Fidelity to Fanon

Richard Pithouse, October 2010

Some days ago we saw a sunset that turned the robe of heaven a bright violet. Today it is a very hard red that the eye encounters.

—Frantz Fanon, *Towards the African Revolution*

In the logbook that he kept while doing reconnaissance work in Mali in 1960, Fanon recounted his arrival at the airport in Accra without, as expected, his comrade, the Cameroonian militant Félix Moumié. Moumié had failed to keep an appointment in Rome before traveling on to Accra. "His father," Fanon wrote, "standing at the arrival in Accra saw me coming, alone, and a great sadness settled on his face" (1967b:180). Two days later they discovered that Moumié had been murdered, poisoned, by the French secret service in Geneva.

Fifty years after Fanon's death in Bethesda, Maryland, he continues to arrive in Accra and in Dakar, in Johannesburg and Paris and Sao Paulo. But the militant intellectual who proposed and then achieved real collective action, who became "an element of that popular energy" (1965:166) calling forth the freedom and progress of Africa, continues to arrive alone.

Of course, we read him with his contemporary interlocutors, with Ato Sekyi-Otu, Lewis Gordon, Nigel Gibson, and Denean Sharpley-Whiting. We read of him in the elegiac lyricism of Alice Cherki. We see his radical humanism put to work in theory, struggle, and the arts. But he still arrives alone.

In 1952, dictating his words to Josie Duble in Lyon, he concluded *Peau noire, masques blancs* with, among other declarations, the assertion that he was willing "to face the possibility of annihilation in order that two or three truths may cast their eternal brilliance over the world" (1967a:228). Almost sixty years on, the truths that he wrought from a militant engagement with his world now illuminate ours. But Fanon aspired to be more than a haunting presence in a future still structured by domination. In 1961, when he concluded *Les Damnés de la Terre*, dictating his final statement to Alice Cherki in Tunis, he asserted that:

> What we want to do is to go forward all the time, night and day, in the company of Man, *in the company of all men*. The caravan should not be stretched out, for in that case each line will hardly see those who precede it; and men who no longer recognise each other meet less and less together, and talk to each other less and less. (1965:254, emphasis added)

The language is of its time. Fanon celebrated the public assumption of political female agency in the Algerian Revolution and affirmed, in the plainest language, the danger "of perpetuating the feudal tradition which holds sacred the superiority of the masculine element over the feminine" (1965:202).

Fanon arrives alone because, while revolutionary nationalism defeated colonialism, it has failed to create a human prospect. The caravan has been so stretched out that those in the front hardly recognise the humanity of those in the back. New lines of force, many policed with violence, separate those who count from those who don't, and those who are in from those who are out. The Africa still to come is further away than it was fifty years ago.

Fanon is a revolutionary, an avatar of the militancy in the spirit of what Alain Badiou (2010) calls the communist invariant—an affirmation of absolute equality, an orientation to all of humanity, a commitment to the self-management of property held in common. He is a philosopher of human freedom who understood us to be endlessly creating ourselves, and the world, as we travel through it. He is a philosopher of popular political empowerment—of the will of the people, of a "deliberate, emancipatory and inclusive process of collective self determination" (Hallward 2009:17). His militancy is not dogmatic or authoritarian. It is not an alibi for paranoia or a ruthless will to power. Fanon's warnings about parties aiming to "erect a framework around the people that follows an a priori schedule" (1965:89) and intellectuals deciding to "come down into the common paths of real life" with formulas that are "sterile in the extreme" (1965:177–178) apply with as much force to any attempt to develop rigid Fanonian formulas as to any other attempt to impose fixed ideas on the lived experience of struggle. Fanon aspires to be part of the collective motion and mutation of struggle, not to command it from outside. He wishes to be a subject among subjects, not a subject directing objects. He rejects any assumption that the human being is "a mere mechanism" (1967a:23), including those that see social change as the "fruit of an objective dialectic" (1967b:170). But while the direction of that collective motion and mutation, and the strategy and tactics it will decide on, must be worked out in concrete situations, Fanon is committed to certain axioms for thought and practice that are rooted in a set of ontological ideas about what it means to be human and which, therefore, hold true across space and time. These axioms include an insistence on the need to recognise "the open door of every consciousness" (1967a:232), on the right of every person to be a person among other people, to come into a shared world and to "help to build it together"

(1967a:3), and the need to always question and affirm a "refusal to accept the present as definitive" (1967a:225).

