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SCHOLACTIVISM:
A ROUNDTABLE INTERVIEW WITH RICARDO ANTUNES, PIETRO
BASSO, PATRICK BOND, MICHAEL LÖWY, JOSÉ PAULO NETTO, AND
LEO PANITCH

“In the various contests over justice and human rights that so many of us feel we have joined, there needs to be a component to our engagement that stresses the need for the redistribution of resources, and that advocates the theoretical imperative against the huge accumulations of power and capital that so distorts human life. Peace cannot exist without equality; this is an intellectual value desperately in need of reiteration, demonstration and reinforcement.”¹

The current understanding of the concept of “intellectual” is the result of a long historical transformation that can be traced back to the ancient times. Plato’s philosopher king was an image of the intellectual, often misunderstood by ordinary people, whose wisdom allowed him/her to see the truths behind the appearances. This was precisely why he must rule *over* society.² Abrahamic religious institutions later provided the space for a particular form of intellectual theologians to flourish. Nonetheless, the intellectual identity (e.g. the priest as the mediator bridging the Truth – God – and men, in Catholicism) and the means for intellectual activity (e.g. the Bible as the primary means to Truth, in Protestantism) were narrowly defined and exclusionary. It was not until the late 16th century that, in the West, ‘intellect’ began to be understood as a general *human* capacity, with *reason* as its method of inquiry.³ The Enlightenment intellectual could be anyone who utilized his faculty of reason to decipher the world around him/her. This broadening of the concept of intellectual in the age of Enlightenment led to important changes in the role of the intellectual in society and the way this role could be played. It provided a venue for the intellectual to be politically *relevant* without the need to be engaged in politics *directly* (as was the case for Plato’s Philosopher King).⁴ The intellectual was thought to be a key participant in the march towards ‘progress’ through contemplation to set up ‘rational’ schemes for a more just social order.⁵ A fundamentally different current emerged from the early 19th century upon the rise of the labour movement and revolutionary socialism. The intellectuals who sided with this current challenged many of the ideas of the Enlightenment, such as the liberal notion of ‘progress’ and ‘justice’. One of the most prominent intellectual of this mode of thinking was Karl Marx whose rigorous intellectual work

and active engagement with the labour movement politics (increasingly so during his involvement with the International Workingmen's Association [IWMA])⁶. The intellectual was no longer an innocent agent of progress. The task of the intellectual was to provide a fundamental *critique* of capitalist society in order to *enable* the agents of change, the working-class people, to overcome the fundamental injustice embedded in the very logic of such a society. Although Marx famously said, "The philosophers have only interpreted the world in various ways; the point, however, is to change it",⁷ he was well aware that it is impossible to change the system without gaining a fundamental understanding of it, as his tireless intellectual work proves. However, this understanding into the inner working of the modern society was no longer neutral and general but directive and (class) specific.

The 20th century contains numerous attempts to redefine and reinvent the concept of intellectual. As the role of ideology and the function of cultural industry became more significant, the need for intellectuals to represent their identity to themselves and to the public became more vital. In the meanwhile, there were concerted efforts, with long lasting effect on academic social sciences to this day, to 'professionalize' social sciences and separate the notion of social scientist from the intellectual.⁸ Max Weber's notorious defense of value freedom, which is often taken to be, rather inaccurately, a methodological argument as opposed to an argument for a particular disciplinary ethics,⁹ was a sign of the emerging division between the scholar, who, like a civil servant employed by the State or an employee hired by a private company, dwells within an institutional framework and has to abide with its rules while trying to maintain his/her relative autonomy. In this scheme, the scholar was a consultant (of the political apparatus of the State or the political institution in which he/she serves) answerable not to the public but his/her 'employer'. Karl Mannheim offered an image of the intellectual who resides above and beyond (in other words, 'outside') particular social classes and whose mission is "dynamic reconciliation of [political] perspectives, or at least secur[ing] the conditions required to make a continuing engagement of perspectives possible".¹⁰ A fundamentally different intervention was made by Antonio Gramsci to illuminate the role of the intellectuals as it *relates* to social classes.¹¹ He held that each social class creates an environment within which 'organic' intellectuals are absorbed in order to help the social class to gain internal cohesion and external hegemony. He distinguished this type of intellectual from 'traditional' intellectuals who relate to the older hegemonic order which allows them to have special autonomy and political status within society as a whole. The intellectual contention to gain hegemony for specific social class is carried out by 'organic' intellectuals, although they must ultimately win over a significant proportion of 'traditional' intellectuals. This account of the role of intellectuals gives a more accurate and complex picture of how intellectuals may or may not side with particular social classes, facilitate them in the process of gaining hegemony, and ultimately, it shows how even in their apparent 'independence' and 'autonomy', they are always already serving a certain political position within society albeit often one from an earlier social formation (as is the case with the 'traditional' intellectual). Political institutions and social movements connecting with particular social classes provide the space in which the 'organic' intellectuals can be produced, trained, and interact with other political agents.

There lies the motivation for this collective interview with some of the leading intellectuals from several countries around the world who are certainly 'organic' intellectuals of the working-class movements. I asked them about the conceptual distinction between scholarship and activism, the

ideal form of relationship between scholars and activists, disciplinary and institutional constraints affecting this interaction, and the existing collaborative relationship between scholars and activists in each respective country. Although the interview includes scholars from various cultural and linguistic backgrounds, it must acknowledge some of its serious shortcomings such as the lack of female participants and also persons of color. Short bibliographical notes on the contributors are as follows:

Pietro Basso is professor of Sociology in the Ca' Foscari University of Venice. He has published extensively on unemployed people (*Disoccupati e stato* [The unemployed and the state]), working hours (*Modern Times, Ancient Hours. Working lives in the Twenty-first Century*), international migration (*Immigrazione e trasformazione della società* [The immigration and the transformation of society]); *Gli immigrati in Europa. Disuguaglianze, razzismo, lotte* [Immigrated people in Europe. Inequalities, racism, struggles]), and state racism (*Razzismo di stato. Stati Uniti, Europa, Italia* [State Racism. United States, Europe, Italy]). His essays, signed or anonymous, have been published in political reviews as “Page deux”, “Agone”, “Ventesimo secolo”, “Movimento operaio e socialista”, “Transfer”. Starting from the spring of 1968, he has been deeply engaged in social and workers’ movements, in anti-war and anti-racist activities. Because of these activities, he was denounced for his “teaching contrary to state interests and principles,” charged and also arrested, many times without ever changing his critical attitude towards capitalist society, its wonderful reality, and its institutions.

Patrick Bond is, from July 2015, Professor of Political Economy at the University of the Witwatersrand School of Governance and also Senior Professor at the University of KwaZulu-Natal School of Built Environment and Development Studies where, since 2004, he has directed the Centre for Civil Society. His research and applied work addresses economic crisis from global to household scales; environment especially energy, water, and climate change; social mobilization and public policy advocacy; and geopolitics (especially the BRICS). His publications cover contemporary problems in South Africa, Zimbabwe, the African continent, the BRICS bloc and global-scale processes. Patrick’s recent books include: *City of Deception: Capital Accumulation, Dis-accumulation and Uneven Development in Durban* (with Ashwin Desai) (2015); *BRICS: An Anti-Capitalist Critique* (co-edited with Ana Garcia) (2015); *South Africa: The Present as History* (with John Saul) (2014), *Elite Transition: From Apartheid to Neoliberalism in South Africa*; *Politics of Climate Justice: Paralysis Above, Movement Below* (2014); and *Durban’s Climate Gamble: Trading Carbon, Betting the Earth* (edited) (2011). In service to the new South African government from 1994-2002, Patrick authored/edited more than a dozen development policy papers and was active in the anti-apartheid movement and US student and community movements.

Michael Löwy, was born in Brazil in 1938, and has lived in Paris since 1969. Presently Emerit Research Director at the CNRS (National Center for Scientific Research). His books and articles have been translated into 29 languages. Among his main publications are *Ecosocialism: A radical alternative to the capitalist ecological catastrophe* (2015), *On Changing the World: Essays in Political Philosophy, from Karl Marx to Walter Benjamin* (2012), *The Theory of Revolution in the Young Marx* (2009), *Fire Alarm. Reading Walter Benjamin’s ‘On the concept of history’* (2005), and *The International Ecosocialist Manifesto* (with Joel Kovel) (2001). He is also a regular collaborator of the Brazilian Landless Peasant Movement. He was an active member of the PT, Brazilian Workers Party, for many years, but is presently associated with the PSOL, Party of

Socialism and Freedom. He is also one of the founders of the International Ecosocialist Network.

Leo Panitch is the Canada Research Chair in Comparative Political Economy and Distinguished Research Professor of Political Science at York University, Toronto. His book with Sam Gindin, entitled *The Making of Global Capitalism: The Political Economy of American Empire* (2012) was awarded the Deutscher book prize in the UK and the Davidson book prize in Canada. Among his many other books are *In and Out of Crisis: the Global Financial Meltdown and Left Alternatives* (2010); *Renewing Socialism: Transforming Democracy, Strategy and Imagination* (2008) and *The End of Parliamentary Socialism: From New Left to New Labour* (2001). For the past three decades, he has been the editor of the internationally renowned annual volume, the *Socialist Register*. Alongside his social and political activism internationally and in Canada, he has been an engaged public intellectual, including recently through commentaries for *The Guardian* and frequent appearances on *The Real News*.

