Globalisation and social movements

In the society a large number of changes have been brought about by efforts exerted by people individually and collectively. Such efforts have been called social movements. A social movement may, therefore, be defined as "a collectively acting with some continuity to promote or resist a change in the society or group of which it is a part.

Social movement is the effort by an association to bring about a change in the society. A social movement may also be directed to resist a change. Some movements are directed to modify certain aspects of the existing social order whereas others may aim to change it completely. The former are called reform movements and the latter are known as revolutionary movements.

Social movements may be of numerous kinds, such as religious movements, reform movements, or revolutionary movements.

Social movements maybe distinguished with institutions:

social movement is the effort by an association to bring about a change in the society. A social movement may also be directed to resist a change. Some movements are directed to modify certain aspects of the existing social order whereas others may aim to change it completely. The former are called reform movements and the latter are known as revolutionary movements.

Social movements may be of numerous kinds, such as religious movements, reform movements, or revolutionary movements.

Causes of social movements:

The social unrest may be caused by the following factors:

(i) Cultural Drifts:

The society is undergoing constant changes. The values and behaviour are changing in all civilized societies. In the course of cultural drift most of the people develop new ideas. To get these ideas operative in society they organise a movement. The development of a democratic society, the emancipation of women, the spread of mass education, the removal of untouchability, equality of opportunity for both the sexes, growth of secularism are the examples of cultural drift.

(ii) Social Disorganization:

A changing society is to some extent disorganized because changes in different parts of society do not take place simultaneously. One part changes more rapidly than the other producing thereby numerous lags. Industrialization has brought urbanization which has in its turn caused numerous social problems.

Social disorganization brings confusion and uncertainty because the old traditions no longer form a dependable guide to behaviour. The individuals become rootless. They feel isolated from the society. A feeling develops that the community leaders are indifferent to their needs. The individuals feel insecure, confused and frustrated. Confusion and frustration produce social movements.

(iii) Social Injustice:

When a group of people feel that injustice has been done to it they become frustrated and alienated. Such feeling of injustice provides fertile soil for social movements. The feeling of social injustice is not limited to the miserable poor. Any group, at any status level may come to feel itself the victim of social injustice. A wealthy class may feel a sense of injustice when faced with urban property ceiling Act or high taxes intended to benefit the

poor. Social injustice is a subjective value judgment. A social system is unjust when it is so perceived by its members.

Thus, social movements arise wherever social conditions are favorable. It may be noted that in a stable, well integrated society there are few social movements. In such a society there are very few social tensions or alienated groups. The people are contented. But in a changing and continuously disorganised society the people suffer from tensions. They are not fully contented. In such a society they perceive social injustice and become dissatisfied. It is the dissatisfied who build social movements. The modern society is more afflicted by social movements.

The people who are more susceptible to social movements are those who are:

(i) Mobile and have little chance to become integrated into the life of the community,

(ii) Not fully accepted and integrated into the group and are termed marginal,

(iii) Isolated from the community,

(iv) Threatened by economic insecurity and loss of social status,

(v) Free from family responsibilities or are estranged from their families,

(vi) Maladjusted.

Thus, the people who are homeless and misfits of society become the supporters of mass movements. It may also be noted that some people join the social movements for reasons unrelated to the movement's objectives. Some may join it first to fill their leisure Ume, or they may be personally attracted to some of its members.

Or, they may join to get an office in the movement with the desire to achieve prestige or exercise power rather than to further the goals of the movement. It may again be emphasized that unless there is deep and

widespread social discontent, social movements will not originate and develop.

The sequence pattern of social movement may be summarised as follows. First, there is unrest and discontent in some part of the population. A small group of individuals becomes conscious of the need for a change, voices its feelings and opinions, and sets out to influence the opinions and emotions of others and prepare them for a reform.

Types of Social Movements:

It is not easy to give a classification of social movements because sometimes a movement is of a mixed nature or is of a different type at different stages of its career.

However, movements have been classified as follows:

(i) Migratory Movements:

Migratory movements take place when a large number of people leave one country and settle at some other place. The reason for mass migration may be discontent with present circumstances or the allurement of a bright future. Mere migration of people does not mean migratory movement.

There is a migratory social- movement only when there is a common focus of discontent, a shared purpose or hope for the future and a widely shared decision to move to a new location. The Zionist movement, the movement of Jews to Israel was a migratory social movement. Similarly, the movement of people from East Germany to West Germany can be called migratory social movement.

(ii) Expressive Movements:

When people are faced with a social system from which they cannot flee and which they feel powerless to change, the result is an expressive social movement. In an expressive social movement the individual comes to terms with an unpleasant external reality by modifying his reactions to that

reality. He somehow makes life bearable. He tries to ignore the miserable present and fixes his gaze upon a glorious future. The Hippie movement is an expressive social movement.

(iii) Utopian Movement:

A Utopian movement is one which seeks to create an ideal social system or a perfect society which can be found only in man's imagination and not in reality. There have been a number of Utopian socialist in the nineteenth century such as Robert Owen and Charles Fourier. Such movements are based on a conception of man as basically good, cooperative and altruistic. The Sarvodaya movement can be called a Utopian movement.

(iv) Reform Movements:

The reform movement is an attempt to modify some parts of the society without completely transforming it. Reform movements can operate only in a democratic society where people have freedom to criticize the existing institutions and may secure changes. The movements to abolish untouchability, dowry system, preserve wild life, control population growth are reform movements. The total revolution movement led by J. P. Narayan was a reform movement. The movement led by J. P. Narayan was a reform movement.

