

THE PSYCHOLOGY OF THE FACELESS WARRIORS

~ EASTERN CHIAPAS, EARLY 1994

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PREFACE

The idea for an almost semi-essentialist approach to the Chiapas Revolt of 1994 came from reading into Mexican colonial history. I refer to Louise Burkhart's *The Slippery Earth* (1989). Mexicanists are aware of how the sixteenth-century missionaries in Latin America had great difficulties in explaining the mysteries of Christianity in Native American languages. Curiously, using indigenous terminology could lead to a confirmation of Amerindian religious motifs and beliefs instead of introducing Christian teaching. One of Burkhart's examples is the Roman Catholic concept of sin, in Spanish *pecado*. Before the Spanish Invasion the Nahuas of Central Mexico used the concept of *tlatlacolli*. This meant something damaged, spoiled, harmed, polluted, or corrupted. As Burkhart argued, 'Any sort of error or misdeed could be labeled a *tlatlacolli*, from conscious moral transgressions to judicially defined crimes to accidental or unintentional damage.' Afterwards, the order or the world ran into danger. This could take some time, in an accumulating annoyance of the deities. But it had not at all the terrifying consequences of Roman Catholic *pecado* to be doomed to Purgatory or Hell. By insisting on the word *tlatlacolli*, the Nahuas recognized their own concepts, which made it easier to continue the practices of their own religion in the churches of the missionaries instead of being converted.¹

This example, of course, supports the hypothesis of a discursive mind, for it shows that a word cues an entire complex of encoded cultural characteristics the Amerindians had developed over time. To be brief for a moment, the 'new' cultural features uttered by the missionaries merged with the 'old' features the Nahuas sustained by the standard of the 'old' the Nahua had maintained, adapted and constituted over the centuries. Or stated otherwise: they made the missionaries' terminology *their own*. This is a key process of cultural reproduction. In order to function properly, that is, in order to be effectively transmitted, a message must contain a code that is understood by both sender/addresser and receiver/addressee. This functions

according to established semiotics but it is also in line with Cognitive Schema Theory, now the central theory of scientific psychology. Schemata are devices to order and group thoughts, including the emotions connected to them. They are set, stored, reset, and maintained by a process called encoding. Encoding works within an experienced world of real or assumed agreement about the meanings of words, gestures and other signifiers, or signs in general.² It follows that the schemata could be interpreted as biasing filters by which for example the Amerindians in Central Mexico ‘understood’ the messages of the missionaries.³

However, this *Cuaderno* is not about sixteenth-century Nahuas. In the next pages I will build up material from the 1994 revolt in the East Mexican State of Chiapas to explain that a process similar to the one just sketched about Nahua conversion in the sixteenth century has influenced the rebels from that State’s Eastern lower jungle area called the Lacandón. Next to a series of clearly identifiable political and economic factors, the adoption of ‘new’ messages with an ‘old’ mythology became one factor extra that finally made mobilization possible. To blend new and old the processing of sign-language or semiotics is useful. As usually, this is an unconscious, psychological process. I will describe the process as implemented by the Maya and finally articulate it to Schema Theory in the last chapter. Although most of the pages contain ordinary narrative, to understand the semiotic process the reader is first taken through a more abstract section on recognizing signs. The narrative that follows is based on how I think that the rebellious Maya read the signs of history, economy, and politics that came to them from the outside in. It is this choice that is presented for discussion.

The picture was different in 1994. According to academic convention, I had set out to articulate the events of 1994 to the Revolutionary legacy of the country.⁴ But reading the literature on both the Chiapas uprising and the Mexican Revolution of the 1910s I came to doubt this convention. Despite Zapatista rhetoric, did the Maya read their actions within the semiotics of the Mexican Revolution? To express my doubt, a large detour through the revolutionary landscape of the early twentieth century seems inevitable. The data on the 1994 movement are well known.⁵ Trained as a historian of the eighteenth-century Central Mexican highlands I committed adultery, as it were, with social anthropology, publishing a book on the New Year’s Revolt in the summer of 1994. I continued my infidelity by editing another volume by the end 1996, as well as writing two scholarly articles.⁶ Some eight years after the outbreak, I will reshape this material for the

present discussion, not directed mainly towards an understanding of that revolt by the narrative thread usually unrolled but towards a psychological – not psychoanalytical – understanding of the Amerindian roots of the Zapatistas.

The different reading of the sign-language is witnessed by what may be called the Zapatistas' own voices in the sources of their uprising. These are different from the ones I might have wished to hear following the 'kind of 'atmospheric hegemony' in which certain ideas manage insidiously to dominate the scholarly imagination [...] as a paradigm of thought [which is] almost literary 'in the air' for [me] – that [I can] not help but breathe it into [my] intellectual consciousness.'⁷ What is 'in the air,' is what Lila Abu-Lughod announced as to write *against* culture,⁸ in fact, against context, to avoid a privileging of the author's own conceptuality. No wonder, when I first presented some of my observations, it was received by some as an 'essentialist.' Undeniably, my approach meant theorizing cultural essentials. This critique is to be anticipated always, but that outsiders cannot describe cultures is too drastic. When an Andean organizer declared at the United Nations: 'How am I different from a Frenchman? My people have our own language, philosophy [*cosmovisión*], history, system of economics, and territory.'⁹ I can only say: so does my people, and, perhaps, so do the French. It cannot be denied that as a Dutchman I share with my compatriots the common set of being Dutch, including myths of common origins, common historical memories and territory, cultural-linguistic links, and a sense of solidarity.¹⁰ People living in the Netherlands who do not, are labeled *allochtonen* or foreigners. As colored minorities coming mainly from Morocco, Turkey, and the Dutch Caribbean, they are discriminated if they apply for jobs or credits. Essentials need to be recognized as well as differences should be theorized, before designing a more democratic system of equality.

