In Memory of Aziz | [Podcast](#) transcript | [Blog summary](#) in English, Spanish and Hindi
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Salim Vally, Fergal Finnegan and Mario Novelli
Co-hosts Soledad Magnone and Joyeeta Dey

This podcast is dedicated to the memory of Aziz Choudry, activist, educator and author engaged in work on radical adult education, non-formal learning and social movements. Aziz died on May 26th of 2021. His prolific scholarship includes books such as "Learning Activism: The Intellectual Life of Contemporary Social Movements" and "Activists and the Surveillance State: Learning from Repression".

Joyeeta and I, Soledad, met Aziz in 2018, at a summer school for our Masters in Education Policies for Global Development (European Erasmus+ Program). And at this event, we problematised research in and for the so-called global south, or as we prefer to refer as the Global Majority. Aziz was an inspiration at that stage of our studies, approachable and with on point book and documentary recommendations, such as the "Digital. Political. Radical" and "We shall fight, we shall win".

We want to expand the reach of Aziz's - and his fellow scholars - contributions raising awareness on the fundamentals of freedom of speech and a path for activism within academia. We believe these to be key values for the progress of democracy and human dignity in these particularly challenging times. As Joyeeta and I have endeavored in doctoral research on data, digital tech and education, we proposed questions around these topics affecting research and social movements. And we hope that these actions entice broader students, particularly from oppressed geographies and backgrounds: because your voice is very important!

Today we invited Aziz's colleagues Salim Vally, Fergal Finnegan and Mario Novelli to participate in dialogue reflecting upon their common passions. This is part of a series of blogs and podcasts including further scholars.

<u>Salim Vally</u> is a professor and the National Research Foundation Chair in Community, Adult and Workers Education based at the University of Johannesburg. He co-edited the following books with Choudry: *Reflections on Knowledge, Learning and Social Movements: History's Schools* (2018) and *The University and Social Justice: Struggles Across the Globe* (2020).

Fergal Finnegan is a senior lecturer at Maynooth University. His research interests include social movements, popular education, biographical research, social class, and equality and higher education. He is currently working on popular education project aimed at supporting transversal and transnational activism called the [Movement Learning Catalyst](#). We will add links to all this work in the description of this podcast.

Mario Novelli is professor in the Political Economy of Education at the University of Sussex. His research fields include education in peacebuilding processes, learning and knowledge production, and social movements in conflict affected contexts.

[Joyeeta] *Thank you, and we're really glad to be conversing with you on these topics and shedding more light on your important work.*

So to start on non formal and radical education, we wanted to ask in which ways you've researched on how social movements have been instrumental as places of non formal education for academics? For you in particular and/or for academics in general.

We would also like it if you could share some examples from Aziz's work in which his academic disposition was strengthened and threatened by his work on radical education.

[Fergal] Well, I'm probably gonna say that academics are not so important a few times in this discussion, and social movements are incredibly important. And I think if you come from an adult and community education background, as I do, both as a practitioner and in terms of an area of research and engagement, the creativity of social movements has created what is good about that field- a certain way of working, a certain type of pedagogy, a certain way of doing research. So for me, a lot of what is valuable and generative about adult education comes from social movements. So, I hope that makes sense in response to your question. For me, it's democratic, radical, egalitarian, social movements have made the portion of the field that I'm engaged in, and the bits that are disengaged from that tend to be less interesting in my experience. And I am interested in what others have to say as well.

[Salim] Yes, no, I certainly agree. And, you know, that's the crux of the issue for Aziz and for many of us who worked very closely with him. And I think that question is perhaps the most critical question because, Aziz was very, very keen on a few things… in all of his varied scholarship and activism, throughout the world, you know, whether it was with indigenous communities or migrant communities, or organised workers, or student activists, women's organisations, climate catastrophe, environmental groups…