(v) Revolutionary Movements:

The revolutionary movement seeks to overthrow the existing social system and replace it with a greatly different one. The reform movement wants to correct some imperfections in the existing social system but a revolutionary movement wants to root out the system itself. Revolutionary movement's flourish where reform is blocked so that revolution remains the people's only alternative to their present misery. The communist movements in Soviet Russia and China were revolutionary movements.

(vi) Resistance Movements:

The resistance movement is an effort to block a proposed change or to uproot a change already achieved. The revolutionary movement arises because people are dissatisfied with the slow rate of social change whereas resistance movement arises because people consider social change too fast. The D. M. K. movement against Hindi can be termed resistance movement.

Revolution:

As said above, revolutionary movements or revolutions seek to over throw the existing social system itself and replace it with a greatly different one. The communist revolution in Soviet Russia overthrew the Czarist regime and replaced it with the communist system of production and distribution of goods.

According to MacIver, "when a political regime is overthrown by force in order to impose a new form of government or a government which proclaims a new policy on some crucial issue, we may call it a revolution." He further says, 'The assassination of a king or President or Premier would not constitute a revolution if it was inspired by personal motives or were the act of a small group of desperados who could not hope to establish an alternative government.

Social movements are purposeful, organized groups striving to work toward a common social goal. While most of us learned about social movements in history classes, we tend to take for granted the fundamental changes they caused and we may be completely unfamiliar with the trend toward global social movement. But from the anti-tobacco movement that has worked to outlaw smoking in public buildings and raise the cost of cigarettes, to uprisings throughout the Arab world, contemporary movements create social change on a global scale.

Levels of Social Movements

Movements happen in our towns, in our nation, and around the world. The following examples of social movements range from local to global. No doubt you can think of others on all of these levels, especially since modern technology has allowed us a near-constant stream of information about the quest for social change around the world.

Local

Winnipeg's inner city is well known for its poor aboriginal population, low levels of income and education, and concerns about drugs, gangs, and violence. Not surprisingly, it has been home to a number of social movements and grassroots community organizations over time (Silver 2008). Currently, the Winnipeg Boldness Project is a social movement focused on providing investment in early childhood care in the Point Douglas community to try to break endemic cycles of poverty. Statistics show that 40 percent of Point Douglas children are not ready for school by age five and one in six are apprehended by child protection agencies. Through programs that support families and invest in early childhood development, children could be prepared for school and not be forced into the position of having to catch up to their peers (Roussin, Gill, and Young 2014). The organization seeks to "create new conditions to dramatically transform the well-being of young children in Point Douglas" (Winnipeg Boldness Project 2014).

Regional

The flag of the Western Independence Party, one of several regional social movements that advocated separation from Canada, represents Western Canada.

At the other end of the political spectrum from the Winnipeg Boldness Project is the legacy of the numerous conservative and extreme right social movements of the 1980s and 1990s that advocated the independence of western Canada from the rest of the country. The Western Canada

Concept, Western Independence Party, Confederation of Regions Party, and Western Block were all registered political parties representing social movements of western alienation. The National Energy Program of 1980 was one of the key catalysts for this movement because it was seen as a way of securing cheap oil and gas resources for central Canada at the expense of Alberta. However, the seeds of western alienation developed much earlier with the sense that Canadian federal politics was dominated by the interests of Quebec and Ontario. One of the more infamous leaders of the Western Canada Concept was Doug Christie who made a name for himself as the lawyer who defended the Holocaust-deniers Jim Keegstra and Ernst Zundel in well-publicized trials. Part of the program of the Western Canada Concept, aside from western independence, was to end non-European immigration to Canada and preserve Christian and European culture. In addition to these extreme-right concerns, however, were many elements of democratic reform and fiscal conservativism, such as mandatory balanced-budget legislation and provisions for referenda and recall (Western Canada Concept N.d.), which later became central to the Reform Party. The Reform Party was western based but did not seek western independence. Rather it sought to transform itself into a national political party eventually forming the Canadian Alliance Party with other conservative factions. The Canadian Alliance merged with the Progressive Conservative Party to form the Conservative Party of Canada.

National

A prominent national social movement in recent years is Idle No More. A group of aboriginal women organized an event in Saskatchewan in November 2012 to protest the Conservative government's C-45 omnibus bill. The contentious features of the bill that concerned aboriginal people were the government's lack of consultation with them in provisions that changed the Indian Act, the Navigation Protection Act, and the Environmental Assessment Act. A month later Idle No More held a national day of action and Chief Theresa Spence of the Attawapiskat First Nation began a 43-day hunger strike on an island in the Ottawa River near

Parliament Hill. The hunger strike galvanized national public attention on aboriginal issues, and numerous protest events such as flash mobs and temporary blockades were organized around the country. One of Chief Spence's demands was that a meeting be set up with the prime minister and the Governor General to discuss aboriginal issues. The inclusion of the Governor General—the Queen's representative in Canada—proved to be the sticking point in arranging this meeting, but was central to Idle No More's claims that aboriginal sovereignty and treaty negotiations were matters whose origins preceded the establishment of the Canadian state. Chief Spence ended her hunger strike with the signing of a 13-point declaration that demanded commitments from the government to review Bills C-45 and C-38, ensure aboriginal consultation on government legislation, initiate an enquiry into missing aboriginal women, and improve treaty negotiations, aboriginal housing, and education, among other commitments.