Ricardo Antunes is Professor of Sociology at the Institute of Philosophy and Human Sciences at UNICAMP (State University at Campinas, São Paulo). He received the Zeferino Vaz Award of Unicamp (2003) and held the Florestan Fernandes Chair CLASCO (2002). He was Visiting Research Fellow at the University of Sussex (UK) and is a researcher at the CNP (National Council for Scientific Research) in Brazil. Among his publications are *The Meanings of Work: Essay on the Affirmation and Negation of Work* (2012), *Riqueza e Miséria no Trabalho no Brasil [Wealth and Poverty in Brazil]* (2013, 2007), *Adeus ao Trabalho: Ensaio Sobre as Metamorfoses e a Centralidade do Mundo do Trabalho [Goodbye to work. Essay on the Metamorphoses and the World of Centralization of Work]* (2009), and *A Desertificação Neoliberal No Brasil [The Neoliberal desertification in Brazil]* (2004). He is a regular contributor of a large selection of Brazilian and international journals and magazines on the topics of contemporary morphology of work, ontology of social being, industrial structure, and trade unionism. He has a wide militancy in the trade unions (including the Central Unitary of Workers [CUT], Trade Union and Popular Central [CONLUTAS], and the INTERSINDICAL). He works with the Movement of Landless Workers (MST) as a professor in the School Florestan Fernandes. He was affiliated with the Workers Party (PT), from 1983 to 2003 and is founder and affiliated to the Party of Socialism and Liberty (PSOL) since 2004.

José Paulo Netto was born in 1947 in Minas Gerais. He is the Professor Emeritus of the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro, who has been a university professor in Brazil, Portugal and several Latin American countries. A follower of the Marxist intellectual tradition inaugurated by György Lukács, he is widely considered a central figure in the reception Lukács receives in Brazil. He has dozens of articles published in academic journals and books in the social sciences and history, the latest of which is entitled *Pequena História da Ditadura Brasileira. 1964-1985 [Brief History of Brazilian Dictatorship 1964-1985]* (2014). Linking academic research to political intervention since the mid-1960s, he has been a political activist and the member of the Brazilian Communist Party [PCB] and, because of this, he was arrested and forced into exile during the last Brazilian dictatorship.

Amini: In 1983, Edward Said called intellectuals a “class badly in need today of moral rehabilitation and social redefinition”. He believed that an intellectual should remain an “outsider,” in the sense of remaining independent of centers of power such as governments and corporations, albeit remaining on the side of the oppressed, to speak in, to, and for the public. He saw the defining characteristics of unsettled intellectuals (in the sense of being an outsider) in critical ability to unsettle; to question assumptions and open new possibilities. Being an activist, however, fundamentally rests on the notion of being an “insider,” whose actions are always guided by the solidarity ties with the causes of the movement whose critical stance is directed against the hostile forces that threaten the validity and integrity of the movement. In your view, is there a conceptual (or pragmatic) distinction between scholarship and activism?

Netto: The question posed by Said is not, in fact, a new question. *Among academics*, for at least a century, this question has come up and been restated, in another formulation, especially within the social sciences where it was the object of the most varied of solutions (more precisely, *attempts* at solutions): the positivism of Durkheim, with its strict separation between “judgment of fact” and “judgement of value”; the neo-Kantian alternative of Weber’s “two vocations”; Mannheim’s idealistic conception of the “*freischwebende Intelligenz*.” Said’s conceptualization, however, is new, it seems to me, in the sense of being pragmatic. Nonetheless, we must take into consideration that these questions about the socio-institutional conditions in which the question is posed are actually new, as in the case of academics.

In the last three decades of the twentieth century, following the changes since the post-World War II period, the socio-occupational development of the *social category* of intellectuals in contemporary capitalist societies became more differentiated, mediated, and complex. This development varies concretely in various societies (it is not the same in central capitalist societies, semi-peripheral, or peripheral ones), and the common denominator of this development is an *intense socio-technical division of intellectual activities* and its *growing institutionalization* (business and academic, private and public) and these two processes are intimately linked. *One* of its implications is a *reduced social space* for the existence of *intellectuals* engaged in political and/or social activism (in other words: militant intellectuals, *activists*) who are, strictly speaking, *outsiders*.

However, I do not think that, as a matter of principle, to be an *outsider* constitutes a *sine qua non condition* for launching the critical functions advocated by Said (questioning, challenging, opening up new possibilities, etc.). It is obvious that independence in regards to centers of power, corporations, and governments at the service of the *status quo*, is central to the exercise of critical thinking, but being connected to organizational and institutional structures does not mean, a priori, an impossibility of having such independence (which can never be considered in the abstract, but always in terms of levels/degrees). The effective question for the critical exercise lies not in the alternative, that is, for the intellectual to be an insider/outsider; it lies in the nature and functionality of the organizational and institutional framework in which the intellectual operates and, in the relations of this framework, with all the social institutions.

This is because one cannot consider any organizational-institutional structure in the abstract: to a greater or lesser extent, *its dynamics are connected to the surrounding macroscopic societal dynamics*. The most obvious example here is provided by the university institution –to a greater or lesser extent, its dynamics express the movement of social classes that polarize and

create social tension in social life (and this latter expression is all the more accurate, the more that the democratic framework within which the social tension occurs is functional). Although the nature of the university institution is eminently conservative/reproductive, inserted in an effectively democratic contextuality, it does not cancel nor prevent critical reflection.

These observations concern, particularly, the relationship between intellectuals and organizational and institutional structures. As for the relationships between “intellectuals” and “militants” (i.e. the relationship between *scholarship and activism*) – which, in fact, bring back the old and the ever new issue between intellectual elaboration and practical-political intervention (in the language of the left, between “theory” and “practice”), I do not think that the conditions of contemporary societies have substantively changed their terms. At the beginning of the twenty-first century, as in the mid-nineteenth century, *true knowledge* (theoretical, systematic, which does not exclude, but on the contrary assumes erudition and culture) of *social reality is absolutely necessary for any militant wishing to operate successfully in radical social transformation processes*. Even today, it is worth paraphrasing Marx’s famous insult to Weitling: “Ignorance never emancipated anybody.”

In short, if theoretical elaboration and social/political militancy do not match or contradict each other, (by their goals, development rates, and the spaces in which they operate), their articulation – though always tense and multi-faceted – is a requirement, so that theoretical elaboration neither falls into *speculative theorization*, nor that militancy degrades into *blind activism*.

Löwy: Intellectuals are not a homogenous body although they may have certain kinds of activities in common, such as cultural background, education, academic certifications, etc. I agree with Gramsci who took a broader concept of intellectuals and defined them as kind of people who engage in cultural production. They are a very heterogamous and divided body of individuals since many of them are co-opted by the existing economic, cultural, and political structure. Many of them produce the ideology for the ruling classes and serve as the organic intellectuals of the established systems. There is a vast array of scholars, political economists, social scientists, journalists, artists, etc. who are basically integrated and absorbed by the established system and profit from the current situation. Yet, on the opposite pole, following a long tradition, we have many intellectuals who decide to side with the subaltern classes, with the oppressed people, and who support the struggles of workers, peasants, women, sexual minorities, oppressed races, etc. Sometimes, such choices go with some difficulties and sacrifices; people might lose their jobs, be marginalized, directly repressed, or killed. Such intellectuals can include scholars, writers, priests, theologians, etc. I see this diversity in the way intellectuals act-think, because both go together. Moreover, in the space between these two poles, there are people who think they are “pure” intellectuals; believing that they are outside or above social conflicts. However, I think this is an illusion. Those who think they are above are just “in the middle”, as some of the middle classes. This is a very sketchy typography of the distribution of intellectuals.

In terms of the distinction between “scholars” and “activists,” there are many scholars who do not have an active engagement with any political or social movement. But just through their writings, by their purely academic, intellectual, and journalistic activity, they contribute to such movements. They are not political activists in a strict sense but their writings are a form of activity which may serve one side or the other in a social conflict. For example, the political

economist, Milton Friedman, does not have to go to the street and demonstrate for protecting private property; his act of writing on the subject positions him as a significant intellectual and political figure. The same applies to the other side for the intellectuals who write to serve the subaltern classes. Nevertheless, on both sides of the social barrier, there are also intellectuals who want to have direct social and political activity. They are directly committed to political parties, social movements, networks, etc.

Basso: I see critical and militant scholarship as compatible even though they are not identical. Limiting myself to the social sciences, I am convinced that the starting point of these two interrelated dimensions of scholarship should be the critique of political economy of global capitalism.

Among the anti-capitalist scholars and activists, up until now, very few have comprehended that we are talking about, essentially, *starting from zero*, or almost, stoically accepting this bitter truth, and trying to recreate collective circuits of discussion and to make the existent conflicts interact with each other. Since, at the moment, while the global crisis of capitalism is unresolved, in Europe, both the critical scholarship and the activist movements are fragile, and they have very limited relationships with each other, which is another aspect of their fragility.

If we consider the furious Islamophobic campaign of the last fifteen years, and the wars provoked from the various European states against Yugoslavia, Iraq, Libya, Syria, Gaza, and so on, in the last twenty-five years as a test for the autonomy of the European intellectuals of today from the constituted powers, the picture that can be painted, *for the overwhelming majority of them*, is equally devastating. And what is more devastating, maybe, is the assimilation to this *majority* who belonged to the left, often to the extreme left, in the years of 1968.

At the root of it all, there are two great historic processes that are tightly interconnected. The *first* is the progressive transformation/dissolution/self-sinking of the old workers' movement, to which a consistent and very qualified number of European scholars in the field of social sciences, and not only, would refer up to the beginning of the 80s. Even though it has occurred in various forms in different countries, this process was *generalized*, since the onslaught of ideology and neoliberal dogma were not fought against with the necessary determination in *any* European country, and certainly not in Italy. And often, if not almost always, the tenuous resistance to its breakthrough occurred in the name of the *presumed* Keynesian alternative to the neoliberal beliefs. Since even where (thinking for example of Germany or Great Britain) the old political (Labour Party, SPD) or syndical structures (Trade Unions, DGB) are formally still operating, their ideological and political addresses have, however, substantially changed, even if on a trajectory that was from the beginning a reformist one.