So he was keen to understand the organisational forms that arose out of collective life and struggles of these various communities, not as an academic, of course, but of how, you know, the expressions of learning and knowledge took place in these communities and through these struggles on a daily basis. And, you know, for him, a lot of this happened in incidental ways, in unseen ways, in academically unrecognised ways. But really, it was these struggles, and these expressions, this knowledge development, that was really the life blood of the forms of resistance, solidarity, but also fortitude of these communities. Quite often it was essential, even to the survival of these communities. And the final point I want to make at this point is that I have a copy of "Learning Activism" with me, I think it's really the seminal book of Aziz's. I have dog-eared a particular page the, the quote, from this book, which I think summarises, really, right at the outset, Aziz says, you know, it's such work through the activism of these communities, which is really inherent in this struggle, can one… that's the key in understanding the relationship between academic work and community engagement. And the quote says, "such work can greatly enrich, broaden and challenge dominant understandings of how and where education, learning and knowledge production occur, and what this looks like". It argues and I'm quoting Aziz, that "these are resources that can provide critical conceptual tools with which to understand, inform, imagine and bring about social change. It contends that the success of organising to fight injustice and create a better, fairer world depends on taking such knowledge and learning seriously. But this also requires being able to reflect critically, both spaces where people can come together to act and learn collectively, and appreciate the unfinished nature of populist struggles for social and political change".

So in a short paragraph, I think it really encapsulates what, you know, the question you posed, what it meant for Aziz, and in that, there are so many elements. You know, it was mentioned the view of academics that thought they would go into communities and educate people. And what he's trying to do is say, actually, they can teach you a lot but it's not knowledge for knowledge's sake or for academic kudos, it's knowledge to fight injustice, and to build a better world. And unless academics are prepared to examine, analyse and act on this, on the forms, the methods, content and the complexities of knowledge and learning that takes place in these communities, then their theories will be superficial, it will remain shallow, and it will be counterproductive. So he was at pains to show that there is another way of doing that, not in a romantic way, in a critical way. I think I'll stop there but for me, that was the essence of how Aziz saw the dynamic between the academy and communities in struggle, in praxis. Thanks.

[Mario] That's, yeah, maybe I can just add, I think that you know, from what Fergal and Salim have talked about. I think from Aziz there was both an attempt to break the kind of binary understanding of the role of the university and the role of the social movement,

and recognising the crucial role of knowledge making inside social movements. Which was an important battle inside universities, to vindicate the power and creativity of social movements. But on the other side, I think it was also an encouragement to social movements to take processes of education and knowledge making seriously as well. So it was in a sense on both sides, he was intervening there. And in a sense, asking social movements to take themselves seriously as producers of knowledge. And I think there is something around the problem of academia in being a follower often for critique, but often divorced from social struggles, which prevented the university to be a site not only of critique, but also of producing alternatives. As opposed to social movements that operated at the nexus of theory and practice, and therefore they were able not only to critique the reality that they struggled in, but also to be able to propose alternatives, because they have a sense of power. They have a sense of an understanding of power, and I think that's an important distinction.

I also think there's something to explore around the concept of academic activism. And what that means in the context of some of these discussions. I kind of feel like there are those academics who see academia as a site of activism and they grow up politically, they become politically aware inside the academia and inside the university and the university becomes the focus of their labour, and whether that's the production of articles and perhaps organising inside the university. And then there are others that are, and I will put Aziz in this category, reluctant academics, they fell into academia. They didn't get there by design. They were activists outside of academia. And when they became academics, university remained as one site of struggle, but not the primary site of struggle. I think there is a distinction there that I see a lot. And I am bumping into these days with the struggles over the genocide that's taking place in Palestine, where we should be focusing our energies. Whether that should be just focused inside the university, or should it be focused much more on the streets and with which organisations. So I think that for Aziz the university was a site of possibility, but definitely not a unique site and that he was much more interested engaging in a broad set of social movements.