Comparisons between Idle No More and the recent Occupy Movement emphasized the diffuse, grassroots natures of the movements and their non-hierarchical structures. Idle No More emerged outside, and in some respects in opposition to, the Assembly of First Nations. It was more focused than the Occupy Movement in the sense that it developed in response to particular legislation (Bill C-45), but as it grew it became both broader in its concerns and more radical in its demands for aboriginal sovereignty and self-determination. It was also seen to have the same organizational problems as the Occupy movement in that the goals of the movement were left more or less open, the leadership remained decentralized, and no formal decision-making structures were established. Some members of the Idle No More movement were satisfied with the 13-point declaration, while others sought more radical solutions of self-determination outside the traditional pattern of negotiating with the federal government. It is not clear that Idle No More, as a social movement, will move toward a more conventional social-movement structure or whether it will dissipate and be replaced by other aboriginal movements (CBC 2013c; Gollom 2013). Taiaiake Alfred's post-mortem of the movement

was that "the limits to Idle No More are clear, and many people are beginning to realize that the kind of movement we have been conducting under the banner of Idle No More is not sufficient in itself to decolonize this country or even to make meaningful change in the lives of people" (2013).

Global

Despite their successes in bringing forth change on controversial topics, social movements are not always about volatile politicized issues. For example, the global movement called Slow Food focuses on how we eat as means of addressing contemporary quality-of-life issues. Slow Food, with the slogan "Good, Clean, Fair Food," is a global grassroots movement claiming supporters in 150 countries. The movement links community and environmental issues back to the question of what is on our plates and where it came from. Founded in 1989 in response to the increasing existence of fast food in communities that used to treasure their culinary traditions, Slow Food works to raise awareness of food choices (Slow Food 2011). With more than 100,000 members in 1,300 local chapters, Slow Food is a movement that crosses political, age, and regional lines.

Types of Social Movements

We know that social movements can occur on the local, national, or even global stage. Are there other patterns or classifications that can help us understand them? Sociologist David Aberle (1966) addresses this question, developing categories that distinguish among social movements based on what they want to change and how much change they want. Reform movements seek to change something specific about the social structure. Examples include anti-nuclear groups, Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD), and the National Action Committee on the Status of Women (NAC). Revolutionary movements seek to completely change every aspect of society. These would include Cuban 26th of July Movement (under Fidel

Castro), the 1960s counterculture movement, as well as anarchist collectives. Redemptive movements are "meaning seeking," and their goal is to provoke inner change or spiritual growth in individuals. Organizations pushing these movements might include Alcoholics Anynymous, New Age, or Christian fundamentalist groups. Alternative movements are focused on self-improvement and limited, specific changes to individual beliefs and behaviour. These include groups like the Slow Food movement, Planned Parenthood, and barefoot jogging advocates. Resistance movements seek to prevent or undo change to the social structure. The Ku Klux Klan and pro-life movements fall into this category.

Stages of Social Movements

Later sociologists studied the life cycle of social movements—how they emerge, grow, and in some cases, die out. Blumer (1969) and Tilly (1978) outline a four-stage process. In the preliminary stage, people become aware of an issue and leaders emerge. This is followed by the coalescence stage when people join together and organize in order to publicize the issue and raise awareness. In the institutionalization stage, the movement no longer requires grassroots volunteerism: it is an established organization, typically peopled with a paid staff. When people fall away, adopt a new movement, the movement successfully brings about the change it sought, or people no longer take the issue seriously, the movement falls into the decline stage. Each social movement discussed earlier belongs in one of these four stages. Where would you put them on the list?

Making Connections: the Big Pictures

Social Media and Social Change: A Match Made in Heaven

Figure 21.7. In 2008, Obama's campaign used social media to tweet, like, and friend its way to victory. (Photos courtesy of bradleyolin/flickr)

Chances are you have been asked to tweet, friend, like, or donate online for a cause. Maybe you were one of the many people who, in 2010, helped raise over $3 million in relief efforts for Haiti through cell phone text donations. Or maybe you follow political candidates on Twitter and retweet their messages to your followers. Perhaps you have "liked" a local nonprofit on Facebook, prompted by one of your neighbours or friends liking it too. Nowadays, woven throughout our social media activities, are social movements. After all, social movements start by activating people.

Referring to the ideal type stages discussed above, you can see that social media has the potential to dramatically transform how people get involved. Look at the first stage, the preliminary stage: people become aware of an issue and leaders emerge. Imagine how social media speeds up this step. Suddenly, a shrewd user of Twitter can alert thousands of followers about an emerging cause or an issue on his or her mind. Issue awareness can spread at the speed of a click, with thousands of people across the globe becoming informed at the same time. In a similar vein, those who are savvy and engaged with social media emerge as leaders. Suddenly, you do not need to be a powerful public speaker. You do not even need to leave your house. You can build an audience through social media without ever meeting the people you are inspiring.

At the next stage, the coalescence stage, social media also is transformative. Coalescence is the point when people join together to publicize the issue and get organized. U.S. President Obama's 2008 campaign became a case study in organizing through social media. Using Twitter and other online tools, the campaign engaged volunteers who had typically not bothered with politics, and empowered those who were more active to generate still more activity. It is no coincidence that Obama's earlier work experience included grassroots community organizing. What is the difference between this type of campaign and the work that political activists did in neighbourhoods in earlier decades? The ability to organize without regard to geographical boundaries becomes possible using social media. In 2009, when student protests erupted in Tehran, social media was

considered so important to the organizing effort that the U.S. State Department actually asked Twitter to suspend scheduled maintenance so that a vital tool would not be disabled during the demonstrations.