The *second* is the *growing irrelevance of the "mass" of old intellectuals*, resulting from the combination of the advent of the computer revolution, that simplified and socialized many of their functions, and the dominance of television and later of instant messaging within the system of public and private communication, with their radical allergy to any form of articulated discourse, reasoning, scientific reasoning, demystification, in favor of sensational banalities, of instantaneous communication, of "predigested cultural food," as Bourdieu would say, of "thinking faster than their own shadow." This dual process has brutally reduced the spaces and locations of the critique of the state of existing things, weakening both the scholarship that is

independent of power, and the activism of the working class and social battles. The contraction of social conflict in Europe, that covers a long arch of time, and has not known a decisive inversion even after the outbreak of the crisis in 2008, inevitably had a depressive impact on the global critique of capitalistic social relations, as it had the effect of almost always reducing the gaze of the activists, including the most generous ones, to a *single* problem, a *single* territory, a *single* movement, a *single* category, a *single* dimension, a *single* country.

Panitch: For a long time, I did not regard myself as a university teacher, rather, as a socialist who was engaged in the process of political education and inquiry. The purpose of what I was doing was socialist education and inquiry. And, I have never felt guilty about that, in a scholarly or an academic way. I think that those people who claim that if you describe yourself as socialist you must be biased are mistaken. On the contrary, I believe it matters, for people who want to change the world, that they get it right, and that they really are committed to objectively understanding how capitalism works, as well as all of the limitations, contradictions, mistakes, and errors that socialists make. It really matters because if you are trying to change the world, then you better get it right! You should not sweep things under the carpet. There are plenty of socialist and Marxist intellectuals, who have swept inconvenient facts under the carpet, concepts which avoid difficult issues. I believe it is our task as socialist intellectuals to get rid of those kinds of concepts. For example, I have written that the “withering away of the state” or “smashing the state” as concepts in Marxism are examples of the kind of concepts that avoid difficult questions.

We are obligated to renovate socialist thoughts in a way to make sure that they utilize concepts which how the world works, and help us understand what is wrong, limited, or mistaken about socialist strategies. This is not speaking to the way that what we do at universities is connected to the actual agencies that change the world, because you do not change the world through class struggle at the university level. That is not to say that there is no just cause for class struggle at the university level especially between the growing academic precariat and increasingly capitalistically inclined university administrations. However, that class struggle is of a narrow kind. The kind of work we need to do needs to link up with parties, movements, and the working-class struggle in a broadest sense of the term. I think that we are obligated, therefore, to orient our research and teaching, to help people understand where working class organization and institutions came from historically, why they were so important as the first permanent institutions of subordinate classes in the world history (the great mass, the socialist parties, trade unions); to decipher what was wrong with them, and how to make them better; and furthermore, to try to work with those institutions in popular education as best as we can. Unfortunately, I have found that social movements and working-class organizations are not always open to such critical assessment. Furthermore, trade union leaders do not want themselves and their institutions scrutinized too carefully. The same applies to working class political parties, social democratic parties, communist parties, etc.

Antunes: The role of the radical intellectual is to do the analysis of the present in the most critical way, *going to the roots*, without fear of acknowledging the difficulties, the tragedies, and the destructiveness of a world governed by the destructive logic of capital. This implies, first of all, a number of challenges. As Marx taught us, we must always have an ontological foundation, to seek knowledge of the being as it is, that is, knowing the real world in its deepest connections, its most intimate, in order to be able to offer some new explanatory element, without which

critical thinking cannot advance. This forces us into other difficult challenges: First, rejecting a false “axiomatic neutrality” and, secondly, not to allow the anti-capitalist ideological and political position to limit or even prevent, the actual unveiling of the concrete world.

Thus, *intellectual activity and political assessment* can be perfectly compatible. Of course, the loss of this delicate balance can lead to huge tragedies as has occurred, on the one hand, under Stalinism, and, on the other, under the current conformism that pervades a broad cross-section of contemporary thought, with always important and well-known exceptions.

If we take my previous answer as a starting point, the lively and real collaboration between scholars and activists must be one of *interpenetration, and of self-recognition* of their effective and authentic possibilities of collaboration, as well as the maintenance of *intellectual autonomy* (present in the sentence “Doubt everything”). That is, in the precise sense that *science must unravel the real world and, in doing so, cannot subject itself to any imperative other than the radical critique, free and autonomous knowledge*, without any limitation imposed either by “the research institutions” who want to determine the topics that they consider “forbidden,” or by interests of another kind, including partisan ones, who want to subject scientific knowledge to a previously defined assumption.

I will give an example to clarify this complex problem: in Russia, in the years leading up to the October Revolution of 1917, the Communist Party had a set of superbly intellectual militants. Just remember Lenin, Trotsky, Bukharin. And, we could add Rosa Luxemburg in Germany, Antonio Gramsci in Italy, György Lukács in Hungary, among many others. With the Stalinization of the Soviet system, the imperatives of the “State” were imposed, and the autonomy of Russian Marxist intellectuals was excised, in some cases even by physical elimination. The neo-positivism of Marxism, the “pragmatism”, and other aberrations undermined freedom of theory in the name of harmful pragmatic imperatives which destroyed the best of what this generation of intellectuals and Marxist militants had created. The consequences, it must be said, are still present today, nearly a century later.

Nowadays, productivity and the heightened appreciation of market ideology have invaded and been internalized in numerous intellectuals who in the past were part of the critical tradition. Conversely, all this has given rise to the so-called “end of ideology,” creating an appearance of intellectual “without ideology,” “neutral,” “scientific,” but who is subject to the impositions of private institutions for research funds, which affect the topics and forms, and hinders critical studies that challenge the logic of capital. This is at the time when the ideological aspect of capital has reached its deepest and most complex phase, seeking to eliminate the possibility of critical and emancipatory thinking that attempts to break from the constraints imposed by capital.

Bond: Yes, but there should not be such a distinction between scholarship and activism, if the activist teaches the scholar properly about conditions in what is usually a rooted, place-bound constituency, and if the scholar demands ruthless criticism, including self-criticism, from the activist. There is an increasingly respected category, the ‘scholar activist’, who is involved in the topic she or he researches, always taking sufficient care to self-identify biases, to correct these where necessary, and to always honestly address attendant critiques of this stance.

One approach to this challenge is to deny that there is any such thing as scientific objectivity and to simply plow ahead with a research agenda without being intimidated by bourgeois self-distancing methodology. That's reasonable enough, but not entirely satisfying. What I feel is the next stage of confidence in activist-created knowledge – and hence in ramping up scholar-activism to challenge mainstream knowledge production – is to consciously learn from activists, by seeking lessons that are especially vital during periods of conflict. Activists are seeking confrontations with systems of power, and occasionally these reach the point that those with power no longer ignore the challenge daily.

At that point, typically a system provides a wide spectrum of reactions, from crushing opposition to co-optation of the challengers to making concessions. Very occasionally the system is overthrown. What activists engaged in such power struggles possess are a much closer-range of views of the structure-agency relations. They have much to reveal about how to stress a system and how their strategy evolves as the struggle unfolds.

In my case, trained in my PhD programme by David Harvey in structuralist analysis of capitalism's laws of motion, perhaps without sufficient attention to agency, I gain insights from activists who tackle structures by disrupting the reproduction of system. If it is a system of capital accumulation, North-South imperial power, or racism, patriarchy, homophobia, generational oppression, or any other structured power, we can really only confirm our theoretical suppositions about the reproduction of a system if it is challenged by its victims.

So, the activists who stand up to fight that power, in many different ways, should be in a position to improve the structuralist's understanding. To me, that's the basic principle we need to explore: activist production of knowledge through conflict, fed back into a rigorous intellectual exercise – including writing post-graduate theses and peer-reviewed articles – so as to codify this knowledge and place it in favourable contrast with *status quo* knowledge.

Amini: Antonio Gramsci saw what he called 'traditional' intellectuals, defined as those whose nonsectarian gesture raises the flag of disinterested objectivity and truth, as ultimately untenable. For him, it is the 'organic' intellectuals, whose articulation of the interest of particular social class, can potentially lead them to the discovery of historically conditioned truth. Nonetheless, the scholarly nature of intellectual work demands various degrees of abstraction, running the risk of becoming too theoretical for practical purposes that concern activists. How would the collaboration between (organic) intellectuals and activists ideally look?

Antunes: When Gramsci conceived of the organic intellectual – which, he, incidentally, was an exceptional example of within Marxism of the twentieth century – he conceptualized it as a category of intellectuals, free and autonomous in relation to the values of the ruling class, who approach the flourishing of most universalizing and emancipatory values as only possible within the realm of what he called subaltern classes. The traditional intellectual, even those with good intentions, cannot make that move. So, I think that a fruitful and organic (in its deepest sense) relationship between intellectuals and activists (members of social movements) must seek to recover socially vital issues that concern the working class who suffer the ills of everyday life.

And what are the vital issues today? Within capital, people work in order to survive; but, in a different system, work can be a free exercise, in free association with other individuals. To realize

such possibility, people have to be able to fight to demolish the structure of capital, to work as long as it is necessary to produce good (as opposed to the extra time necessary to produce surplus value) and live outside work in the widest and richest way, i.e. *truly* free.

And who can unleash this huge battle? A myriad of social movements whose individuals rely on their labour to survive, the active part of the working class in the broad sense. The environmental issue, the struggle for women's emancipation, the right to self-determination of indigenous peoples (striking feature of Latin America), the fight against racism, the full right to freedom of sexual orientation, are all examples of vital and interconnected issues.

