social enquiry is to promote the emancipation of the exploited and dispossessed (Linklater 2008: 47). Because of this, critical theory promotes an interdisciplinary approach to understanding society by looking at the social and historical development of contemporary social structures. Central to this is a focus on study which aims to uncover the underlying structures of exploitation and inequality in order to overcome them (Linklater 2008: 47–48).

This theoretical position is in contrast to positivism, which has, according to Habermas, permeated much of the self-understanding of the social sciences. In the field of enquiry, the concept of 'value freedom' has had the effect of reinforcing an unconditional epistemological commitment to the severance of knowledge from interests (Habermas 1987 [1971]: 303). Indeed, positivists assert that it is only in the separation of knowledge from interests – supposedly realising 'objectivity' – that theory gains its practical efficacy (McNeill 1998: 1). However, building on the work of Horkheimer (1976), Habermas asserts that social knowledge is not produced objectively, nor is it constituted "as a universe of facts whose law-like connections can be grasped objectively" (1987 [1971]: 304). A critical focus on the way human interests shape approaches to understanding the world reveals that what positivists portray as simple 'explanations' of the social world are not objective, as is claimed. Rather, these 'explanations' are anchored in particular political aspirations, perspectives and interests. Therefore, positivist theoretical discourses, rather than simply explaining an 'objective', external reality, come to serve 'knowledge-constitutive interests' (Habermas 1987 [1971]: 308). The knowledge produced by positivism is, either consciously or unconsciously, constitutive to the perpetuation of the interests of the powerful as it reifies the status quo through the production of 'nomological' knowledge.

Thus, in contrast to the monistic view of knowledge and human interests perpetuated by positivism (that is, that the two are separate and distinct), critical theory reveals the intimate relationship between the two. Therefore, theories of the social world are not merely 'neutral' or 'objective' accounts of an abstract, external reality; indeed, knowledge will always have implications in impacting upon human interests. As Cox stated, theories "are always for someone and for some purpose" (1981: 128) and consequently work in the interests of some against others. Consequently, critical theory has been successful in identifying that knowledge does not stand outside the sphere of political action, as 'objectivist' scholars' claim, but rather that it has poten-

tially profound consequences for the distribution of power, material resources and opportunities for sociopolitical change. The purpose of a critical-theoretical approach is thus to open up space (George 1989: 273):

> … so that voices otherwise marginalised can be heard; that questions otherwise suppressed can be asked, that points of analytical closure can be opened for debate, that issues and arguments effectively dismissed from the mainstream can be seriously reconsidered and re-evaluated.

Therefore, critical theory seeks to break through the limits of our theoretical understanding of the present and transcend the boundaries of a positivistic knowledge form set upon the notion of a monistic, unified account of reality and its associated methodologies. The opening up of such a space serves the critical-theoretical pursuit of exploring possibilities for the immanent emancipation of humanity, an avenue so often closed off by orthodox, positivist notions of focusing on the "art of the possible" (George 1989: 273). The primary purpose of critical theory is, therefore, to develop emancipatory knowledge that is conscious of the role theory plays in impacting upon human interests in order to open up a "dimension in which acting subjects [can] arrive rationally at agreement about goals and purposes" (Habermas 1987 [1971]: 316). Necessarily entailed in this is a rejection of the ontological assumption that the social world exists independently of us and the assumption that the creation of another world is possible, that, to a certain extent, the social world is a subjective construction of particular interests. Hence, a work of critical theory should, amongst other things, "look at those who are creating viable alternatives [to the status quo], try to figure out what might be the larger implications of what they are (already) doing, and then offer those ideas back, not as prescriptions, but as contributions, possibilities – as gifts" (Graeber 2004b: 10). It is in this way that I justify the pursuit of 'emancipatory' knowledge that has implications for political praxis and that has potential implications for emancipatory interests and those that pursue an emancipatory politics.

ON THE USE OF QUALITATIVE APPROACHES

The methodological implications of adopting this position are significant. This view explicitly contends that social science is not conducive to the development of the type of theories that the natural sciences base their knowledge claims upon. Merely explanatory, 'objective' accounts of reality are likely impossible. Rather, attempts at producing such knowledge would, instead, have the potential to reify existing social structures. Instead, as Flyvbjerg posits, the social sciences ought to be reoriented towards the clarification of problems, risks and possibilities that humans face individually and socially and thus contribute to social and political praxis (2006: 68); an approach to social science based on Aristotelian 'phronesis'. Therefore, social science should not be a mere technical exercise in positing and answering research questions "through scientific and technical expertise, but… should also take into account what we know from everyday practices of politics and ethics" (Vromen 2010: 253). This view holds that the role of the political scientist is to deliberate on and question values and interests and also political praxis. Scholars should thus demonstrate the way in which theory affects practice (Vromen 2010: 253). It is in this way that I justify my thesis' concern with contemporary antisystemic praxis; I am here attempting to 'figure out the larger implications of what political actors are already doing' so as to develop theoretical

and practical knowledge that has implications for people's political experiences. Flyvbjerg argues that for this to happen, political science must (2006: 85):

1. Drop all emulation of the natural sciences as the production of cumulative or predictive theory in social and political science does not work

2. Address problems that matter to and are identified by groups in the local, national and global communities in which we live and in ways that matter by focusing on context, values and power;

3. Effectively communicate the results of our research to our fellow citizens and engage in a dialogue with them, taking on board their feedback.

Flyvbjerg envisions a political science that is able to utilise qualitative approaches conducive to interpretation, the development of understanding and investigation into people's political experiences. That is, methods more focused around generating theories and accounts, or developing a more in-depth understanding of social phenomena so as to create a discipline responsive to the problems, grievances and experiences of political actors (Schram 2006: 18–19). This position correlates with the aim of my thesis; which is to develop an understanding of the rejection by contemporary antisystemic movements of the state as an agent of change and the subsequent adoption of an anarchistic praxis.

Qualitative Methodology

In line with this, I will utilise two different qualitative methods. In the second chapter, I will engage in narrative process-tracing, or the study of how, over time, certain ideas, events or norms inform certain actions (Parsons 2010: 91), in order to develop an understanding of the changing nature of antisystemic movements. This method is effective as it allows one to develop a theoretical account of how certain ideas and events – most notably, the failure of state-centric movements to produce the liberating social change promised – have influenced the adoption of an anarchistic praxis within contemporary antisystemic movements. Within this, I will effectively engage in an immanent critique of state-centric antisystemic social movements, as I will temporarily accept their pretensions and claims and then judge their 'failure' by their own standards;[1] that is, their attempt to transform society and realise the 'liberty and equality' so long promised through the utilisation of state power.

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[1] As Harvey explains, immanent critique begins as a "dissenting motif", a negative analytical tool designed to reveal the flaws or contradictions of the object of analysis. It begins by selecting (1990: 5) "some tradition, ideological premise, or institutionalised orthodoxy for analysis… [then, provisionally accepting] the methodological presuppositions, substantive premises, and truth-claims of orthodoxy as its own, immanent critique tests the postulates of orthodoxy by [its] own standards of proof and accuracy. Upon 'entering' the theory, orthodoxy's premises and assertions are registered and certain strategic contradictions located. These contradictions are then developed according to their own logic, and at some point in this process of internal expansion, the one-sided proclamations of orthodoxy collapse as material instances and their contradictions are allowed to develop". This is effectively what I will be doing in the second chapter, as I will 1) explore the basic postulates of 'state-centric' antisystemic movements; 2) discuss how this state-centric position became central in the constitution of antisystemic movements; 3) explore the relative success of these movements in gaining state power and 4) develop anunderstanding of their failure in relation to their own self-appointed goal; transforming society so as to realise the "liberty and equality" immanent to humanity since the French Revolution.

After a theoretical exploration of anarchism in Chapter Three, the argument depicted through this narrative process-tracing will then be empirically demonstrated through the use of two qualitative case studies, one of the EZLN and the second of AbM (in Chapter Four). The utilisation of two detailed case studies is justified on the grounds that, in contrast to quantitative methods, they allow for a more thorough investigation and hence the development of a deeper *understanding* of the social phenomena being studied. This is in contrast to attempts to *explain* phenomena, which would mean reversion to positivist attempts at generating 'nomological' knowledge, or assertions of 'law like', immutable causality; something, as described above, unsuited to critical-theoretical political science. Additionally, in case studies, the researcher is not merely studying a single phenomenon, as they (case studies) generate a "multitude of qualitative-interpretive, within-case 'observations' reflecting patterns of interaction, organisational practices, social relations, routines, actions and so on" (Yanow, Schwartz-Shea and Freitas 2009: 4). Hence, detailed case studies still allow space for contingent theoretical generalisations – specifically, allowing me to understand the way in which the failure of state-centric antisystemic social movements and the state as an agent of change has brought about the adoption, by contemporary antisystemic social movements, of an anarchistic praxis that subsequently rejects the state as an agent of change. Yet, the choice of particular case studies over others means that the chosen cases must be 'substantively important' (Mahoney and Goertz 2006: 242). Hence, one must justify why particular case studies were chosen over others.

Justifying the Case Study Choices

Outside of the fact that they illustrate my argument, there are several significant reasons I chose the EZLN and AbM over other possible case study candidates.[2] Firstly, more than other possible cases, both movements have gone a considerable way towards establishing autonomous, 'living' communities in line with anarchist theory. That is, both are particularly developed examples of an anarchistic praxis. Secondly, both are amongst the largest and most influential contemporary antisystemic social movements (Burbach 2001, Gibson 2008: 695). Finally, these cases (both of the 'global south') were chosen because they represent voices distinct and separate from Western manifestations of the so-called 'anti-globalisation' movement (AGM) – the 'anarchistic' movement to which most contemporary academic focus has thus far been dedicated (see Curran 2006, Epstein 2001, Graeber 2002, Wallerstein 2002). Whilst the EZLN, and their significant impact on the AGM, have been extensively analysed, there has been limited focus on the movement's specific rejection of the state as an agent of change. More broadly, limited attention has been paid to specific movements that utilise an anarchistic praxis in the global south. Hence, utilising 'southern' cases will also act to broaden our understanding of movements that utilise an anarchistic praxis, lending further applicability and generalisability (and thus credibility) to my argument.

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[2] In the West, movements like the 'No Border Network', 'Reclaim the Streets', 'The Ruckus Society', 'Ya Basta!', 'Food Not Bombs' and different forms of Indymedia arguably utilise an anarchistic praxis and anarchist principles in the construction of their politics (See Grubacic 2003 and Sellers 2001). Examples from the 'global south' could possibly include the Landless Peasant's Movement (MST) of Brazil (Stedile 2002), the Gandhian Karnataka State Farmers' Association (KRRS), the Zapatistas (Graeber 2002) and AbM.

SOURCE MATERIAL

Connected with the employment of qualitative methodology, the primary source material to be utilised within this thesis includes participant interviews, media releases and speeches (see EZLN 1993 for an example). As I am seeking to understand and analyse the praxis of contemporary antisystemic social movements and also why such a praxis has been adopted (effectively, as outlined above, recreating historical events, or 'telling a story'), it is necessary to engage with participant accounts and self-understanding. However, the utilisation of such sources will necessarily involve hermeneutical analysis. The primary criticism of sources that involve participant contributions and the hermeneutics involved in comprehending them is that the sources and their interpretation may provide partial and biased accounts of participant 'reality'. I will attempt to avoid such criticisms by triangulating my primary sources with the secondary literature that exists. By doing this, I am able to minimise the pitfalls of what are potentially biased and ideological materials. Other (secondary) materials to be used in the construction of my thesis will be academic journal articles and books that help to contextualise and inform my thesis; particularly the theoretical components explored in this chapter, as well as those of Two and Three.

CONCLUSION

This chapter has explored my epistemological and ontological assumptions and the subsequent pursuit of emancipatory knowledge interests entailed in the adoption of a position close to relatively orthodox Frankfurt School critical theory. Within this, I also examined and defended the methodological choices and limitations that necessarily come from this. I began by explicitly developing and justifying the Frankfurt School's general conviction – developed from Marxism – that the purpose of 'social science' should be to contribute to the emancipation of the exploited and dispossessed from structures of domination and exploitation. Following this, I delineated the methodological implications resultant from adopting the epistemological and ontological assumptions entailed in such a pursuit. Within this, I also discussed the specific methodological techniques to be utilised throughout this thesis; firstly, narrative process-tracing, utilised in Chapter Two (in which I will develop a theoretical and historical account of the rise and failure of a 'state-centric' praxis within antisystemic movements), and qualitative case-studies, utilised in Chapter Four (so as to empirically illustrate the core argument of this thesis: that an anarchistic praxis has become, as a result of this failure, a primary point of reference within contemporary antisystemic movements). Finally, I then explored the implications of all of this for the source material to be utilised in the construction of this thesis. As such, I explored the way in which the pursuit of emancipatory knowledge interests has been central in shaping the constitution of this work. In the following chapter, I will be examining the rise to dominance of a 'state-centric' praxis within antisystemic movements of the past and their subsequent 'failure', hitherto, to transform the world and realise the 'liberty and equality' so long promised to the mass of humanity.

CHAPTER TWO: THE STATE AND THE PROMISE OF LIBERATION

THE FAILURE OF THE STATE IN THE PURSUIT OF TRANSFORMATIVE SOCIAL CHANGE

State-centric antisystemic movements have achieved tremendous success in recent political history in gaining (at least partial) power over the state apparatus within most modern political systems. In this sense, they have at least partially achieved their objectives in gaining what they saw as the necessary political power that would later allow them to transform society and achieve the 'liberty and equality' immanent since the French Revolution. It is thus all the more perplexing that, despite some significant historical achievements by these movements, the capitalist world-system remains essentially intact. The transformative changes long promised by antisystemic movements have remained largely unfulfilled. The majority of the problems the antisystemic movements objected to, ranging from alienating wage labour, to the level of democratic participation within society, remain intact. Indeed, most of the formerly antisystemic movements have become (or once were) functionaries of state power, perpetuating many of the grievances they once ostensibly stood against. It is in this failure to produce the transformative social change long promised that the state is increasingly seen to have failed as an agent of change. It is also chiefly for this reason that an anarchistic praxis is now a primary point of reference within contemporary antisystemic movements.

The 'antisystemic' social movement typology, developed by Arrighi, Hopkins and Wallerstein (1989) and further developed by Wallerstein (1990, 2002), refers to the broad range of movements that developed as a coherent response to the capitalist status quo in the early nineteenth century. Prior to this, opposition to capitalism was largely incoherent, ephemeral and unorganised. Though uprisings against capitalism were common, they were never more than fleeting rebellions targeted against specific problems or injustices. As time went on, however, antisystemic forces started to develop institutions in the form of continuing organisation with members and specific political objectives. This chapter begins by exploring this development and how a common 'state-centric' praxis came to define these movements. Following this, I then move on to discuss what Wallerstein (2002) refers to as the 'two step' strategy that these movements proposed for changing the world, the differing ways they proposed to fulfil the first 'step' of this strategy (gaining power over the state apparatus) and the incredible, widespread success these movements had in achieving this first step. The final section of this chapter will explore how state-centric antisystemic movements have 'failed'; particularly, their collective failure in achieving the second step of this strategy, transforming the world. In doing this, I will explore how many antisystemic movements effectively became functionaries of state power and began to – despite some significant achievements – perpetuate the sorts of injustices they once stood against. Thus, I will show how the state has essentially failed as an instrument of transformative social change and explore

how this has influenced the rise of an anarchistic praxis within many contemporary antisystemic movements.

'STATE-CENTRIC' ANTISYSTEMIC MOVEMENTS

From Spartacus' slave uprising against Roman tyranny, to modern day resistance against neoliberal capitalism in the Lacandon Jungle (the EZLN), oppressive social systems have always generated forms of resistance, dissent and revolt. As Marx proclaimed (Connerton 1980: 74–75), and Foucault later reiterated (Hartmann 2003), structures of domination inevitably encourage various forms of resistance. However, whilst opposition to oppression is permanent, it has also been, as Arrighi, Hopkins and Wallerstein (1989:29) note, mostly latent. For a range of reasons, the oppressed have, historically, had minimal agency with which to generate consistent, permanent opposition to the structures of exploitation. There have been times when domination and coercion were particularly severe or the masses so thoroughly deceived by those in power that they have rebelled in a largely spontaneous manner to prevent further exploitation. This has largely taken the form of riots, revolts or migration.