So what is the real impact of this technology on the world? Did Twitter bring down Mubarak in Egypt? Author Malcolm Gladwell (2010) does not think so. In an article in New Yorker magazine, Gladwell tackles what he considers the myth that social media gets people more engaged. He points out that most of the tweets relating to the Iran protests were in English and sent from Western accounts (instead of people on the ground). Rather than increasing engagement, he contends that social media only increases participation; after all, the cost of participation is so much lower than the cost of engagement. Instead of risking being arrested, shot with rubber bullets, or sprayed with fire hoses, social media activists can click "like" or retweet a message from the comfort and safety of their desk (Gladwell 2010).

Sociologists have identified high-risk activism, such as the civil rights movement, as a "strong-tie" phenomenon, meaning that people are far more likely to stay engaged and not run home to safety if they have close friends who are also engaged. The people who dropped out of the movement––who went home after the danger got too great––did not display any less ideological commitment. They lacked the strong-tie connection to other people who were staying. Social media, by its very makeup, is "weak-tie" (McAdam and Paulsen 1993). People follow or friend people they have never met. While these online acquaintances are a source of information and inspiration, the lack of engaged personal contact limits the level of risk we will take on their behalf.

ZATAPISTA MOVEMENT

On 1 January 1994, the Zapatista Army of National Liberation (EZLN), an indigenous armed organisation, declared war on the Mexican Government, demanding "work, land, housing, food, health, education, independence, liberty, democracy, justice and peace."1 This article explains the factors that encouraged this indigenous uprising that began in Chiapas, Mexico, by highlighting the interests and demands of the indigenous peoples as well as the Mexican Government's responses to them. It also addresses the limitations that both sides experienced during the struggle, and the consequences and effects this conflict brought to indigenous rights and living standards in Mexico. The EZLN movement was an eye-opening event for both the Mexican government and the non-indigenous population to realise the alarming situation of indigenous people in Chiapas. The indigenous conflict in Chiapas not only provoked a domestic awareness of indigenous rights, recognition and self-determination, but also an international awakening on these issues.

Understanding the Chiapas Indigenous Issue

Mexico has the largest indigenous population in Latin America.2 According to the UN Human Rights Commission, 15 per cent of the total Mexican population identifies as indigenous,3 with the majority living in the southern states. Mexico's indigenous population accounts for 12.7 million people who speak 62 different languages.4 Among the 31 states that constitute Mexico, together with the Federal District, Chiapas has the most multicultural and multi-ethnic population of the country. According to the Mexican Institute of Statistics and Geographical Information (INEGI) 2010 census, Chiapas has 1.1 million indigenous people, representing 27.2 per cent of the state's total population. Chiapas is one of the wealthiest states in Mexico in natural resources (with 30 per cent of Mexico's fresh water supply), yet ranks as the second most marginalised state in the country.5 According to International Service forPeace (SIPAZ), half of Chiapas'

indigenous population "reports no income at all and another 42 per cent make less than US$5 a day."6 Furthermore, 70 per cent of Chiapas's indigenous population suffer from high levels of malnutrition. Throughout Mexican history, Chiapas's indigenous people have been excluded from the governmental decision-making process as well as from enjoying basic human rights and services such as education and healthcare. Consequently, the EZLN was formed, to represent the rights and aspirations of Chiapas's indigenous peoples. EZLN demanded that the Mexican Government put an end to indigenous segregation and oppression.7 This oppression was exacerbated by the enactment of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), which was viewed as a threat to indigenous interests. The EZLN considered this as a governmental betrayal by opening opportunities for US and Canadian big agrarian businesses to buy or rent their land.8 Indigenous agricultural workers in Chiapas feared that international competition would wipe them out of the local markets. According to the Mexican Commission for Indigenous Development, 67 per cent of Mexico's indigenous population work in the agricultural sector.9 The historical marginalisation and abuse of indigenous people in Chiapas together with the NAFTA implementation were the two key factors that sparking the Zapatista uprising.

The EZLN or 'Zapatistas' are comprised mainly of Chiapas's indigenous peoples, together with some non- indigenous political leadership. The Zapatistas recognise themselves as an 'indigenous peasant movement' constituted by the diverse indigenous communities of Chiapas. The predominant communities that form the EZLN are the Tzeltal, Tzozil, Chol, Tjolobal, Zoque, Kanjobal and Mame.10 These represent one-quarter of Chiapas's inhabitants and most of them live in extreme poverty.11 However, other indigenous groups from different states of Mexico have also shown support for the movement.12 The main ideological leader of the Zapatista insurgency is Sub-commandant Marcos. He has acted as the spokesperson for the EZLN since the insurgency's creation. The group is founded on "traditional indigenous forms of organisation and governance."13

The EZLN and the Mexican Government: Interests and Limitations

The EZLN's war declaration took place on 1 January 1994, the same day as NAFTA's implementation. The EZLN started the war by taking over 4 towns of Chiapas, including the touristic town of San Cristobal de las Casas. After 11 days of violence (where more than 300 died), the Mexican Government and the indigenous rebels began negotiations and ceased fire.14 The Zapatista's interests and limitations were comprised and formally listed in the San Andres Peace Accords, two years after the Zapatista uprising. The Accords declared that the Mexican Government give fair treatment to the indigenous peoples of Chiapas. The Zapatistas interests were completely opposite to those of the Mexican Government regarding NAFTA. According to the New York Times, Sub-commandant Marcos categorised NAFTA as a "death certificate for the Indian peoples in Mexico, who are disposable for the Government of Carlos Salinas de Gortari."15 The EZLN wanted the Mexican Government to provide a better quality of life for the indigenous peoples of Chiapas by incorporating their political, economical and social rights to the Mexican constitution.16 The San Andres Accords sought constitutional ability for indigenous peoples to exercise the right to self-determination.17 They claimed for autonomy as a "collective right to have diversity respected, control over native territories and recourses with them."18 The Zapatistas fought for Emiliano Zapata's ideology during the Mexican Revolution of 1910: "the lands should be owned by those who work on them."19 Therefore, the interests and limitations of the indigenous peoples of Chiapas, represented in the San Andres Accords, not only regarded cultural autonomy and political participation, but also the recognition of self-determination rights within the Mexican constitution.

