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Trade, Law *and* Development

Vol. 3, No. 1

2011

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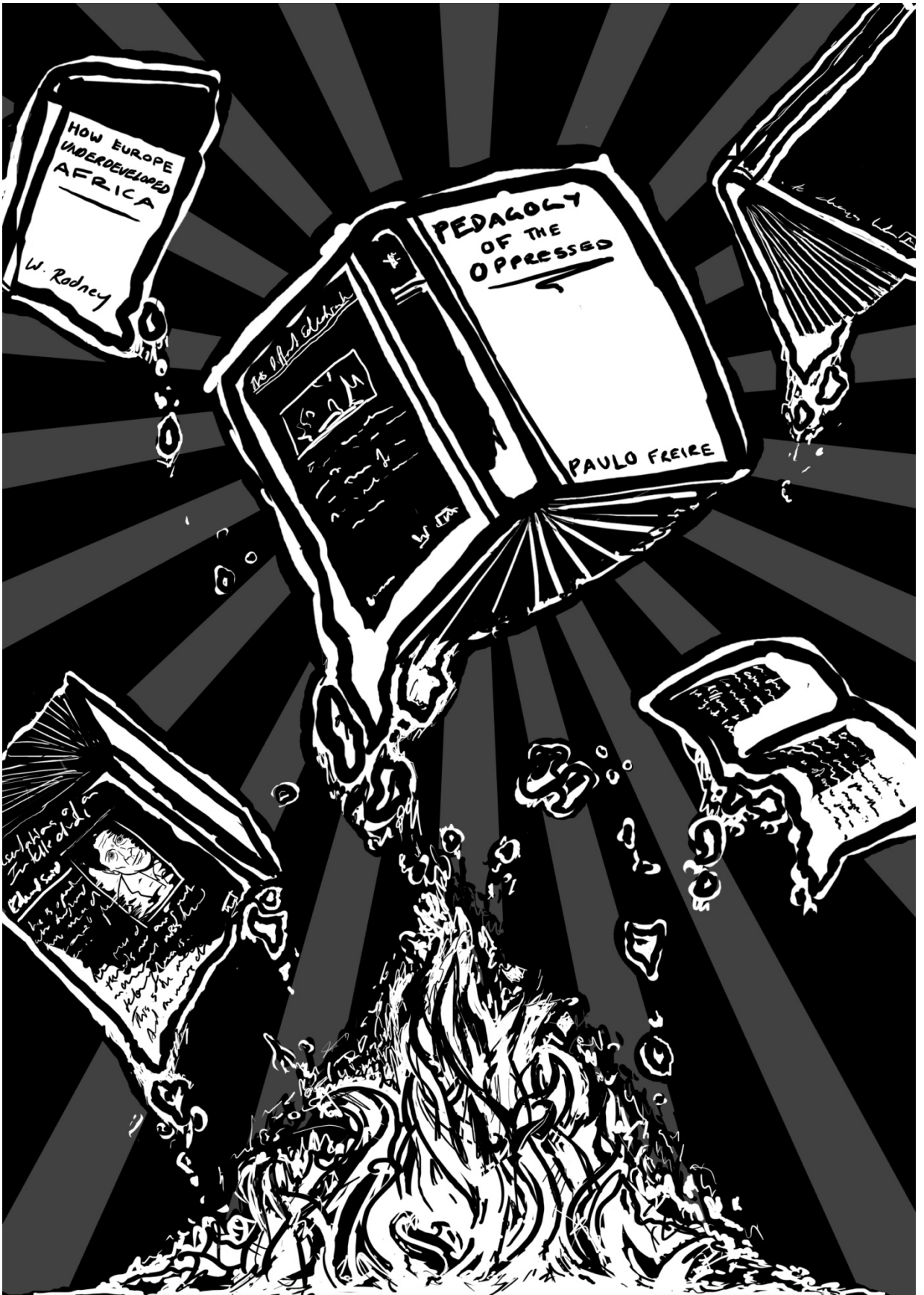
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Published by

The Registrar, National Law University, Jodhpur

ISSN : 0976-2329 | eISSN : 0975-3346



EDUCATION FOR EMANCIPATION

...written by Mohsen al Attar
.....illustrated by Mia Koning

EDUCATION FOR EMANCIPATION

"In tropical Africa or the Pacific we have for the most part primitive races that seem at present to have but little to contribute, and that must undergo long years of patient work before they can effectively assimilate the best that we can offer.