However, these temporary rebellions yielded various – though as a whole, at most partially successful – results. Though some rebellions effectively forced the ruling stratum to reduce systemic exploitation or introduce more just measures, at other times they have failed to do anything. The one continuing characteristic of these revolts is that they were spontaneous and largely short-term in character (Arrighi, Hopkins and Wallerstein 1989: 29). Such uprisings appeared and dissipated with regularity and speed, affecting things as they did. When future rebellions began, they normally had "little explicit relationship with the previous one". For the most part, things remained the same during the early history of the capitalist world-system in which "rebellions were many, scattered, discrete, momentary, and only partially efficacious at best" (Arrighi, Hopkins and Wallerstein 1989: 29–30).

Taking 1848 as a symbolic date, Wallerstein identifies the way in which groups of people involved in what he refers to as 'antisystemic' activity created a new social institution of great political significance to the capitalist world-system: the *organised* 'antisystemic' social movement (Wallerstein 2002: 29). To be antisystemic is, as Wallerstein explains, "to argue that neither liberty, nor equality is possible under the existing system and that both are only possible in a transformed world" (1990: 45). It was in these movements that, for the first time, one saw continuing features, such as members, networks and political objectives (both long and short-term) in rebellious movements. Prior to this, organised antisystemic movements, certain examples not withstanding,[1] had not existed.

In the course of these developments, Wallerstein identifies the way in which antisystemic movements broadly emerged in both 'national' and 'social' forms (Wallerstein 2002: 29). 'Social' movements were principally envisaged as socialist political parties, movements and trade unions in perpetuating class struggle within a particular state against the bourgeoisie and state

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[1] Most prominently, religious movements regularly carried forth organised antisystemic activity; contrary to 'modern' antisystemic movements, however, these movements' goal was, by definition, 'other worldly'. There were also other organised movements that existed, most prominently those in Ancient Greece (i.e. the Stoics) and the forces responsible for the French Revolution as well as some examples of 'anarchical' communities throughout the world (see, for instance, Graeber 2004b). However, for a variety of reasons permanent antisystemic movements were much rarer than they are and have been within capitalist systems since 1848.

managers. Social movements essentially felt that liberty, equality and fraternity, the ideals of the French Revolution, could only be achieved by instituting socialism in place of capitalism. In this sense, the major source of oppression was to be found in the relationship between employers and wage earners and the relationships and institutions resultant from this (especially, but not limited to, the capitalist state, private property and the corporation) (Arrighi, Hopkins and Wallerstein 1989: 30). Conversely, 'national' movements fought for the creation of a nation-state, either by combining separate political units the advocates considered homogenous, or seceding from colonial empires (Goodman 2002: 2–3). National movements saw the major source of oppression in the dominance of one ethno-nationalist group over another. The ideals of the French Revolution could thus only be realised through the formation, by the oppressed group, of equal, parallel and separate social structures (Arrighi, Hopkins and Wallerstein 1989: 31). Wallerstein argues that, although these movements accorded priority to their own social or national objectives – often in specific opposition to their national or social rival – and the two types rarely cooperated outside of temporary necessity, the history of these two movements reveals a set of shared features (Wallerstein 2002: 29–30).

First, as previously discussed, these movements presented themselves as revolutionary alternatives to the social order and thus promised to radically transform social relations (hence, 'antisystemic'). However, it is also true that the two types generally had a more 'reformist' wing – often located in a separate organisation – that advocated social transformation from *within* the system. Nevertheless, those in power generally saw these movements, even the reformist versions, as threats to sociopolitical stability and the sanctity of the status-quo. What is more, it was often very difficult to tell the two apart. At times, 'revolutionaries' would need to compromise to gain or retain power, whereas 'reformists' often realised state power was more limited and limiting than they hoped (examples of this can be seen in the radicalisation of social democratic parties in Western countries in the 1960s). As such, reformist "tactics fed revolutionary tactics", whilst "revolutionary tactics [also] fed reformist tactics" (Wallerstein 1997). Furthermore, many of these movements were long subject to state violence and repression. Members were regularly subject to organised violence by both the state and private forces (Wallerstein 2002: 30).

Second, these movements went through a parallel series of debates over strategy that varied from 'state-centric' perspectives to those that viewed the state as an intrinsic enemy and pursued instead civil and individual transformation. Within the social movements, this debate is exemplified by that between state socialists and anarchists and within national movements, that between 'political' and 'cultural' nationalists (Wallerstein 2002: 30). For a time, statist and anti-state alternatives held a broadly similar influence over the constitution of antisystemic forces. However, the state-centric perspectives eventually proved triumphant, arguing that the immediate source of power and influence is located in the state apparatus (Tilly 1996: 10). According to this view, attempts to ignore the centrality of the state are destined to failure; any libertarian variant would be unable to pursue substantive social transformation and, in any case, would be suppressed by the state. Anti-state alternatives thus came to be dismissed as 'utopian' in that they supposedly 'ignored' political 'realities' (see, for example, Lenin 1992). This is not to say that more libertarian alternatives did not hold influence or did not help to achieve substantial 'progress' (for instance, see the significant role the syndicalist union, the Industrial Workers of the World, played in the creation of the eight hour working day, or the role of anarchism in the Spanish Revolution of

1936[2]), but merely that a state-oriented praxis ascended in relative influence within the antisystemic movements.

THE 'TWO STEP' STRATEGY AND THE STATE APPARATUS

Contrary to more libertarian alternatives, state-centric movements instead articulated what was essentially a 'two step strategy' in that they would first seek to gain power over the state and then follow this by initiating the second step: transforming the world (Wallerstein 2002: 30). Since these movements saw the state as the key political structure, if anything were to change it would be necessary to control the state apparatus. The fact that both the national and social movements concurred on the parallel objective of obtaining state power led them to debates on how to capture this power. Arrighi, Hopkins and Wallerstein (1989) identify two primary ways that state-centric antisystemic forces sought to obtain state power: (1) through 'legal' political persuasion and (2) through the 'illegal' path of insurrection. These two positions are more commonly referred to as 'reformist' or 'revolutionary'.

Socialism, Social Democracy and State Communism

In the social movement, these debates culminated in the creation of the Second and Third Internationals. These two Internationals exemplified the tactical/organisational conflict outlined above in which social democrats ('reformists') and state communists ('revolutionaries') vehemently opposed one another. This was so despite sharing and pursuing the same broad objective of overthrowing capitalism and instituting socialism and that they were based in and of left-wing, working-class origins with a similar antisystemic heritage. Alliances and 'united fronts' became merely tactical and ephemeral. Whilst there are undoubtedly other significant differences that separate the two, there is little room to explore them here. What is important to note, in the context of this thesis, is the way the two different 'wings' see the state and how each one proposes to gain power within the state apparatus.

Traditionally, social democracy has been evolutionary and reformist.[3] Though social democrats proposed making changes from within the capitalism system, social democracy retained its antisystemic character by maintaining that the achievement of liberty and equality was only possible once capitalism was replaced by socialism. Rather than smashing the capitalist state or staging a revolutionary insurrection, social democrats seek the overthrow of capitalism from within the capitalist system itself, promoting the gradual, evolutionary transformation of capitalist society through (representative) democratic, parliamentary means (Steger 1997: 140). Social democracy is thus seen, by its proponents, as a necessary link in the teleological progression through to socialism, whereby capitalism is transformed through a socialistic

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[2] This was one of the foremost examples of anarchist principles being put into widespread practice. Indeed, Sam Dolgoff claims that at least eight million people participated in the libertarian communes and workplace self-management and came closer to "realising the ideal of a free stateless society on a vast scale than any other revolution in human history" (Dolgoff 1974: 5).

[3] It should be noted that there have been 'revolutionary' versus 'reformist' debates *within* social democracy. However, when speaking in this sense, 'social democracy' is meant much more broadly and even includes Marxists, Leninists and other 'revolutionary' socialists (see, for instance, Lenin 1965). When using the term 'social democracy' I am referring to the more widespread, 'reformist' meaning that is now generally attached to it (see Przeworksi 1985).

restructuring of society. Plekhanov expressed this most clearly when stating that (cited in Przeworski 1985: 1):

> Social Democracy views historical development from the standpoint of necessity, and its own activities as a necessary link in the chain of those necessary conditions which combined make the victory of socialism inevitable.

Consequently, social democrats see economic factors as determining both the conditions for the revolution and people's actions under these conditions. Therefore, social democracy is a necessary period in the gradual overthrow of capitalism and transition through to socialism. Upon being elected, social democrats propose that they will, at some (generally undefined) point, enact revolutionary policies and utilise state power to collectivise the means of production and eliminate wage labour so as to eliminate the oppression perpetuated by the capitalist ruling class. An example of this is the 'Socialist Objective'[4] of the Australian Labor Party, which proposes that, once sufficiently establishing political power, the Party will seek "the socialisation of industry, production, distribution and exchange" (cited in McKinlay 1981: 52–53).

Conversely, the 'revolutionaries' of the state-centric social movement, the communists, instead propose 'illegal' insurrection to realise socialism. Communists lambast social democrats as perpetuators of capitalism and accuse them of legitimising it due to their passive acceptance of the processes of capitalist 'democracy'. In contrast to social democrats, communists do not see the capitalist state as a relatively neutral instrument that can be utilised or reformed for socialist ends. Rather, the capitalist state is a 'committee of the bourgeoisie' dedicated to perpetuating the interests of capital and managing the common affairs of the capitalist ruling class (Marx and Engels 2002 [1848]: 221). The capitalist state is merely part of the wider sociopolitical superstructure, an outgrowth of the economic relationships developed within civil society out of the capitalist mode of production (what is generally referred to as the 'economic base'). To ignore the state apparatus, a tool so central in perpetuating the needs of the bourgeoisie, would be to ignore an instrument central to the perpetuation of class oppression and exploitation. As such, it is impossible to utilise such an instrument and reform it for socialist ends. Because the economic base determines the character of the sociopolitical superstructure, the only possible way the working class is able to truly realise the 'liberty and equality' promised by the French Revolution is through the appropriation of political power by a 'dictatorship' of the proletariat. As its initial task, this 'dictatorship' seeks political domination in order to destroy the class relationships existing within capitalist society, abolishing the prior (and most significant) source of domination (Marx and Engels 2004: 54):

> [E]very class which is aiming at domination, even when its domination, as is the case with the proletariat, leads to the abolition of the old form of society in its entirety and of domination in general, must first conquer political power in order to represent its interest in turn as the general interest, which in the first moment it is forced to do.

Thus, the 'political movement of the proletariat' has, as its most immediate goal (Marx 2001: 26):

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[4] It should be noted, however, that this *Objective* has been progressively qualified over the years and has become something of a dead letter. This ties in with the eventual failure of social democracy, to be explored later.

> *... the conquest of political power...* and this naturally requires a previous organisation of the working class developed up to a certain point and arising precisely from its economic struggles... with the object of enforcing its interests in a general form, in a form possessing general, socially coercive force... The working class... [must be trained to take the collective political power] of the ruling classes (emphasis added).

Hence, state communists advocate a working class revolution to smash the capitalist state and replace it with a revolutionary 'proletarian state' – which, out of practical necessity, must be composed of a vanguard of the working class – that would allow for the subsequent transformation of the capitalist system (Lenin 1987: 70–71).

However, this worker's state would expectantly disappear, being only a temporary stage in the teleological transition through to communism. As sketched out in *The Communist Manifesto* (2002 [1848]), this transitionary period would involve, among other things, "the confiscation of the property of all emigrants and rebels", the "abolition of property in land" and the centralisation of all factories and instruments of production, credit and the banking system and communication and transport in the hands of the state (Marx and Engels 2002 [1848]: 243–244). After fulfilling its primary purpose – the dissolution of the class antagonisms inherent within capitalist society – the proletarian dictatorship would collectivise and centralise production in a "vast association of the whole nation" and eliminate wage labour and the dehumanising aspects of the division of labour (Marx and Engels 2002 [1848]: 244). Theoretically, once these "ultimate general results" (Marx and Engels 2002 [1848]: 234) had been achieved and a socialist society had become sufficiently established, this dictatorship – and thus the state – would lose its political character and 'wither away', leaving a libertarian communist society, built on free and voluntary social bonds, that had transformed distribution from "each according to his [sic] ability, to each according to his [sic] needs" (Marx 2008: 27).

The Global Rise to (State) Power of Antisystemic Movements

Despite organisational, ideological and ideational differences, it appeared as though these state-centric forces would collectively achieve their transformative promises on a transnational scale. By the 1970s, they had, in many cases, achieved 'stage one' of the two step strategy (gaining power over the state) and had 'come to power' throughout the world. Social democratic movements had generally established themselves – in some form or another – well before this point and ostensibly held influence within Western political systems.[5] Though this was on an alternating basis in competition with other, usually more conservative parties, they had still achieved power over the state apparatus and were thus in a position to initiate the second stage of their strategy: the transformation of society. National liberation movements assumed power or partially realised their aims of decolonisation throughout Asia and Africa,[6] communist parties ruled over approximately a third of the world[7] – from Eastern Europe to East and South East Asia – and populist movements ascended in Latin America.

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[5] Examples include the Australian Labor Party, the British Labour Party, the German Social Democratic Party [*Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands*] and the Swedish Social Democratic Worker's Party [*Socialdemokratiska Arbetarpartiet*] (Lavelle 2008: 7).

[6] Including in Vietnam, Mozambique, Nicaragua and Bangladesh.

[7] Most prominently, the Soviet Union and the People's Republic of China.

Thus, as of the 1970s, the world faced the following sociopolitical situation: social democratic parties had achieved their primary objective, coming to power and governing Western, capitalist states. Communist parties ruled over much of the world and nationalist and populist movements were strong throughout Asia, Africa and Latin America. As Arrighi, Hopkins and Wallerstein (1989:33) identified, "from the vantage point of 1848 [the anointed point of reference for antisystemic movements], the success of the antisystemic movements has been very impressive indeed".

These antisystemic movements, taken as a whole, had become increasingly important actors in the politics of the world-system. Additionally, other movements emerged that incrementally built upon the critique these movements launched against capitalism; feminist, ecology and civil rights movements all, at least partially, rose from the political struggles initiated by 'social' and 'national' antisystemic movements. Furthermore, the antisystemic movements gained many significant concessions in their struggle against the ruling strata (Arrighi, Hopkins and Wallerstein 1989: 34), including such momentous achievements as the eight hour day, the dissolution of child labour and 'equal pay for equal work' legislation in the West, rapid industrialisation in communist states and widespread decolonisation post-World War Two. To many, it seemed merely a matter of time before humanity realised the eternal promise of emancipation and, in one way or another, relegated capitalism to the dustbin of history.

THE 'FAILURE' OF STATE-CENTRIC MOVEMENTS

Yet when any of these antisystemic movements gained state power — be they social democrats in 'first world' states, communist movements within Eastern Europe or Asia, or 'national liberation' movements in other parts of the world — they failed to live up to their promise of transforming the world, of implementing 'stage two' of the two step strategy mentioned above. As Wallerstein (2002: 32–33) notes, what all of these state-centric movements failed to realise was that state power was more limited than initially thought. Instead of being an autonomous unit, each state is inhibited by being part of a wider interstate system in which no nation's sovereignty is absolute and economic realities are hampered and dictated by the necessity of participating in a global capitalist economy (Chase-Dunn 1981: 19).

Over time, the longer these formerly antisystemic parties or movements stayed in office, the more it appeared as if they were attempting to postpone and even suppress the realisation of their transformative promises (Wallerstein 2002: 32–33):

> The cadres of a militant mobilizing movement became the functionaries of a party in power... in every state in which [these movements] took control... a privileged caste of higher officials, with more power and more real wealth than the rest of the population emerged. At the same time, the ordinary workers enjoined to toil even harder and sacrifice ever more in the name of national development. The militant... tactics that had been daily the bread of the social movement became 'counter-revolutionary', highly discouraged and usually repressed once [the movement] was in office (emphasis added).