On the other hand, the Mexican Government had different interests to those of the Zapatistas. With NAFTA's implementation, the government was forced to align the laws regarding agriculture with those of Canada and the US. Mexican interests were in favour of big transitional companies and privatisation. Moreover, the government did not want to give autonomy to the indigenous populations because it feared that by providing them

autonomy, the country was going to 'Balkanise', or fragment itself. Additionally, the Zapatista insurgency brought social instability to Mexico and a lack of confidence to international investors, provoking a Mexican peso devaluation of 50 per cent.20 The Mexican Government intended to obstruct the EZLN uprising to reestablish foreign investor's confidence, and stability of the Mexican economy. It sent a high military presence to Chiapas to overcome the EZLN and take back control of the region. Though, the government interests were limited in intimidating and oppressing the EZLN and in not accomplishing their requests. It wasn't until 2001 that the Mexican Congress passed an indigenous law recognising the multi-cultural nature of the Mexican state, reiterating that "indigenous peoples could practice autonomy as well as self-determination within the framework of a united nation."21 Consequently, autonomy was granted to indigenous communities, as well as political participation. The EZLN insurgency functioned for indigenous peoples as a catalytic converter of indigenous rights in Mexico and as an effective example for other indigenous communities around the world on how to pursue indigenous interests and how to overcome the limitations of indigenous rights.

Implications and Consequences of the Zapatista Movement

As a consequence of the Zapatista insurgency in Chiapas, the indigenous peoples in Mexico were granted the constitutional right of self-determination, with the exception of not attempting to destroy Mexico's sovereignty.22 The incorporation of this right into the Mexican constitution was essential for the development of Mexican indigenous communities as well as for the Mexican democracy as a whole, because it encouraged the respect of indigenous traditions and practices within the country.

The Zapatista Movement was a consequential actor of indigenous political participation in Mexico. After 2001, indigenous people were able to "determine freely their political status and consequently to pursue their economic, social and cultural development."23 Indigenous peoples' representation in local legislatures was reinforced with this insurgency, while the Mexican Government also ensured the legitimacy of cultural

ways of indigenous government. 24 The Mexican Government guaranteed indigenous peoples' right to participate in the policymaking of their communities, and to conserve their languages, as well as their lands.

Another consequence of the Zapatista insurgency was that a new political, economic, social and cultural relationship between the Mexican Government and indigenous peoples was formed.25 One can argue that the Chiapas struggle established opportunities for indigenous peoples to administrate their own territories in relation to their traditional ways of governance.26 For example, before colonisation, the elementary component of the indigenous government in Chiapas was the "calpulli", better understood as small territories where indigenous peoples cultivated corn crops or "milpas".27 The "calpiulec" was the authority of the "calpulli" since he was the one that administrated the lands by dictating the rules and conditions to the indigenous families that worked the crops within the lands.28 With the Mexican Congress' approval of the self-determination right, indigenous peoples maintained their own traditions because they were able to keep in a certain way their "calpulli" lifestyle. The Mexican Congress's approval of the indigenous law of 2001 was a mainstream event in the history of Mexican indigenous peoples, as it allowed them to preserve their ancient ways of living and their identity.

The Chiapas issue also motivated the creation of the National Commission for the Development of Indigenous Towns (in Spanish, Comision Nacional para el Desarrollo de los Pueblos Indigenas (CDI)).The CDI's mission is to make public policies to develop and preserve indigenous peoples and communities by guaranteeing "respect for their cultures, enforcement of their rights and the achievement of a full life."29 This Commission prepares legal opinions in order to support legislative work in regards to indigenous peoples.30 It also has the task to encourage the respect and defense of human rights of the indigenous population. However, according to the World Directory of Minorities and Indigenous People, the actions of this agency have "been criticised for failing to take cases of grievous rights violations, leading many indigenous leaders and rights activists to question

its credibility."31 Moreover, the current status of marginalisation that indigenous peoples experience in Chiapas daily demonstrates the CDI's failure in providing them satisfactory living standards.

Evaluation of the Zapatista Insurgency outcomes

The theoretical progress to advance indigenous rights and living standards by the Mexican Government was a good step for achieving indigenous demands, reflected in the Zapatista revolt. However, in practice one can argue that the EZLN demands to the Mexican government were unsuccessful when examining the current conditions of the indigenous peoples in Chiapas.

Presently, indigenous peoples in Chiapas lack basic services such as education and healthcare. According to the INEGI, almost 20% of Chiapas's population is illiterate and most of them report having attended school a scarce number of years.32 Moreover, the majority of indigenous peoples in Chiapas don't have access to quality health services because the state accounts for "less than one doctor per 1000 inhabitants."33 Chiapas provides more than "half of Mexico's hydroelectricity"34 and 30 per cent of Mexico's total water supply, but despite this, 90 per cent of its indigenous communities do not have energy or plumbing in their homes.35 Chiapas's present-day lack of healthcare and deprived sanitation are evidence of the ineffectiveness of the Zapatistas movement, as well as of the Mexican Government's actions in response to it.

Alternatively, the Chiapas issue can be examined as a positive approach for indigenous populations. The EZLN created a national and international awareness of the indigenous peoples' situation in Chiapas. This rebellion generated a general consciousness among Mexico's entire population in accepting its status as a multicultural and multiethnic nation and in recognising the existence of rich indigenous cultures and traditions within its territory.