THEIR OWN

Dawn at New Year 1994 was a tantalizing moment in Mexican history when hundreds of ski-masked rebels took their nation by surprise. In the early hours of the day, the rebels had occupied municipal buildings in a few towns in the State of Chiapas and the one in the State's main highland city San Cristóbal de Las Casas. After massive revolts like the Tzeltal Revolt in 1712, Cuzcat's Revolt of 1868-69, and the Caste War of Yucatán of 1848-1901,¹¹ this was the fourth major 'indigenous' war the Maya had started in Southern Mexico. The ski-masked rebels presented themselves as the EZLN, or Zapatista National Liberation Army, *Zapatistas* in short. The rebels' apparent leader was Subcomandante Insurgente Marcos – later identified by the Mexican authorities as Rafael Guillén, a former university professor from Tampico in Northern Mexico and involved in an urban guerrilla group in the region. He had also appeared ski-masked in San Cristóbal's town hall on the day of the uprising and has not left the stage without his mask since then. One journalist, present at that day, asked Marcos why the Zapatistas wear such masks. Marcos answered that he wished to be careful that nobody would try to be the main leader or that others – the newspapers, for example – would pick one:

The masks are meant to prevent this from happening. It is about being anonymous, not because we fear ourselves, but rather to avoid being corrupted. Nobody can then appear all the time and demand attention. Our leadership is a collective leadership and we must respect that. Even though you are listening to me now, elsewhere there are others who are masked and are also talking. So, the masked person here today is called 'Marcos' and tomorrow it might be 'Pedro' in Las Margaritas, or 'Josué' in Ocosingo, or 'Alfredo' in Altamirano, or whatever he is called. [...] The only image that you will have is that those who have made this rebellion wear ski-masks. And the time will come when the people will realize that it is enough to have dignity and put on a mask and say that they too can do this.¹²

During the latter years of the movement, indeed more 'anonymous' *comandantes* acquired the status of the factual and personalized Zapatista

leaders. A recent posting on the Internet (2000) of children's drawings from the Zapatista community 'in resistance' of Guadalupe Tepeyac shows the town's history of violence by the Mexican army. Included are large portraits of the ski-masked leaders Comandante Tacho and Comandante Moisés, as well as a portrait of Che Quevara.¹³ According to a communiqué of May 10, 2000, Comandante Moisés is the second in row after Subcomandante Marcos. The other military commanders mentioned – all *comandantes* – were David, Javier, Daniel, Gerónimo, Guillermo, and Rafael. No women were included. Although the stream of communications published by Subcomandante Marcos from 1994 onwards are all except a few 'in name of' the EZLN's COLLECTIVE leadership, the texts themselves give the impression that he was nevertheless more or less free to issue whatever he liked, above all on no-military, political issues. In short, these in-name-ofs seem ritualized additions to private documents of the Subcomandante.

Back in 1994, the image was different. The collective leadership meant by Marcos was the so-called Clandestine Indigenous Revolutionary Committee (CCRI), the movement's major, self-proclaimed council of corporate Maya leadership 'in resistance'.¹⁴ This CCRI must have been some 'federal' CCRI, built up by representatives of all kinds of local councils or CRY's that governed the communities. Writer John Ross speaks also of a CCRI-General Command.¹⁵ The CCRI consisted of Maya leaders from communities in the Eastern Chiapas Jungle, the Selva Lacandona – on the border with Guatemala. One of its first proclamations was a communiqué issued on February 27, 1994, fascinatingly not co-signed by any of the *comandantes*. In this declaration, they referred to the non-Indian leaders, Maoists, lay preachers and *guerrilleros* of the Zapatistas, who came to their rescue in the time of 'chaos', described by them as the time of the 'night'. It suggested to the audience another image of the meaning of the ski-masks:

When the EZLN was only a shadow, creeping through the mist and darkness of the jungle, when the words 'justice', 'liberty' and 'democracy' were only that: words; barely a dream that the elders of our communities, true guardians of the words of our dead ancestors, had given us in the moment when day gives way to night, when hatred and fear began to grow in our hearts, when there was nothing but desperation; when the times repeated themselves, with no way out, with no door, no tomorrow, when all was injustice, as it was, the true men spoke, the faceless ones, the ones who go by night, the ones who are jungle [...]

The world is another world, reason no longer governs and we true men and women are few and forgotten and death walks upon us, we are despised, we are small, our word is muffled, silence has inhabited our houses for a long time, the time has come to speak for our hearts, for the hearts of others, from the night and from the earth our dead should come, the faceless ones, those who are jungle, who dress with war so their voice will be heard, that their word later falls silent and they return once again to the night and to the earth, that other men and women may speak, who walk other lands, whose words carry the truth, who do not become lost in lies.¹⁶

It is this text that I like to discuss within the broader context of the revolt.