Thus, only a deep connection with those who have to do the most tedious works, who belong to what I have termed the class-which-lives-to-work, and social movements fighting for the survival of wage earners, in other words with the real needs and wants of everyday life, we can unmask the utter fallacy of the ideology of neutrality of the intellectual and fill the gap that exists between the university life and the concrete life of the working class outside academia.

Bond: I can offer my personal anecdote of why a commitment to learning from strategic leadership in the activist community is of enormous benefit. Fifteen years ago, I would regularly write about the campaign to get free AIDS medicines for the more than five million HIV-positive South Africans. These medicines then cost each patient more than \$10,000 a year, and with Big Pharma exerting enormous influence over legislation and the rise of intellectual property restrictions against generic production in South Africa, we were facing a genuine, full-fledged holocaust. Life expectancy had fallen from 65 to 52 during the 1990s and so in 1999 an activist initiative was vitally needed.

The Treatment Action Campaign was that initiative, led by HIV+ activists who refused to take medicine for themselves until it was available to all. These few hundred activists – with allies like AIDS Coalition to Unleash Power and Medicins sans Frontiers – took on Big Pharma, the World Trade Organisation's Trade Related Intellectual Property System, the Clinton and Bush regimes, and the South African government of AIDS-sceptic Thabo Mbeki. My prediction was that they would lose, and I have embarrassing articles in the early 2000s wishing them well but pointing out the power of the structures they were fighting.

They proved me incompetent, I am happy to say. For within four years, they had won their battle inside Mbeki's own party by late 2003, following victories in the WTO and South African Constitutional Court in 2001 and 2002. By 2004, generic medicines were being made in South Africa. The life expectancy here then soared from 52 to 62 this year, as three million people came into the public sector treatment programmes. The leader of the Treatment Action Campaign for most of the latter period was Vuyiseka Dubula, and her doctoral thesis, now underway in our Centre for Civil Society, is one of those excellent examples of the activist teaching the scholar why being involved very intimately in a conflict like this is so much more conducive to producing knowledge than being, as I was in that cause, a sympathetic but faraway armchair academic.

Basso: Allow me to answer this question without referring to "ideal" situations, but rather to the present situation in Europe and Italy, that frankly has few "ideal" characteristics. I will limit myself to two examples that I retain as significant. The first regards the radical change in the

conditions and the way of thinking of workers that intervened in the last forty years, product of the complex combination between a series of linked transformations: the international division of labor, the organization of labor, the labour market, and the syndical and political organizations of workers. It is an extremely large and complicated field of research (first of all, because the study cannot be confined neither to single European countries nor to Europe), that requires an intense and prolonged collective research effort, and together, the closest collaboration between scholars and activists, even only in the development of the “workers’ inquiry” in the field. Unfortunately, at this moment, in the structures of the old workers’ movement, the interest for research is substantially failing, and there is more and more preoccupation for everyday life, while the new self-organized structures almost all suffer from a preoccupying limitation of visions and interests, the limitation of their strengths. This makes the most invested scholars (few, I repeat) lack the fundamental contribution of those who are “in the field” daily, in contact with the practice of production of goods and resistance to capitalist despotism; such a lack risks making them prone to simplify, removing themselves from the effort to see in the “concrete” object of study, the multiplicity of determinations and distinctions, the inclination, therefore, to make “ideology”.

The second example that pertains to the present is extremely deep crisis of the relationship between capital and nature. There is no doubt that the capitalistic plundering of nature (the other face of the exploitation of live labor) in the last decades has arrived to call into question the integrity of the global ecosystem and many local ecosystems, and that there has been an impressive intellectual production, *especially outside of Europe*, on this subject matter. If I turn my gaze, however, to movements in Italy that have formed on this territory (the No Tav movement in Val di Susa, the movement against biocide in Campania and Lazio, the No Muos movement in Sicily), and they have been among the most significant movements, I cannot help but notice that they have interacted very little, at least until now, with the places of production of academic knowledge. I must state that – even in the presence of significant social movements – the collaboration between scholars and activists is almost non-existent.

Panitch: Let’s focus on socialist intellectuals and activists. We should try to have as much collaboration as possible but I think a lot of people who do research in the movements and labour unions engage in advocacy research rather than critical research. I believe, we have to uphold the importance of critical research. For example, in examining government austerity policies, a critical Marxist intellectual should be able to see that workers and their institutions do have power inside capitalism. They are not just victims. That is the whole point of being a Marxist. It is an asymmetrical relationship but capital depends on workers. So I always want to insist on the fact that workers militancy can have an effect on capitalist profit and the whole system depends on capitalist profit. By saying ‘we don’t have anything to do with this and that it is not our fault’ unions in a sense take away from workers any sense that they have strength within this system. Of course, if the workers are strong, it will cause contradiction within capitalism. But unions do not want to hear this. This sometimes applies to other movements as well which want to square the circle. They want to both convince the capitalists that whatever they are asking for is not only possible but just; whereas Marxists want to say, no, some of the things you are asking for actually will cause contradiction and crises in capitalism.

There is a tension between the advocate researchers and critical researcher. It is not a matter of being in a university. It is the matter of trying to actually get beyond capitalism rather than just

advocate for whatever cause, be it the feminist cause, ecological cause, the workers economic rights, etc. There is a tension in this; those engaged in the advocacy will sometimes say of those of us who are critical researchers, and who are trying to get to socialism, that we are in the ivory tower. This is an unfair charge. It is usually not because we are in the ivory tower, in the sense of being detached from movements, but because we are trying to educate people to be socialists. An example of this attitude is that unions generally do not like to hire critical researchers, or at least they quiet them when they do hire them. Unions are not schools for socialism. Similarly, feminist movements are not necessarily schools for socialism. They are trying to win rights within capital. As I mentioned before, there is a tension there which is not necessarily between universities and the outside world but between advocacy, and critical research; it is between socialist education and the type of education that is oriented towards winning people's rights within capitalism.

Netto: The current conditions of academic activities (marked by an extreme socio-technical division of labor, most obviously manifest in specialization taken to an unbelievable degree) do not favor a fruitful dialogue between critical intellectuals (academics) and militants (activists).

But, I do not think that levels of abstraction, necessary and indispensable parts of theoretical reflection, are responsible for the obstacles that make the above dialogue difficult. It is important to consider that the pace of theoretical development (that is to say, the production of knowledge) is not the same as the pace of practical/political demands; the demands of theoretical elaboration are not the same as the immediate demands of militant action. It is necessary to take into account the fact that theoretical knowledge apprehends the questions posed in everyday social life and overcomes its immediacy by treating it as objects of cognition, while everyday life is the direct and immediate space of intervention on the part of the militant (where, even his/her pragmatic tendency is located). Theoretical knowledge and practical/political intervention have *specific characteristics* and are distinct modes of human objectification that prevent their *identification*: for this very reason, their necessary *articulation*, which enables the effectiveness of their *unity* (from Hegel, we know that unity is not identity), involves *a relationship which is always tense and multi-faceted*.

I believe that the contemporary difficulties that make relations between critical academic thinkers and social activists problematic should not be explained on the basis of the specifics of their activities. These difficulties should, at first, be understood in the context of the different social conditions (material and ideal) in which they develop these activities. In the context of a democracy, however limited, the constraints that the establishment exerts on the academic critic are mainly (though not exclusively) of an ideal nature, more precisely ideological, whereas the militant, even within the context of the same democracy, is the object of material and ideological coercion (economic and political, including police repression). To put it simply: the academic has more room to maneuver than the militant.

At any rate, to think concretely about the current relationship between academics and activists – both confronting the *establishment*—implies considering the *Zeitgeist* produced by the political and ideological attack of capital against the workers (an attack that is emblematic of the destruction of the *Welfare State*) with the entire capitulation of late social democracy, further produced by the implosion of the Soviet Union and the elimination of socialist projects, by the crisis of the trade union movement, and by the remains of the communist parties. Although, in my opinion, this

Zeitgeist expresses only a transitory historical period, no more than a well determined moment of a long process whose outcome is apparently far from decided, it is indisputable that, in its framework, the relationship between thought and critical action looks greatly weakened. Again, I believe that good old Marx helps us to understand the difficulties of the present time: “It is not enough for thought to strive for realization; reality must itself strive towards thought” (*Critique of Hegel’s Philosophy of Law. Introduction*).

Amini: In the essay, “Heinrich Heine and the role of the intellectual in Germany,” Jürgen Habermas identifies four categories with respect to the public role of (German) intellectuals, namely, “the unpolitical” who sharply separate the realm of mind and politics, “theoreticians oriented to Realpolitik,” who claim that the incompetence of intellectuals in practical politics mandates their withdrawal from that realm, politically engaged intellectuals, who operate outside the pillars of political power, and finally those intellectuals who do not rule out active participation in political apparatus and institutions. Max Weber is seen as the most celebrated defender of the second category. In his two famous essays, “Politics as a Vocation” and “Science as a Vocation”, Weber argues that politics demands a particular form of personal responsibility which scholarship cannot and ought not to fulfill it. Even though the argument for value freedom is refuted as a methodological disposition, there are those who defend it on strategic ground, holding value freedom as an appropriate code of conduct, absence of which is claimed to have negative outcomes on the integrity of intellectual endeavors. What are your thoughts about value freedom in intellectual and scholarly activities?