[Fergal] I think your remarks Mario are very well chosen, as are Salim's. I think there's a very, there is an anecdote at the beginning of [Aziz's book] "Learning Activism" and Aziz talks about going to his own viva committee, as he brings a suitcase, full of leaflets, and various pieces of documents produced by social movements. And you can see in that anecdote he goes, "there's all this incidental, there's all this day to day learning and knowledge that is simply not respected in the university". And I think he quite rightly wanted to dignify that knowledge production. And I think the particular way he does that, he had a certain activist habitus in University. And I recognise that actually, I think it's one of the things that draws me into him is this scepticism about the vanities and the

rituals of the academy. You know, the sort of, he knows very well, what scholasticism does in terms of disconnecting people from social movements. And I think it also gave him a capacity to think across different knowledge fields, he was not bound to a discipline in a solely academic way.

But as I think of myself and Laurence Cox have tried to articulate, I think this particular approach and particular take on the academy and this way of thinking about the academy and its relationship with social movements is generational. And I think it is, was made at a time when a lot of large social movements were quite relatively weak, not always. And I think that is a way, even though he's decentering the academy, he sometimes gives too much importance. Aziz combined a sort of political ambition with a type of modesty. You know, I think is very important for people involved in a space between scholarship and activism, which is, you know, we need to be bold, we need to be passionate. We need to know that what we do is important. But we also need to know that what we as individuals, as small group [can do] is very small and needs to be sustained by collectives.

[Salim] Yeah, no, no, absolutely. I think both of you really summed it up. But essentially, he saw the University as a site of struggle with lots of contradictions, of course, and, you know… I miss his particular, peculiar sense of humour, and how he had this sardonic wit aimed at those academics who thought they were activists, and really got into the entire hierarchy of the university and when the crunch came, did not side with struggles, whether they were in the university or outside. But I think the connection of the two, Mario talked about… were very important, so he, you know, for many of us, the Palestinian struggle is the litmus test. And he was really annoyed and frustrated. Of course, he expressed it in his own peculiar way against those academics who didn't take a stand. Of course, many years ago, he was involved in the Palestinian struggle with communities. He also, you know, while he used, whatever his place, particularly with students who were involved in various issues, made space for them, protected them. In a sense, he wouldn't like this word, but nurtured them in his own modest way. And was very generous with his time. He also saw the limitations and he was very… he followed very closely what happened to Steven Salaita, for example, and his view of the university hierarchy, the management and its lack of empathy. But also solidarity and the kind of opportunism of some of his colleagues. So yes, that was Aziz, he was able to goo through, you know, easy the binaries, he made the links, and yet he continued despite the contradictions, being involved with people in struggle, within and outside of the university.

[Joyeeta] How have academic spaces in the past supported activist research and how can it continue to do so in the face of growing threats to free speech? What

is the role of individuals in creating more conducive academic spaces? What can we learn from Aziz' work and scholarship about this?

[Mario] We could go in a number of directions here. But if we're thinking about how we engage inside the university, on kind of themes around radical education. At least for myself, I think we're probably breaking away from the formal education system. Even if we maybe teach courses or modules on Freirean popular education and these kinds of things. But where the radical education takes place is outside of those spaces often. Bringing social movements on to the university campus for political events, working with trade unions within the university, working with the student unions. And trying from there to build or to feed into political campaigns or different social movement campaigns. So I remember some years ago in the midst of the Turkish State bombing of Kurdish areas that we organised an event around the situation on campus and we invited Kurdish local community, different movements onto campus. And invited students union, trade unions on campus, and from that process started to challenge the parameters within which the university… what constitutes the university's legitimate discussion. And I remember, the pressure that I came under there because in the UK, like many parts of the world of commander… pressure from a range of different state laws around freedom of speech, and also, countering radicalization policies. In the UK we have this programme called PREVENT, which has started to regulate freedom of speech and I think that with those events we started to test the limits of what we're allowed to talk about, and to push issues around freedom of speech, to challenge the notion that radical isn't necessarily a negative phenomena. And I think that's the kind of example of the way that we try to show, both to our institution, and particularly to students that there are different ways of being, different ways of thinking around some of these issues. And I think some of these issues… that's the kind of thing that Aziz was always working in. Working alongside the collective institution, collective organisations within our own institutions, trade unions, student movements, etc. And then outside, I think there's also a whole range of radical pedagogical processes one could engage with. I know that Aziz was involved when he was in Canada working with trade unions, providing non formal education. I myself have worked for the last 20 years with different Colombian social movements and been involved in a radical education programme, but now comes under the banner of the Intercultural University for People, which trains social movement actors from different sectors in the southwest of Colombia. We can see there, the kind of in the university and outside of the university, and engaging with different organisations across of those ways of kind thinking through that. And again, many of my social movement colleagues and activists, I think they are very sceptical about the possibility of formal education as a vehicle for critical approaches and much more comfortable of claiming spaces outside. But, you know, I guess there is a debate over that and it depends on the context.