Even in states where reforms or 'revolutions' were undertaken, there was increasing disillusionment with the capacity of such movements to bring about substantive change. The majority of the problems the antisystemic movements objected to — ranging from alienating wage labour,

to disenchantment with the level of democratic participation within society, or the role of the state within the international system – remained in place. Alienating wage labour, far from disappearing, has generally increased as a percentage of work activity, whilst wage labour itself, as a result of neoliberalism, has intensified relative to recent historical levels (Harvey 2007: 24–26).[8] Democratic participation has not expanded, either in governmental decision-making, policy development, or at the workplace; indeed, it has in many ways regressed as the workplace and the state (under neoliberalism) become increasingly authoritarian (Harvey 2007: 70–81). Simply put, though there has been social change in parts of the world – particularly in relation to health, education and relative employment guarantees, and this should not be forgotten, devalued or underplayed – there has not been enough (Linklater 1986: 304). The implications of this for the antisystemic movements were huge. The populations of the world drew from this, at best, a negative conclusion about their performance, at worst, they called for revolutionary change (see, for instance, the Soviet Union or China). These populations ceased to believe that state-centric movements would ever bring about the glorious transformative change or egalitarian future that had been promised.

Throughout the interwar period, the terrors of the Soviet experience shook the wider legitimacy of the communist project.[9] However, the long struggle against Hitler and the Second World War allayed many of these fears and provided a degree of legitimacy to the Bolshevik regime. Despite this, the perpetuation of systematic tyranny in the post-war world by a range of communist regimes (most prominently, the USSR and China) continued largely unabated. In light of the continuation of widespread oppression, those living under communist regimes ceased to believe in the possibility of the liberating social transformation so long promised. The masses stopped believing that the proletarian dictatorship would bring about the dissolution of class antagonisms, that it was an agent for progressive change in the teleological transition through to an emancipated future, that alienating and oppressive wage labour would disappear,[10] or that, through continued faith in a communist future, they would escape what had become perpetual oppression at the hands of the state – that the dictatorship itself would eventually fade.

Rather, the centralisation of production, distribution and exchange extolled in works like The Communist Manifesto manifested in the systematic oppression of the masses. The majority of the populations in communist states toiled at the behest of a 'new' bureaucratic ruling class resultant from the investment of so much power in the state (Arrighi, Hopkins and Wallerstein 1989: 34, 100–101). The dictatorship of the proletariat failed to disappear. Instead, around the globe, the aspirations of communist parties for political power prevented the socialistic reconstruction of the economy. As Rudolf Rocker articulated during the interwar period in reference to the horrors of the Bolshevik regime (2004 [1938]: 12–13):

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[8] As Harvey (2007: 25) notes, from the period 1970–2000, productivity increased exponentially, whilst average wages remained stagnant, inequality increased between the richest and poor and the workplace became increasingly regimented and hierarchical as neoliberalism further developed. These trends have not been arrested and indeed, have in many ways been magnified since.

[9] The purpose here is not to debate whether or to what extent regimes like the USSR, Cuba or the People's Republic of China were/are a 'true' reflection of Marxism-Leninism. Rather, I am merely exploring the failure of what can be broadly termed 'state communist' regimes to produce the liberating social change promised.

[10] Workers in state communist regimes still had to sell their labour power to survive, but to one monopolistic 'employer', the state, that gained exclusive control over the lives of its 'employees'. Some have thus referred to state communist regimes as 'state capitalist' (for example, see Cliff 1974). When all industry and property comes to be centralised, as state communists propose, is not this sort of outcome to be expected?

The 'dictatorship of the proletariat,' in which naïve souls wish to see merely a passing, but inevitable, transition stage to real Socialism, has today grown into a frightful despotism and a new imperialism, which lags behind the tyranny of the Fascist states in nothing. The assertion that the state must continue to exist until class conflicts, and classes with them, disappear, sounds, in the light of all historical experience, almost like a bad joke.

Reflecting what was remarked upon in a more general sense previously, communist parties became functionaries of state power. The 'ultimate general results' of the revolution envisioned by Marx were never realised. Once gaining political power, communist parties quickly came to repress the militant tactics that had once been their primary means of political struggle. Actually existing state communist regimes were not agents participating in liberating social transformation in a worldwide struggle against capitalist oppression. Instead, these regimes came to be characterised by an oppressive statist hierarchy that perpetuated systematic tyranny. As the socialist economist, Michael Kalecki, remarked in relation to Poland's transition from capitalism to socialism, though capitalism had been 'abolished', "all we have to do now is to abolish feudalism [sic]" (cited in Sen 1999: 114); disillusionment reflected in the many rebellions against communism[11] and the resultant repudiation of it throughout much of the world (Hobsbawm 1994).

Similarly, long gone is the time when social democrats openly sought the dissolution of capitalism and the evolutionary establishment of socialism. Instead, social democratic parties are, reflecting a global trend, now content with a role in which they act, through government intervention, to 'humanise' or 'civilise' capitalism (see Latham 1998 or Nairn 1973). Kicking off a general tendency beginning in the 1980s, social democrats have even abandoned an historically modest policy agenda that would pursue goals like fuller employment, the limitation and regulation of capital movement, the strengthening of union and worker power and an increase in taxation on corporations and the wealthy (Lavelle 2008: 14–15). Instead social democrats are now satisfied with pursuing the purely reformist aim of "curbing the excesses of capitalism and redistributing [some] power and resources to the disadvantaged and the forgotten" (Seyd and Whiteley 2002: 185). In adopting this goal as an end in itself and rejecting the more ambitious aim of (eventually) overthrowing capitalism, they have sacrificed their antisystemic telos.[12] Furthermore, in their enthusiastic adoption of and conciliation with capitalism, social democratic parties now also have to contend with an ever-dwindling member base. This continues to be compounded by the marked adoption of a neoliberal consensus and the historical shift towards catch-all and cartel party models within capitalist democracies (a trajectory thus far unaltered by the 2007/2008 Global Financial Crisis) (Lavelle 2008: 39–40).

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[11] The list is long and I will thus only explore examples from the two great state-communist experiments; the USSR and China. In the USSR, rebellion began almost immediately, initially springing from sources to the left of the Bolsheviks. The Makhnovists, the Mensheviks and the Kronstadt Rebellion are the early examples at attempts to resist Bolshevik rule (see Guerin 2003 [1970]: 98–108). Later there were revolts in Hungary and Yugoslavia and eventually in Russia, bringing the ultimate downfall of the regime. In the People's Republic of China, similar examples can be found, among others, in the Tiananmen Square rebellions of 1976 and the more infamous rebellion of 1989, both of which linger in world society's collective memory.

[12] This sort of trend is reflected in things like the ALP increasingly disassociating itself from its relatively radical 'Socialist Objective', which was touched on earlier. This was particularly apparent in former-leader, Kevin Rudd's, declaration that the ALP has always fought against more radical strands of socialism and has instead seen its historical "role as what we can do to civilise the market" (cited in Shanahan 2006: 7).

Finally, since taking state power, 'national' antisystemic movements have been responsible for the perpetuation of systematic oppression, domination and violence. Rather than pursuing 'liberation' in the attempted construction of alternative political units – in the form of homogenous nation-states – many contemporary national 'liberation' movements[13] have, instead, been responsible for the committal of grave tyranny through acts of ethnic cleansing, genocide, and state-sanctioned violence (prominent examples including conflicts in the former Yugoslavia and Rwanda throughout the 1990s). Indeed, nationalism and national liberation movements, far from being causes for social 'progress' or a buttress against imperialism, are more readily associated with: (1) regressive, xenophobic parties and movements of the far-right that vehemently oppose multiculturalism and immigration (Lavelle 2008: 30–32) and (2) aggressive, violent ethnic-nationalisms that, in attempts to cultivate homogenous nation-states, perpetuate unmitigated violence in supposed pursuit of this end.

National liberation theorists, like Frantz Fanon, claimed that 'national' liberation struggles would eventually have to give way to a wider 'humanistic' struggle that seeks, as opposed to parochial 'national' emancipation, 'human' emancipation (2001 [1963]: 119–166). However, a similar problem to that of Marxism applies: like the 'dictatorship of the proletariat', at what point does the nationalist ruling class 'know' that 'national' liberation has been achieved? Furthermore, how does one cultivate an inclusive, humanistic society from one that has struggled to be an exclusive, national society? Given the often parochial impulse of 'national liberation' struggles resultant from the regressive dichotomies necessarily produced by the 'us and them' mentality that nationalism cultivates, and the hitherto violent and chauvinistic character of national liberation movements once gaining access to state power, one must question whether the cosmopolitan transformation (of explicitly nationalist movements) is possible, or whether new movements must instead emerge on the failed edifice of nationalist struggles and overcome their limitations (for instance, see Bookchin's criticism of national liberation movements (1995: 68–72)).

Having lost confidence in these movements, most also withdrew their faith in the state as the locus of transformative change. Whilst this does not connote that populations would not support these parties, groups or movements,[14] it does mean much of this support had simply become a 'defensive' measure; for instance, a vote for the lesser of competing electoral evils, not a verification of ideology or expectations (Offe 1994: 116). The fall and transformation of the various communist regimes throughout the world and the unprecedented dominance of neoliberalism both within states and the international system would seem to vindicate such a conclusion. Additionally, the emergence of neoliberalism has exacerbated the failure of state-centric antisystemic forces. This is primarily due to the fact that neoliberalism threatens the egalitarian and liberatory concessions antisystemic movements have managed to gain from the capitalist ruling strata. This has made the failure of the state even more striking, as the few 'victories' that were 'won' are now

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[13] At the behest of figures like Robert Mugabe in Zimbabwe, Idi Amin in Uganda and Slobodan Milosevic in Serbia.

[14] Though in some cases, it also means this. See, for instance, the way that some of the traditional working class has now shifted to the far-right, often on the grounds that traditional social democratic parties no longer represent their interests (Lavelle 2008: 39–40).

under threat, or are even in the process, of being reversed (such as the extent of social spending in capitalist societies (Harvey 2007)).[15]

Consequently, the victories of 'state-centric' antisystemic movements of the past have "proved, in the end, to be failures, or defeats, hidden behind the mask of success. That what always remained unresolved was the role of the people... in what became, ultimately, a dispute between two hegemonies" (Marcos 2004: 4). Once such movements achieved power, they decided on behalf of society, from above, "the correct path" and whilst ousting "the other group from power, seize power and then also decide on behalf of society". This thus becomes a struggle between two hegemonies, one 'good' and one 'bad', "but for the rest of society, things don't [sic] basically change"; oppression and domination remain (Marcos 2004: 5).

The failure of the state in antisystemic praxis has thus confirmed that the mechanisms of state control are incapable of serving the end of liberating social transforming. As Michels' argued in his seminal work on political parties, though vanguardist and representative political organisations are conceived in the pursuit of social change – as the means to an end – these groups tend to ossify into hierarchical, oligarchical and increasingly centralised bodies (a tendency he called the 'iron law of oligarchy') (Michels 1911). The representatives at the top of the hierarchy become increasingly differentiated from the mass body of the organisation. Ordinary members find themselves progressively removed from the decision-making processes as those at the top increasingly impose their will. As rules, procedures and activity become further detached from the mass organisational body, 'the people' increasingly reject it and refrain from participating within it. This simultaneously bestows upon leaders greater decision-making capacity resultant from such disengagement. Meanwhile, the hierarchs become increasingly convinced by their own propaganda and mass adulation, eventually reaching the conclusion they know what is best for 'the masses'. Furthermore, the means of hierarchy and centralisation ('the party' and the state) quickly come to supplant the ends of a liberated society free from oppression and exploitation ('the revolution'). As such, the radical actions that were once the primary means of struggling for liberation come to be denounced out of fear that such actions will, for instance, harm the image of 'the party' (Slattery 2003: 52–53). Whilst this is not to say that liberatory results were never obtained through such means – taken collectively, the state-centric antisystemic forces did, after all, achieve some significant concessions from the ruling strata – the telos of social transformation and the liberation of daily life (the ultimate aim of every revolution) remain unachievable through the mechanisms of state control and come to be eventually supplanted by a desire to maintain power and perpetuate privilege.

Such an outcome acts as a vindication of the anarchist critique of the state and its fundamental incapacity to produce liberating change. As the anarchist historian, Voline, stated, any revolution that is inspired by the state, and subsequently adopts statist forms, even 'provisionally', is lost as "all political power inevitably creates a privileged position for those who exercise it". This is because, "those in power are obliged to create the bureaucratic and repressive apparatus which is indispensible for any authority that wants to maintain itself, to command, to give orders... to govern" (Voline 1974: 538).

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[15] State spending has not decreased under neoliberalism, but has instead been redirected away from welfare ('social spending') towards things like the military, police and the subsidisation of monopoly capital (Harvey 2007: 70–81).

Because of this, contemporary antisystemic movements, taken as a whole, are now "deeply suspicious of the state and of state-oriented action". They are also more inclusive, participatory and non-hierarchical in that the "basis of participation is a common objective… and a common respect for each [individual]'s immediate priorities" (Wallerstein 2002: 35–37). Furthermore, because anarchism does not advocate a "fixed, self-enclosed social system", but rather strives "for the free, unhindered unfolding of all the individual and social forces in life" (Rocker 1938: 31), it is an ideological position suited to a philosophical environment in which the teleological shibboleths of past antisystemic forces are rejected (Chomsky 1970: 5). There is no predestined mode of politics or method of orthodoxy to realise social transformation. Rather, anarchism is grounded in struggle, the defence of individual liberty and autonomy and participatory action. Much more than this, it places a respect for democracy and democratic decision-making at the centre of its ideological makeup. In the rejection of imposed hierarchy is an inherent inclination towards participatory forms of decision-making independent from the inherently oligarchic mechanisms of state power. Indeed, an anarchistic praxis is geared towards subverting these tendencies of power. This perhaps explains why antisystemic social movements, in their contemporaneous rejection of the state and imposed hierarchy, have come towards the adoption of anarchistic principles and praxis.

CONCLUSION

This chapter set out to trace the development and rise to dominance of a 'state-centric' praxis within antisystemic movements and how this praxis subsequently 'failed' these movements in their endeavour to transform the world. I also set out to develop an understanding as to how this has influenced the contemporaneous adoption, by an increasing number of antisystemic movements, of an anarchistic praxis that rejects the state as an agent of change. After exploring how a state-centric praxis came to dominate antisystemic activity, I moved on to discuss the way these state-centric movements proposed to change the world; through a broad 'two step' strategy. As a first step, this strategy involved taking state power. It was only after taking state power that these movements would, theoretically, be able to initiate the second step: transforming the world. The final section of this chapter showed that state-centric movements have fundamentally failed in their endeavour to transform the social order and thus achieve the liberty and equality long promised. Instead, state-centric antisystemic movements became, in various ways, repressive and regressive functionaries of state power.

The result of this was that much of the world lost faith in both the movements and the state as an agent of change. Whilst many still supported the (formerly) antisystemic forces, this support became a measure intended to prevent further social regression, rather than a sign of confidence, or a verification of political expectations. The failure of state-centric antisystemic forces has instead led to the adoption, by many contemporary antisystemic movements, of an 'anarchistic praxis' that rejects the state as an agent of change and actively seeks to subvert hierarchical tendencies. But what does an 'anarchistic praxis' entail? Due to the contested and highly controversial status of anarchism, the next chapter will be dedicated to developing a more thorough and clearer understanding of what anarchism is and what an anarchistic praxis actually involves. It is only in laying this framework that I can then demonstrate the way in which such a praxis has become central within contemporary antisystemic movements (see Chapter Four).

CHAPTER THREE: ANARCHISM AND AN 'ANARCHISTIC PRAXIS'

THE REJECTION OF EXTERNALLY IMPOSED HIERARCHY IN THE PURSUIT OF LIBERTY AND AUTONOMY

Octave Mirbeau effectively encapsulated anarchism's diversity when noting that it "has a broad back, like paper it endures anything", inclusive of acts that are such that an enemy of anarchism could not hope to have been more harmful (quoted in Joll 1964: 145–146). This implies a couple of different things in relation to constructing an overview of anarchist theory and practice. Firstly, anarchism is fallaciously portrayed as an ideology of violence and terror. Whilst there are 'anarchists' that have committed acts of and advocate violence, this portrayal is little more than a caricature that effectively ignores the principles and ideas that inform anarchism. Secondly, and most significantly, there are many schools of thought within the 'anarchist' tradition. In line with this, Guerin asserts that "the rejection of authority and stress on the priority of individual judgement make it natural" for anarchists to reject ideological dogmatism. This is compounded by the fact that systematic theoretical anarchist works, even by the tradition's theoretical 'masters', are sporadic (Guerin 2003 [1970]: 3). What comes from this is a fluid ideological tradition more difficult to comprehend than others in which theoretical 'masters' actively attempt to cultivate a monistic philosophical position. Because of this diversity and contestation, this chapter is necessarily dedicated to clarifying the misunderstandings and misconceptions surrounding anarchism.