Basso: No, definitely not. This theme was forcefully imposed by

M. Weber. But it was Weber himself that categorically proved wrong the possibility to make social science “value free” within a capitalistic society that is divided into objectively antagonistic classes. I recognize Weber’s scholarly capabilities but his approach to social relations is, notwithstanding, *radically individualistic*, and therefore idealist, and has its clear root in a liberal (school of) thought, which is the typical bourgeois thinking. In the same way, his conception of rationality and of rational organization leads in a direct way to the thesis that *capitalistic* “rationality,” that capitalism, is an inevitable, albeit bitter, *historic fate* of Western society and the world. Inasmuch inserted in such a historic context, of battles among nations, and in particular amongst great nations, to establish which of them was to gain world supremacy, social science cannot avoid being imbued with *national values*, or being *nationalist*. It has to be so, for Weber, not in a banal sense, as a servant of the “daily interests” of state politics, but in a greater and deeper sense, as a servant of the “*lasting interests of the politics of strength of the nation*.” Therefore, the “cause of the State” is the guiding star of social sciences because, as Weber would say, “the last word goes to economic interests, of our nation’s strength and its representative, that is to say the national German state.” Weber openly declares his belonging to the bourgeois class, and indicates as “ultimate goal of our science,” “to collaborate in the re-education of our nation” in order to open “an even greater era” of power for it. Nor can we forget that, yet again in line with the bourgeois thought, Weber raises the state to “most important constituting element of cultural life.”

The successive, exasperated formalism and technical rigidity belonging to his construction of sociological categories *do not* constitute an element of contradiction with this *radically evaluative* conception of social science in general. And the same “dualism” between facts and

values typical of his writings on the method of historic-social sciences is always affirmed in a context in which the constellation of values of reference remain, *invariably*, that of the trinomial science-nation-state, and the prospective that of a historic universal mission of a “great nation” like Germany, of “social and national cohesion” that is necessary for this mission to be fulfilled. After all, from his first steps until the end, Weber’s work and life have been imprinted with the battle against Marxism, Socialism, and in particular against the internationalist tendency of the working-class movement – it suffices to think of the violent outcomes in favor of the repression against the Spartacists.

In a society like the present, deeply divided into classes, first of all, and characterized also by a division among dominant countries (and “races”) and dominated nations (and “races”), and by an ongoing gender oppression, how can social science, which is a product of these social relations, remain neutral with respect to interests in irreducible contrast with each other? The presumption, typical of the twentieth century, to give life to “pure sociology,” to “pure” theory of rights, to “pure” political economy, to “pure theory of cycle,” regardless of the more than ever impure, namely contradictory, social reality, is a presumption that is as much arrogant as it is baseless. And it has played and plays, even when it presents itself under the appearance of technical neutrality, a function of mystification that is useful only for the conservation of the status quo, not of course for the knowledge of reality, and even less so for its revolutionary transformation.

Having said so, not everything is resolved. To align oneself with the side of waged labor, of the exploited, of the super-exploited of the dominated countries, of women, to focus on the central matter of our era: the decadence of the capitalistic way of production, and the necessity to not be crushed by it in the most frightening of barbarities, is *fundamental* but *it is not all*. And it does not guarantee at all, in itself, *rigor* in the study of contemporary situations and occurrences. It is in this way that I translate the call to “objectivity”: as the obligation to study matters deeply, from all sides, in their genesis and their development, accepting the uncomfortable methodic doubt regarding the validity of one’s own results. The process of knowing is an infinite process, ever so complicated, ever so in this society which is the *most mystified* among all forms of hitherto existing society, and *the only one* that must be understood as a *global* society. The knowledge of the incompleteness of the achieved results, the necessity to methodically subject them to a critical test, the capacity to openly recognize the limits and mistakes of one’s own inquiries, is the obstinate battle to surpass oneself: such, in my opinion, are the required attitudes from a militant scholar of the case of the oppressed.

Netto: Allow me to make an intervention and reformulate the question in a way that allows me to talk about a fundamentally important subject, that is, the value of freedom in academic and intellectual activity (as opposed to the “value freedom” that the question asks).

Of course, at the outset, it is important to clarify that, in any area of social life, this value does not exist in the abstract, unconditionally: either freedom is a concrete freedom, socio-historically and culturally determined, or it is an empty word. To use the ontological formulation of Lukács, *freedom is the concrete possibility of choosing between real alternatives*.

Although I am not able to develop here the nexus of determinations implied therein, I want to state, leaving no room for doubt, that I believe that *freedom is the first condition for productive and creative intellectual activity (academic or not)* and I am convinced that this statement is

valid for all types of theoretical and scientific development (whether in social research, or within the so-called natural sciences), and within their specificities, philosophical and artistic development. And such a condition involves, obviously, not only the theoretical, epistemological and methodological choices, but also the expression, communication, disclosure of contents, and the results of intellectual activity, as well as their discussion and public criticism. The latter, incidentally, are basic requirements for verification, revision, rectification, and the ramifications of those contents and results – in short, for scientific, philosophical and artistic development. Without such conditions, which include the broadest freedom of research, this development is necessarily compromised.

It is clear that these conditions are only imaginable in the framework of a democratic society, and also, of equally democratic academic institutions. Historical experience has demonstrated that democratic restrictions hamper, impede, and/or deform scientific, philosophical and artistic development. The recurrence, for example, of the experience of “real socialism” (established in political power by the merger of the State with the Party), is enough to reveal the degree of commitment on the part of theoretical reflection. Much more subtle, but no less harmful, are the effects – now widely at play in so-called “Western democracies” – of the frequent presence of the interests of big capital (large corporations) in research into social processes and research into “hard sciences,” and the role of media monopolies in spreading “mass culture.” It is important to emphasize that this presence manifests itself directly (with big capital directly determining the *direction and the objects of research*), or in more sophisticated ways (for instance, foundation funding to universities and research centers).

The current dynamics of late capitalism have shown a growing tendency towards restricting democratic measures. It is clear, however, that given the complex mediations between dynamic and theoretical and intellectual activities (academic or not), the impacts of the mentioned trend are diverse, inasmuch on intellectual activities, as on social and geopolitical spaces where the trend occurs. In addition, structural and institutional differences of organizations (whether academic or not, whether public or private) within which such activities take place may offer quite uneven possibilities for maneuvering and resisting. But under contemporary capitalism, there are strong indications that the so-called “autonomy of intellectual work” is suffering significant erosion.

Bond: One of my colleagues, Ashwin Desai, has been known to jujitsu the old maxim to “Speak truth to power!”, into a more wholesome pursuit: “Speak truth to the powerless!” He adds with a grin, “Speak lies to power if you need to, so as to advance the cause,” but I take issue there for reasons you imply: the integrity of the cause and personal reputational consistency. South Africa has had far too much hucksterism in socio-political analysis, including writing over the last fifteen years about social justice mobilisations, and I am to blame as much as anyone. To continually correct our analysis for public consumption is vital, just as it is to push the boundaries of what we know through challenging systems of power in a public way, if needed. There is an ethical strategy there, and an egotistical performance too, for intellectuals who take a David versus Goliath stance and are aware of their own vanities. But from the personal and psychological challenge to retain perspective and balance, should emerge in each site of struggle a consistent strategy for intellectuals to help challenge power as a way to advance not just justice but also knowledge.

But let's be open and honest about those ethical difficulties, because a host of problems typically pop up when un-organic intellectuals get over-excited by the opportunity to assist mass movements. At one time or another, especially in the early 1990s, I exemplified nearly all the following problems. In my 25 years in South Africa, many opportunities arose to be close to leadership of the new democratic state, the civic movement, other community organizations, mass social movements, environmental justice struggles, feminism and the left of the labour movement. So I am acutely aware that privileged positionality often available to someone with a Ph.D and clear radical sympathies can be abused. Here are 'ten sins' that we teach each other not to commit, though *still* do even though we do not mean to:

- *Gatekeeping* (or worse, *hijacking*): In which a researcher takes ownership of a movement, its interpretation and even access;
- *Substitutionism*: Replacing (not augmenting) the local understanding with the researcher's understanding or vision;
- *Ventriloquism*: Replacing local phrasing with a researcher's own words (in press releases, articles, statements of demands, etc.);
- *Careerism through parasitism*: Exploiting information gained, without reporting back or turning benefits back to the base;
- *Technicism* or legalism: Sometimes necessary to contest an enemy's technicism, but sometimes incapable of comprehending realities, and usually causing premature deradicalisation;
- *Sectarianism*: Favouring or profiling certain factions or individuals in a divisive way;
- *Hucksterism*: Romanticising and overstating the importance of the movement, leader or struggle;
- *Score-settling*: Importing researchers' petty internecine rivalries, causing degeneracy in movement politics as ego-clashing replaces open, honest debate;
- *Failure of analytical nerve*: Inability (often due to fear) to draw out the fully liberatory potentials of the movement and its struggles, or offer comradely critique of those movements;
- *Betrayal*: Turning against the movement, giving confidential information to enemies, or unreasonably acceding to enemy arguments.

Antunes: The intellectual devoid of values is a fallacy. When he/she proceeds in this way, his/her "studies" are, at one end of the spectrum, an expression of the dominant ideology (in this case, advocating "objectively" the rules and logic of capital). At the other end of the spectrum, his/her ingenuity takes him/her to truly believe in "pure objectivity" devoid of any value,

which one sees very clearly, for example, in the so-called natural sciences. Of course, within this wide spectrum, between such extremes, there are nuances and differences.

The effective objectivity we pursue comes from the concrete, from the *being-precisely-so*, from reality in its complexity, uniqueness, particularities, universalities, transversalities, an effective understanding of which comes from a *relational dimension* that cannot be eliminated, and which exists between the *subjectivity* that seeks knowledge and the *objectivity* that needs to be unraveled.