For Fanon, the vocation of the militant intellectual is to be present in the real movements that abolish the present state of things—to be present in the "zone of occult instability where the people dwell" (1965:183), in the "seething pot out of which the learning of the future will emerge" (1965:181) and, there, to "collaborate on the physical plane" (1965:187). He is clear that the university-trained intellectual must avoid both the inability to "carry on a two-sided discussion," to engage in genuine dialogue, and its obverse, becoming "a sort of yes man who nods assent at every word coming from the people" (1965:38). Against this, he recommends "the inclusion of the intellectual in the upward surge of the masses" (1965:38) with a view toward achieving "a mutual current of enlightenment and enrichment" (1965:143).

Fanon insists that praxis must be rooted in the temporal, that each generation must confront the living reality of its own situation, accept its own call to battle, gather its own weapons, and, in the vortex of struggle, from within the collective mutation of popular political empowerment, produce its own truths. But while we do confront each situation straddling infinity, with its prospects for new secrets to be revealed, and nothingness, which condemns us to absolute responsibility for our choices in the face of the void, we do not step into that situation from nowhere. The contribution made by our ancestors in struggle is part of what makes us, and it provides us with some of our weapons. And for Fanon, whose radical humanism is strictly universal, the specificity of situations does not demarcate their absolute and encased singularity (Hallward 2001). He rejects any attempt to encase being, recognises that there are women and men who search in every part of the world and affirm his solidarity with every contribution to the victory of the human spirit and every refusal of subjugation. We cannot ask Fanon to script our analysis and resistance but we can, certainly, draw on the illuminating power of his work as we live our own drama and try to "see clearly, to think clearly, that is—dangerously" (Césaire 2000:32).

Fifty years after Fanon died in the National Institute of Health in Bethesda, Maryland, there are many ways in which his work speaks directly and with tremendous illuminating power to the current situation in South Africa. One of the many aspects of our situation to which we can summon Fanon's illumination is the need for us to affirm politics, a living politics (Zikode 2009) of ordinary women and men, against Thermidor.

Revolutionary upheavals are usually followed by a period of reaction once the new elite has consolidated its power. It is not just new forms of popular innovation challenging the revolution from the left—the Diggers on St George's Hill, the *sans-culottes* in Paris or the sailors in Kronstadt — that are attacked. Often the very forms of popular mobilisation that enabled the revolution in the first place are rendered unacceptable. Alain Badiou calls this the moment of Thermidor, after the constitution in the third year of the French Revolution "in which it becomes apparent that virtue has been replaced by a statist mechanism upholding the authority of the wealthy, which amounts to reinstalling corruption in the heart of the state" (2005:125). He stresses that "the maxims of repression . . . expressly targeted every kind of popular declaration that situates itself at distance from the state" (2005:125).

Fanon witnessed the first years of the African Thermidor, the moment when the "liberating lava" (1967b:178) of the great anti-colonial struggles was diverted as the people were expelled from history (1965:137), "sent back to their caves" (1965:147) by leaders who "instead of welcoming the expression of popular discontentment" and the "free flow of ideas" (1965:147), "proclaim that the vocation of their people is to obey and to go on obeying" (1965:135). He wrote his last words to summon that liberating lava back out of the caves and into battle. But if he could imagine how quickly it would cool and solidify, or for how long, he did not confront this prospect head on. This is our task.

For Fanon the colonial world, of which apartheid was a paradigmatic case, is a world "of barbed wire entanglements" (1965:43), "a world divided into compartments," "a world cut in two," "a narrow world strewn with violence" (1965:29). He provided a clear and spatial measure for decolonization and argued that the ordering of the colonial world, its geographic layout, must be examined in order to "reveal the lines of force it implies" that "will allow us to mark out the lines on which a decolonized society will be reorganized" (1965:29). In Fanon's view, an authentic decolonization requires a decisive end to a situation in which "this world divided into compartments, this world cut in two is inhabited by different species" (1965:30).