Despite the variety, there are certain core beliefs and principles central to anarchism. Anarchism is equally defined by the centrality of and emphasis on 'praxis' as it is by things like anti-statism, a rejection of externally imposed hierarchy, a recognition of the connection between means and ends, the rejection of capitalism and the pursuit of a participatory, decentralised politics. Indeed, the emphasis on praxis is what shapes anarchism and accounts for much of its fluidity, leading David Graeber to assert that anarchists have often expunged 'High Theory' in favour of debates on method and praxis (Graeber 2009: 106).

With this in mind, this chapter will be structured as follows. I will begin by discussing the 'metaphysics' of anarchism. Within this I will explore the anarchist rejection of externally imposed hierarchy that is necessarily entailed in its 'fanatical pursuit of liberty'. In this, I will also explore the anarchist conflation of 'means and ends' and the rejection of the state, all of which flows logically from the rejection of externally imposed hierarchy. This will be followed by an investigation into the relationship between anarchism, socialism and capitalism. Though historically associated with socialism in opposition to capitalism, this association is increasingly contested by 'post-left' anarchists and 'anarcho-capitalists'. I will show that the denunciation of capitalism and association with socialism – but only socialism of a particular type – naturally follow from the rejection of externally imposed hierarchy. After this, I will explore the key site

of conflict within anarchism; the debate between 'individualists' and 'collectivists'. By exploring the way the two positions broadly complement one another in both theory and practice, I will show why anarchism should be seen as a *dialectic* of individualism and collectivism. Furthermore, I will tease out how the ontological assumptions impact upon the type of praxis pursued. The chapter will then be brought together with a deliberation on the way in which anarchists highlight the necessity of the unification of theory and practice. Due to their theoretical orientation, anarchists pursue decentralisation, direct democracy and the construction of anti-hierarchical social structures within the realm of civil society, premised on mutualism and reciprocity, rather than coercion and constraint. It is only in pursuing this praxis that anarchists believe a liberated society – 'another world' free from oppression – can be created.

ANARCHIST METAPHYSICS: OPPOSITION TO IMPOSED HIERARCHY AND THE REJECTION OF THE STATE

Central to anarchism is the primacy of the individual. Human beings are seen to possess intrinsic moral worth, forming the existential core of anarchist ideology as the teleological pursuit of individual liberty. To be coerced or constrained in any way is to be debased and degraded and thus to violate this central principle (Jennings 1999: 132–133). This sentiment is expressed most clearly by Bakunin, who identified himself as a "fanatical lover of liberty", considering it to be the "unique condition under which intelligence, dignity and human happiness can develop and grow" (Bakunin 2008 [1871]: 76). However, this liberty is not the kind that 'bourgeois liberalism' extols. To Bakunin, liberalism advocates a "purely formal liberty conceded, measured out, and regulated by the State, an eternal lie which in reality represents nothing more than the privilege of some founded on the slavery of the rest". Instead, he advocated liberty "that consists in the full development of all the material, intellectual, and moral powers that are latent in each person; liberty that recognises no restrictions other than those determined by the laws of our own individual nature" (Bakunin 2008 [1871]: 76). In this way, such 'laws' cannot be regarded as restrictions since they would not be imposed by any external power, but are instead inherent and immanent, thus "forming the very basis of our material, intellectual and moral being" (Bakunin 2008 [1871]: 76).

Anarchism is thus premised on opposition to and a rejection of externally imposed hierarchy. The coercive imposition of obligation is seen to violate the intrinsic liberty of the individual. As Chomsky identifies, these, the central ideas of anarchism, grew out of the Enlightenment. Their roots are to be found in Jean-Jacque Rousseau's *Discourse on Inequality* (1984 [1755]), Humboldt's *The Limits of State Action* (1969 [1792]) and Immanuel Kant's insistence that "freedom is the precondition for acquiring the maturity for freedom, not a gift to be granted when such maturity is achieved" (cited in Chomsky 1970: xi). To Chomsky, it is anarchism that has preserved the "radical humanist message of the Enlightenment and the classical liberal ideas" that were perverted to sustain and legitimise the emerging capitalist social order (Chomsky 1970: xi). What these different works have in common is an insistence that freedom is not something to be bestowed from above or legitimately withheld from without and that arbitrary authority should be questioned and dismantled if found to lack justification for its existence.

This is exemplified in Humboldt's objection to the arbitrary state intruding on the liberty of the individual. This objection stems from the fact that the state tends to "make man [sic] an in-

strument to serve its arbitrary ends, overlooking his [sic] individual purposes" (Humboldt 1969 [1792]: 69). Social dislocation and alienation result from this external imposition because "whatever does not spring from a man's [sic] free choice... remains alien to him [sic]" (Humboldt 1969 [1792]: 28). Whilst under conditions of liberty human beings may be elevated to artists who, through their own free labour, "cultivate their intellect, ennoble their character and exalt and refine their pleasures", when merely reacting to the demands of an external authority, society may admire what is produced, but despise what one must become to produce it (Humboldt 1969 [1792]: 27). Humboldt takes this further, proclaiming that whilst opposition to the state and the external imposition of authority may threaten a breakdown of the existing social order, people would necessarily attempt to find and construct new social bonds to replace those that existed previously as the "isolated man [sic] is no more able to develop than the one who is fettered" (Humboldt 1969 [1792]: 98). It is the rejection of externally imposed hierarchy that most clearly delineates anarchism from other political ideologies. Given the intrinsic moral worth of the individual, the imposition of authority external to one's direct consent is considered illegitimate as it violates the innate liberty of the individual.

In line with this, and through subsequent historical analysis, anarchists see the state as the primary perpetrator of coercion and constraint and the most egregious example of externally imposed hierarchy. Leo Tolstoy, for example, viewed the state as the foremost usurper of liberty and perpetrator of violence (Christoyannopoulos 2008: 85). Government is seen as the locus of this, the operationalisation of state power. Consequently, it follows that anarchism is necessarily anti-state and anti-government in the pursuit of individual liberty. As Proudhon polemically declared (2004 [1851]: 294):

> To be governed is to be... spied upon, directed, law-driven, numbered, regulated, enrolled, indoctrinated, preached at, controlled, checked, estimated, valued, censured, commanded, by creatures, who have neither the right, nor the wisdom, nor the virtue to do so... To be governed is to be... repressed, fined, vilified, harassed, hunted down, abused, clubbed, disarmed, bound, choked, imprisoned, judged, condemned, shot, deported, sacrificed, sold, betrayed... That is government; that is its justice; that is its morality.

As such, the notion of autonomy from the state is central to anarchism and its practical applications.

Closely related to this, anarchism holds that individuals should not be represented by another; such action would be inherently coercive as people are not making their own decisions. If people are unable to directly participate in decision-making, then do we not again have the imposition of hierarchy, of leaders and the led? This concern correlates with the crucial anarchistic conflation of 'means and ends' (Franks 2006: 99). Once existing, hierarchy and power are likely to perpetuate themselves. To an anarchist, one must utilise means in line with ideas of liberty and autonomy in achieving one's ends (Graeber 2004b: 7). In this there is an explicit rejection of externally imposed 'representation' as anarchists seek autonomy from hierarchy as the only avenue in achieving *individual liberty.* Once one compromises their means in achieving some sort of teleological ends, the means are instead likely to supplant the ends.

The conflation of means and ends also shapes the anarchical preoccupation with modes of organisation and political praxis (Graeber 2004b: 7). How can undemocratic praxis realise democratic ends? How can liberation be achieved through coercion and violence? Would this coercion

not merely reconstitute domination and impose new forms of hierarchy? As Bookchin notes, the failure of past antisystemic forces has made it clear that one cannot separate revolutionary processes (the means) from revolutionary goals (the ends) (Bookchin 2004: 11).

This emphasis on means and ends also shapes the anarchist rejection of and hostility towards the Marxian notion of the 'dictatorship of the proletariat'. Anarchists have long warned about the intrinsic dangers of state bureaucracies pursuing 'socialism' or working towards the realisation of a 'socialist' state. It is in this vein that Bakunin famously and presciently warned of a 'red bureaucracy' propagating a tyranny worse than any to have been previously experienced (Bakunin 1972: 329). This rejection of state socialism is born from a rejection of the notion that an instrument of domination – the state – can be used to achieve liberation and alleviate domination; that violence and coercion can achieve liberty, equality and justice; ultimately that one cannot separate one's means from one's ends. As Bakunin declared (2005: 179):

> They [the Marxists] say that this state yoke, this dictatorship [of the proletariat], is a necessary transitional device for achieving the total liberation of the people: anarchy, or freedom, is the goal, and the state, or dictatorship, the means. Thus, for the masses to be liberated they must first be enslaved.

ANARCHISM, SOCIALISM AND CAPITALISM

From the rejection of the state, Engels mistakenly asked why anarchists "confine themselves to crying out against the political authority of the state", whilst effectively ignoring the more significant source of tyranny encapsulated in the relationship between capitalists and wage-earners (Engels 2001 [1872]: 75).[1] Contrary to this persistent characterisation (for modern examples, see Draper 1970 or Fotopolous 2001), the anarchist objection to externally imposed hierarchy entails much more than opposition to the state. It is a rejection of the arbitrary imposition of social relations in any form. Indeed, one can find consistencies in the anarchist denunciation of externally imposed hierarchy with the 'early' Marx's discussion on alienation in that both proclaim a vision of society in which externally imposed social relations are replaced by the free formation of social bonds. According to Marx, the "alienation of labour", when work is external to the worker and not part of their nature, but rather something imposed from without, causes it to be not only personally unfulfilling, but physically exhausting and mentally debasing (Marx 1956: 159–160). Alienated labour effectively "casts some of the workers back into a barbarous kind of work and turns others into machines [due to the exhaustive pursuit of the division of labour]", thus depriving human beings of their social character, "free conscious activity" and a "productive life" (Marx 1992: 325).

Though increasingly contested by the right, anarchism has traditionally adopted a similar analysis of capitalist social relations. As Malatesta argued, when the oppressed "sought to overthrow both state and property – then it was that anarchism was born" (1993: 19). Anarchists oppose both the state and property in that both involve the external imposition of hierarchy by one over another and thus constitute forms of arbitrary domination. Though often cited as a 'right-wing' anarchist, Benjamin Tucker associated anarchism with socialism on the grounds of its opposition

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[1] A relationship that, when put to an end, would also, according to Engels, put to an end political tyranny (Engels 2001 [1872]: 75–76).

to private property (in favour of 'possessions') and the exploitation of labour by capital that necessarily follows from this (Tucker 2005 [1893]: 361–362). Under capitalism, proprietors are seen to dominate workers through exclusive, private control over the means of production and hence the terms of employment, the frequency of labour and material income. In effect, anarchists have historically seen the capitalist as one who steals from the worker through wage slavery, thus directly impacting on one's propensity to live a life free from oppression and exploitation. After all, "property is theft!" (Proudhon 2007 [1840]), it propagates a relationship built on deference and domination. In capitalist society, the state is seen to be complicit in this act as it creates and enforces the laws maintaining the capitalist status-quo whilst also necessarily propagating and pandering to the interests of capital. This was explicitly demonstrated in 1871, when the Paris Commune was 'drowned in blood' as troops of the French government, acting from Versailles, reconquered Paris and violently re-established the capitalist order. As Marx lividly declared (Marx and Engels 2008 [1871]: 62, 66):

> The civilization and justice of the bourgeois order comes out in its lurid light whenever the slaves and drudges of that order rise against their masters. Then this civilization and justice stand forth as undisguised savagery and lawless revenge... the infernal deeds of the soldiery reflect the innate spirit of that civilization of which they are the mercenary vindicators... The bourgeoisie of the whole world, which looks complacently upon the wholesale massacre after the battle, is convulsed by horror at the desecration of brick and mortar.

Whilst this instrumentalist view of the capitalist state is, in many ways, problematic,[2] it reflects the view that the capitalist system, be it structurally or instrumentally, is ultimately backed by the power, coercion and violence of the state. Contemporaneously, one can see the centrality of the state to capitalism in, for instance, the way that neoliberalism has relied on state power and military coercion to accomplish its utopian vision of global capitalism (see Paley 2001). Additionally, through intergovernmental organisations, such as the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank and the World Trade Organisation, policies have been pursued to alter the ways in which states and markets function in order to make their operation more conducive to the whims of global capital (Stiglitz 2003). Accordingly, one can see here a long held association of capitalism and its central institutions and precepts with the state hierarchy and inequality in violation of individual dignity and liberty; the antithesis of anarchist aspirations.

Anarchism is thus "the confluence of the two great currents which during and since the French Revolution have found such characteristic expression in the intellectual life of Europe: socialism and liberalism" (Rocker 1938: 16). Anarchism is necessarily anti-capitalist in that it opposes the economic system of "exploitation of man *by* man [sic]" (Rocker 1938: 28). As explored above, capitalism is seen by anarchists to impose a form of hierarchy as dangerous and destructive as that of the state. However, anarchism also opposes "the domination of man *over* man [sic]" (Rocker 1938: 28) that has come to characterise much of the history of state socialism. It is in this

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[2] As so-called 'Neo-Marxists' have shown, instrumentalist views of the state, such as those propagated by Marx, are unable to explain several things. I will cite two such examples, made famous by Fred Block. First, instrumentalist accounts are unable to "make sense of marginal improvements in the positions of subordinate classes within continuing relations of dominance [the rise of the welfare state]". Second, instrumentalist theorists also made "implausibly strong assumptions about the conscious unity and coordination of dominant groups [such as the bourgeoisie]" (Block 1984: 32)

that one finds the insistence that socialism must be of a libertarian spirit or it will not be at all. Because of this, anarchism can rightfully be regarded as 'libertarian socialism'. It is also in this vein that Adolph Fischer famously declared that "every anarchist is a socialist, but every socialist is not necessarily an anarchist" (Fischer cited in Foner 1977: 81).

Therefore, an anarchist will consistently oppose capitalism in favour of socialism, but will also be a socialist of a particular type. Anarchists, not only oppose alienated labour in anticipation of a future in which capital is appropriated by the entire mass of workers, but also maintain that this appropriation be direct and not managed or carried out by a vanguard claiming to 'represent' them. Anarchists thus also oppose the organisation of production, or anything else, by the state. This necessarily entails opposition to state socialism, the command of state bureaucrats over production as well as the command of any other form of imposed, arbitrary hierarchy, be it scientists, or unelected managers (Pannekoek 1947). The goal of anarchism is liberation from exploitation. In contrast to state socialists, anarchists claim that this goal can never be reached by a new class imposing itself and replacing the existing order, but can only be realised by people liberating themselves from all forms of externally imposed hierarchy.

INDIVIDUALISM AND COLLECTIVISM

Despite the broad philosophical agreements established *within* anarchism regarding the rejection of externally imposed hierarchy and, with this, the tyranny of the state and capitalism,[3] alleged ontological differences remain a major source of debate. The most significant of these, due to the implications for the way in which anarchism is practiced, is the perceived dichotomy between 'individualists' and 'collectivists'. Individualists are associated with more egoistic strands of anarchism. 'Individualism' is often a pejorative conceptualisation levelled against those weary of collectivist or 'communistic' strands of anarchism. Conversely, there are 'collectivists', covering a diverse range of positions inclusive of mutualists, syndicalists and communists. Often seen as the archetypal anarchist position, collectivism is most widely associated with anarchism historically. Presented in such a dualistic form, this dichotomy is, ostensibly, the major divide within anarchism (see Bookchin 1995).

Individualists take the *unitary* individual and hold them to be the ontological basis of society. Individualists see society as potentially totalitarian (due to the tyrannical hold opinion and sentiment can have over one's actions and thoughts) and deduce that freedom can only be achieved when the individual breaks free of the constraints society imposes. Liberty can only be realised in the fulfilment of the desires of one's Ego and the realisation "of the all powerful I" (Stirner 1995 [1844]: 36). Thus, freedom is not something conceded or given, but something which must be willed. There is no external judge "who can decide whether" one is "right or wrong". The only things one is obliged to are those things done with a free mind. To emancipate oneself, one must begin by engaging in a process of 'desanctification', existentially ridding oneself of not only "bourgeois morality", but the internalised values imposed from birth by institutions like the family and the church and the wider social order (Stirner 1995 [1844]: 331). Subsequently, the individual has the right to be whatever they have the strength to be, as whatever is truly accomplished is that which is willed as a unique individual, something "neither the state, society, nor humanity can master" (Stirner cited in Guerin 2003 [1970]: 28). Thus, for the individualist,

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[3] Even 'lifestyle' or 'post-left' anarchists reject both the state and capitalism.

true emancipation is only found in the emancipation from the 'tyranny' of society. As the 'public passion for morality' enslaves people more effectively than any government, society itself is a tyranny to be overcome.