The finest of Marxian formulations is, in my opinion, exactly that subjectivity and objectivity make up a relational whole, where there is no suppression or elimination of one another. In this way, both *subjectivists* (pillars of post-modernity) who disregard the objectivity of the real world, as well as *objectivists* who seek to suppress the authentic and subjective dimensions that cannot be eliminated and that are present in the sphere of social being are deeply mistaken. Both have caused and are still causing huge damage to social thought. An effective relationship between the objectivity and subjectivity in intellectual life depends on *freedom* in its deepest sense, without barriers and constraints that prevent one from understanding the real world. This is the greatest legacy of Marx: one must understand the real in the multiplicity of its connections. The starting point of radical critique can only be the real world. In Marx's writings, for example, there is no concept that has no reference to the real world: alienation, fetishism, estrangement, surplus value, use value, exchange value, crisis, etc. Weber, regardless of their intellectual attributes, designs and conceives of knowledge by constructing "Ideal types," whether or not they represent an effective conception of the real. The distinction between dialectical ontology of Marx and functional epistemology of Weber generate profound difference, which lies underneath Habermas's formulation.

Panitch: Nobody is free of values. The honest intellectual makes his values clear rather than hides them under the carpet. As someone who holds socialist values and seeks to change the world accordingly, he/she is likely to be a more objective and serious scholar than someone who claims to be neutral. It really matters to objectively understand how something works if one is trying to change the world. Whereas if one is a careerist neutral, like main-stream political scientists, it does not matter that much; all they are trying to do is publish articles. Their project is not connected to the socialist project. It may be to try to get the government to adapt a policy and so on but it does not fundamentally question the system. I think the reason why Marx did not publish volume II and III of the Capital was that he did not think they were right. That is why I have so much trouble with the Marxists who cling onto "the tendency of the greater profit to fall." Marx did not publish that and I think he was very concerned that it was not right. Engels published it long after. The answer that is usually given is that Marx is a perfectionist. Well, yes, but it is because he was so committed to understanding the system correctly. Because if you do not understand the world, you cannot change it. I give you another example that I think is helpful in this respect. I went to the World Social Forum in Porto Alegre, when the anti-globalization movement really took off, which was what I was researching on at the time. They had the participatory budgeting mechanism of the Workers' Party and everybody was talking about this new wonderful democratic wave running the system and so on. They had people come from around the world to Brazil to attend the World Social Forum and they would be given the kind of picture of the participatory budget that was painted in a rosy color, but nobody wanted to ask the hard question. I found this very problematic. It reminds me of Lincoln Steffens, the famous Fabian

intellectual, who, after his visit to the Soviet Union in 1935, said “I have seen the future and it works.” Well, I thought that a lot of the movements that came away from the World Social Forum were not asking the critical questions. But once you start asking such critical questions about what was going on with the Workers’ Party, you would find plenty of maggots under the rock. After I was taken to a favela (a slum) and reported this to my Canadian friends, they said “the Workers’ Party has been in government and they had the mayor of the Porto Allegre since 1989, there cannot be any slums there.” They did not want to believe it! I think our role is not to go around the world or even the local community activists (activist roots) and become spokesman or advocates for them in an uncritical way. Our role is to see how they are working, the mistakes they are making, the barriers they running into, how they are not developing people’s capacities, how they are not developing people’s abilities to engage in class struggles, and analyze and speak it publicly. This is a fundamentally different attitude than being an advocate for the victims.

This is not to say that we want to engage in such internal criticism of the Left movements by, for example, writing op-ed pieces in the *NY Times* or the *Globe and Mail*. You could easily do that, and they would love to have left intellectuals to say ‘look how bad this is.’ No, we come back and we write it in *Socialist Register* or other left outlets, which is a profoundly different reflexive act. I give you another example, a tragic one I think. The *Socialist Register* published a piece called “Comrades and Investors” by a Cuban intellectual in which he said, the reason we have freedom of association in Cuba is that if the Americans do lift the embargo, Cuba, because of its capacity, will be immediately a leading and dynamic capitalist society in the Caribbean and Latin America, as the Chinese have proven to be in Asia. He said why we need the freedom of association is that we need trade unions, and more generally a vibrant socialist society, to keep socialists ideas dynamic and relevant. He published this piece in *Socialist Register*, not in the *NY Times* but he was kicked out of the Institute of Philosophy for writing this. This shows you the limitation of the Cuban Communist leadership. They were, in a sense, shooting themselves in the foot.

Löwy: This is a vast subject, and in fact, I have written a book on this, under the title Portuguese, *As aventuras de Karl Marx contra o Barão de Münchhausen* [*The Adventures of Karl Marx against Baron Munchhausen*] I think that the idea of a value-free science, a purely objective science is an illusion. The positivists believe that the scholar can free himself from his pre-concerns, his pre-judgment, his political and social view points, and produce an absolutely value free science. However, this is either an illusion at best or a mystification. If you take any of the important positivist politicians, like Emile Durkheim or Aguste Comte, you immediately see that their own writings are heavily informed by their political and social prejudices and perspectives, mainly by their social world-views, which is much more fundamental than cynical prejudice.

Marx has many comments on his writings on political economy, and particularly on the history of political economy in the last section of *Capital* which relate to this issue. He says that there are two kinds of Bourgeois economists: those who, he says, are just speakers and apologists of the capitalist system and the bourgeoisies because of the “psychophans” which is an old Greek word, referring to those who gain advantage by appealing and flattering influential people in power. There are a whole array of political economists who are just psychophans, which include John Batise, Thomas R. Malthus. Then, there is the other type of bourgeois political economists who

attempt to discern how the economy works scientifically. They are not interested in making propaganda for the ruling class. They want to understand what is going on in the economy. They have an honest and sincere “will to truth.” All the classics like David Ricardo and Adam Smith fall in this category. For Marx, this is an important difference. He expresses a lot of respect for Smith and Ricardo and he completely despises the psychopaths. However, Marx adds that even the most honest and sincere bourgeois economists are limited by their intellectual horizons and the social worldview of their class.

This implies that their understanding of the states of affairs does not exceed beyond certain limits. This is a structural limitation of their knowledge that they cannot get rid of because it is part of their thinking of which they are not conscious. So, the ideologies, social and political world-views and viewpoints are part of the structure of thinking itself.

Marx reflexively says that his critique of political economy also represents a class viewpoint and political perspective, which is the class viewpoint of the subaltern classes of the proletariat. Hence, he does not pretend to be outside or above. He thinks that this, let’s call it, proletarian perspective permits him to go beyond those limitations of the bourgeois perspective. That is to say, the proletarian class viewpoint gives him a higher observatory to screen what happens in the economy, in society, and the process of history. It is a sort of vantage point, a kind of epistemological vantage point, which allows one to gain a broader view and a deeper understanding of the world, without the need to cling on to the fictitious idea of an absolute truth. I believe this is the best way to approach the discussion of objectivity.

Amini: There is a longstanding image of scholars as academics who dwell in the ivory towers of academia, disconnected from the work of activists on the ground. This gap (real or perceived) has shrunk or grown in different historical periods of history and geopolitical contexts. Such separation is also systematically institutionalized to minimize the organic collaboration between scholars and activists, through professionalization and specializations, academic sanctions for radical political dissidents, privatization of universities, etc. What is the current state of the relation between scholars and activists (in both grassroots and institutional forms such as labour unions) in your country and region and what is the most effective way to bridge the gap?

Antunes: The Brazilian situation has much in common with Latin American countries, but one also perceives limitations with which they want to “box us” into the *status quo*. Thus, there is both an enormous pressure for “neutralization” (in fact, subjection) of the university to market imperatives, as there is a strong resistance from public universities (which have expanded throughout the country) and which, in many places resist these impositions which aim to privatize and commodify public universities.

Thus, if it is true that many of these public universities increasingly broaden their agreements and exchanges with multinational corporations, with oligopolistic and monopolized conglomerates, without any commitment to the real life of humanity, it is also true that many universities manage to maintain critical spaces to carry out exchanges with social movements, trade unions, etc.

I can cite an example: in November 2014 in Brazil, we have held a series of International conferences to mark the 150th anniversary of the International Association of Workers (which I

had the honor of organizing, along with Professor Marcello Musto, from York University), where we held activities in 10 public universities, in eight cities, in the most diverse regions, from one end of the country to the other.

Attending this international meeting was a strong showing of many representatives of various social movements like the MST (Landless Workers Movement), the MTST (Homeless Workers Movement), several unions and trade unions, like CONLUTAS, INTERSINDICAL and several leftist parties and movements, socialist magazines, etc. This is an example that typifies a form of resistance and links between a university that is critical and the social world with its myriad challenges.

The MST, for example, besides developing agreements to offer courses in public universities for its members (from Brazil and Latin America), has created its own school: the Florestan Fernandes School. At the Florestan Fernandes School, a meaningful exchange between social activists and leftist university professors takes place. In Argentina, Uruguay, Colombia, Bolivia, Venezuela, Ecuador, and in several countries in Central America, these trends are also present, which reveal elements that are particular to Latin America and which reveal the undeniable need to establish, build, and expand critical relations between social movements and a university. For an effective approach between university and social life to take place, we need to indicate another central point, in addition to excessive institutionalization and distance university. There is a fundamental debate that we can summarize briefly: what is the university that interests capital today? And what is the university project that interests humanity?