Important supernatural and sacred aspects have characterized the major Maya rebellions. These revolts seem to have been at all times a restoration of the sacred order; the 'right' ordering of society, avoiding and indeed fighting 'chaos' itself. As will be argued, in Chiapas 'chaos' was obviously at hand: hunger, disease (pneumonia, the flu, anaemia), no education, no good clothing, despair and anger, and a government policy that excluded the Lacandonas poor. 'Welcome to the nightmare,' Subcomandante Marcos wrote to Mexico's President, Ernesto Zedillo Ponce de León, just before his inauguration in December 1994. The Amerindian population of the Lacandón Jungle knew precisely what he meant. But in their leaders' statement there is no expression of being corrupted, of avoiding the creation of a *caudillo*, of working with collective leadership, or even about dignity, as the Subcomandante had done. Not that they did not talk about these themes, on the contrary, in their communiqués they vividly called on civil society like ordinary Mexican citizens striving for democracy and social change. In her 1997 overview, Shannan Mattiace argues that the Zapatistas 'have provided a dramatic boost for the Indian movement by linking the struggles of Mexico's indigenous population to broader ones for democracy and citizenship, effectively opening political spaces that indigenous organizations have used.'¹⁷ In short, this was unmistakably not a traditional peasant or proletarian movement. But in its specific statements of early 1994, the CCRI presented the ski-masked or faceless warriors as if they were to be regarded as humble instruments of time. Marcos' own obvious distancing probably was a personal intuition. Marcos, a non-Indian from Central Mexico, may be supposed to have been not fully integrated in the Maya way of thinking, and thus to voice a different Zapatista narrative than his Maya followers. The question therefore remains: reading the CCRI-text, do we indeed witness a different discourse, deliberately brought forward almost two months

after the occupation of San Cristóbal? Was this the rebels' inner voice, the voice from the Lacandón jungle, which they needed to speak out, perhaps in response to Marcos' enduring voice in the world's media?

Semiotics

The method to analyse the CCRI-text focuses upon a kind of semiotic discussion of signs present in the text itself. As anthropologists know for decades, semiotics and culture are the most intimates of companions. Sign-language is connected with religion, or mythology at the least.¹⁸ In the early 1980s the US Office of Nuclear Waste Isolation was looking for a way to warn people in distant futures to stay away from nuclear waste products. For in about thousands of years, without any doubt the present societies would have been substituted by cultures that could not understand our contemporary signals and warnings. They invited linguists and semioticians to suggest durable sign-language. Thomas Sebeok, already a famous semiotician at the time, proposed to invent not a signal or a symbol, but a very special kind of sign: myths about the danger of the places where such nuclear waste was stored. He suggested installing a kind of priestly caste of nuclear scientists, psychologists, linguists and semioticians, who had to search continuities over the centuries of these myths and legends to keep the danger in human consciousness. These myths were to be the central constitution of a sign-language that would make the nuclear waste places taboo.¹⁹

Semiotics is the method of studying the interpretation of signs.²⁰ As such it has built up considerable scientific credit in the social sciences. It seems an 'objective' science, because it keeps distance of the observer by maintaining conscious track of the learned interpretations and its contexts. Central, of course is the question: What is a sign? Swiss Ferdinand de Saussure (1897-1913) defined the sign not only as a combination of signifier and signified, but also as the end product of a naming process by which things get associated with a word or name: the concept or signified is named by the sound image or signifier. Sound image here includes the wording that is imagined by the brain without uttering the sound. This is taken for granted in our time, but as Ivan Illich has argued, it was not that self-evident in the European Middle-Ages, for example, when written texts were always read out loud. Augustine admired his teacher Ambrosias because he could read without moving his lips. There are signs in linguistics, from phonemes, letters, words and sentences, to entire metaphors. Signs 'in the world' have matter and energy, are configurations in general and their components.

As vehicles or carriers of meaning, signs do have a material basis to be recognized by senders and receivers in a communication process.

Why does semiotics offer a way out of the problem of representativeness? Traditionally, historical representability comes from a serial paradigm, in which any single case fits neatly in the larger sequence. The privilege here is with the sequence, the average, not with the case. The case presented is regarded typical for the sequence. In fact, the case is especially and carefully selected because it can function as a statistical representative of the general structure, the thread of the discourse. Therefore, the characteristics of the case may be used to underscore a theoretical, structural generalization. The signs in a text, so it is thought in semiotics, stand for something 'real' but can only be recognized by the reader if the relation between the sign and the object is known. In short, in sign-language an entire culture is grasped. Anthropologist Claude Levi-Strauss realized that culture could be analysed as a code of meaning along Saussurean lines. In his work with the mythology of Brazilian and North American Indians, he wished to go beyond a vision of myths as collective dreams (as once suggested by Sigmund Freud), as the basis of ritual, or as the outcome of aesthetic play. Semiotics opened a possibility of looking beyond the conventional attitude and at the same time respect the Amerindians' own cultural practices. Of course, there is much more to the problem, as Jacques Derrida, Roland Barthes, and anthropologists and (post-)structuralists from all over the world confirmed. Nevertheless, Levi-Strauss' defence of the savage mind as equal to the civilized mind, and his refusal to treat Western culture as privileged and unique is the inevitable starting point for a topic like the one chosen for this *Cuaderno*. His insistence of form over content pushes me to his suggestion of using semiotics.