However, this individualism leads one to the conclusion that social and communal life is impossible. Antisocial aphorisms such as "we do not aspire to communal life but to a life apart"; "the people's bad fortune is my good fortune!" and "if it is right for me it is right. It is possible that it is wrong for others: let them take care of themselves!" (Stirner cited in Guerin 2003 [1970]: 28) leads one to a political praxis reduced to the pursuit of egoistic, individualistic solutions to inherently social problems. Consequently, one can only achieve freedom through the repudiation of social ties. It is from this that the notion of the 'Temporary Autonomous Zone' (TAZ) has grown. This is an idea which posits that people, through fleeting acts of rebellion and the perpetration of chaos, are able to emancipate themselves from the hierarchies society 'inevitably' imposes, but are only able to do so temporarily and to a necessarily limited extent (Bey 2003). Problematically, this sort of individualism both ignores the necessity of synthesis between the voluntary collective and the free individual and the possibility of substantive emancipation through the reconstitution of society. Though a similar abhorrence of collective coercion is shared by social anarchists who, like Stirner, reject the coercion, violence and obligation associated with state socialism and communism, social anarchists also reject the 'individualistic utopianism' that agglomerates unrelated individualities with no intrinsic connection and no latent collective power.

In rejecting this egoistic individualism, social anarchists instead allege society and circumstance to be the basis of individual development. Though the integrity and autonomy of the individual are 'primordial', the individual does not exist independently of history and society. Instead, humans rely on one another to survive, flourish and develop (Kropotkin 1990 [1892]: 27). Hence, social anarchists see humans as essentially social beings that are unable to effectively function without the development of social bonds and, consequently, unable to achieve happiness or pursue the just society in any substantive manner.

However, despite these differences, anarchism is, as Guerin notes, to a certain extent, about the synthesis of, rather than the conflict between, individualism and collectivism. All anarchists are to differing extents, individualists and collectivists in that both the "individual" and the "the masses" influence and inspire anarchism (Guerin 2003 [1970]: 32–33). For instance, though Stirner was an egoist individualist who maintained that the (seemingly ahistorical) 'Self' should seek only his or her own fulfilment as the telos of human action, he nevertheless advocated people unionise into 'association' as it is "best for their welfare if they unite with others" (Stirner 1995 [1844]: 309). The one caveat of this association is that it must be "free and voluntary" and subject to repudiation, otherwise it merely constitutes another form of coercion and hierarchy. As such, one must distinguish between the society a priori established, the one built on coercion and constraint, and one constructed through human agency, of association and voluntarism. Though any form of society implies a level of sacrifice and restraint on the part of the individual, such restraint is voluntary and thus such a society more legitimate (Stirner 1995 [1844]: 309). This is in contrast with more authoritarian forms of state socialism, which hold that fraternity is to be enforced, through coercive, hierarchical mechanisms if necessary, so solidarity can be maintained and the 'revolution' achieved. As explored in Chapter Two, it is only once the revolution has been achieved (however it may be defined by a 'vanguardist' group), class contradictions effectively eradicated, the 'counter revolutions' of capital put down and socialism thoroughly 'developed' that the statist hierarchy will 'wither away' and humanity left to freely and sponta-

neously develop (Lenin 1992: 80–81). This, what essentially equates to an external imposition of authority in order to achieve a libertarian society, simply enters the individual into new forms of social obligation and hierarchy (thus constituting what is essentially a form of slavery). It is only a socialism free from coercion and obligation, in which association is freely formed, that freedom can be substantively achieved (Guerin 2003 [1970]: 30).

Within anarchism there is thus a rejection of both the coercion of obligatory collectivism and the egoism of unfettered individualism. As Bakunin asserted, the only legitimate end of collective social activity is for the betterment of the individual. Human society can only find progress in developing from an ontological basis of individual freedom as "[t]he liberty of man [sic] consists solely in this: that he obeys natural laws because he has *himself* [sic] recognised them as such, and not because they have been externally imposed upon him [sic] by any extrinsic will whatever, divine or human, *collective or individual*" (emphasis added) (Bakunin 2008 [1876]: 30). However, Bakunin developed this substantive notion of freedom further than individualists like Stirner by conceptualising liberty in a positive sense, claiming that individuals can only become free through enlarging the freedom of others and can only fulfil their individuality by "complementing it through all the individuals around [them], and only through work and the collective force of society". Though membership in an anarchist society would be voluntary, Bakunin was confident that because of the substantial advantages it offers "membership will be chosen by all". Humans should thus be seen as "the most individual and the most social of the animals" in the sense that "all social life is simply the continual mutual dependence of individuals and the masses. Even the strongest and most intelligent individuals… are at every moment of their lives both promoters and products of the desires and actions of the masses" (Bakunin cited in Guerin 2003 [1970]: 33).

Therefore, the individual is at the core of anarchism. In the pursuit of liberty, the individual is encouraged to enter into free and voluntary association in order to maximise liberty whilst also maximising the potential of his or her capacities and providing mutual support and reciprocity to others within society. However, if the abstract, collective entity of society fails in this endeavour or degenerates into coercion, then the individual ought to reject it and rebel against it as it no longer fulfils its only legitimate teleological purposes: the betterment of the individual, the improvement of their social circumstance and the cultivation of more just, libertarian social relations. As Bookchin argued (2004: 10):

> It is plain that the goal of revolution today must be the liberation of daily life. Any revolution that fails to achieve this goal is counterrevolution. Above all, it is we who have to be liberated, our daily lives, with all their moments, hours and days, and not universals like 'History' and 'Society'. The self must always be *identifiable* in the revolution, not overwhelmed by it. The self must be perceivable in the revolutionary process, not submerged by it. There is no word that is more sinister in the 'revolutionary' vocabulary than 'masses'. Revolutionary liberation must be a self-liberation that reaches social dimensions, not 'mass liberation' or 'class liberation' behind which lurks the rule of an elite, a hierarchy and a state. If a revolution fails to produce a new society by the self-activity and self-mobilisation of revolutionaries, if it does not involve the forging of a self in the revolutionary process, the revolution will once again circumvent those whose lives are to be lived every day and leave daily life unaffected. Out of the revolution must emerge a self that takes full pos-

session of daily life, not a daily life that takes full possession of the self (emphasis author's own).

Thus, whilst generally enamoured with collectivism, anarchism should also be seen simultaneously as an attempt to substantively promote and preserve the autonomy of the individual. In an anarchical society "the eternal aspiration for individual differentiation will find expression in a thousand ways and will not be submerged by any levelling process... Individualism, personal taste, and originality will have adequate scope to express themselves" (de Santillan 1937: 48).

As has been hinted at, the debates between collectivists and individualists go to the very heart of the practice of anarchism. As previously explored, 'individualistic utopianism' ignores the necessity of synthesis between the voluntary collective and the free individual. Instead, it agglomerates disparate individualities and assumes they have no inherent relationship and no potential collective power. Such a conception of the human condition renders the species unable to resolve problems of common interests. This individualism connotes that any collective activity – even those that pursue direct democracy and the subversion of hierarchy – merely constitute a form of collective tyranny; making collective social activity (and thus the reconstitution of the social order) impossible. Conversely, 'pure' collectivism ignores the role of voluntarism in the construction of libertarian social structures. Instead, the individual is subsumed by the collective as they are coerced – be it through insidious social mechanisms or overt violence – into collective social arrangements. Between these two extremes, the synthesis of individualism and collectivism allows for the pursuit of a more programmatic anarchism in which both the means and ends of political activity are the creation of non-hierarchical, directly democratic social structures (and the reformulation of existing hierarchical ones) independent of the state in the realm of civil society. This sort of praxis recognises the need for collective solutions to the problems of society, but also recognises that it is illegitimate to coerce people into social formation. Instead, social transformation can only occur through the collective, concerted action of people, but only action that is instigated at the behest of people themselves.

As such, anarchism, outside of more extreme variants of individualism, has never been about 'non-organisation'. Anarchists recognise that human beings are essentially social animals that must necessarily coexist. Because of this, it is more accurate to say that debates within anarchism have, more often, revolved around questions of what are the most legitimate *forms* of organisation. In the pursuit of anarchism, individuals and communities are to simultaneously decide upon and live social arrangements, rather than them being imposed from without or after a particular 'Revolutionary' moment. This coalesces with the point various anarchists, including Chomsky, Graeber and Rocker, have made: that it would be arrogant to assume we know enough about human nature or how some sort of future anarchical society would function to definitively declare how it would be organised, what it would be like, or on what basis it would develop. Instead, it is more important to practice more participatory, democratic forms of decision-making; strive for the development of non-hierarchical social structures and debate over legitimate forms of social, political and economic organisation (Chomsky 2005: 191–194, Graeber 2004b: 7–8). Indeed, it is through this conflation of practice and theory that one engages in revolutionary praxis.

AN ANARCHISTIC PRAXIS

Anarchism, more than any other ideological position, puts debates on method and practice on an equal footing with philosophical questions, or 'High Theory'. This, as Graeber explains, is the expected outcome when such an emphasis is put on subverting and avoiding hierarchy (Graeber 2009: 106):

> [Debates within anarchism] always emerge from some kind of organisational principle or form of practice: Anarcho-Syndicalists and Anarcho-Communists, Insurrectionists and Platformists, Cooperativists, Individualists, and so on. Anarchists are distinguished by what they do, and how they organise themselves to go about doing it. And indeed this has always been what anarchists have spent most of their time thinking and arguing about... [Rather than arguing about broad] philosophical questions that preoccupy Marxists, such as, "Are the peasants a potentially revolutionary class?" (anarchists tend to think this is something for the peasants to decide)... anarchists tend to argue about what is the truly democratic way to go about a meeting, at what point organisation stops being about empowering people and starts squelching individual freedom. Is "leadership" necessarily a bad thing? Or, alternately, about the ethics of opposing power: what is direct action? Should one condemn someone who assassinates a head of state? Is it ever okay to break a window?... *Anarchism has tended to be an ethical discourse about revolutionary practice* [emphasis added].

But what sort of ethical discourse is used by those who are collectively attempting to bring about a world in which people are free to govern themselves – as anarchism promises? First and foremost, the rejection of externally imposed hierarchy presupposes that 'another world is possible'. Entailed in a rejection of externally imposed hierarchy is an implicit assumption that institutions of domination like the state and social structures like capitalism, patriarchy and racism are not inevitable and certainly not natural. It is a rejection of positivist assumptions that the social, political and economic world exists a priori (Graeber 2004b: 10). Instead, one is aware that the world is a subjective historical and social construction. Yet this poses the classical conservative question: how do we know it is possible to transcend these forms of hierarchy? This question, so often levelled against perceived 'utopianisms', often leads to the more serious objection that utopianism has produced some of the great horrors; that Stalinists, Maoists and other 'idealists', in attempts to create impossibly 'utopian' societies, ended up killing millions (see Courtois 1999).

This argument, however, belies a fundamental misconception: that the pursuit of a better world is, in and of itself, the problem. Stalinists, Maoists and Leninists did not murder and commit unmitigated horror because they imagined limitless possibilities and hoped for a liberated future, but rather because they were adamant that their hopes were scientific certainties. Leading again back to the problems a positivist epistemology propagates, this promoted within such revolutionaries the idea that they had a legitimate right to impose their revolutionary visions on others, through viciously violent means if necessary. In contrast to this, anarchists propose nothing of the sort. To an anarchist, there is nothing inevitable about history, no pending revolutionary moment, no scientifically determined social structure (Graeber 2004b: 10); 'another world' is something to be forged through dialogue and consent, through participatory decision-making.

One cannot further the pursuit of liberty and equality by developing and imposing new forms of coercion through the 'barrel of a gun' (Mao 1972: 61). This would be merely to construct and impose new forms of hierarchy, violating individual liberty and autonomy.

Hence, anarchism entails a rejection of 'representative' mechanisms in which one imposes decisions on another. In this, there is particular opposition to the *centralised* state (Graeber 2003: 332). In the practical exercise of collective decision making, anarchists instead advocate decentralisation to prevent the rise of *arbitrary* authority and externally imposed hierarchy (Bakunin 1953: 271). However, this is not only decentralisation in a political sense – though it is, of course, also this – but also in an economic sense. It is in this way that a participatory society/revolution[4] can be constructed; one where people are able to directly participate in decision-making processes. This dictates that where collective decision-making is necessary, all arrangements must be arrived at through methods amenable to participatory practices independent from the state. This, what Bookchin describes as 'libertarian municipalism', is designed to minimise hierarchy and break up power into smaller localities (1991). In pursuit of this, anarchists advocate 'social' – rather than 'political' – revolution. This entails the creation of directly democratic social institutions autonomously within the realm of civil society and subsequently strengthening those institutions until they are able to replace the existing statist system (Baker 2002: 132). The creation of participatory democracy also entails the grassroots collectivisation of political and economic organisations with the aim of producing alliances that are able to resist and oppose the power of governmental agencies and corporations. Thus, a libertarian society can only be realised through a libertarian revolution.

Sharing similarities with Kantian deontology, liberty is not something to be 'delivered' to the masses as the telos of the 'revolution'. Non-hierarchical social structures cannot be forced or legislated into existence in a post-revolutionary epoch. Instead, these structures must be derived within the process of revolution; their construction must be both the means and ends of revolution, necessarily alongside the dissolution of power, hierarchy, private property and exploitation. This, known variously as 'dual power' or 'counterpower', is about building "the structure of the new society in the shell of the old" (Industrial Workers of the World 2010) until the point at which the old shell can be discarded. Though one cannot know precisely what such structures would look or function like, in practice, their realisation entails the creation of local citizen assemblies in which the majority of decisions are to be made, confederalism for decisions requiring large-scale input (Ward 1992) and the propagation of workplace self-management, rather than capitalist or state bosses dictating economic management (Bookchin 1999: 151–152).

Furthermore, because the liberty of the individual is seen as paramount, anarchists also oppose externally imposed hierarchy because it is unjust to coerce individuals into social formation. To be forced into 'revolution' would necessarily violate the consent of the individual and thus amount to an external imposition of hierarchy. This entails a self-conscious rejection of vanguardism. Rather, individuals must freely engage with and participate in revolutionary activity, lest it amount to counterrevolution. Anarchists instead harbour that individuals will voluntarily engage in the construction of social order due to a necessary inclination towards sociability and mutual aid; existence necessitates it. According to Kropotkin, mutual aid is as significant in

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[4] I place the two together because, to an anarchist, both are created at the same time. The act of an anarchist revolution also entails the simultaneous creation of participatory institutions that subvert hierarchy. Indeed, the creation of a directly democratic society is both the means and ends of the revolution; hence the notion of 'participatory society/revolution'.

evolutionary development and the construction of human civilisation as mutual struggle as it "favours the development of such habits and characters as insure the maintenance and further development of the species, together with the greatest amount of welfare and enjoyment for the life of the individual" (2008 [1902]: 4). Human beings are thus reliant on one another not only for their base survival (for instance, how would modern societies go about producing things without the collective exercise of labour?) but for their own fulfilment in escaping, or at least minimising, alienation (intellectual and artistic pursuit are not just the product of an individual, but history and society) and that together, they are able to, intersubjectively, construct a better world, free from structural domination and exploitation.

CONCLUSION

Historically, anarchism has been caricatured to the point that it is widely accepted to be either shameless utopianism on one hand, or the nihilistic pursuit of chaos and violence on the other. However, due to its centrality within contemporary antisystemic praxis, this chapter sought to rectify this and develop a more considered conceptualisation so as to draw out what an anarchistic praxis actually entails. Though an ideology of incredible variety, there are core principles and values that clearly differentiate anarchism from other ideological positions. Central to anarchism is the rejection of the state and externally imposed hierarchy necessarily entailed in the pursuit of individual liberty. It is from this basis that the other core principles of anarchism develop.