[Fergal] I would generally agree with what Mario has said. There is an old slogan that is still quite useful, the sort of idea of being 'in and against'. it was originally coined with the idea of the state but I think it applies to a lot of public institutions. The university is clearly a site of struggle, and what can you do there? You can work in a certain way, I think actually how you work pedagogically is really important, something that we learn from popular education, and you can achieve small but not trivial things by working in a critical, democratic fashion. I think you can help train educators to think about the world and think about power carefully, and we do a fair amount of that. You can design a specific course for activists, and we've got some experience doing that and that can be very productive. Really creating space for reflection on what is happening in movements, and we've done that at masters and doctoral level. But by and large, I do think the most powerful forms of learning tend to be outside the university or tend to happen first outside the university, and then claim space. So there…. To give [an example] Mario and Salim I think they've been involved in editing the Special Issue [of a journal] in memory of Aziz and there are some really interesting examples of both outside [the university], and outside then moving into institutions. I have in mind, in particular, Patrick Kane's fascinating article about NOMADESC, which is an intercultural University in southwest Columbia that Mario was talking about. And then there's Rebecca Tarlau who has been looking at this for a very long time. For instance, she's explored the history of the Movimento Sem Terra, which very much built autonomous education but then said, well, we need the state on a regional or national level, to help us support to educate and help us to train teachers and other fascinating partnerships with universities or public civil society organisations. One last remark, as much as I am sharing that framework, which is what is outside of the university is really what's usually generative, or there's different ways of bringing that in and working with that. And I do think, good educational space, be that form of formal or non-formal, is sometimes that space between the movements and education. It is sometimes a need to break from patterns in activism. I certainly have experienced that personally as an activist. But you become tied into very compulsive, almost hyperactivist, cycles of work without finding the space and time for reflection. Or just as importantly- and again this is something that Aziz is very good at pointing out- actually documenting what you've learned thus far, to consider that and share that. So there is something about good education inside and outside of the University. That is this space aside or space between and not sure if Salim has any thoughts on that?

[Salim] Yes, no. Absolutely. You know, what he was engaged with constantly. There are a number of concrete examples that have been pointed out already. I can think through how Aziz sought out social movements and organisations in various parts of the world. For example, in South America, he was greatly inspired by the teachers in Oaxaca, in other places in Mexico, indigenous teachers what they did with the curriculum. And you

know, there was this incident where the teachers that was formed after challenging the corruption of the main teachers union, which was historically aligned with the PRI went to a conference. We were at a fancy hotel in Mexico City, and they were not allowed to come in within the hotel because they were indigenous. And the discussion we had after that, in fact, Rebecca, Becky Tarlau was there. So it was an education in itself. These formal spaces that sometimes restricted people from communities and indigenous communities. In South Africa, we worked very closely in some of our projects in the various townships, and informal settlements, and we constantly strived to break the metaphorical walls but also the exclusion of these communities from universities, and our programmes. So, you know, Aziz, all the importance and constantly talked about popular education, non formal education, in-formal education, but he excelled in his formal programmes, in the curriculum he set for his students. All at the Labour Congresses in Canada, how he shared this with me and people were aware of these seminars we ran for Labour organisers, and the links we made throughout the world really. He wasn't dogmatic about the world and he saw ways of breaking those boundaries. And, yeah, that's true.