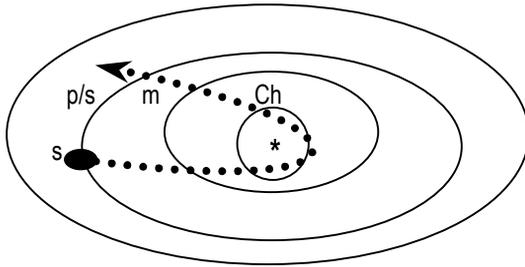
Signs are not interesting in and of themselves but in terms of what they stand for: not as data to be verified as true or false, but as clues about what various things and circumstances could mean. They are a key to context. The meaning of the sign is based on cultural convention, and therefore found in the association between sound-image/signifier and concept/signified. Saussure defined the system as arbitrary because what a sign signifies is agreed upon by the community that uses it, not because the sign has some intrinsic meaning. Italian semiotic Umberto Eco includes this convention in his definition: a sign is everything which can be taken as significantly substituting for something else, because it is interpreted as a sign of something by some interpreter.²¹ Eco points to the semiotics of North-American philosopher Charles Sanders Peirce (1839-1914), which is not only generally accepted in semiotic circles,

but also explicitly based on the role of the researcher between signifier and signified. A signifier stands for something signified for the observer, and this triadic three-some of signifier, signified and observer form together the sign. Later, Eco extended Peirce's work with his observations on 'the role of the reader'.²² Understanding the sign involves applying the rule of an appropriate code familiar to the interpreter. This application is called *abduction*. As a research method it was proposed by Peirce to 'unmask codes'. It consists of the formulation of hypothesis, creating hypothetical patterns of understanding – based on a never ending process of testing subjective observations, constructed facts, and held beliefs – that allows to move inquiry forward; theoretical, empirical, conceptual. Abduction starts with the observer's own experience at hand, his own reservoir of theories and concepts, and then proceeds to understand any new experience from that reservoir not as a unique phenomenon but as a meaningful case of some hypothetical rule or principle. It will be mirrored in communication with others present who have the same experience. The abductive researcher works like a detective. Communication theorist Gary Shank thinks this abductive researcher learns to gather information and to combine that information in bricolage fashion. This researcher turns to the world of experience directly for guidance.²³ The logic of signs and hence semiotics follows an abductive logic.

To explain what a sign was, Peirce worked with many definitions. He thought for example a sign was something that stands to somebody for something in some respect and capacity. The 'something' can be replaced, for instance, by *icon* – a representation of; a self-sufficient sign that represent its object by resemblance: a map of Chiapas – or by *symbol* – stands in place of; based on agreement: words, laws, traffic rules work by convention or habit of association only. In addition, an *index* is based on a relationship of cause and consequence, like smoke as an index of fire, or a dent in a car as an index of a collision. Typical for the index is that it is really, physically touched by the object it stands for. Hence an index points to something beyond itself that can be confirmed with collateral evidence. Sebeok argued that above all the indexical sign must be viewed as Peirce's central contribution to semiotics. The notion of indexicality points to 'the being of present experience' as Peirce worded it. He contended that no matter of fact could be stated without the use of some sign serving as an index, 'because *designators* compose one of the main classes of indexes.'

The ski-masks form one surprising phenomenon of Peircean inquiry within the Zapatista sources, 'the experience that frustrates the

expectation,' as he voiced it. Therefore, the 'Peircean method' of research in this *Cuaderno* can be illustrated by the figure on the next page. It shows how semiotics (s) brings me to the ski-masks (*), and from there I go step by step, along a few detours back to Chiapas (Ch), the Maya historical heritage (m), and eventually to the psychology of the semiotic method (p/s). As voiced by the CCRI, the Zapatista ski-mask may be taken iconic for the Amerindian people as a sign of the end of chaos. At the same time the mask is also an index of change and a symbol of Amerindian struggles for dignity. All interpreters, including the Amerindian people, make their own narratives. Because, as said, the logic of signs is an abductive logic, the iconic quality of the ski-mask can only be revealed to us thanks to its indexical quality that opens to us of following its traces through our sources. Every sign's iconic, symbolic, or indexical quality is established by context – community, time and place.