We can, following Fanon, read the production and regulation of space as a material instantiation of broader social relations. Post-apartheid society came into being with three main types of space. On the one hand, there were the state-created and -regulated spaces—what Henri Lefebvre (1991) calls strategic spaces, spaces that sort and classify—which were broadly divided into black spaces and white spaces. On the other hand, there were the autonomous spaces created and regulated by

popular power, some of which was democratic and some of which was not. The late apartheid state had been forced, by its lack of popular legitimacy and the power of popular resistance, to seek an accommodation with autonomous space. That took the form of the withdrawal of the threat of eviction and the provision of basic services. But the post-apartheid state has largely used its legitimacy to pursue two projects—the deracialisation of formerly white space, the commodification of formerly black space, and the eradication of autonomous space. The destruction of autonomous space has taken the form of creating new ghettos that are often clearly worse than the apartheid township. South Africa is, again, being built as a society of opposed zones inhabited by people with, in practice if not in principle, very different levels of rights to assert their full humanity to the state and civil society.

In the zones inhabited by the poor, the combination of political subordination with economic exploitation (or in some cases outright abandonment) and enforced spatial marginalization is invariably legitimated by and productive of intense social stigma. For the police, the media and many in the political elite, including, most emphatically, some left projects, these are often still "places of ill fame peopled by women and men of evil repute" (Fanon 1965:30). In this view, the agency of the poor can be recognised but it is generally seen as perverse—threatening, criminal, violent. For the World Bank and the host of donors, NGOs and academics in its orbit, poverty is neither historicised nor politicised. The poor suffer an ontological lack and should be pitied and helped to accommodate themselves to the system rather than feared. This view is often incapable of recognizing the independent agency of poor people, who are reduced to their material situation and show up as suffering bodies, not as people who always think and sometimes organise in the midst of material deprivation. It is not unusual for the same individuals or organisations to oscillate between these two views, with the good poor being those who can be contained in the latter paradigm and the dangerous poor being those who cannot. As Lewis Gordon (2006) observes, elites generally assume that the system is ultimately good, so the people who disrupt its smooth functioning must be problem people—even monsters. At the points where South Africa connects to transnational civil society, this often becomes distinctly racialised via the enduring colonial tropes of good and bad natives.

In their recent meditation on monstrosity, Lewis and Jane Gordon argue that in anti-black societies black people are rendered monstrous "when they attempt to live and participate in the wider civil society and engage in processes of governing among whites... Their presence in society generally constitutes crime" (2009:42). In contemporary South Africa the political poor, who affirm their right

to think from material deprivation, very often have a similar relation to civil society. S'bu Zikode, president of the South African shack dweller's movement *Abahlali baseMjondolo*, made this point after he was driven from his home by a state-backed armed mob:

> [T]echnocratic thinking will be supported with violence when ordinary men and women insist on their right to speak and to be heard on the matters that concern their daily lives. On the one side there is a consultant with a laptop. On the other side there is a drunk young man with a bush knife or a gun. As much as they might look very different they serve the same system—a system in which ordinary men and women must be good boys and girls and know that their place is not to think and speak for themselves. (2009)

As a general rule, problem people are dealt with either by violence or remedial education. If you turn the ghetto into a commune, or if you exit it collectively and politically—wearing a red shirt rather than, say, the uniform of a domestic worker or a security guard—you are likely to discover that the rules of civil society do not apply to you. In fact you are very likely to be met with violence. In Durban the local political elites have never willingly granted *Abahlali baseMjondolo* the right to march into the city—a right guaranteed to everyone under the South African constitution—and have often responded to protests in elite spaces with gratuitous violence. The paranoid desire to exclude shack dwellers, as an independent and explicitly political force, from civil society trumps the law every time. On the whole this does not scandalise bourgeois civil society, some of which, on the contrary, joined the state in its rush to declare *Abahlali baseMjondolo* as violent when the movement announced its intention to non-violently disrupt business as usual by blockading roads.

The exclusion of the organized poor from civil society is not a mere question of armed force backing up the physical exclusion from elite spaces; it is also accompanied by a symbolic violence that takes the form of a fundamental refusal on the part of elites to accept that shack dwellers could organise themselves. This refusal to recognise subaltern political consciousness and agency, which has passed seamlessly from apartheid to parliamentary democracy, is hardly unique to South Africa. And in South Africa, as is the case elsewhere, it is not the sole preserve of the state. On the contrary, it is endemic among some of the leading figures of the middle-class left (much of which is white and some of which is expatriate) to the point that the state and many of its critics among the middle-class left adopt precisely the same discourses of malevolent external manipulation and criminality to explain away, and thereby symbolically annihilate, the emergence of a politics of the poor outside of their control. In fact the exclusion of the organised poor from civil society, premised on the