This chapter began by exploring the 'metaphysics' of anarchism. Within this I discussed the rejection of externally imposed hierarchy that is necessarily entailed in anarchism's 'fanatical pursuit of liberty'. In this I also analysed the anarchical conflation of means and ends and the rejection of the legitimacy of the state, all of which develop from the rejection of externally imposed hierarchy. This was followed by an investigation into the relationship between anarchism, socialism and capitalism. Though historically associated with socialism in opposition to capitalism, this association has been contemporaneously contested by so-called 'post-left' anarchists and 'anarcho-capitalists'. However, in defiance of these contestations, I showed that the rejection of capitalism necessarily follows from the anarchist rejection of externally imposed hierarchy, as does the embrace of a 'libertarian' form of socialism. After this, I explored the key philosophical debate within anarchism; that between 'individualists' and 'collectivists'. This ontological dichotomy has long dominated debate within anarchism and thus the type of praxis anarchists pursue. Instead, by exploring the complementarities between the two positions, I illustrated that anarchism should be seen as an attempted dialectic between individualism and collectivism; necessarily impacting on the praxis pursued. The chapter was then brought together with a reflection on the broad type of praxis that develops from this complex theoretical outlook. Due to their theoretical orientation, anarchists pursue decentralisation, direct democracy and – as a consequence of these things – the construction of anti-hierarchical social structures within the realm of civil society premised on mutualism and reciprocity, rather than coercion and constraint. It is only in practicing politics in such a manner that anarchists contend it is possible to escape, or at least minimise, hierarchy and so maximise the equal liberty of all. Long relegated to the dust-bin of history, an anarchistic praxis – in which the state and the external imposition of hierarchy are rejected – has come to, again, play a prominent role in the constitution of antisystemic social

movements. The final substantive chapter of this thesis will analyse examples of this emergence so as to illustrate the empirical validity of my argument.

CHAPTER FOUR: ENOUGH IS ENOUGH! TOWARDS AN ANARCHISTIC PRAXIS

THE ZAPATISTAS AND ABAHLALI BASEMJONDOLO

Thus far, my thesis has shown how, despite instances of progress, state-centric antisystemic movements have failed in their ultimate goal of substantively transforming the capitalist system and realising the 'liberty and justice' so long promised since the French Revolution. This failure also helps to explain the rise of an anarchistic praxis within antisystemic social movements (Chapter Two). This praxis is (as explored in Chapter Three) connected with previous antisystemic forces in their rejection of capitalism. However, what separates contemporary antisystemic praxis from previous forms is that, in the pursuit of liberty and autonomy, these movements have come to reject the state as an agent of change. Whilst, of course, differing in their practical applications to subjective situations, in doing so, these movements have adopted elements of an anarchistic praxis that rejects externally imposed hierarchy, recognises the relationship between means and ends and consistently pursues the construction of directly democratic, decentralised, anti-hierarchical social structures independent from the state.

However, the utilisation of an anarchistic praxis should not imply that I am claiming there has been an increase in anarchist antisystemic movements (though there likely has been). This point cannot be over-emphasised. Though never anointing themselves as anarchists, one can see within many contemporary antisystemic movements a powerful expression of and commitment to anarchist principles. Drawing from the work of Curran (2006), I claim this – a 'post-ideological' anarchism – has become influential within antisystemic movements. I will begin this chapter by briefly conceptualising this antisystemic typology.

Following this, I will explore the first case study: the Zapatistas (EZLN) of Chiapas, Mexico. I begin by investigating the relationship between the Zapatistas and the state. Within this, I will tease out the perpetual failures of the state in delivering the change long promised and how this has influenced the Zapatista's adoption of an anarchistic praxis. This will then be complimented with an exploration of the Zapatista's organisational practice, 'Zapatismo', so as to demonstrate the extent to which an anarchistic praxis has been adopted. I follow this with the second case study: Abahlali baseMjondolo (AbM), a shack dweller's movement in Durban, South Africa. I begin this with an exploration of AbM's relationship with the post-Apartheid South African state. Similarly to the Zapatistas, the germ of the anarchistic praxis that now defines AbM can be found in the continual failures of the post-Apartheid South African regime. Despite the promises made by the African National Congress (ANC) and its ostensible pursuit of social democracy, the post-Apartheid state has largely perpetuated the oppression of the poor. This leads into an exploration of the organisational practice of AbM, born directly from the failure of the post-Apartheid state, which is aimed at realising the liberty and democracy promised since the overthrow of the Apartheid regime. This praxis is defined primarily in its pursuit of a 'living politics' that rejects

externally imposed authority and instead pursues direct democracy and tactics of direct action in response to continued brutalisation at the hands of the state.

TYPOLOGY: A 'POST IDEOLOGICAL' ANARCHISM

Though they have never anointed themselves as anarchists, one can see in the practice of the Zapatistas and Abahlali baseMjondolo a powerful expression of and commitment to anarchist ideals in the pursuit of liberty and autonomy. The actions of both groups correspond with what Curran describes as a 'post ideological anarchism'. Though inspired by and drawing from anarchist principles and ideas in constructing autonomous politics, post-ideological anarchists reject "doctrinaire positions and sectarian politics", preferring instead to conflate anarchism with an eclectic assortment of other political ideas. Thus, I am not claiming that antisystemic actors who utilise these principles are, or would explicitly refer to themselves as, 'anarchists'. Rather, anarchism informs the "impulse, culture and organisation" of antisystemic movements (Curran 2006: 2). Furthermore, this emergence corresponds with a wider repudiation of the adoption or imposition of stringent ideological labels; what could be described as a rejection of manifestos. It is thus more apt to note that anarchism's "ideas and principles are generating new radical dreams and visions" and are impacting significantly upon the methodology, practice and philosophy of modern antisystemic forces. As Graeber notes, often the exponents of these movements "do not call themselves 'anarchists'. There are a host of other names... Still, everywhere one finds the same core principles" of anarchism informing antisystemic political practice (Graeber 2004a). It is for this reason I claim an anarchistic *praxis* – rather than a doctrinaire anarchistic programme – has become a primary point of reference within contemporary antisystemic movements.

As such, these groups correspond with this thesis' argument that contemporary antisystemic movements appear to be increasingly rejecting the state as an agent of change. Rather, such movements, without referring to themselves as 'anarchists', are progressively adopting an anarchistic praxis of anti-statism, decentralisation, direct democracy, direct action and recognition of the relationship between means and ends, whilst also propagating a radical anti-capitalism, preferring the adoption of mutualistic measures of production and distribution. Furthermore, the emergence of both movements and the anarchistic praxis central to their expression is tied to the perpetual exploitation experienced by both at the hands of the state and global capital. As such, they also reflect the disillusionment contemporary antisystemic movements have in regards to the potentialities of the state to deliver transformative social change.

THE ZAPATISTAS

The State and the Neocolonial Legacy

Since the Mexican Revolution of 1910, the indigenous Mayan people have been promised much, but received little. Emerging from the Lacandon Jungle in the early hours of 1994 and proceeding to occupy the community of San Cristobal de las Casas, the Zapatista Army of National Liberation proclaimed that "enough is enough!" (Marcos 1993). This declaration was made in response to the history of exploitation experienced by the indigenous people of Chiapas, Mexico. As Subcomandante Marcos declared (1993):

> We are a product of five hundred years of struggle ... we have nothing, absolutely nothing, not even a roof over our heads, no land, no work, no health care, no food

or education … But today we say: ENOUGH IS ENOUGH! We are the inheritors of
the true builders of our nation. We are millions, the dispossessed who call upon our
brothers and sisters to join this struggle (emphasis author's own).

Though centuries of brutal, formal colonial rule under the Spanish may have come to an end,
we see in the Zapatista resistance opposition to the perceived 'neocolonialism' perpetrated by
the Mexican state and its hierarch, global capital, through the hollowing out and privatisation
of society as a result of neoliberal globalisation (Klein 2002: 4). In "responding to the interests
of the country's emergent bourgeoisie and the demands of the international market place" the
Mexican state "has treated Chiapas as an internal colony, sucking out its wealth while leaving its
people – particularly the overwhelming majority who live off the land – more impoverished than
ever" (Burbach 2001: 118). Chiapas is thus a vivid expression of the contradictions of both the
Mexican and world economy and "lays bare the two faces of capitalist modernity – the relentless
simultaneous generation of both wealth and poverty" (Cecena and Barreda 1998: 39). Though an
extreme case, Chiapas exemplifies the polarisation and heterogeneity of neoliberalism; a force
that is, to the Zapatistas, a grim reaper, consigning them to the dustbin of history.

As Holloway and Pelaez note (1998: 1):

> There was no subtlety about the way in which the indigenous people of the Lacandon
> Jungle, a huge, forested area in the south-east of Mexico, had been told that they had
> no place in the postmodern world. They, and their forebears, had been driven out ever
> since the Spanish conquest of Mexico in the sixteenth century. But by the beginning
> of 1994, they were facing extermination… Their land was wanted by cattle ranchers,
> by oil companies, by paper producers… and by capitalist planners eager to exploit
> the unique biodiversity of the jungle as a resource for future developments in genetic
> engineering.

As such, the Zapatistas see the Mexican state as a beast that "feeds on the blood of the people"
and neoliberalism and the state as taking "all the wealth out of Chiapas and in exchange" leaving
behind "their mortal and pestilent mark" (Marcos 1994).

Despite attempts to engage with the state in processes of dialogue (for instance, the San An-
dres Accords of 1996), little has been done to alter this image the Zapatistas hold of the Mexican
state. Despite promises to the contrary, it continues to act as an oppressive organ for the inter-
ests of transnational capital. It appears as no coincidence then that the North American Free
Trade Agreement (NAFTA) came into force on January 1, 1994; the day the EZLN uprising be-
gan. Enough, it seems, truly was enough; the continued deceit and failure of the state to deliver
the autonomy, liberty and equality perpetually promised to the indigenous Mayan people since
national 'liberation' almost a century ago has formed the justification for the anarchist praxis of
'Zapatismo'. Zapatismo is the cry of dignity, the demand to break down barriers of exclusion, op-
position to separation and partition, the rebellion against a system that consigns the Zapatistas,
and those like them, to nothingness (Marcos 1995a):

> Us they forgot more and more, and history was no longer big enough for us to die
> just like that, forgotten and humiliated. Because dying does not hurt, what hurts
> is being forgotten. Then we discovered that we no longer existed, that those who

govern had forgotten us in the euphoria of statistics and growth rates... [From this] we went and seized our arms and went into the cities ...And we went and said to the powerful 'here we are!' and to all the country we shouted 'here we are!' and to all the world we shouted 'here we are!' And see how odd things are because for them to see us, we covered our faces; for them to name us, we gave up our name; we gambled the present to have a future; and to live... we died.

Yet the Zapatistas are more than a national liberation struggle and represent more than an indigenous rebellion against (neo) colonial injustice. Zapatismo stands for the dignity that neoliberalism and the state destroy. The Zapatistas seek to unite with the marginalised and forgotten throughout the world and play their part in a necessarily worldwide struggle of the forgotten, marginalised and oppressed. As the Zapatistas declared, their most visible spokesman, Marcos, represents (Marcos 1995b: 310–311):

> ... a gay in San Francisco, a black in South Africa, an Asian in Europe, a Chicano in San Isidro, an anarchist in Spain, a Palestinian in Israel, an indigenous person in the streets of San Cristobal, a gang member in Neza, a rocker on campus, a Jew in Germany, an ombudsman in the Department of Defence, a feminist in a political party, a communist in the post-Cold War period, a prisoner in Cintalapa, a pacifist in Bosnia, a Mapuche in the Andes, a teacher in the National Confederation of Educational Workers, an artist without a gallery or portfolio a housewife in any neighbourhood, in any city in any part of Mexico on a Saturday night, a guerrilla in Mexico at the end of the twentieth century, a striker in the CTM, a sexist in the feminist movement, a woman alone in a Metro station at 10 p.m., a retired person standing around in the Zocalo, a peasant without land, an underground editor, an unemployed worker, a doctor with no office, a non-conformist student, a dissident against neoliberalism, a writer without books or readers, and a Zapatista in the Mexican southeast. *In other words, Marcos is a human being in this world. Marcos is every untolerated, oppressed, exploited minority that is resisting and saying 'Enough!'* (emphasis added).

Therefore, the Zapatistas propose the formation of transnational opposition to the structures of exploitation engendered by neoliberal neocolonialism. This is encapsulated vividly in the declaration 'Against Neoliberalism and for Humanity', issued from La Realidad in 1996. In it the Zapatistas note how "[d]uring the last years, the power of money has presented a new mask over its criminal face". It disregards borders and grants "no importance... to races or colours". Regardless, "the power of money humiliates dignities, insults honesties and assassinates hopes. The historic crime in the concentration of privileges, wealth and impunities is renamed 'neo-liberalism'. It democratises misery and hopelessness" (Marcos 1996). In response to this, they stand with those who, "beyond borders, races and colours, share the song of life, the struggle against death, the flower of hope and the breath of dignity" (Marcos 1996). The Zapatistas are thus a movement that transcends the parochial nationalisms regularly associated with national liberation movements, whilst also dismissing the efficacy of the state to bring about transformative social change (Marcos 2004: 3–5).

The Organisational Practice of the Zapatistas

The Zapatistas idea of revolution, similar to criticisms historically levelled at anarchism, has been called immature or 'reformist' in nature because they fail to spell out a definitive conclusion at which point the revolution can be deemed 'successful'. There is no transitional programme or immediate teleological goal (Holloway 1998: 165). Yet, this restraint from pursuing a narrowly-defined revolutionary conclusion reflects the deeply anarchical character of the Zapatista revolution and the depth of their intellectual engagement with anarchist principles. For if the revolution is to achieve *direct democracy* as an end, be democratic in its struggle and avoid externally imposed hierarchy, than a pre-defined path or a definitive teleological point of arrival is impossible. In contrast to traditional state-centric notions of revolution that have dominated antisystemic activity for most of the past 200 years, the Zapatista's democratic convictions reject an overwhelmingly instrumentalist view of revolution: "a conception of means designed to achieve an end" (Holloway 1998: 165). Instead, the Zapatistas are pursuing a 'revolution to make the Revolution possible'. This again reflects the depth of the Zapatistas engagement with anarchist principles. The idea of a 'revolution to make the Revolution possible' – "with small letters to avoid polemics with the many vanguards and safeguards of THE REVOLUTION" (Marcos 1995c: 17) – is connected with a conflation between means and ends and a preoccupation with participatory decision-making. It entails the pursuit of a democratic practice (the revolution) that then makes the Revolution itself – the transformation of society – possible, as participants are directly engaging in Revolution, which is itself the achievement of 'democracy,[1] dignity and liberty'.

Closely connected with an understanding of the state developed through struggle and in line with anarchist views of political power, the Zapatistas do not seek to capture state power, but alternatively, circumvent it. This seemingly stands in contradiction with the foundational ambitions of the Zapatistas. Initially, the EZLN developed as a "completely vertical" military organisation "established to take power through armed force". However, this rigid conception quickly came to clash with the "reality of the indigenous communities" (Marcos cited in Lorenzano 1998: 141). The original vanguard's "square conception of the world and revolution was badly dented in the confrontation with the indigenous realities of Chiapas" (Marcos 1995d: 25). Through a process of dialogue, debate and communal dialectics, this attempt to impose revolution and praxis on participants was rejected and transformed. Rather, it was only when Zapatismo subordinated itself to participatory structures that the project exploded into a popular mobilisation. This led to a wider redefinition of the sociopolitical project of Zapatismo.

The Zapatistas have, consequently, come to oppose the Marxist idea of a vanguard leading the people in revolution, however it may be conceived. Despite the fact that they began as a hierarchical politico-military group, the Zapatistas have shown a deontological commitment to such theory in practice, declining the formation of a practical political alliance with the subversive Mexican political movement, the Popular Revolutionary Front (EPR), due to irreconcilable differences over declared designs on state power. As the EZLN confirmed in a communiqué to the EPR, "what we want... [is] not to seize power but to exercise it' (cited in De Angelis 2000: 32). According to Marcos, the Zapatistas would have had no future if they had merely aspired to the perpetuation of an armed politico-military structure that resolved to take power in the name of the people. The victories of such movements in the past have been failures, "hidden

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[1] Not democracy in a representative sense, but a directly democratic, participatory democracy within both the political sphere and anywhere else collective decision-making is made.

behind the mask of success" (Marcos 2001b: 70–71). Once such movements seized power, the role of the people and civil society remained unresolved. As was argued in Chapter Two, such movements simply became a new hegemony once taking power, imposing decisions upon society, with little truly changing. To reproduce such folly again would represent failure; the failure of "an alternative set of ideas, an alternative attitude to the world" (Marcos 2001b: 70–71). Instead, the Zapatistas see the construction of autonomous democratic structures within civil society as an end in itself (Baker 2002: 132). By 1987, the Zapatistas had set up a complex confederal network in which settlements took direct charge of praxis and decision-making. What had formerly been a vanguard submitted and integrated itself into the "social, cultural [and] political... fabric of the communities". Every initiative taken had to be "authorised by the regional command after deliberations in assemblies"; the communities "made the EZLN cede to them" (Lorenzano 1998: 143).