Structurality

No need to repeat how difficult this kind of sign language is to document for any outsider. What is the relation between the observation of signs and their translation into a discourse? In 1997, anthropologist Alan P. Fiske presented a paper on learning a culture the way informants do. It is known that any anthropological interpretation of the signs observed is predisposed by the conversation between the anthropologist and the informant, but also by each other's concept of the other. Interviews, questionnaires, life histories, descriptions of events, explanations of motives, norms and values need to be *decoded* from this situation, from this procedure and context. And what is more, because in general people usually can hardly explain what they do, what can be made of the information the informants had provided? Fiske stated that clearly 'practice, even the most refined practical competence, need not necessarily give rise to reflective analysis.' What prevails is the

‘pervasiveness of unintended, involuntary, effortless, autonomous, non-conscious processes of social attention, perception, categorization, attribution of meaning, evaluation, affective response, motivation, and goal-establishment.’ It is also known that most religions are not so much thought out as danced out. Around the world, most rituals and most beliefs, are not reflected upon discursively at all. Very few people have interest in doing that, and informants in particular were certainly not trained for their interfacial role. Like children, informants learn their culture by observation, imitation, and participation. Fiske accepts that informants ‘pressed to explain practices that they themselves learned by observation, imitation, and participation generally have to make up concepts that have tenuous, often imaginary relations with the manner in which the informants themselves actually acquired or generate the actions in question.’²⁴ French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu invented the Maussian concept of *habitus* to contextualize this unreflected practice. The habitus is not consciously, discursively learned, it is acquired by practice: indeed, by observation, imitation, and participation.²⁵ And signs are the devices to perform this. No wonder Fiske suggests to familiarize with people’s perceptual world, experience events, and construct conceptual meanings, listen and learn to converse, and so on. Hence his suggestions to learn the culture as children do.

Before going deeper into the role of the interpreter, I like to discuss two problems of the signifier-signified relationship a little bit further. First, it is rather orthodox that semiotics can do without language. In fact, it can be argued and shown that human thinking in general precedes discursive interpretation; that thinking is for doing, and the actions will only be interpreted discursively one split second *after* it happened. Think simply of driving a car: the road is full of signs and signals, but the driving occurs largely unconsciously outside the realm of language. However, if the sign consists only of signifier – signified, it could be deduced that there is nothing to be understood outside of this particular sign. If the signifier is articulated essentially to language and the signifier constantly to the ‘world’, as is understood in a few important poststructuralist works, the impression might root that the ‘world’ is constructed by language, and vice versa. Saussure believed that all thought is language and that thoughts do not exist without it. His was the assumption that a one-to-one mapping of words onto objects and vice versa is the basis for meaning and reference. Michel Foucault argued that to utter the word is to enter the thing. Activated by the mysterious power of language, the word opens up the very experiential reality it refers to. This is linguistic idealism, and it is

unsustainable. Animal cognition does not need language. Not only has an author like Sebeok published at length about animal semiotics, signs are to represent the world beyond themselves, beyond what we like to see as 'reality'. Language is a very important device to do that, but we do not talk just to represent this 'beyond'. To conclude from the role of language in human thinking that no cognition occurs without interpretation, a thought Eco recently vented,²⁶ is plainly romantic. Although talking comes from the desire to communicate, to exchange messages, feelings, moods, and the like, as a rule, however, the talking is not about reality as such but about how it is conceived by someone. Thus, communication turns out to be mostly an exchange of *interpretations* of reality. This social categorization of reality, indeed by and in language, does not replace reality in any way. The opposite is closer to the truth: language is developed by the brain to name the world, and all the physical properties that can be observed, memorized, retrieved and followed by action without a discursive reflection. Human beings and their brains, in short, the language-independent reality, preceded language-dependent realities and this is still central to the thinking process. Because the perceptual detection of signs is not itself semiotic deduction, semiotics touches merely a part of cognition. The message is clear. Whereas linguistic-idealistic (post-)structuralism inquires the meaning coming from signs, semiotics includes the researcher as the creator of meaning.

This brings me to the second problem of the signifier – signified relationship. Anthropologist Roy Rappaport summarized it as follows:

When a sign is only conventionally related to what it signifies [...] it can occur in the absence of its *signification* or *referent*, and, conversely, events can occur without being signalled. This conventional relationship, which permits discourse to escape from the here and now and, even more generally, to become separate and distinct from that which it merely represents or is only *about*, also facilitates lying if it does not, indeed, make it for the first time possible.²⁷

This is the consequence of working with symbols. Symbols give the sign physical freedom from the signified, an escape to stand on its own. It increases by magnitudes the possibilities for the scope of human life as well as for falsehoods, Rappaport writes. Indeed, semiotics, says Eco, provides a theory of the lie.²⁸ This experience with sign language can be used by the interpreter to play with signs, and to manipulate signifiers, to express the belief in the 'truth' of mythological and religious narratives. During most of the twentieth century, for example, Eastern European May Day parades indicated – were indices of – the power of

the Soviet system. In mythology, the indexical relationship might even be considered stronger. The ski-masks were not simply indices of a return to order, for the Maya they could also have been *symptoms*; in this case of chaos itself. Symptoms are *natural* indices, a ‘natural effect’ of a specific cause.²⁹ Rituals rely ‘heavily on indices that are virtually impervious to falsification and resistant to misinterpretation.’³⁰ For the Maya, the ski-masks transmitted three sets of information. First, they expressed their current state of mind. According to the CCRI-text, it was *their* activity and task to assist time. Second, they therefore might have underscored a century-old cosmovision in which order relieves chaos in endless repetitive sequences. Third, they may have revived an equally century-old tradition of resisting the State. The first set of information is indexical or symbolically; the second is canonical; it may also have worked through symbolism.