Finally, according to Xochitl Leyva, a contributor of The Journal of Peasant Studies, the Chiapas issue generated a united indigenous ideology, which

refers to an "internal reaffirmation of cultural self-esteem (pride in existing selfhood)." Arguably, as a consequence of this revolt, indigenous peoples learned that by uniting among themselves and by fighting together common causes, their voice would become stronger within negotiations with the Mexican Government.

Conclusion

The Zapatista rebellion played a significant role in the expansion of indigenous rights and recognition in Mexico. As a consequence of the insurgency, together with its international implications – such as the loss of confidence of foreign investors – the Mexican Government was obligated to make constitutional reforms that granted indigenous peoples local political autonomy and greater political participation at a national level. Indigenous peoples not only gained from this rebellion the expansion of political rights, but also guaranteed greater preservation of traditions, languages and ways of living.

The Mexican Government has failed to reduce poverty levels and improve the quality of life standards in Chiapas: violence, social inequality and human rights violations to indigenous peoples still remain. However, as a consequence of the Zapatista revolt, the government has made efforts to overcome these problems by creating Federal agencies specialised in indigenous issues. The creation of the CDI can be seen as an example of these efforts. Regardless of the shortcomings of these government agencies, their creation is a big step towards accelerating the development of indigenous communities.

Mexico is a multicultural and multiethnic country. The EZLN movement played a fundamental role in representing the interests of these indigenous peoples by achieving protection of the rich Mexican indigenous heritage within the constitution. The Zapatista struggle was effective as indigenous communities were given greater autonomy, challenging their previous subordinate position as seen by the Mexican Government.

The Zapatistas had a positive impact on the expansion of indigenous rights and recognition in Mexico. It can serve as an example of how indigenous solidarity can put an end to indigenous exclusion and oppression. Although the Mexican Government has been unsuccessful in granting a better quality of life to those indigenous peoples in Chiapas, the EZLN was effective in displaying (nationally and internationally) the alarming situation that indigenous peoples are living in Mexico.

World Social Forum

Since 2001, activists from around the world who are opposed to neoliberal corporate globalization have gathered annually at the World Social Forum (WSF). The Forum brings together tens of thousands of people from the world's social movements and nongovernmental organizations in pursuit of varied agendas: for women's rights, small-scale worker-controlled enterprises, public health, community-controlled schools and a host of other causes. In the words of Naomi Klein, it's a movement of "one no and many yeses."1 The phrase captures the pluralism and diversity of the movement, but at the same time makes clear that there is a core of unity about what it opposes. It also shows why it is difficult to analyze the movement.

The central point of unity in the movement is its opposition to the neoliberal model promoted by international financial institutions (IFIs) and transnational corporations. The IFIs condition loans to the governments of developing countries on a fiscal austerity that requires those governments to limit spending on their people's needs. And the corporations invest in manufacturing plants for export, driving down wages as they threaten to move their investments in search of cheaper labor. In the eyes of their critics, IFIs and transnational corporations perpetuate poverty in the Third World, while increasing the steadily growing riches of the First. Indeed, the Forum's "Charter of Principles" broadly states that the WSF is "opposed to neoliberalism and to the domination of the world by capital and any form of

imperialism.... The alternatives proposed at the World Social Forum stand in opposition to a process of globalization commanded by the large multinational corporations and by the governments and international institutions at the service of those corporations' interests, with the complicity of national governments."2

They also join in opposition to the proliferation of free trade agreements through which developed countries subject underdeveloped economies to unfair competition. In the Porto Alegre meetings, the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA) was a chief target. What's more, many fear that the FTAA and other trade agreements cement U.S. economic and political control over the region, exacerbating the ability of IFIs and U.S.-based corporations to exert pressure.

The Forum held its first three meetings in Porto Alegre, Brazil and the fourth in Mumbai, India. The fifth met in Porto Alegre from January 26 to 31, 2005, as this article went to press. The WSF has been a heady experience for its many participants. Imagine a gathering with tens of thousands of people (100,000 in 2003) successfully communicating across barriers of language, political orientation and issue emphasis. The scene bursts with energy as people who work on particular causes at home—feminism, the environment, indigenous rights, economic justice, human rights, AIDS treatment and prevention and many more—compare notes and strategies. Musicians and other performers entertain in the open air during breaks, and dozens of organizations and publishers promote their projects and publications.

Economic inequality features prominently in the discussions and debates. The Forum provides participants a chance to discuss strategies and programs for collective action. Against the belief in the free market prevailing in official circles, they seek to formulate a new discourse that will help them recover the ideological offensive. Rejecting Margaret Thatcher's oft-repeated injunction that "there is no alternative" to transnational capitalism, the Forum's slogan insists that "Another World is Possible."

Participatory ideology and practice are a common goal. Advocates argue that in a democracy, people should deliberate collectively and should, to the extent possible, determine government decisions directly rather than through elected representatives. This means participation at all levels of government as well as unofficial civil-society-based structures.

Participants also celebrate the great diversity among the people and groups the Forum brings together. They proclaim their respect for the varying opinions expressed and for the many cultures visibly present, and they defend the right of all to differ with one another.3

The WSF is self-limiting; its charter, adopted at the first forum in Porto Alegre, explicitly excludes political parties and forswears taking political positions or proposing actions.4 It is a space, not an actor: it opens its agenda to all the forces wanting to discuss the issues relevant to the struggle for a better world.