At the heart of the concept of university education, we have the famous disjunctive between *homo sapiens* and *homo faber*: qualifying for the labor market, which entails forming a worker who is fragmented and specialized; hence the typical expression “pragmatics of fragmented expertise.” In the late twentieth century and early twenty-first century (when time and space have changed in profound ways), with the advent of “flexible accumulation” (recalling David Harvey) and financialization, public universities are forced to be more “agile” and “flexible”, and responsive to corporate values. The so-called “Corporate University” as well as the exponential growth of private colleges in the world are examples of what I am indicating. If public universities still argue (as in Brazil) for the possibility of an alternative society, way of life, and mode of production, the “corporate universities” want to forge its student “customers” to work strictly in companies, without questioning business values and dogmas. This new pragmatism in higher education is manifested in flexible courses, and distant (or online) education which are further disconnected from authentic human-societal aspirations.

Netto: The image of theorists and scientists, within the university or outside of it, operating as in an “ivory tower” is, unless I am mistaken, entirely outdated – there is apparently a universal consensus to reject it. But there is no consensus on the nature, functionality, and constraints of these activities, and, in fact, with regard to the relationship between academics and activists, dissent is even broader. It is what is found in Brazil; however, in such a limited space available to me at this opportunity, it would be irresponsible of me to discuss the Brazilian situation without warning that the points I make below are necessarily schematic and absolutely reflect my personal view.

It should be noted that in Brazil, university development occurred quite late. Indeed, the first academic institution, effectively a university, emerged in the mid-1930s (the University of São Paulo/USP); it brought with it a peculiar brand that would weaken the university structure for about 50 years – an unequivocal *elitist quality*, either in the selection of its members (faculty and students), or in the social direction of the education offered. Only under the civil-military dictatorship imposed in 1964 (that was in power until 1985) was elitism reduced in the student admission process, with the start of a *mass process* (that cannot be called a *democratization process*). If some steps were taken to democratize the university structure in the second half of the 1980s, the mass process has grown strongly in recent years (basically, starting in 2004). But, even today, with a population of just over 200 million inhabitants, Brazil has a very low percentage of university students: in 2013, about 7.3 million students were taking university courses; however, the public university (state system) only accounts for 25% of this number: 75% of university students are in private institutions, true capitalists enterprises, and, for the most part, enterprises with very little credibility. *It is important to stress, however, that research and investigation only really exist within public universities (and this in a country where non-academic institutes and research centers are very rare): in quantitative terms, the public university system accounts for more than 90% of research activity.* Moreover, when scrutinizing the Brazilian university system, one must take into account both the poor distribution of what is offered (which is connected to regional imbalances in a country of continental vastness) as well as high student dropout rates. In academia, the public university system (and very few private institutions) have research teams that are widely respected and internationally recognized – including both research in the social sciences and in the “exact sciences” (especially in the case of the latter, with considerable influence from big capital).

Looking back at the past two decades, it is possible to identify two strong vectors in the relationship between academic intellectuals and social activists – contradictory vectors, no doubt. On the one hand, corresponding to the impact of neo-conservatism on university culture (of which certain tendencies of postmodern thought are significant components), we find the emergence of segments that, criticizing the “politicization” of the relationship between academia and social movements, try to limit intellectual intervention to the confines of the university, making *the dialogue between peers a core value*, thereby lending weight to an intellectual role that pretends to be legitimate and validated by a consensus established among equals. On the other hand, a segment emerges, visibly a minority, but significant, which seeks to branch out and legitimize itself beyond academic boundaries, by entering into collaboration with significant social movements (sectors of the trade union movement and people’s organizations and groups like the Movement of Landless Rural Workers/MST).

All indications are that this last segment (in fact, heterogeneous in its composition and in its academic and political projects) has been building stronger ties and new forms of intervention with collective groups that, in Brazilian society, express the interests and aspirations of the working class: academics advise such groups, participate in their theoretical and political education (whether in an academic location, or where the social movements themselves are located), collaborate with their organizations and their means of dissemination (publishers, newspapers, magazines etc.). And there is a clear trend from social activists to increasingly demand, explicitly and expressly, such academic contribution (which, in many cases, has been legitimized in the institutional framework by means of agreements, voluntary services, etc.).

But the reality is that the relationship between critical scholars/social activism still falls short of the needs of social movements – a point which, as a matter of fact, the latter recognizes consciously. The potential for the realization of this relationship will certainly depend, in the immediate future, on the evolution itself of class struggles in Brazilian society: if democratizing trends are not stopped nor reversed, this relationship will become more multidimensional and fruitful; enriching both partners (academic critics and activists). Those who live long will see what happens.

Lowy: There are many scholars in academia who pretend to be involved with social and political conflict or be outside and above it; but, as I argued earlier, in fact, in one way or another, they cannot escape the social conflict. They either deliberately or involuntarily fall on one side or another, either on the basis of their direct involvement or their indirect influences. Some people in academia again have chosen the camp of the ruling class very explicitly and they put their knowledge entirely to serve the ruling classes of the established oligarchy. Of course, what happens in Latin America, probably more than in Europe or elsewhere is that many intellectuals in academia feel the need and urge to be part of social and political struggles for equality, freedom, and emancipation. And so, we see many scholars who become kind of organic intellectuals of the labour movements, leftist parties, the peasant movements, etc. not just through their writings but often through more direct engagement. This political culture among intellectuals is not specific to Latin America but here it happens on a larger scale, particularly in Brazil. I think perhaps Brazil is one of the countries where the active participation of scholars in social movements, in political parties, etc. in various forms and degrees of commitments is most impressive. I think this is one of the distinguishing characteristic of the way intellectuals behave in Latin America in general and in Brazil in particular.

Panitch: Different people have different functions. I do not know if you can define the relationship in a general way. I think some people will try to keep the Marxist intellectual tradition alive. So for example, [some intellectuals] are trying to continue research on what Marx wrote, why he wrote it, how it was taken up, and so on. This is a very useful task. Even though it does not engage directly with the politics of any moment, it is very important in keeping Marxism as a tradition alive. I would not want to say that that type of research is even to the movements because it might seem that it is not engaged directly in fighting neoliberalism today. Although very few of those involved in the movements, I assure you, would care much about why Marx wrote *Grundrisse* when he did, or even how it got taken up in a certain country. They want ‘practical stuff’ in terms of exposing, say Harper’s government in some policies having to do with migrant workers. I think we cannot define this too narrowly. My own research on the American Empire is quite important in terms of soberly showing the strength of the empire. Lots of academics and left intellectuals assume how they contribute is by showing that American empire is in fact a paper tiger to give people courage. On the contrary, I think if we can empirically show the enormous strength of it; we can contribute in terms of helping the movement see the enormity of the task before them. In the *Communist Manifesto* published in 1848, Marx was speaking as though Capitalism was on its last leg. By 1850, he was saying to the communist League what we are engaged in is a 15, 20, 50-year process of helping the workers develop the capacities to even begin to change the system. That too is not always what the left wants to hear because they want people to have courage to beat this bloody thing. But this is not necessarily helpful. Different sets of skills are involved in building institutions that are engaged in a 50-year struggle than encouraging people to go on the next protest. It requires a different

sensibility. Given the failures of social democracy and communism, we lived through a generation which was very anarchistically inclined, which wanted to go out and protest, which wanted to occupy. But that does not involve building institutions in the long run. It is a bit like hoping that the system will collapse in the face of all the protest. It applies in the case of the Arab Spring. Look what happened in Egypt. The protest brought down the dictator but not the deep state, and the deep state is now taken over. I am trying to problematize what usually is discussed in a candy floss kind of way: “isn’t it wonderful that all these left intellectuals are working with the movements, they’re working with people in struggle.” But in reality, there is much more necessary and actual tension.

As whether it is part of the task of the intellectuals to come up with institutional alternatives, I would say yes, but that is different than drawing the blue-print for what a socialist society would look like. I think it is a useful thing to do and probably more models of socialism have been set up by socialist intellectuals since 1989 than the whole previous history of socialism. All these schemes on Market socialism, democratic planning, participatory economics, etc. I think there is a lot of that done. What has been missing is how we get from here to there. If you give an activist worker a book of participatory economics, he will say “oh that’s wonderful, but how do we ever get there?” So I think even more important than drawing models and blueprints is the responsibility we have to try to think about and actively engage ourselves in building the type of socialist political organizations that are capable of engaging in a 50 year struggle. That involves thinking through the limitations of parties before, the limitations of unions today, examining seriously and soberly whether it is possible to change them from being what they now are into agencies of working class development, rather than just a collective bargaining machines on the defensive, as is increasingly the case. I am very concerned with the question of being involved and trying to build new socialist parties, not only by what happened to the communist parties, socialist democratic parties, but also what happened to Workers’ Party in Brazil, the great attempt to build a post-Leninist, post-social democratic parties which now is a classic parliamentarist. Or what happened to South African communist party; endless popular support, endless roots in the labour movement, linked to the ANC and other struggles, and now what a disappointment. We should not be dispirited by these examples. We must understand that we are fighting a system of an enormous strength. It was naïve to think that we would discover the formula for the type of revolutionary organization that would be able to transform the system quickly. So we need to keep on trying to reinvent. And this is a question of knowledge as much as it is a question of practice. How do we reinvent the types of class institutions that are capable of developing people’s capacities and desires to get out of this bloody system, this irrational, chaotic, and increasingly morbidly unequal system that is now all over the world? I think that is not so much a matter of what socialism would look like but what type of political institutions we need to build to do this, what lessons we need to learn, what institutional barriers we need to introduce so that elitism and oligarchy does not develop in these institutions again. This is achievable through critique and practice. I do not think it can ever be done through critique alone. I absolutely believe that if we are doing the critique we need to be rolling up our sleeves and trying to build the socialist project, workers assembly, etc. As Beckett said, “Try Again. Fail again. Fail better.”