This is closely tied with the way in which power ought to be exercised within anarchist social structures; at an individual level. Rather than bargaining for a limited version of territorially based autonomy within a 'top-down', centralised model of governance demanding adherence to the state, the Zapatistas have insisted on the right of each community under its influence to develop its own network of political relations (Stahler-Sholk 2007: 49). Though encircled by the Mexican Army since the 1994 Declaration, the Zapatistas quickly announced their presence in thirty-eight municipalities outside of the army barricade (Marcos 2002: 239). Following this, the Zapatistas boycotted official elections and rejected the assertion of authority proclaimed by the Mexican state. Instead, they effectively created parallel structures of governance by adopting traditional indigenous measures in line with direct, participatory procedures in open community assemblies amenable to Bookchin's libertarian municipalism. This also involves the comprehensive rejection of subsidiary measures from the state, including resistance to and rejection of government aid (Stahler-Sholk 2007: 54 -56).

These confederalist, decentralised social structures are an attempt to build institutions that seek to make existing statist institutions irrelevant in the functioning of Zapatista communities. Effectively, they represent a rejection of hierarchical decision-making and an attempt to subvert the hierarchies of not only the state, but the very structures on which the EZLN was built. It is only through changing "the forms of organisation and the tasks of politics" that social transformation is possible. In saying "'no' to leaders, we [the Zapatistas] are also saying 'no' to ourselves" (Marcos 2001b: 73). In this, the EZLN is rejecting not only the hierarchy on which the movement was originally constructed, but the legitimacy of externally imposed hierarchy: saying 'no' to the right of anyone to decide on behalf of another. Accordingly, the Zapatistas are an "armed movement which does not want to take power, as in the old revolutionary schemes" (Marcos cited in Lorenzano 1998: 141). Rather, they are "subordinate to [civil society], to the point of disappearing as an alternative" (Marcos 2001a: 58). Thus, far from wanting to capture state power, the Zapatistas are fundamentally indifferent to political parties and the state; they seek to bypass and live autonomously from what they see as its deceitful, destructive influence.

The operational methods of cultivating and propagating these democratic structures are clearly compatible with the anarchist ideas explored in Chapter Three. If there are to be 'leaders' and 'followers' then representation and hierarchy arises (Graeber 2004: 11–12). Through the utilisation of two central principles, the Zapatistas have shown a sophisticated commitment to and understanding of the anarchist congruence of means and ends. Through the first operational principle of 'command-obeying', the Zapatistas have sought to subvert hierarchy by juxtaposing

the relationship between the leaders and the led. In practice, this has led to the rotation of leadership in community councils in order to avoid a situation of permanent leadership and a form of 'consensus' decision-making within communities in which all important decisions must necessarily be decided upon by participants.[2] Furthermore, decisions that fall outside of the scope of a single community are decided upon within village assemblies that draw parallels with classical anarchist ideas of confederalism. This preoccupation with participatory decision-making is an attempt to avoid the pitfalls of externally imposed hierarchy and hence, administrative political power (Jeffries 2001: 132).

The second operational concept of 'asking we walk' places the burden of responsibility for activity on individuals, rather than certain figures or 'vanguardist' social groups imposing their vision or driving progress towards an abstract, teleological goal (Curran 2006: 154–155). This means that, rather than *telling* others how it is that social change is to be carried out (as one in the role of a 'vanguard' would), one is constantly engaged in emancipatory praxis by consistently *asking* how it is that social change is to be carried out and by participants doing tasks themselves. As such, revolution and liberation depend not on providing the correct answers, but asking the right questions and taking collective, democratic responsibility for revolutionary action.

In order to meet the needs of subsistence, communities under the influence of the Zapatistas have sought the adoption of mutualistic organisational practices. This includes the organisation of textile-weaving and boot-making cooperatives, locally controlled schools, health promotion networks and collective garden patches conducted through self-sufficient production and exchange methods, based around participatory approaches that reject the hierarchical capitalistic relationship of proprietorship and wage slavery (Rothschild 2003: 223–228). Instead, such practices more closely fit with the classic anarchist visions of self-management and the idea that the *social* revolution (creating non-hierarchical, mutualistic social structures independent from the state and transforming existing hierarchical ones) is of more significance than the *political* revolution (taking and transforming state power), which, through its inherent preoccupation with taking and utilising power, will necessarily come to reproduce externally imposed hierarchy and 'new hegemonies'.

ABAHLALI BASEMJONDOLO

The Failure of the Post-Apartheid South African State

In a similar vein to the Zapatistas, AbM emerged from post-Apartheid South Africa as a response to the continued marginalisation of the poor and dispossessed (the majority of whom are black) who, despite promises to the contrary, continue to live in conditions of abject poverty (Gibson 2008: 695). Emerging from the open oppression and degradation of a racially violent and oppressive regime, the incoming government of Nelson Mandela promised to liberate the destitute and impoverished from the degenerative conditions to which they were subjected by establishing a society formulated on socialistic notions of liberty, equality and fraternity (Cottle

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[2] If a consensus is unable to be reached (and in larger confederal forums) then more practical measures are necessarily adopted to break the deadlock, such as a two-thirds majority voting system. However, where possible, compromise and consensus are preferred. Included in this type of decision-making was the decision to go to 'war' with the Mexican state. As Holloway (1998: 164) notes, "the decision to go to war was not taken by some central committee and then handed down, but was discussed by all the communities in village assemblies".

2006: 115). Instead, however, the socioeconomic inequalities of Apartheid South Africa remain intact, with over seventy percent of the population living in abject squalor. This is legitimised by the state with reference to the rise of an African bourgeoisie, in which a host of new millionaires have been created (Gibson 2008: 695). Yet as Moeletsi Mbeki argues, the economic policies of the South African state amount to a reification of the new ruling elite; a fluid caste connected with the leaders of the antisystemic struggle opposed to the former Apartheid regime (cited in Riviére 2008):

> [State policies amount to little more than] crony capitalism... Most of these so-called business leaders are agents of... capital, hand in glove with the state... There was a wide sociological gap between grassroots activists and the leaders of the struggle. *The latter did very well out of it because they took over the state.* They and their children now make up the ranks of the emerging middle class... *The government spawned an enormous bureaucracy which was spectacularly successful in feeding off these resources, without creating work for the wider population* (emphasis added).

It is here where the objections of AbM begin. In deposing elements of the old regime, the new regime has reified the existence of a fundamentally unjust, obdurate neoliberal capitalism that values profit and instils within society the logic of capital and legitimacy of corporatised markets over the welfare of people (Bond 2006). Indeed, the socioeconomic inequalities of post-Apartheid South Africa remain as extreme, if not more so, than during Apartheid. From the mid-1970s, we have seen the rise of neoliberalism in South Africa; the transition from a Keynesian Apartheid state, to a neoliberal post-Apartheid state. Whilst during Apartheid, South Africa was a state-capitalist society "based on white privilege" – where whites' welfare, employment and a relatively decent standard of living were guaranteed by the state through the appropriation of black labour – post-Apartheid South Africa has been characterised by the widespread adoption of a neoliberal program (Gibson 2008: 697). This is most clearly evident in the way in which the ANC, whilst privatising and corporatising much of the formerly state-run sector, have shifted from a social democratic ideological base centred around the socialistic 'Freedom Charter' to the adoption of neoliberalism (Gibson 2001: 371–387). Within this, the ANC has become a "nationalist party masked by a rhetoric of Africanism" and, in betraying the people, has simply become a vehicle for private advancement. Gibson lays the blame for this at the feet of the 'anti-human' neoliberal paradigm (Gibson 2008: 696). The authoritarian methods in which neoliberalism has been implemented, the wide-spread perceptions of corruption that hounds the party, the way that the ANC has become little more than a mode of private advancement and externally imposed social control, the opinion that, for the majority, little has improved, the unmitigated poverty and the ever-increasing criminalisation and demonisation of the poor – what essentially amounts to a "betrayal of the idea of freedom" (Gibson 2008: 696) – has propagated the sort of social desperation that, as was noted by Gramsci (1971: 275), sets the stage for social reaction. This also correlates with the basic argument set out in Chapter Two of this thesis: that the state has failed as an agent of social transformation.

In response to this situation, *Abahlali* emerged. Though beginning as a single issue movement in early 2004 demanding better economic services, housing and sanitation – perhaps what could have been described as a 'service delivery movement' – AbM has since drawn connections between the injustice of their parochial situation, and the injustice of the neoliberal capitalist system

that dominates post-Apartheid South Africa. As the elected spokesperson of the movement, S'bu Zikode, put it, he and those involved and associated with AbM, felt betrayed; "this is the government that we [the AbM] fought for, and then worked for and then voted for and which now beats us and arrests us" (cited in Pithouse 2005: 7). As Kennedy Road[3] resident, M'du Hlongwa, remarks, the South African state "does not think of the poor". The poorest are the vast majority, but are kept voiceless. From the shack dwellers to the "street traders, the flat dwellers who can't [sic] afford the rent" and those unemployed from "Cape Town to Musina in the Limpopo Province and from Richard's Bay on the Indian Ocean to Alexander Bay on the Atlantic", the poorest have no say in state decision-making (Hlongwa 2007). The destitution and situation of the poor continues to decline while the rich and those who benefit from the state's patronage and influence continue to benefit. The politicians have shown that "they are not the answer" to the suffering of the dispossessed in South Africa; the "poor are just made the ladders of the politicians" who, like a "hibernating animal", come "out in election season to make empty promises" only to soon disappear (Hlongwa 2007).

Another resident, Mzobe, expressed similar sentiment, claiming that "the government said good things before", but never fulfilled one promise. The government has "promised us lots of things, but they never did even one. Not one thing good. Like now, I'm [sic] living here thirty years. And I'm [sic] still living here, no different. Still no toilet, still no electricity, still no house" (cited in Xin 2006). Politicians get into power "by lying to us [the poor and disposed] and then make money... and it is the suffering of the poor that makes [the country] rich" (Hlongwa 2007). The movement thus essentially sees the post-Apartheid state as a parasitical entity that steals from and oppresses the poor and the politicians that compose it and claim to represent the people as the (Hlongwa 2007):

> ... new bosses, not the servants of the poor. They deceive us and make fools of us. They ask us for our vote and then disappear with our votes to their big houses and conferences where they plan with the rich how to make the rich richer. Their entrance fee for these houses and conferences is us. They sell us to the rich. Can anyone show one politician who has stood up to say build houses not stadiums [in reference to the 2010 Fifa World Cup]? Can anyone show one politician who has said that Moreland's land should be for the poor who are still waiting to be a real part of South Africa and not for more shops and golf courses? Can anyone show one politician who has said that it is wrong for the police to beat us and arrest us when we want to march? Can anyone show one politician who has stood with us when the police shoot at us?

Increasing numbers of poor (usually black) people are excluded from the urban landscape. They are 'relocated' at gunpoint in response to 'market forces' to inadequately built locations on the urban periphery, far away from schools and work. But rather than regressing into the failed nationalisms of the past, AbM has, like the Zapatistas, located these problems within the broader framework of neoliberal globalisation and the modern statist system, questioning "why it is that money and rich people can move freely around the world while everywhere the poor must confront razor wire, corrupt and violent police, queues and relocation or deportation" (Abahlali

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[3] Kennedy Road is the 'genesis' of AbM as it is where protests first broke out on a major scale (see Pithouse 2007).

baseMjondolo 2008a). In response to this they have articulated a form of cosmopolitanism and sought to propagate international solidarity and resistance, declaring that "a person cannot be illegal. A person is a person wherever they find themselves" (Abahlali baseMjondolo 2010a). Locating these problems in the hierarchy of the state and the exploitation of capitalism, AbM seeks instead to construct a 'living politics' that everyone can find a place in – as we will see, the embodiment of an anarchistic praxis – concerned chiefly with realising the desire for a directly democratic politics, autonomous from the corrupting, harmful influence of the state.

The Organisational Practice of Abahlali baseMjondolo

Initially, the fledgling movement considered standing S'bu Zikode for local government elections. However, after lengthy deliberation it was decided that the movement should refrain from electoral politics in order to preserve the integrity and autonomy of it as a radical political project (Pithouse 2005: 12). AbM, and other shack settlements associated with them, came to a deontological refusal of electoral politics and instead espoused the slogan 'No Land, No House, No Vote' (Hlongwa 2007). In line with this attitude, AbM has sought the establishment of confederalist, decentralised municipal structures independent from the 'corrupt influence' of the post-Apartheid state and the logic of global capital (Patel 2007: 23–24). In this way, the state cannot falsely claim to represent the poor as the AbM created their own organisational structures, "which do represent the poor because they are for and by the poor" (Hlongwa 2007).

What AbM has sought to construct is a radically democratic political culture that has been carefully theorised and contemplated (Neocosmos 2007: 48). First and foremost, the shack dwellers are committed to a participatory and decentralised praxis. All new issues are discussed at open-forum meetings conducted on a formal, weekly basis. This is viewed by participants as a liturgical act central to the continued functioning and legitimacy of the movement. When issues are raised and voted on, participants seek consensus building through lengthy measures at which point, if consensus is unable to be reached (generally after several meetings and delegate send outs), the issue is put to a vote. When municipal delegates are sent out as functionaries to other settlements that make up the movement in order to make movement-wide decisions, they are mandated to make decisions on issues already decided upon within decentralised forums and not to make decisions on behalf of the movement or particular communities within it. This decentralisation means that each community that joins the movement engages in decision-making autonomously and collectively. What develops from this is a political practice in which participants actively decide what is important and in which elected 'leaders' are, on a daily basis, accountable and accessible to those that elect them (Nimmagudda 2008). A striking example of the movement's commitment to this participatory, confederalist praxis is when the movement was to engage with a state-mandated service provider and find consensus on the facilitation of housing projects within shack dweller communities. As Kienast remarks, when the service provider requested two representatives of AbM as negotiators, the request was rejected. *Abahlali* instead insisted (Kienast 2010):

> ... that *each* of the fourteen affiliated settlements could send two representatives. Representatives had no mandate to make decisions during negotiations. Hence, each proposal had to be brought back and discussed in the respective community. AbM even sent 'less prominent' people in order to broaden the [communities] knowledge about the process (emphasis author's own).

Embodied in this programmatic libertarian municipalism is a desire, like the Zapatistas, to create an autonomous space where the 'forgotten' are respected, dignity is reclaimed and politics is a composite of collective existence (Pithouse 2008: 79). This is a popular and participatory politics explicitly opposed to technocratic and autocratic management from above. Indeed, the praxis of *Abahlali* is centred around a self-conscious pursuit of direct democracy and collective self-management (Hlongwa 2007):

> Let us keep our votes. Let us speak for ourselves where we live and work. Let us keep our power for ourselves. The poor are many. We have shown that together we can be very strong. Abahlali has now won many victories. Other organisations are working hard too. Let us continue to work to make ourselves the strong poor. *Let us vote for ourselves every day* (emphasis added).

The notion of 'voting for ourselves' appears as an explicit rejection of hierarchy and representation. It suggests that little can be achieved when decision-making is removed from the personal level of more direct, participatory forms of democracy. Central to this and the struggle of AbM has been a concrete recognition of the connection, essential to an anarchical understanding of politics and political action, between means and ends. In line with this, AbM has always "asked people to speak to us, not for us" and for "people to work with us, not for us. We have asked people to think with us, not for us. We have asked people to understand that our movement will always belong to its members and never to any NGO or political party" (Abahlali baseMjondolo 2008c). Within this is a recognition that when power is externally imposed it risks developing into structures of exploitation and domination and modes of organisation antithetical to participatory democracy and furthermore, degenerates into disrespect and condescension. Thus, *Abahlali* has consistently opposed representation, be it through mechanisms of government (exemplified in their rejection of 'representative' electoral politics), or even those, like NGOs and interest groups, who claim to work in their interests.

