**POL 3013: SOUTH AFRICAN POLITICAL THOUGHT**

**TUTORIAL 7: IDEAS OF LIBERATION AROUND 1970**

This tutorial contains brief extracts from three texts published between 1969 and 1973 (the three basic arguments were all in circulation by 1969). The questions focus on understanding the differences between the currents of thought articulated in these texts. The questions below will be discussed in the tutorials. These extracts provide a starting point for comparison, but the whole of the texts from which the extracts are taken are relevant for the tutorial. They are included in the reading list.

“The struggle of the oppressed people of South Africa is taking place within an international context of transition to the socialist system, of the breakdown of the colonial system as a result of national liberation and socialist revolutions, and the fight for social and economic progress by the people of the whole world. We in South Africa are part of the zone in which national liberation is the chief content of the struggle.” (ANC, “Strategy and Tactics,” pp. 387-88)

“If I concentrate on things rather than people, I become a slave. I become dependent on things. I behave in the way in which things need me to behave. In each relationship with the other I am not free to be open to the other as a person. I have to manipulate the other in such a way as to obtain things. And to manipulate the other I have to manipulate myself. This is my essential degradation, for in manipulating myself I finally lose my freedom.” (Richard Turner, *The Eye of the Needle*, p. 21)

“Black Consciousness is an attitude of mind and a way of life. . . The philosophy of Black Consciousness therefore expresses group pride and the determination of the black to arise and attain the envisaged self. . . . At the heart of this kind of thinking is the realisation by blacks that the most potent weapon in the hands of the oppressor is the mind of the oppressed.” (Steve Biko, “Black Consciousness and the Quest for True Humanity,” pp. 101-02)

1. Are these expressions of three different political perspectives, or just three expressions of a single perspective of radical opposition to apartheid? (Put differently, although all three texts are in radical opposition to apartheid, do they oppose it for the same reasons or with the same vision of an alternative social order?) If these extracts represent different political perspectives, what are the differences?

2. To what extent can the differences between these extracts be understood as the result of apartheid repression having forced the ANC (and other organizations) into exile? That is, can the differences between them be understood as the result of the ANC needing to engage with an international context, and Turner and Biko working in a context in which internal opposition to apartheid has been crushed? If it can be explained that way, does it make their differences insignificant?

3. Is any of these three perspectives compatible with a conception of liberation in which the oppressed are liberated by processes (i) in which they have not consciously participated or (ii) which they do not really understand or (iii) which are not the result of their choice of the kind of society they want to live in? Put differently, is any of these three perspectives compatible with a view of liberation in which the liberated are manipulated by their leaders?