Basso: In this case the answer is rather simple because, as I already anticipated, it is more and more rare in Europe, and I will limit myself to Western Europe, that a tie between the academic world and activism exists. In particular in Italy, but we are not talking about a unique case, the great majority of intellectuals that in the 60s and 70s called themselves Marxist and close to or

even “organic” to the working class movement, today are aligned in a more or less total way to the positions of neoliberalism (Berlusconian television is full of ex-“revolutionaries”). A mutation has occurred that is striking for its extension and rapidity, so that this relationship is configured first of all as *a more and more limited* relationship, almost an *exception*. A very extreme exception especially in the field of natural sciences, but not only: for example, physics, chemists, doctors, geologists that in Italy (and in Europe) rebelled against the monstrous sowing of impoverished uranium carried out by European and American armies first in Iraq and then in ex-Yugoslavia; or that they were able to indicate the responsibilities of European countries and their structures and financial impositions in the diffusion of the Ebola virus in Western Africa; or the ergonomists, the sociologists, the doctors, the social psychologists that had the courage to break the dominating silence to denounce the growing and irreversible damages that “flexibility,” in all of its dimensions, brings to the health and existence of workers (men and women) and proletarians (men and women); can be counted on the fingers of a few hands, to say the most.

I repeat, we are, therefore, in the year zero, or almost. This constitutes, if one does not get discouraged, a condition that is on the one hand cumbersome and on the other exceedingly interesting.

Bond: Let’s first take an ideal type, the scholar who James Petras calls the irreverent intellectual. He himself is a good example. That scholar-activist is, on the one hand, irreverent toward academic protocols and unimpressed by the prestigious titles and prizes, on the other respectful of the militants on the front lines of the anti-capitalist and anti-imperialist struggles. They are steady and productive in their intellectual work that is in large part motivated by the big questions facing movement struggles; they are self-ironic anti-heroes, whose work is respected by the people who are actively working for a basic social transformation; they are objectively partisan and partisan objective. The irreverent intellectuals discuss and listen to the pessimists and other intellectuals, despite their titles and pretensions, to see if they have anything worthwhile to say. For the irreverent and committed intellectual, prestige and recognition come from the activists and movement intellectuals who are involved in popular struggles; they work with those intellectuals and activists. They conduct research looking for original sources of data; they create their own indicators and concepts, for example, to identify the real depths of poverty, exploitation and exclusion. They recognise that there are a few intellectuals in prestigious institutions and award recipients who are clearly committed to popular struggles and they acknowledge that these exceptions should be noted, while recognising the many others, who in climbing the academic ladder, succumb to the blandishments of bourgeois certification. The irreverent intellectuals admire a Jean-Paul Sartre who rejected a Nobel Prize in the midst of the Vietnam War. Most of all, the irreverent intellectuals fight against bourgeois hegemony within the left by integrating their writing and teaching with practice, avoiding divided loyalties.

South Africa has a good many of these irreverent intellectuals, and most are found in the main institutes serving the movements: Alternative Information and Development Centre, International Labour Research Information Group and Khanya College. There are institutes associated with the two main labour movement tendencies on the left: the National Union of Metalworkers of South Africa (with which I associate as a volunteer) and the Congress of South African Trade Unions in alliance with the SA Communist Party. Many leftist intellectuals are active as education or research officials in the leading unions.

In terms of formal academic positionality, several left intellectuals are employed at the University of Johannesburg's 'Research Chair in Social Change'; at the University of the Witwatersrand's 'Society, Work and Development Institute' which is now 30 years old; and since 2001 at our Centre for Civil Society at the University of KwaZulu-Natal. Progressive intellectuals are also to be found at the Wits Institute for Social and Economic Research and the University of Cape Town's Centre for the Study of Cities, both of which have ethnographic or even policy projects associated with townships struggles. A few other small university centres are run by radicals and a few dozen other leftists do activist-supporting work in other universities. Then there is the huge swath of practicing left intellectuals employed in law at various institutes and small law firms, and especially in NGOs and even a few funding agencies.

The closer we go into system-massaging change, though, the harder it is to find irreverent intellectuals. Yet it is often because of them that South Africa's most interesting strategic question is raised: should our progressive movements agree to 'reformist reforms' or instead, as most in the irreverent left insist, fight harder for 'non-reformist reforms'? This is the formulation that Andre Gorz established when assessing French working-class strategies four decades ago, and because even after twenty years of liberation, nearly everything is up for debate in South Africa, that framing is occasionally used here as well. In the former category are those reforms that strengthen the internal logic of the system by smoothing its rough edges, that allow the system to re-legitimise, that give confidence to *status quo* ideas and forces, that leave activists disempowered or coopted, and that confirm society's fear of power, apathy and cynicism about activism. In the latter, 'non-reformist' advocacy strategies efforts can be found to counteract the internal logic of the system by confronting its core dynamics: to continue system delegitimization, to give confidence to critical ideas and social forces, to leave activists empowered with momentum for the next struggle, and to replace social apathy with confidence in activist integrity and leadership.

In the anti-apartheid era, the most important site for development of organic intellectuals was the township struggle because all black urban residents were segregated there, including a truncated petitbourgeoisie whose entrepreneurial ambitions were channeled into political and community movements, often conjoined with trade unions. From these grew institutions that debated the country's social relations and strategies for apartheid's downfall. But as that downfall progressed in the early 1990s alongside economic liberalization and what became known as 'Black Economic Empowerment,' some of the sharpest leftists shifted out into the public and private sectors for great financial rewards. Many leading white leftists followed a similar trajectory, mainly into state-funded institutes or consultancies, dropping any pretense of revolutionary ambition. Some did so while holding out within academia, but by and large, those with formal intellectual training ceased their efforts at reproducing radical intellectuals within the academy during the 1990s, with a resulting adverse impact on the overall left. Our top black leftist intellectuals got their advanced degrees abroad, where many remained.

The universities have, as a result, never properly desegregated at the level of the professoriate. The highest quality university is Cape Town, and of more than 200 tenured professors only five are black South Africans (and not one woman). Part of this problem is the rise of the neoliberal bean-counting ethos in our universities, and the desire to become internationally competitive (four are usually considered in the world's top 500: Cape Town, Wits, Stellenbosch and KwaZulu-

Natal). Those of us who publish a great deal are therefore inordinately valued, far more than our comparative worth.

A public intellectual deficit on the black left is also evident, with whites taking far greater space than is healthy in the media commentariat and op-ed pages of the main newspapers. This is true for those reproducing mainstream politics, but also amongst radicals. Of more than 100 major books written about South Africa with the tools of critical political economy since 2000, fewer than 10 percent are authored by black South Africans. The contrast with Zimbabwe could not be greater, and in addition to people like myself who are to blame for taking too much of the space, the national state's research apparatus is to blame for a counter-productive incentive strategy which channels energies into obscure journal publications. Luckily, because of a communist minister of higher education, the state is changing its incentive structure to reward authors of books and chapters with a much higher subsidy, so if all goes well we might soon witness a turn-around at least in terms of intellectual output.

But the big challenge is to reconnect the progressive intelligentsia to the mass movements in the way I felt existed in the late 1980s when I began exploring South Africa. At that stage, it was an honour for those with race, class, and gender privilege to work for justice against the all-encompassing evil of apartheid. Now, with class, gender, and environmental crises looming and race still a major determinant of social power, it is an excellent challenge for activists to demand accountability from scholars, and for scholars to learn from activists. I may be wrong but like the United Democratic Front's role as a major mobilizing force for such cooperation during the 1980s, the period ahead will potentially benefit from a United Front that, when launched in June 2015, exhibited the early signs of revolutionary collaborations between organic and formal intellectuals.

Translator's Note

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Notes

¹ E. Said, 'The Public Role of Writers and Intellectuals' in H. Small (ed.), *The Public Intellectual* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2002), p. 38.

² A. M. Melzer, "What is an Intellectual", in A. M. Melzer, J. Weinberger, & M. R. Zinman (eds.), *The Public Intellectual: Between Philosophy and Politics* (Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield Publisher Inc., 2003), p. 10.

³ L. Fink, S. T. Leonard, & D. M. Reid, "Introduction", in L. Fink, S. T. Leonard, & D. M. Reid (eds.), *Intellectuals and Public Life: Between Radicalism and Reform* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1996), p. 7-9.

⁴ "[Intellectual of the Enlightenment] is by no means indifferent to practice but he is confident, as no knower before him was, that he does not need to rule or be politically engaged [directly] in order to help make the world rational and right". Melzer, "What is an Intellectual", p. 10.

⁵ *Ibid.* p. 11.

⁶ For more on this, see M. Musto (ed.), *Worker's Unite: The International The International Working Men's Association 150 Years Later* (New York, London: Bloomsbury, 2014).

⁷ K. Marx, "Theses on Feuerbach", in Karl Marx, Frederick Engels: *Collected Works*, Vol. 5 (New York: International Publishers, 1976), p. 8.

⁸ C. F. Gattone, *The Social Scientist as Public Intellectual: Critical Reflections in a Changing World* (Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield, 2006).

⁹ For an elaborate argument in favor of this interpretation of Weber's notion of 'value freedom', refer to A. Scott, "Between autonomy and responsibility: Max Weber on scholars, academics, and intellectuals", in J. Jennings and Kemp-Welch (eds.), *Intellectuals in Politics* (New York, London: Routledge, 1997).

¹⁰ I. Katznelson, "The Professional Scholar as Public Intellectual: Reflections Prompted by Karl Mannheim, Robert K. Merton, and C. Wright Mills", in A. M. Melzer, J. Weinberger, & M. R. Zinman (eds.), *The Public Intellectual: Between Philosophy and Politics* (Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield, 2003), p. 198.

¹¹ Gramsci does not consider intellectuals as a social class rather a social group or strata [ceti].

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