[Joyeeta] Digital technologies empower politics in social movements, research and academia with greater reach and knowledge access, while risking surveillance, how do you think its use needs to be negotiated, whether as a staff, professor or as a student?

[Mario] Perhaps I could begin with a reflection on Aziz's relationship to technology. Because I remember, up until a few years ago, he was the only person that I knew that didn't have a mobile phone. And we would arrange to meet in the old fashion way, of like I'll meet you outside of this cafe at three thirty. Which is not average these days.

[Salim] You know, if I can just interrupt Mario, he finally got himself a smartphone and came and the person who trained him on how to use it was our administrate, Katlego [Tshiloane] and Aziz was really bowled over and he started writing a paper which he never finished about technology and about how it's used by workers. Because he was really overcome with the skills he derived from his interaction with our administrator.

[Mario] But so, so just kind of continuing that theme. So the reason Aziz didn't have a telephone was precisely because of this issue of surveillance. He had had run ins with security forces in different parts of the world secret services, and as a result of that, he was very well aware of the capacity to… for these forces to monitor, control, regulate our communications, and so as a result he was much more prone to use email, than he was of any other form of communication. Which he did regulate at multiple times of the day, to multiple people around the world and connecting us together. So, the technology

one is a funny one to talk about with Aziz, precisely for the reason that Salim mentioned.

[Salim] Yeah, he called Facebook, the book of faces. (laughs) And he always commented on narcissism in his own friendly kind of way. But I think there's two aspects. One is the state and corporate surveillance. And you know, we put that book together "Activists and the Surveillance State", lot of people like Jane Duncan have contributed to it. So and true, I mean, it's got to do with his own history. You know, he was surveilled in New Zealand. I think a lot of us know of what happened then.

But there's another aspect to this, so you know, our university prides itself with being the epicentre of the Fourth Industrial Revolution. And technology, although the electricity keeps giving… we have regular blackouts which he was quite amused by. But there's another aspect of this how edtec, technology inc. has impacted on education, on educators, and how the manegerialism and bureaucracy have used that against creativity, against community and involvement, and activism. So there's another aspect to that as well, besides security agents, using technology to spy on people, undermine what people are doing etcetera, he increasingly became interested in education technology, used by corporate companies in institutions.

[Fergal] I think this is a really important topic. And for me, it's an obvious point that one was making nonetheless, you know, technology is not separate from the social relations in which it's used. And it's also important to say that activist cultures are these ways of movement activity that relate to technology in different ways. I mean, it seems like another world, but a decade ago, there was quite a lot of technophilia amongst progressive movements in the left, you know, an enormous sense of the possibilities of democratic communication. And that seems so different now. And I think it's much clearer, the extent to which the use of digital media is linked to corporate power, is linked to state power, and is linked to emerging fascists and far right movements. And those are also brought, all those various things are brought together in quite worrying ways. I was reading a book about Peter Thiel recently, who made an enormous amount of money. Much of it from the US state during COVID, was now promoting Trump and even more worrying types of political movements, you know. So there's this question of what's happening through social media and through digital tools is very important. And probably, I mean some of you have read Berardi and he says that we're in the midst, and I think is slight an exaggeration, but it's a useful term anyway, we're in something he calls a semiocapitalism, when there is this absolute excess of informational flows, which can be quite paralysing and fragmenting. And I think we really need to take seriously the idea that those flows as structured directed by corporate state and other entities, is fracturing the form of counter politics that we've built our movements around. So I think

one of the things we really need to take seriously is a type of scepticism, not a full rejection but a qualified use of these technologies, and think about that very carefully. Oscar Negt, who died recently, who was a critical theorists and adult educator from Germany said you should remember in a digital age that the Enlightenment came about as a "rejection of a tsunami of printed material" as well as the articulation of certain ideas. And I think we have to find ways of rejecting, curating, and creating our own forms of media and communication again which has weakened over the past 10-15 years in movements. In practical terms, you mentioned earlier that I am involved in the Movement Learning Catalyst, which is primarily a movement and civil society organizations network, with one university partner. And we're trying to work out how to support transversal and transnational activism and enhance the learning that supports that. Obviously, a lot of what we've done has been digital and there's been a lot of value to connecting activists who wouldn't be normally connected, and letting them explore and discuss and learn from each other's struggles. That has been very powerful. But we've found that when we all come together in residentials over a week or two of just thinking and learning together, that has a much more profound effect. So I think again, it's about the blends that we seek to use, and type of critical use and scepticism (of digital tool), which is, what I think probably what Choudry would advocate.