While like-minded activists attend hundreds of meetings in small rooms, they gather by the thousands in plenary sessions to hear prominent international activists such as Samir Amin, Noam Chomsky and Arundhati Roy. Some grumble that a democratic movement should not give so much space to celebrities, but against this, the WSF weighs the need to attract the international media and, to some extent, tailors the event to the media's demands. Though a double-edged sword, international media attention has helped the Forum communicate its breadth of demands and its broad opposition to neoliberalism.

These events bear fruit afterward. After meeting so many fellow activists from so many different places, people return home actually believing that another world is possible—in part because they feel they have experienced it. But it has concrete results as well. The Social Forum has inspired many replicas at the regional, national and local levels, and among specific interest groups organized around particular themes. The 2003 gathering contributed to organizing the massive February 15, 2003, demonstrations opposing the U.S. invasion of Iraq in which a reported 10 to 15 million people participated in cities around the world.

Organizers of the WSF originally conceived of the meeting as a counterweight to the World Economic Forum (WEF), the annual conclave of the international capitalist class that usually meets in Davos, Switzerland. (The WSF times its meetings to coincide with those of the WEF.) In 2000, a network of Brazilian and French activists, NGOs and unions began organizing a meeting for the following year. Many of the Brazilian groups had indirect ties to the Workers' Party (PT), while the French activists were largely from the Association for a Tobin Tax for the Aid of Citizens (ATTAC, later renamed Association for the Taxation of Financial Transactions for the Aid of Citizens), an international movement based in France to promote a proposed tax on international speculative capital movements, with the aim of making developing countries less vulnerable to capital flight.

As they conceived it, the meeting would be a starting point for creating proposals that would go beyond the growing protest actions against the neoliberal model whose promoters met in Davos. They drew on two broad currents of activism: the direct action movement that has mounted massive demonstrations against international summit meetings (notably against the 1999 World Trade Organization meeting in Seattle), and the emergent worldwide civil society, embodied mainly in the nongovernmental organizations that have mushroomed throughout the world since the 1980s. These forces have been dubbed the "antiglobalization movement" by much of the press, but they generally reject the label. They favor a unified world, but one unified around common human values and respect for diversity rather than trade.

Just as the wef found its home in a luxury ski resort in the Swiss Alps, the WSF's organizers chose Porto Alegre as an appropriate site for their gathering. Porto Alegre had been a longstanding PT municipal stronghold and a showcase for the PT's brand of participatory democracy. The most important exemplar of participatory governance in Porto Alegre is the participatory budget process, in which public assemblies decide how to spend each year's municipal budget. The process of deliberation is also a process of education, through which participants learn to respect one

another's points of view and put the interests of the community above their own parochial interests.

The PT and the city government spared no effort in showing off the budgeting process to WSF delegates. Under the PT mayor, the city provided major financial and logistical support for the Forum in its first years, as did the PT governor of Rio Grande do Sul, the state of which Porto Alegre is the capital. When the PT lost the gubernatorial election in 2002, however, the state withdrew some resources from the WSF. And the party's loss of the mayoralty in 2004 further dampened the welcome in 2005.

The founders created an Organizing Committee with representatives from six leading Brazilian NGOs and the country's largest labor federation, the Central Única dos Trabalhadores (CUT), as well as the Landless Rural Workers' Movement (MST). The NGOs are broadly progressive but nevertheless part of the national and international civil society establishment; the CUT hews closely to the moderate, pro-Lula line in the PT; only the MST is distinctly on the left within Brazilian politics. This composition puts the Organizing Committee on the center-left of the political spectrum. It later created an International Council of leading activists and intellectuals, mostly European and mostly to the left of the Organizing Committee. The two bodies have not always agreed.

The first forum brought 20,000 participants from over 100 countries to Porto Alegre from January 25 to 30, 2001. In the most dramatic incident of the gathering, the MST and José Bové, the French peasant leader and anti-McDonald's activist, led the occupation of a farm near Porto Alegre owned by the U.S.-based biotech multinational Monsanto. The company was allegedly developing genetically modified seeds on the farm. The takeover made some of the Brazilian NGOs on the Organizing Committee fear they had unleashed a monster they could not control. Consequently, they tried to moderate the tone of the second forum in 2002 to prevent a repeat of incidents like the Monsanto occupation.

The meetings have grown spectacularly. Attendance has always exceeded expectations, roughly doubling from the first annual meeting to the second,

and again from the second to the third. The meetings have evolved in theme as well. At the third WSF, in 2003, the dominant issue was not originally on the agenda: the looming war in Iraq. Vehement opposition to the war became an ever-present theme of the large plenaries, smaller workshops and a massive protest march.

A highlight of the third forum was the presence of the newly elected Brazilian President, the PT's Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva. While speaking of his "Zero Hunger" program to guarantee every Brazilian three meals a day, the charismatic former factory worker also responded to criticism of his previous announcement that he would proceed to the World Economic Forum in Davos. While many in the audience shouted, "Stay here!" he promised to say in Davos "exactly what I would say to anybody here: that it is impossible to continue an economic order where a few can eat five times a day and many go five days without eating."5

The fourth Forum moved to Mumbai, symbolically staking in Asia the claim to be a genuine world forum. About 80,000 people attended, making it smaller than the previous meeting at Porto Alegre, but larger than the first two, and laying to rest the fears of some that it would be impossible to attract similar numbers from the many cultures and the extreme poverty of South Asia. The atmosphere was festive, following local traditions of including musical and dramatic performance in political demonstrations. The widespread Indian NGO network brought more poor people to the Mumbai Forum than were in evidence at any of the Porto Alegre meetings.