They seem hardly in a position as yet to co-operate. It is rather our business at present to guide them as to develop to their own advantage and the advantage of the world." Arthur Mayhew, Joint Secretary Advisory Committee on Education in the Colonies, 1938.

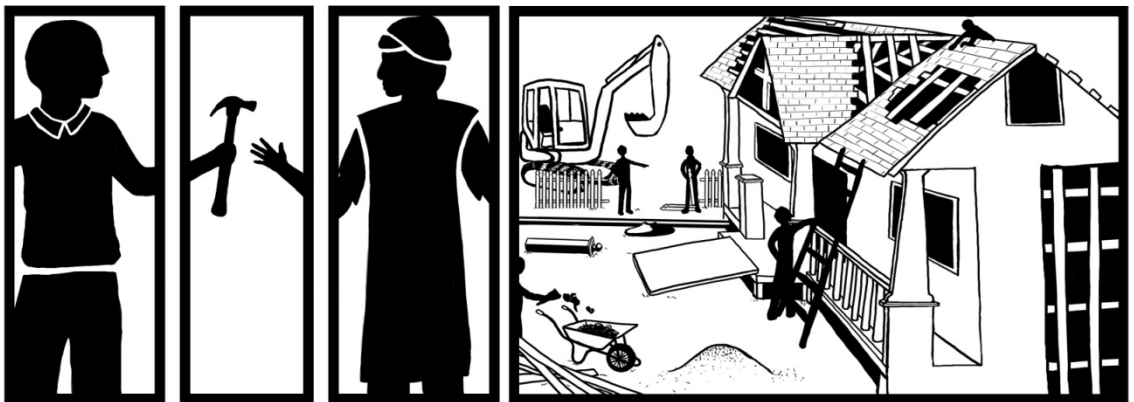


Mimicking the relationship between adult and child, the colonial masters took it upon themselves to initiate natives into new ways of thinking.

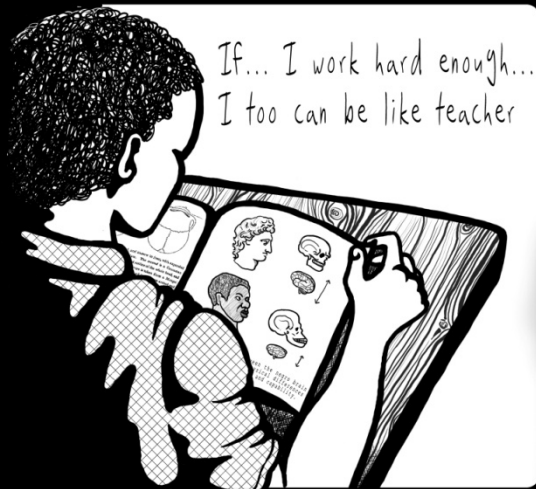
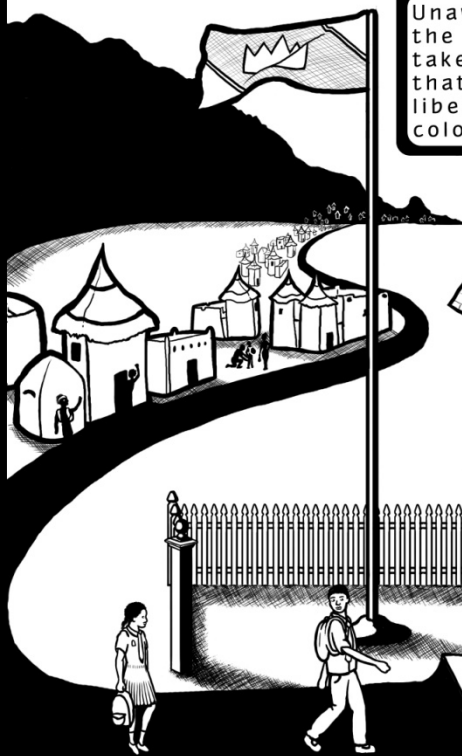
The native mind, Europeans claimed, was enshrouded in darkness and ignorance; European civilisation would bring them into light and wisdom. All the natives had to do was absorb and obey and their lives, not to mention their morals, would be redeemed.