[Mario] Can I just say, I think similar to other discussions around, you know, the kind of inside, outside university, social movement. These kinds of things, but similarly, with technology, it's kind of question that is not just about the messenger, it's also about the message. I think we've seen over the last three months the importance of social media, in getting across of different messages about what was happening in Palestine, the voices of Palestinians in Gaza and in the West Bank, the capacity of Al Jazeera journalists with low technology, to be able to communicate an alternative story, an alternative narrative of what is going on, which has meant that despite the power of all of these platforms and the right wing nature of the owners of most of the means of communication, we still see now, as we speak, the vast majority of the world's population supporting Palestinian struggles, the right to self defence, frameworks around analysis of the situation of apartheid in Palestine, and a range of counter arguments. So, I think that should also give us hope, that all mechanisms can be subverted without losing sight of the dangers of corporate control of social media, etc. So you know, that are spaces of hope in all those spaces of capital as well, I think.

[Fergal] I wouldn't disagree with that at all. I mean, I think there is a capacity for testimony and gathering together. I don't think we should forget Gezi square, I don't think we should forget Occupy. You're quite right to say that digital testimony is working very powerfully in most parts of the world in supporting the Palestinian people and Palestinian self determination and against genocide. But nevertheless, when I open

TikTok, I get a lot of dirty ops material which is clearly coming from the Israeli state. They're actually leading the world in terms of how to manipulate social media, they're not the only people out there of course.

If I was to talk about my own backyard- I'm from Ireland. Ireland is a country with a strong tradition of support for anti colonial movements for obvious historical reasons. There's a relatively strong tradition of international solidarity in Ireland which I'm proud of, but in the past couple of years, the far right has been using social media to activate [people], particularly in disadvantaged working class communities which have suffered the past 10-15 years even longer, and are using [social media] in a particular way, Not so much [that the Far right] they've changed the conversation entirely, but they've changed the conversation in certain communities. So again, it is dialectical when I am saying we need to reject it's not a complete rejection [of social media] but I'm very concerned about some of what I am seeing.

[Salim] I think the concern is absolutely valid. And, you know, there's a whole number of paths, including the bots that are present the ways that algorithms work, the way people are censored by the billionaires who control these platforms. But equally creative, I mean, what's been really creative is how people have been subverting that and finding ways to get the message out and have been, to a certain extent succeeding. I mean, just for mobilisation purposes. Aziz started getting the hang of using WhatsApp. WhatsApp has made a difference in terms of the almost daily mobilizations marches we've been having here. But I think, we need to consider all the issues, the positive side but also the caveat is always being aware of its uses. Bolsonaro's election is a case in point, the way Modi uses this in India. So there's enough examples, but equally, it's using what is available as best as we can, and limiting their attempts to censor. Yes, it's the dialectic at work that sometimes, or fine line.

[Fergal] Sailm and Mario, I'm interested, there is a lovely phrase from Alan Sears the left needs a greater "infrastructure of dissent". And one of the things I think that has happened over the past 10-15 years has been the diminution of autonomous media and autonomous spaces. I'm not sure if that's the case, in your context, as well? But I think the reliance on social media has been somewhat problematic because 15-20 years ago, there was, I think, a larger independent media landscape. Maybe it doesn't apply to your places, and spaces.