sometimes hysterical denial of the possibility of a subaltern political consciousness and capacity, of what *Abahlali baseMjondolo* have called a politics of the poor, has been policed with the most consistent, paranoid, and ruthless vigour by this left. At times this vigour has collapsed into outright authoritarianism and even a kind of madness in the face of a subject who reasons and acts politically in the elite public sphere while being poor and black. The refusal of this subject to appear on the scene in a way that can be accommodated into a pre-existing framework has led to simple assertions, in total disregard of empirical reality, that, when it comes down to it, the grassroots militant (Quadrelli 2007) is insincere, criminal, inconsequential, even a simulator and a liar. A version of North African Syndrome continues to fester in South Africa after apartheid

In his introduction to *Proletarian Nights,* Jacques Rancière asks an important question that retains an urgent contemporary currency:

> Why has the philosophy of the intelligentsia or activists always needed to blame some evil third party (petty bourgeoisie, ideologist or master thinker) for the shadows and obscurities that get in the way of the harmonious relationship between their own self-consciousness and the self-identity of their popular objects of study? Was this evil party contrived to spirit away another more fearsome threat: that of seeing the thinkers of the night invade the territory of philosophy? (2002:249)

In contemporary South Africa, we need to think this question together with Fanon's point about the inability of the racist white gaze to recognise a person as simultaneously black and reasonable—"when I was present, it was not; when it was there, I was no longer" (1967a:119–120). Race and class have fused in a manner in which the black poor, moving out of the physical and symbolic places to which they are supposed to keep, can only be understood in some influential quarters in the language of external manipulation, conspiracy, criminality, and threat.

Fanon wrote three of his four books in dialogue with national liberation movements. But the moment when popular power calls everything into question has passed. Where does the intellectual turn after Thermidor? In Fanon's story about the postcolony there is, slowly but inevitably, a return to popular struggle. The state responds with violent intolerance. But because the new struggles are social rather than national, there is a real opportunity to develop new ideas and elaborate new principles with the hope of transforming the state by subordinating it to society. Of course, in South Africa where the deracialisation of some institutions and the decolonisation of some social relations,

such as those pertaining to rural land, remain urgent, things are more complex than a simple opposition between national and social struggles. But a distinction between popular and elite nationalism can be useful to avoid a situation where the demands of elite nationalism are used against popular demands.

But Fanon's call for a return to popular struggle is not the most widely accepted aspect of his work. Some time ago, Mahmood Mamdani observed that "whether in government, or outside it, intellectuals have tended to see themselves as actual or potential managers of the state" (1994:249) and warned that "one does not need to be inside the state to articulate a statist conception" (1994:254). Mamdani saw the statism of African academics as a "profoundly anti-democratic orientation . . . basically summed up in the widely shared perspective that African societies need to be transformed from above" (1994:252–253). Fanon may have called this statism a new "technocratic paternalism" (1967a:88). These days many university-trained intellectuals continue to orientate themselves to the state, but many others now orientate themselves to international institutions, donors, and NGOs working above or beneath the national state. But the antidemocratic orientation inherent in the assumption that progressive change will come from above has remained constant. The discourse of human rights and civil society may mask this, but a turn to donor-funded professional "activism" certainly does not change it in practice.

The elitist nature of mainstream civil society is widely recognised.[i] For instance, Harry Englund's ethnographic work in Malawi shows that "NGO and project personnel maintain the same distinctions towards 'ordinary' subjects as elites" and that "their practice of activism actually contributes to maintaining inequalities" (2006:157). Peter Hallward argues, quoting Nicolas Gilhot, that NGO politics is a "quasi-'aristocratic' approach to politics" (2007:180). In his study of Haiti, Hallward does not shy away from the degree to which this paternalism is racialised. He remarks that "the provision of white enlightened charity to destitute and allegedly 'superstitious' blacks is part and parcel of an all too familiar neo-colonial pattern" (2007:180). Julie Hearn, citing Julius Nyang'oro, argues that African NGOs have become "local managers of foreign aid money, not managers of local African development processes" (2007:1108).