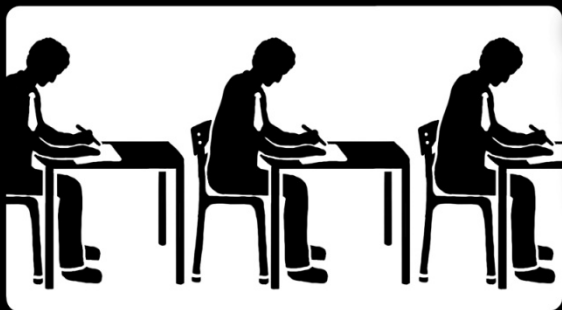
Gunboats carried soldiers and cannons but also teachers and books; the former robbed the natives of their land, the latter of their culture. In the end, cultural genocide proved far more conclusive in strengthening the grip of colonial powers over natives than military domination.



Unaware of the depth to which they have internalised the colonial mentality, the colonised often seek to take the place of the coloniser for they have learned that to oppress is to be free. In the initial stages of liberation then, the colonised strive for the role of colonial master.



If... I work hard enough...
I too can be like teacher



Listen to this. Until now, our education has been clown, he lacking. This isn't suprising. would sell out. Look at our parents! They live in his own people. the past. What are we for a chance expected to learn to live like from them? Don't them. Wonder get me wrong, they if he'll were neat bleach his skin next? in their time. If he does, but now we must look chances are to the future. I'm talking If we can learn to the next the West's ways, president! we can develop our economy and our nation. What we need is a strong government to lead the people; to show them the way...



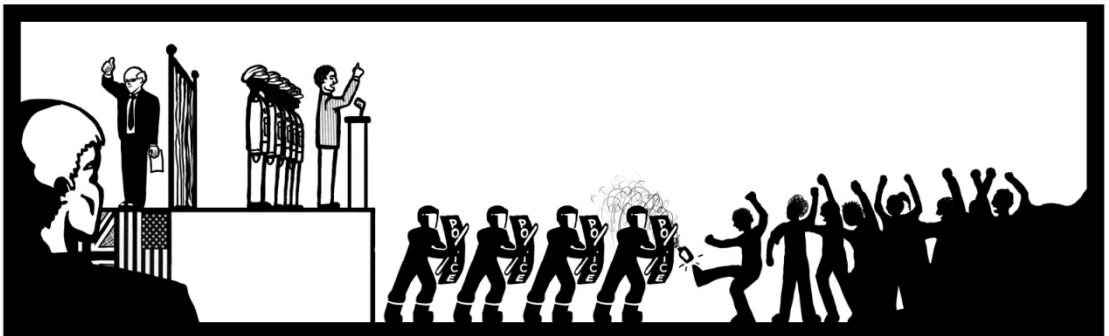
...if nature has taught us anything, it is that hierarchies are natural. As your leader then, it is my responsibility to make decisions that, while unpopular, are needed to cure our diseased economy. We must encourage foreign investment and to do this we must terminate all economic distortions. I have therefore decided that state-owned assets will be sold to private enterprise to improve efficiency; borders will be opened to encourage the free movement of goods; and government spending will be slashed to promote innovation. I am afraid gradualism is not feasible. We will need to act swiftly and decisively if we are to arrest the sickness before it does any more damage. These will be harsh lessons but, if we are to be saved, they must be learned.



Mesmerised, many native politicians swallowed wholesale the order of colonial powers.

Independence became little more than a shell as so-called leaders tried to convert their societies into mirrors of colonial culture, colluding with foreign capitalist interests to undermine the aspirations of their own people.

Of course, knowing a fix when they see one, the people resisted... by every means necessary.



"It is imperative to take political power and to liquidate the oppressor classes; but then the second stage of the struggle, which perhaps may have more difficult features than the first, must be faced....."

.....Ever since monopoly capital took over the world it has kept the greater part of humanity in poverty, dividing all the profits among the most powerful nations.....

.....The higher standard of living in those nations is based on the misery of ours. Thus to raise the standard of living of the underdeveloped peoples, there must be a fight against imperialism...

....There are no more boundaries in this struggle to the death. We cannot be indifferent to what happens anywhere in the world, for a victory by any country over imperialism is our victory; just as any country's defeat is a defeat for all of us."