This conclusion already indicates that I should not wrong the poststructuralist current. Structuralist and poststructuralist writers – in France they usually are considered one group – came with the idea that language speak to humans and not the other way around. Humans inhabit a structure that enables them to speak. People live in cultures, live in language. The authors of texts do not originate their texts, cannot be their progenitor because the authors work with the ‘already written’. Combining structuralism with Saussurean semiotics, it is postulated that authors can only model with signs already set out in the world. The central position taken by Jacques Derrida, for example, comes from Saussure’s argument of difference. Signs operate because they are understood as being different from another sign.³¹ This is especially true of symbolic signs like words, because while symbolic signs (words) tend to relate to each other, iconic signs tend to keep their basic relation with the signified in the world. Think of religious festivals. In times they were iconic, they were performed by very traditional ceremonies belonging to the ‘discourse’ of the celebration, like Christmas to the Birth of Christ, and Easter to the coming Resurrection. But in symbolic times, these festivals tend to relate to each other more and more: holidays of family reunions, including gifts. In Holland, even during Easter presents become part of the festival. In this culture deserted by God, the iconic relationship is being lost. At the same time, the distinct features are also stressed and seem to become the *raison d’être* of the festivals: Christmas with its snow-covered trees and the cold of winter set against the egg-dominated Easter, the feast of the coming Spring. If this sets through, both festivals can become iconic again, although, so it seems to me, never as metaphysically footed as they once were in

pre-Roman times. The same may happen with the ski-masks. They may become icons of the revolt itself, inspiring other revolutionaries to wear them simply because the sign language of the Amerindian revolt now requires it.

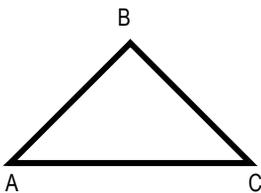
The Interpreter

Despite its Saussurean origin, Derrida's vision on the sign-structure goes much further.³² Derrida expressed his objections by looking at the relationship between writing and talking and concluded that Saussure's shortcoming was its pure dyadic modelling. Language is often seen as talking, which leaves writing exterior to this. The written text is then Other to the spoken text and language. Derrida's *Of Grammatology* (1976/67) is basically arranged to discuss this exteriority. Language binds signifier and signified, even if it stays itself outside the sign. In this sense, language works also outside consciousness, originating in the *unconscious*. In a famous article, Derrida tried to underscore this position. He pointed to the recognition of the 'structurality of structure' that made it possible for the interpreter to see and discuss himself and his language as part of the structure, as included in the sign-structure. Derrida argued that we could look at this role of the interpreter as a *centre* that keeps the sign-structure 'whole'. Whereas this centre used to be seen as truth, rationality, God or some other metaphysical reality, structuralism showed it was nothing but a human construct. Because of its irreplaceable and central presence, the centre should be regarded as a transcendental signified, the ultimate source of meaning which cannot be replaced with a satisfactory signifier. The 'centre' of the Maya movement is not easy to define. I will not even try to do this.

The strength the centre can generate is limited, though, leaving some room for *play* to the elements in a structure. Think of the leader of a group of resistance. When he is there, the group behaves disciplinary – according to the dictates of the centre, its leader. But the moment the leader is captured, the members of the group may go crazy – they will start 'playing' wildly. Centre and play belong together. Sometimes a strong centre is fit, sometimes a weak centre. In philosophy, Derrida argued, too strong a centre leads to a kind of tyranny, described as *violence*. More or less in line with the concrete role of the interpreter of signifier and signified introduced above, Derrida's centre cannot be substituted by any element of its structure, it is the cause and ultimate referent for everything within the sign-structure. However, because of its all-encompassing presence, the centre could also be thought outside the sign-structure, an 'outsider' looking at signifier and signified and

linking them to a sign for himself. Derrida feared – very Saussurean indeed – that in the end its power to back out instigates the centre to escape structurality. This construction of signifier and signified was indeed prepared by Saussure, leaving the interpreter outside the sign, but at the same time projected it as its centre. Therefore, Derrida, very well at home in Peircean semiotics too, tried to reconcile Saussure and Peirce into one system, acknowledging the *signifier-signified* unit as well as the *signifier-interpreter-signified* unit.

Since the sign can be treated as an independent sign, a symbolic structure that includes the interpreter but does not refer to some metaphysical truth. The sign is build around a central force (interpreter, idea, ideology, etcetera) that holds the sign in place without being more than an illusion. Realizing the illusion but taking the sign serious is called bricolage. In a text, a writer might use concepts like penis envy or the Oedipus complex without referring to the totalizing structure of psychoanalysis as true. The concepts itself are used in a discourse to score an argument. Although, psychoanalysis usually leaves not so much room for play at all, the liberty of play is almost complete, the force of the centre very weak indeed. Realizing this, Derrida contrasted the *bricoleur* with the engineer, who designs buildings or machines that have to be stable and balanced and should ‘work’. The engineer needs to create such stable structures or nothing at all. The engineer’s products have little or no play because this high quality stability. Set in a world build on language, the engineer is the centre of his own discourse, the origin of his own language. A liberal humanist, presenting the sign of humanism, argues more like an engineer than as a *bricoleur*.³³



A = signifier, sign/sign vehicle, also: representamen;
 B = interpreter, sense made of, also: interpretant;
 C = signified, object.