[Mario] Okay, I can begin, I think just a few words. I mean, I'm sitting here in Brighton and just reflecting a little bit on the intellectual contribution of Aziz's work over the years. I've got books next to me "Organize! Building from the Local for Global Justice", "Unfree labour? Struggles of Migrant and Immigrant Workers in Canada", "NGOization:

Complicity, Contradictions and Protests", "Learning from the Ground up: Global Perspectives on Social Movements", "Reflections on Knowledge, Learning and Social Movements: History's Schools"... so many interesting areas, so many interesting books that Aziz produced in his short academic career. And he's given us so much to reflect on and it's not just about the contribution of his academic research, but he also grew a morality, a code of conduct, a way of behaving, that I think that whenever I'm faced with some challenges, decisions to make, I think of him on my shoulder and think about what might Aziz do in this situation, and it gives me the courage to carry on and keep struggling, and keep working, and know that we're standing on the shoulders of giants. Not just Aziz, but many other fighters for social justice, and I think Aziz fits into that mold.

[Salim] Yeah, I mean, absolutely. You know, I remember when we put together the South African version of the "Social Movements, Learning and Knowledge" book, its title in South Africa, "History's Schools: Past Struggles, and Present Realities". And that book came about because of the number of, particularly young people, who approached Aziz and myself about various issues, but were honestly depressed about the state of the world. And sometimes the difficulty in attempting to change things. And we, we thought that the question of alternatives is important and, and to look through the lens of history, and context and how people over the ages have struggled to change the status quo. But also we recognise the urgent need today to struggle on so many fronts, but also to bring together people and Aziz was particularly concerned with the importance of care and commitment, to reflect, to prepare the ground, sow the seeds, and, and, and to grow these vibrant movements that he was so involved in resistance. And continuing to work through these, while… and we started, we use the epigram about you know, Marx's men make their own history, as I see in brackets. But you know, conjuring up the spirit, and for me really Aziz is now one of those spirits he is an ancestor, with his own vision for a kind of more humane world, a particular praxis, that will always inspire us and remain with us and inspire future generations. So Soledad thanks so much for bringing us together for this short discussion with Fergal and Mario. It's really appreciated the work you do. Thanks a lot.

[Fergal] I thought those were lovely tributes to Aziz. I think Mario's remark on Aziz's type of moral compass is very interesting and quite moving. I mean, as I mentioned I discern a type of activist habitus, in Aziz's work, a type of fierceness, a commitment, a passion, the type of irony, which I think it is an enormous set of capacities to bring to movements in general. And to pick up on the word that Salim used, when his opening remarks, and something that is key to understanding Freire as well, is the idea that we are radically unfinished with each other, that we're brought into dialogue over time and space. And I think that is one of Choudry's great talents -and I've heard that repeatedly from people

who worked with him- that he had a type of genius for creating dialogue between people and across groups and movements.

I don't know, probably it won't work in this context.. There's a wonderful poem by Derek Walcott which is about slavery, The Sea is History, and see if it works:

"then came the synod of flies,
then came the secretarial heron,
then came the bullfrog bellowing for a vote,
fireflies with bright ideas
and bats like jetting ambassadors
and the mantis, like khaki police,
and the furred caterpillars of judges
examining each case closely,
and then in the dark ears of ferns
and in the salt chuckle of rocks
with their sea pools, there was the sound
like a rumour without any echo
of History, really beginning."

So, I guess it's always about how we turn to the future and in dialogue, and I really appreciate making the space for us.

[Salim] Fergal, what is the name of the poem? It is really beautiful.

[Fergal] [The Sea is History](#) by Derek Walcott

[Mario] Thank you.

[Salim] Thank you, take care everyone.

[Fergal] Take care. Long live!

[Joyeeta] We appreciate Salim, Fergal and Mario's reflections and time to continue honouring Aziz's contributions to social movements, learning and academia.

We hope that these efforts encourage further scholars and activists to keep struggling together, recognising the radical knowledge emerging from incidental collective actions.

It is important to learn from the alternatives we've built through history and to engage in dialogue, understanding that we're radically unfinished with each other. We're standing on the shoulders of giants!

Check the podcast description to read the [transcript](#) in English and a blog with a summary in Spanish and Hindi.

We have added links to Aziz and his colleagues' work and recommendations for a Data Detox alternatives digital tools and [Critical Digital Education](#).