Instead, politics must be a composite of collective existence, a 'living solidarity' that is experienced 'every day' (Pithouse 2006b). Though the shack dwellers' speak of a struggle for houses and services, they also acknowledge, in a Kantian vein, that "freedom is more than all of this. Freedom is a way of living, not a list of demands to be met". Though delivering houses will "do away with the lack of houses", this act in itself will not realise freedom for the impoverished. Rather, "freedom is a way of living, where everyone is important and where everyone's experience and intelligence counts" (Abahlali baseMjondolo 2008b). Accordingly, AbM has acknowledged that liberty cannot be realised through the 'temporary' tyranny of statist hierarchies, cannot be achieved through the leadership of a self-appointed vanguard and is not something to be bestowed in a distant era once the 'revolution' has been achieved. Rather, it is something to be realised collectively in the way people live; it is, as was explored in Chapter Three, something that can only be achieved through a self-liberation that reaches social dimensions and that, consequently, realises the liberation of daily life (Abahlali baseMjondolo 2010b):

> We are for a living communism. We are for a communism that emerges from the struggles of ordinary people and which is shaped and owned by ordinary people. We are for a communism built from the ground up. We are for a communism in which land and wealth are shared and managed democratically. Any party or groupuscule

or NGO that declares from above that it is the vanguard of the people's struggles and that the people must therefore accept their authority is the enemy of the people's struggles. Leadership is earned and is never permanent. It can never be declared from above. It only lasts for as long as communities of struggle decide to invest their hope in particular structures.

As such, the movement has developed a notion of 'people's politics', a self-conscious and ongoing project of developing a 'politics of the poor'. This is a "homemade politics that everyone can understand and find a home in", one that utilises a dialogic formulae discernable to the people, to ensure the level of direct participation necessary in sustaining a movement reliant on participation and dedication from those involved (Zikode cited in Pithouse 2006a: 29). As Zikode declared, "our struggle is thought in action and it is thought from the ground… We define ourselves and our struggle" (Zikode cited in Abahlali baseMjondolo 2006c). This is in opposition to an elitist ontology of politics in that it rejects notions of imposed leadership and metaphysical abstraction and is a "genuinely radical politics… in which the poor are powerful and not those in which they are silenced as they are named and directed from without" (Pithouse 2008: 82). This theorising can be reduced to a single axiom; that within this living politics, all are to avoid stringent dogmatism, all matter and all are worthy of respect. To remove the struggle from this context is to place decision-making into the ranks of a corrupt hierarchy. If the participatory element of the movement is ever to become more of a performance than a reality, the integrity and efficacy of AbM will falter and the movement dissipate. The deep emphasis the shack dwellers' place on avoiding hierarchy is reflected further in the rejection of the many international NGOs who attempt to impose decision-making and projects on AbM from without (see Abahlali baseMjondolo 2006b). These attempts to avoid hierarchy and promote self-management and participatory decision-making have been taken so far as to the development of collective, self-managed projects like "crèches, gardens, sewing collectives [and] support for people living with and orphaned by AIDS" that meet subsistence whilst also avoiding the hierarchical and often degrading relations customary of capitalist society (Abahlali baseMjondolo 2006a).

CONCLUSION

Through the exploration of the Zapatistas and Abahlali baseMjondolo, this chapter empirically illustrated the argument developed throughout this thesis: that an anarchistic praxis – though not a doctrinaire ideological programme – has become a primary point of reference for contemporary antisystemic social movements and that this can be seen, in many ways, as a response to the failure of state-centric versions to bring about transformative social change once assuming power.

I began this chapter by briefly outlining the 'post-ideological' anarchism increasingly central in the praxis of contemporary antisystemic social movements. After this, I moved on to explore my first case study: the Zapatistas. Within this I traced the development of the Zapatistas and how their uprising developed out of a conflictual relationship with the Mexican state denoted by perpetual betrayal and their subjective experience of what is an essentially global imposition of neoliberal social relations. In response to the perpetual failures of the state and its acquiescence to the desires dictated by global capital emerged an anarchistic praxis that rejects the state as an agent of change. In declaring 'Enough is Enough!' the Zapatistas rejected the 'death' imposed by

neoliberalism and have instead sought the establishment of parallel structures of governance in which decentralisation, direct democracy, confederalism and mutualistic measures of production and distribution are utilised that reject externally imposed hierarchy and recognise the significant relationship between means and ends, thus displaying a thoroughly developed form of political praxis in line with anarchist principles and values. After this, I turned to analysing the development and emergence of AbM. Sharing similarities with the Zapatistas, AbM emerged out of struggle against the post-Apartheid South African state and its hierarch, global capital. Initially, the shack dwellers supported the post-Apartheid regime's ostensible pursuit of social democracy. However, in the face of continued state oppression, AbM instead pursued a 'living politics'. This living politics is defined by its pursuit of direct democracy, decentralisation, a conflation of means and ends and the rejection of externally imposed hierarchy, all of which are central in the development of a 'politics of the poor'.

As has been made clear by these two cases, the practice and continued effectiveness of contemporary antisystemic movements lies in their regenerative capacity, derived from a participatory, anti-state, anarchistic praxis that rejects the perpetual failures of and the faith necessary in placing one's trust in statist and 'representative' mechanisms of power in which corruption, nepotism, oppression and exploitation appear to inevitably arise. These cases not only exemplify the way in which contemporary antisystemic movements reject the state as an agent of change (due to its perpetual failures), but also the anarchistic praxis playing a significant role in their contemporaneous constitution. These 'living' examples offer lessons and hope to humanity, the majority of which continues to be oppressed and marginalised by the rapacious system of neoliberal capitalism; a system that consigns this vast preponderance to toil, anonymity and hardship for the benefit of the few. Significantly, these movements propagate that 'another world' is possible by challenging the way politics functions. They represent a new 'anarchical' way of politics in which principles of direct democracy, liberty and equality are not abstract concepts but a perpetual source of political enlightenment and, as such, offer renewed hope to those struggling for emancipation.

CONCLUSION

Far from being taking seriously in the academy, anarchism is regularly caricatured and labelled as everything from 'chaos and violence' to 'shameless utopianism'. Perhaps this dismissive stance accounts for the wide gap one now finds between the practice of antisystemic politics, and those that claim to study, observe and theorise it. Nevertheless, a number of scholars, including Graeber, Wallerstein and Curran, have identified the centrality of anarchism within contemporary antisystemic praxis, particularly in the West and within the so-called 'Anti-Globalisation' Movement. However, these scholars have only entered into limited discussion as to why an anarchistic praxis has assumed contemporary significance. Hitherto, only limited attempts have been made, within the current literature, to develop a holistic understanding as to why antisystemic movements are increasingly rejecting the state as an agent of change. In light of this intellectual lacuna, the primary motivation in the development of this dissertation centred around contributing to and developing a more thorough understanding of this. I thus sought to develop a theoretical (and historical) account of the way in which antisystemic social movements have developed and changed. Therefore, this thesis looked to develop an understanding as to why an anarchistic praxis has become central within contemporary antisystemic movements.

I argued that an anarchistic praxis – though not a doctrinaire ideological programme – has become a primary point of reference for contemporary antisystemic social movements and that this can be seen, in many ways, as a response to the failure of state-centric versions to bring about substantial, transformative social change once assuming power. Within this I also necessarily sought to develop a more detailed understanding of this anarchistic praxis through an exploration of anarchist ideology, subsequently illustrating my argument with reference to two case studies; one of the shack dweller's movement, Abahlali baseMjondolo, of Durban, South Africa and the second of the Zapatistas of Chiapas, Mexico.

In order to adequately defend this argument, the thesis was divided into four substantive chapters. The first chapter defended this thesis' pursuit of 'emancipatory' knowledge interests. It began by outlining my ontological and epistemological position – what essentially amounts to relatively orthodox critical theory. In contrast to the dominant positivist paradigm, critical theory holds that, amongst other things, emancipatory theory should attempt to uncover unnecessary structures of domination within the existing social order and engage with, study and theorise those counter-hegemonic movements trying to overcome them. In light of this, I necessarily pursued an area of study that has immediate implications in people's experience of politics and the potentialities of emancipation. Leading on from this, I outlined and legitimised the necessarily qualitative methodological techniques that would later be used: 1) Narrative process-tracing, used chiefly in Chapter Two and 2) the use of qualitative case studies in Chapter Four. Within this I also legitimised and explicated the particular case studies utilised (the Zapatistas and AbM).

The subsequent chapters were formed in response to a range of secondary questions and problems that arose in the course of supporting my argument. If an anarchistic praxis has become a primary point of reference within contemporary antisystemic movements, what previously

bound antisystemic forces? What are the common features they shared and can they be legitimately talked of as a totality, despite considerable differences? The second chapter engaged with these questions and, through narrative process-tracing, responded to them. Firstly, I explored how antisystemic movements, during the late nineteenth — early twentieth century, engaged in a series of debates between those that regarded the state as an intrinsic 'enemy' and those that saw the state as a necessary instrument to be utilised in any attempt to transform society. I showed how 'state-centric' perspectives won out over more libertarian alternatives, arguing that it would be impossible, and even dangerous, to ignore the state apparatus. Thus, the assumption of state power would be a necessary step in changing the world. Following this, I analysed the way in which these movements articulated an essentially 'two-step' strategy in that they would first gain control over the state and follow this by initiating step two: transforming the world. I also touched on the relative success of these movements, especially from the vantage point of the mid-nineteenth century, in completing this first step and gaining state power throughout the world. The final section of this chapter was dedicated to evaluating the success of these movements in carrying out the second step. It was on the basis of this failure to transform society that the state-centric movements were judged to have failed. Rather, once gaining power, many of the antisystemic forces became repressive functionaries of state power and a new source of oppression for the masses. It is because of this that many contemporary antisystemic movements reject the state as an agent of change and why the ideological praxis suited to a political environment that rejects the efficacy of the state to bring about change – that of anarchism – is increasingly significant in antisystemic praxis.

Because I claimed that an anarchistic praxis has become central within modern antisystemic movements, my third chapter sought to develop a coherent understanding of what 'anarchism' is and an 'anarchistic praxis' entails. In contrast to the hyperbole and misconceptions abound, anarchism is not the pursuit of violence, chaos and disorder. Whilst, owing to its diversity, any one conceptualisation of anarchism will be necessarily lacking, there are key principles and values that delineate anarchism and an anarchistic praxis. Besides the rejection of externally imposed hierarchy – and the rejection of the state that flows logically from this – the other ideas central to an anarchical praxis are *decentralisation*, so as to diffuse decision-making and political power and thus the potentiality of tyranny and 'representation'; *direct democracy* and *confederalist* forms of decision-making, to ensure participation and avoid hierarchy and centralisation and a *rejection of capitalism* and the exploitation it engenders. Furthermore, in its deontological conflation of 'means and ends', anarchism pursues a praxis that rejects all hierarchical social structures that perpetuate arbitrary oppression and domination. Rather, anarchism is defined by a 'fanatical pursuit' of liberty, encapsulated in the pursuit of participatory forms of decision-making that are independent from the state.

The final chapter was dedicated to empirically illustrating this thesis' central argument: that an *anarchistic praxis* has become a primary point of reference for contemporary antisystemic social movements and that this can be seen, in many ways, as a response to the failure of 'state-centric' versions to bringing about transformative social change. Two case-studies, one of the Zapatistas and one of Abahlali baseMjondolo, were pursued in this vein. Both the Zapatistas and AbM illustrate the way in which contemporary antisystemic movements are increasingly adopting a praxis, though not a doctrinaire ideological programme, in line with anarchism. Entailed in the actions of both is not only the way that they reject the state as an agent of change – owing, at least partially, in both cases, to the failure of the state to deliver on its promises of social transformation

– but the way in which both movements display a deep commitment to the pursuit of anarchical principles and praxis, whilst simultaneously avoiding stringent ideological labels. Both reject the legitimacy of externally imposed hierarchy in the form of the state and neoliberal capitalism, both consciously conflate means and ends, both pursue participatory forms of self-government and modes of economic self-management and both seek the creation of parallel structures within civil society as an end in itself; the 'construction of new social structures within the shell of the old'. These movements also appear to recognise the way in which state-centric antisystemic movements have failed to bring about the liberating, transformative change so long promised. Most significantly, however, this sort of praxis represents a new 'politics of freedom' in which principles of grassroots democracy, liberty and equality are not abstract concepts, but a constant source of political enlightenment.

Despite this, there are still many questions and problems left to explore.[1] To what extent can we deem the actions of contemporary antisystemic forces 'successful'? In what way would such notions be qualified? Intangible, philosophical ideals like 'justice', 'liberty', 'dignity' and 'recognition' are just as significant to the praxis, aspirations and demands of groups like the Zapatistas and AbM (and perhaps, even more so) as more conventional, quantifiable bases of struggle, such as material improvement. Certainly, these groups, through their struggles, have, at least on some level, come to 'be recognised' and their dignity reclaimed. As the Zapatistas said, they had to die, they had to cover their faces, to be noticed. Rather than being oppressed at the hands of the state and at the whims of global capital, these groups have, through an anarchistic praxis, achieved a degree of liberty not previously allotted to them by the state. Whilst the participatory structures are not without internal contradictions and difficulties,[2] those involved in these movements have attained a degree of liberty and autonomy hitherto denied to them. With this, they have also achieved the dignity and respect so long deprived.

Furthermore, is their scope, and indeed, are the wheels in motion for the creation of a global movement, a 'movement of movements' as the potentiality has been so often referred? Whilst it has often been alluded to, does the potentiality exist?[3] Groups like the Zapatistas and AbM have recognised the problems they face are of an international nature and thus the need for collective international resistance. But to what extent would an international movement have to homogenise its internal forces? Would hierarchy emerge in such an environment? Would the emergence of a more conscious and explicit anarchism (rather than an 'anarchistic praxis') be necessary to avoid the creation of hierarchical structures? For the most part, these are questions only time can answer, but they are also questions that radical scholars and antisystemic actors must continue to consider in constructing any sort of internationalist movement.

Movements like the Zapatistas and AbM have much to offer in light of the revolutionary failures of the past. They implore us to consider the revolutionary process as something to be intersubjectively constructed among participants, not to be externally imposed by a vanguard or political group. It is in this very simple principle that they represent a new way of politics and a new way of revolution; a rejection of the failed state-centric antisystemic forces of the past

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[1] As Ishmael, the Narrator of *Moby-Dick*, declared, though "small erections may be finished by their first architects; grand ones, true ones, ever leave the copestone to posterity. God keep me from ever completing anything. This whole book [thesis!?] is but a draft – nay, but the draft of a draft. Oh, Time, Strength, Cash and Patience!" (Melville 1992 [1851]: 157).

[2] Most notably the military structures of the Zapatistas.

[3] See Mertes (2004) for a relatively recent exploration of this.

and the dominant 'democratic' modality of the present. Within an anarchistic praxis lays the proclamation that representative democracy amounts to a sham, to a betrayal of the very idea of democracy. People do not require 'representatives' to manage their public affairs. Substantive democracy is not merely a staged contest between political elites that represent essentially the same interests (be it those of the state, or those of capital). Democracy should not be a system of governance in which the limits of popular participation are voting between different representatives of the ruling elite or occasional consultation with 'the public'. Rather, the propagation of an anarchistic praxis represents an attempt to reinvent democracy, along face-to-face, direct lines. Within this is an unwavering belief in the capacity of people to, as democracy has long promised, manage their own lives. This way of politics could become the basis for political and social life; a reconstruction of the *polis* in which people, through genuinely equal and free acts of communication and deliberation, are able to construct another world from below, free from the hierarchies that have so long betrayed the possibility of a more just, equal and free world.

Modern antisystemic forces have once again given hope to activists the world over. Whilst many questions are yet to be answered, and the future undoubtedly uncertain, there is hope that, for long, has not existed. The 'fire and the word' of modern antisystemic forces have once again rekindled belief in the idea that the creation of another world is possible. Whilst the failure of the state long disoriented and disillusioned antisystemic actors and movements – and those amenable to their grievances – the rise of an anarchistic praxis in response to this failure has given hope that a new society, based on opposition to hierarchy and principles of direct democracy, liberty and equality, is possible. Perhaps, even if this ideal world, free from hierarchy and domination, turns out to be 'utopian' and 'impossible', with exploitation, poverty and oppression rife, would it not still be for the better that it has been pursued?

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