The same issues discussed at Porto Alegre were also prominent, along with some new ones responding to the local context: casteism, racism (not prominently addressed in the Brazilian meetings, even though half the country's population is of African descent), work- and descent-based exclusions and discriminations, religious fanaticism and sectarian violence.

Each forum has attracted parallel events. At Porto Alegre, self-organized world forums of education, trade unions, judges, peasants (Vía Campesina, a worldwide confederation of national peasants' organizations fighting for

land reform) and many more have all met concurrently. At the 2003 WSF, the youth camp, a tent city that sheltered some 25,000 people, had its own loosely organized, anarchic program of activities, though the campers also participated in the main events.

After the 2003 Social Forum, many of those who had celebrated it for the first two years began to complain that the WSF was not living up to its promise to serve as a model of democratic organization. Indeed, the forum now contends with four big issues of internal debate: internal democracy, political action, global vs. local struggles and class inequality. The first two issues have been debated extensively in the forum's councils and on the Internet. The latter two have not been so openly recognized.

Size and format conspire against democracy. A global movement has to be big, but the Social Forum bursts at the seams. It is a challenge for tens of thousands of people to come together in the same space for a short time and accomplish anything. The plenaries held in stadiums that seat 15,000 people only allow for one-way communication. Even the smaller workshops held in classrooms are often impersonal. Most of them follow a hierarchical model: a panel faces an audience, gives prepared talks and leaves little time at the end for the audience to respond.

Undoubtedly, such a large event makes the full consultation of all potential participants impossible. It is difficult for such a process to function in an open, deliberative way or, even more, to give such a huge constituency a say in advance planning. Critics from the direct action movement, however, insist that anarchists have adopted consensus mechanisms that give representation and create unity among a large number of tight-knit affinity groups in massive demonstrations. According to David Graeber of the activist network, Peoples' Global Action, these mechanisms provide a model for democratic deliberation in large assemblies. But they have rarely been applied in anything more than short-term actions.

The debate over internal democracy has largely occurred among the participants from the North, or those exposed to the debate through their international NGO network connections. It does not much affect the

thousands of participants who come from smaller grassroots organizations or who simply show up on their own. Those who come moved by a single issue can give their presentations, compare notes with others who share their concerns and be satisfied. In this way, what goes on in the small workshops and in the corridors is far more important to them than the decisions made ahead of time or the large plenaries. And those who come on their own, of whom there are many, come primarily as consumers of information. They rarely seek to influence structural decisions.

Along with the issue of internal democracy, the Forum debates the strategic issue of its external projection: whether it can take concerted political action as a body. The Charter adopted in 2001 ruled out joint action, but many participants, including many on the International Council, want the Forum to propose and undertake worldwide political action. The political moderates, however, especially those within the NGO community, value the Forum as an opportunity for international networking and the exchange of ideas. They do not want the forum to go beyond its provision of a "space": it should be a talking shop for civil society and should steer clear of political intervention.

Other activists agree, but for a different reason: some fear that any concerted action coming out of the Social Forum will be marked by the same rigid, top-down organization that they criticize in the Forum itself. Naomi Klein, for example, would prefer the movement to remain rooted in decentralized communities, neighborhood councils and land reform, "networked internationally to resist further assaults from the IMF, the World Bank and the World Trade Organization."6

Some on the International Council, on the other hand, see it as a waste to hold such a Forum merely to offer the like-minded a chance to talk among themselves. They contend that the Forum should seize upon its size and energy to offer a more coordinated challenge to transnational capital. The NGO-network model has "abandoned strategic programmes for the construction of a new type of society," writes Emir Sader, a Brazilian sociologist on the International Council.7 "They talk about thinking globally

and acting locally, but the most they can do is resist." Instead, Sader calls on the Forum to frame "global alternatives to the big problems of the world" and present a unified challenge.

Here is a key dilemma: how can the forum's base act globally when it is so deliberately diverse and the priority of most participants is with their local and sectoral concerns? At the forum they discover that the problems are worldwide and learn about new ways to act locally, but they do not learn to confront the problems on a global scale. They believe that all their efforts will collectively add up to a global solution, but others argue that only a targeted struggle has any chance of success.

There is another largely unaddressed issue: stark class disparities pervade the Forum. Though the elite within the movement place themselves in solidarity with the oppressed, the Forum reproduces the hierarchy it claims to be fighting on a global scale. The class divide largely falls along the geographic division between North and South. It starts with who can afford to attend. Class differences create an internal hierarchy within the Forum that produces divergent positions on important global issues.

These distinctions are visibly present at the conference. In 2003 name tags clearly labeled people in bold capital letters as "invitees," "delegates" (those who had registered in the name of an organization) or "participants." Invitees enjoyed a VIP lounge, while mere participants were excluded from some sessions. And most of the leadership and the visible speakers are from the white, northern (mainly European) left elite, with the debates disproportionately reflecting their issues.

There is also a striking gender imbalance—not among participants but among speakers. Though some women who are stars of the international global justice movement, such as Arundhati Roy, Medea Benjamin and Susan George, have addressed the forum, many plenaries, panels and even the smaller workshops have only male speakers. It is paradoxical, of course, that such divisions and imbalances should weigh so heavily within a broad global movement dedicated to equality and to an improved life for the marginalized and excluded of the world.

The Social Forum must work within these contradictions and overcome them collectively. It has exposed some of the problems inherent in mobilizing opposition to capitalism on a global scale. So far, internal problems have not been overwhelming. Activists rejoice in the opportunity to come together, meet and learn from each other. The Social Forum is inherently pluralistic. It would be hard to imagine an event of comparable scope and reach achieving greater coordination.