Popular challenges to NGO elitism are not often welcomed. Civil society organizations are generally given their authority by donors. In order to redeem the faith invested in them from above, they have to deliver a constituency from below. In this situation a challenge from below, no matter how sincerely and politely articulated, is almost inevitably read as a serious threat by the NGO. In South

Africa, well-known NGOs in the orbit of both the World Bank and the World Social Forum have resorted to outright slander, including baseless but vicious public allegations of criminality, when questioned by grassroots activists. A leading left NGO has engaged in a number of outright attempts, all failed, to censor academic work that gives some voice to grassroots activists critical of that NGO. This is not entirely unusual. When the Sangtin Writers (2006) in Uttar Pradesh began to publish their own writing, including carefully reasoned critiques of NGO practice, the NGO for which they had been working censored them.

But civil society is not just criticized for its elitism and the tendency, in some cases, to resort to authoritarian strategies to protect that elitism. It has been argued that NGO-based civil society is often fundamentally unable or unwilling to recognise popular agency. Iran Asef Bayat has argued that "the current focus on the notion of 'civil society' tends to belittle or totally ignore the vast array of often uninstitutionalized and hybrid social activities—street politics—that have dominated urban politics in many developing countries" (1997:161). Englund reports that in Malawi, NGOs operate in such a way that "dissent... must take a prescribed form before it is recognised" (2006:4). In South Africa, *Abahlali baseMjondolo* assert that "some of the NGOs are always denying and undermining the knowledge of the people" (2010:27). The official modes in which dissent can be recognised are, precisely, those in which NGOs are structurally strong and poor people's organisations are structurally weak. It has also been argued that NGO and donor-based civil society often 'channel' dissent in ways that remove it from the popular realm.

Englund reports that in Malawi, the idea of popular empowerment is routinely reduced, via NGO mediation, to "service delivery" (2006:97) with all the passivity that is inherent in such a technocratic conception of social progress. In South Africa, *Abahlali baseMjondolo* have argued that "our ideas about freedom go much further and deeper than the way our struggles are presented when they are described as 'service delivery protests'" (2010:89). They insist, against the stunted and anti-political language of the NGOs and human rights organisations, on the right to define their own struggle and to do so in explicitly political terms. Englund concludes his study with the view that NGOs are part of a system of transnational governance in which "African activists and the foreign donors together deprive freedom, democracy and human rights of substantive meaning" (2006:8).

Despite the rhetoric about democratisation, civil society is, almost invariably, an exclusionary project. Dylan Rodriguez argues that when "racially pathologized bodies take on political activities critical of US state violence" they are "defined as criminals" and presented as "*essentially*

opportunistic, misled, apolitical or even *amoral* social actors" (2007:26). In other parts of the world, a clear distinction is made between civil society and terrorism or, ironically, given that most civil society is dependent on foreign funding, between [good] civil society and [bad] popular organisations alleged to be instigated and directed by foreign manipulation. In South Africa, the ruling party, often with the enthusiastic support of the authoritarian (and mostly white) edge of the middle class left, routinely presents popular politics outside of civil society control through the lenses of various forms of conspiracy, ranging from foreign or white manipulation to Machiavellian political opportunism and witchcraft. In 2006, *Abahlali baseMjondolo*, which at that time was entirely self-funded, was informed by ANC senior leaders that their intelligence had revealed that the movement was driven by a malevolent white agent of foreign powers and would have to federate to the transnational donor-funded NGO Shack Dwellers International [SDI] or its leaders would face arrest (Abahlali baseMjondolo 2007). *Abahlali baseMjondolo's* refusal to join SDI, announced on radio, led to the immediate arrest and torture of the two most prominent leaders of the movement.

The exclusionary nature of the idea of civil society is not just a corruption of its ideal form by racism, anxieties around class or political paranoia. Partha Chatterjee has shown that its exclusionary nature is fundamental to its project. He notes that many people in India, "often organized into associations, transgress the strict lines of legality in struggling to live and work...[but] make a claim to habitation and livelihood as a matter of right" (2004:40). He argues that while the formal structures and commitments of the state recognise all citizens as members of civil society in India, and he suggests, "most of the world," most citizens "are only tenuously, and even them ambiguously and contextually, rights baring citizens in the manner imagined by the Constitution" (2004:38). He concludes that civil society is, in practice, the preserve of a small group of elites who see themselves as the "high ground of modernity" but find, when they must descend to the people, that "modernity is facing an unexpected rival in the form of democracy" (2004:41).