Che Guevara, Afro-Asian Conference 1965



Resistance is a collective effort and each person plays his or her part. From the peasant to the intellectual, the field to the lecture theatre, a variety of revolutionary thought and action is needed to overthrow an oppressive order. While politicians spew out propaganda to consolidate state policy, preserve the status quo, and narcotise our critical sense, true leaders are uncompromising in their commitment to justice for all.



Moved not by rewards, these individuals speak truth to power and to themselves. Critical to the core, they assume nothing and take even less for granted preferring to stand by, challenge, and even change their convictions so as to maintain consistency between belief and action. True leaders forever pay a high price but, in the words of one of them, may the personal cost be damned.



To produce true leaders,
a new empowering
education is needed.

No longer are
young people to
be mechanically
integrated into the
system;

education is about
liberating minds and
freeing creative
potential.

In this new model,
students are equipped
with the tools to
critically reflect on
the reality presented
to them. Through
critical examination,
students begin to
question the
structures of
domination that
underlie our
existence...and
begin to
change them.



How these changes
manifest themselves
depends on you. Critical
engagements to learning is a necessary
precursor to learning something
new, old, or simply forgotten.

To practice critical engagement
you must do more than merely
listen in class or read at home;
you must make an effort to
engage your learning, on your
own time and learn to
mates. Without effort you will
not understand the causes of
third World exploitation or of
your own disempowerment.

Conversely, with effort you
will become conscious of
yourself and your place in
the world; in short, you
will earn your freedom.

With effort, you might
even learn how to help
others win theirs.



Based on the article
*TWAIL Pedagogy: Legal
Education For Emancipation*
by Mohsen al Attar and
Vernon Tava

Resources

Both education and emancipation (or emancipation through education) are achieved via action; we learn about and reflect upon our world not simply to gain a greater understanding of it but to acquire the means to act upon it in meaningful ways. The following resources, while limited, will help you towards this end, primarily by helping you tighten your grip over First to Third World relations but also by inspiring you to contribute towards ending Third World oppression.

Books:

1. Paolo Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, (1970).
2. CLR James, *The Black Jacobins: Toussaint L'Ouverture and the San Domingo Revolution*, (1938).
3. Malcolm X & Alex Haley, *The Autobiography of Malcolm X*, (1965).
4. Walter Rodney, *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa*, (1973).
5. Edward Said, *Representations of the Intellectual*, (1994).

Websites:

1. ZMag – <http://www.zcommunications.org/zmag>
2. Third World Network – <http://www.twinside.org.sg/>
3. The Warehouse Magazine – <http://www.stockthewarehouse.org/>
4. Counterpunch – <http://www.counterpunch.org/>
5. Moving the Centre – <http://movingthecentre.org/>

Art:

1. Joe Sacco, *Palestine, Safe Area Gorazde, and Footnotes from Gaza*.
2. Emory Douglas, *Black Panther: The Revolutionary Art of Emory Douglas*.
3. Ari Folman, *Waltz with Bashir*, (2008).
4. *RevolutionArt* – <http://www.revolutionartmagazine.com/>
5. Saul Williams - <http://www.saulwilliams.com/>

Movies:

1. Raoul Peck, *Lumumba*, (2000).
2. Stephanie Black, *Life and Debt*, (2001).
3. Gillo Pontecorvo, *The Battle of Algiers*, (1966).
4. The Wachowski brothers, *The Matrix*, (1999).
5. John Pilger, *War on Democracy*, (2007).

Music:

1. *Immortal Technique* – <http://www.myspace.com/immortaltechnique>
2. *Dam* – <http://www.dampalestine.com/>
3. *Silvio Rodriguez* – <http://www.silviorodriguez.org/>
4. *Manu Chao* – <http://www.manuchao.net/>
5. *Bob Marley* – <http://web.bobmarley.com/index.jsp>

Portraits from Page 5 (from left to right, top to bottom):

Malcolm X, Walter Rodney, Malalai Joya, Ho Chi Minh, Huey Newton, Edward Said, Patrice Lumumba, Helen Keller, and Che Guevara.

These are not just names but iconic figures whose ideas transcend time, space, culture, ethnicity, creed, and class. Their ideas are both powerful and penetrating and will inevitably precipitate changes in your thinking.