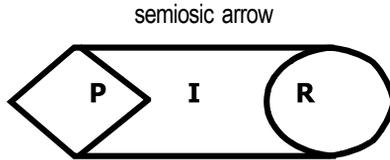
Much room for play or almost nothing at all, language and interpreter are always synonymous to interpretation. Authors like Derrida make clear that any sign constituted by signifier and signified works only by the act of semiosis. A sign never exists in and of itself. Semiosis, going beyond Saussure for a moment, operate within a triadic relationship, illustrated by the triangle ABC, above.³⁴ According to assorted definitions found in the literature, the angles of the triangle bear different names, but mostly without meaning something distinct.

Peirce called the interpreter an *interpretant*, because he wished to disconnect the action from any person. It is the *sense* made of the sign. Signs are human artifacts; nothing is a sign unless it is interpreted as a sign. The interpretant B does not only mediate, brings A and C into the same sort of correspondence with itself, it may also develop into another sign. The signifier or the form that the sign takes was to Peirce a *representamen*, and the signified or to which the sign refers he called an object. Signs are enabled to have significance only within a certain setting. The interpreter/interpretant provides a key feature of the context in which the sign must be understood. It all depends on context. The key role provided for the interpreter means that there is not necessarily any observable relationship between A and C. This implies the base line might be pointless.

Second, the sign – including the interpretant/interpreter – is inscribed in a chain, a ‘sentence’, a ‘grammar’. The consequence is that the sign itself becomes part of a structure within which it refers to other signs, and this by means of the systematic play of differences. For Derrida, following Saussure again, a sign differs because within a chained structure it opens a space for itself. And a sign defers at the same time because it cannot merge with other signs and needs to keep its distance. Derrida speaks of the economy of *différance*, a French word deliberately misspelled to indicate the play of the sign within a structure. This avoids any possibility of identifying signs with any truth at all, but allows for its use in language and communication. In fact, the word *play* as discussed by Derrida can easily be replaced by the more common *articulation*. A sign is held together, articulated, by the play allowed, performed, and constructed by the interpreter/interpretant, but it functions only dynamically, as a movement or a crisscross of differences. Signs are motored, fuelled, directed, not simply ‘there’. During this movement the ‘past’ is included by the signifier, and the ‘future’ by the signified. This dynamic composition includes humans and groups of people, who think they are conscious, or present to themselves, while they are only differing and deferring. Human self-presence is a centred illusion that disguises the play of centreless displacement within they live. It is by *différance* that Derrida transforms semiotics into the psychology of identity.

From a similar position, Swiss semiotician Alfred Lang designed a so-called semiotic arrow to illustrate the ongoing process of semiosis: signified *through* interpreter *to* signifier; from past experience through present communication into a future existence. This arrow, writes Lang, comprises the process of an origin or referent structure R – comparable

to Peirce's object – being transcribed by an interpretant structure *l* into a presentant structure *P* – Peirce's representamen:³⁵



The presentant/signified/anaform has incorporated the referent/signifier/ source in the light of the interpretant/interpreter/mediator. To the luck of the researcher, all three are entities that can in principle be empirically pointed out in their structure or process manifestations. By the anaform, Lang means any discernible formation that is 'semiotically' related to two other structures. This can be, as mentioned before, by structural similarity or complementarity (iconically), by genuine causation, contingency or antagonism (indexically), and by habit or tradition (symbolically). The anaform *P* is the sign carrier (signifier) and can be turned into a signified/referent *R* during semiosis, but only the three together as a unit is the triadic sign carrying meaning. This last remark is the fundamental clue to the operation of the semiotic process. The triad is dealt with as a structure but it should in fact be dealt with as a process, for in a next phase *P* transforms into *R* and the process proceeds through a new *l*, and so forth. Such transactions, argues Lang, may occur between organisms who do the semiosis and their environments – from individual into the environment (ExtrO-Semiosis) or the other way around (IntrO-Semiosis) – but also happen inside an organism or individual (IntrA-Semiosis) or completely outside in the environment (ExtrA-Semiosis). IntrO-Semiosis is a perceptual, cognitive process, ExtrO-Semiosis an acting process, while IntrA-Semiosis should be regarded as psychology and ExtrA-Semiosis as cultural development. This 'metabolism' on the information level between the person and the world shows semiotics as a general device of analysing causation, and the creation of memory and history. Of the many implications, I mention only one. If modernity is to be understood as the opposite of a dialectic of history, as 'the eventness, the permanent play of the present moment, the universality of new blurbs through the media,' as Jean Baudrillard named it,³⁶ an interpretant built on history and myth will direct the semiotic arrow away from modernity, looking for points of contact with tradition first and for all, but transforming both tradition and modernity into a new

form. In short, it takes the signified ('tradition') to a new signifier. For the anthropologist 'learning a culture the way informants do', IntrO-Semiosis should be his or her main apparatus.