NGOs are not, of course, all the same, but it is important to remember that left NGOs remain NGOs and not popular movements. Indeed the experience in South Africa has often been that the more left the NGO, the more likely it is to seek to co-opt radical movements of the poor by excluding critical voices and buying off compliant leaders with a view to subordinating them to the imperatives of the NGO with the objective of staking apparently credible claims for its own power in spaces like the World Social Forum. The power that a Third World NGO attains in the global civil society networks often has much more to do with what those NGOs can deliver to those networks,

especially in terms of delivering the appearance of a fully global support for *their* campaigns, than what those networks can deliver to popular struggles in the global South. The same is true of the way in which radical academic engagement from North to South is often mediated by Northern-funded NGOs and research institutes in the South.

The movement of many aspirant left vanguards from the party form into the donor backed NGO form is an undertheorised but important phenomenon. One consequence of this development is that middle-class left vanguards can now attain some power over the representation and international mediation of popular politics through donor rather than popular support. One of the problems arising from this situation is that, as Hallward shows with reference to Haiti, "NGO administrators and left-leaning academics are often uneasy with what they see as a merely populist deviation" (2008:137–138). In both Haiti and South Africa, NGOs, especially left NGOs, have, with all their resources, consistently failed to mobilize people in any significant way. Yet when people have mobilized themselves, the NGO response is often one of anxiety or even outright hostility and slander. In S'bu Zikode's estimation, "It is very sad that some academics and NGOs continue to think that it is their natural right to dominate instead of to support the struggles of the poor... [For them] the work of the intellectual is to determine our intelligence by trying to undermine our intelligence" (2008).

Hallward's study of the Haitian experience captures the fundamental issue: "Indignant talk about the (uncontroversial) economic evils of neo-liberalism amounts... to little more than hot air... the real question, the divisive question, concerns the *political* empowerment of the people" (2007:9). He also shows that in Haiti, the grassroots left terms the left NGOs the "useless left" (2007:186) because they work in the name of, rather than with, the people. But perhaps the most controversial aspect of his study is that he concludes that in Haiti there was a "need to nourish ideological support for regime change not only on the right but also on the left of the political spectrum" (2007:177) and argues that the left NGOs have been directly complicit with imperial machinations. This is not surprising from a South African perspective, where some left NGOs have, since the emergence of a genuine grassroots politics, kept in lockstep with the state as both have attacked it in the same language—with the party sometimes drawing on the NGO slander to justify repression.

There are rare instances of NGOs that have thought seriously about praxis, but it remains the exception rather than the rule to find an NGO or donor willing to (1) genuinely orientate its self to

popular grassroots struggles rather than the professional left in the global North and (2) to become a subject among subjects rather than a subject among objects.

In his 1956 letter of resignation from the French Communist Party, Aimé Césaire wrote that "what I want is that Marxism and communism be placed in the service of black peoples, and not black peoples in the services of Marxism and communism" (2010:150). Today the same point could and certainly should be made to global civil society, as well as to the global justice movement, from the perspective of popular struggles in South Africa.

South Africa has one of the highest rates of popular protest anywhere in the world and some innovative and tenacious, although invariably localised and vulnerable, movements have emerged out of this ferment. But it has become clear that for much of the middle-class left, whether in the academy or NGOs, it is simply impossible to accept that there is a grassroots left. It is often assumed with the same fanaticism one finds in the ruling party that the poor can offer their allegiance only upward. Real politics, it is assumed, is inevitably a contestation between the ideas of competing elites that each seeks to develop and use to rally their own constituency.

But Fanon insisted that we should not lose sight of the real. The reality is that there are still political moments and spaces in which life is lived at an "impossibly high temperature" (1965:105); there is "spectacular generosity" and people organise in a manner "evocative of a confraternity, a church" (1965:106). The occult zone is still alive with struggle and any fidelity to Fanon still requires that we move from and not on the occult zone. The hope that these scattered struggles tender may be uneven, delicate, "a fragile moth wing unsure in the winter sun" (Abani 2000:101). But what else is there to do, really, other than to keep going, to keep the free flow of ideas circulating, to keep on singing, squinting into the hard red?

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[i] The section of this essay dealing with civil society draws significantly from an as yet unpublished paper presented at a conference on *The Transnationality of Cities* at the European UniversityViadrina, Frankfurt/Oder in December 2009.