Semiosis is a sign process that transforms signs through signs into new or other signs. However, we do not need Lang's terminology of semiotic ecology too much. IntrO-Semiosis is similar to encoding, the process that freezes the sign into a relation with a signified by the interpretant. The word encoding points of course to the code. Like the sign, the code has multiple definitions. It is regarded a unified structure of narrative and imagery – by French philosopher Roland Barthes, if I remember well – or as a system of rules that would involve a fixed number of elements and that would exclude some combination while allowing others (Eco). Codes are also defined as terms to carry significance, as a network of ideas, images, and stylistic devices that have an internal cohesive principle, and as information fully or partially common to the addresser (encoder) and addressee (decoder) of a message. If the codes are encoded they are obviously not (yet) incorporated into the semiotic system, or in thinking in general. Codes are vulnerable to changes imposed on them by sign users. This is decoding en encoding in one signifying process. A reader of a text, for instance, argues Eco,³⁷ compares new codes with the ones he has encoded already. However, if I use the word encoding in its colloquial usage, no further definitions are to be expected, I think.

It is not surprising to regard Peirce's interpretant not just as the person who does the semiosis, but – as he indicated by choosing precisely this designation – also or instead as the discourse applied by the person. This seems to bring us back at Saussurean and poststructuralist discourse analysis, articulating signifier and signified as the result of discursive thinking. In the case of the faceless warriors of the Zapatistas this seems indisputably the case. The ski-masks are signs of anti-chaotic struggle to open up the door to a forced renovation, back to order. It may be expected that this interpretation is derived from their mythology. A close reading of the sources will unmask some more signifiers/representamen connected in this way to the possibility of the return to order by the interpretant of Maya cosmology. The recognition of the White Marcos as the leader of the Amerindian warriors is one of them. Moreover, autonomy can be articulated to demarcations in the landscape, by maps in their archives, and the narratives of history and geography/territory they tell. These signs become interpretants if the discussion of the political fate of the contemporary struggle turns up. This particular Peircean semiosis can indeed be a device of recognizing

the Maya inner voice. Therefore, semiotics seems to serve as a theoretical foundation of more-or-less traditional ethnography not only to overcome the split between the supposed objective and subjective worlds, but also to return to a kind of essentialist argument.³⁸

Traces of *Différance*

Using uncomplicated Peircean semiotic language, pointing at signifiers/representamen, signified/objects and their articulating interpreters/interpretants may indeed offer a way out for the crisis of structuralist anthropology, which, by looking at it this way, should not have been in the first place. The problem of a privileging of the author's own conceptuality can be avoided by constantly referring to this semiotic device. The signifiers and signified are 'in the world' to be identified – with the help of informants, by participative observation, thick description, or close reading of texts – and the interpretants can also be recorded as was done throughout anthropology's youth as a science. The 'Other' should indeed be studied in his habitat, where things and places are neither objective facts nor simply subjective constructions, but are realities spanning across the inhabitants, past and present, and their environment. This avoids considering the habitat as given object and space, having an elemental and independent existence. As a short discussion of Maya mythology might indicate, the environment probably cannot be fully specifiable in physical terms. Although we must stand by that language is only a part of semiosis, in this sense, indeed, the landscape contains or triggers a motivational narrative. Then, Peircean semiotics may perhaps have one dangerous consequence. If we listen to experienced Peirceans, we note a radical *anthropo-de-centration*, looking at man as a symbol, in thoughts. Semiosis could definitely expose the illusion that the person should be discussed as the essential source as well as the supreme single achievement of the human condition itself. 'We are in thoughts rather than thought is in us,' Peirce wrote.³⁹ Consequently, the Maya might have been in myth, in their cosmivision. A dangerous remark in our contemporary world of individual agency. So: were they? Was their agency fuelled, motored, driven, directed by 'outside forces'? This is one of tasks to carry out ahead, in the next chapters.

Amusingly, also Derrida is usually 'accused' of such *anthropo-de-centration*.⁴⁰ True, Derrida did not participate in the well-known French movement of 1968 at the universities or the street, and he is not affiliated to a political party. Both could be considered not pro-humanistic,

because most political movements have put the human experience in its centre. Though clearly Marxist in origin, the father of structuralist thought, Claude Lévi Strauss, exposed that societies develop in no specific historical pattern, not even dialectic, and class had nothing to do with it either. It brought doubt about the centrality of the human being. And it proposed to look at cultural differences as equal manifestations of human activity. European values like reason, progress, and liberal democracy could be cultural weapons to colonize the Africans, Asians, and Latin Americans once more. Hence the violence of the centre. The ‘centring’ of language is called *logocentrism*. The word comes from *logos*, or reason; the dialectic of pure reason in Hegelian sense. Catholicism is logocentric, Protestantism is, and so is Marxism, or, no doubt, Maya cosmology. Deducing from epistemic discourse analysis, Derrida showed that every logocentric episteme – or the body of ideas that shape the perception of knowledge at a particular period, recognizable in discourses (Foucault) – is imbedded in a discursive struggle with an older, prior episteme. A discourse has a writer and a fictional reader and both share the *grammatology* of the text, its ‘unconscious’ dialectic opponent. Humanism came out of an argument with monotheism, which in turn came out of an argument with pantheism. Consequently, pantheism is part of the logocentre of monotheism, which is again included in the logocentre of the humanistic discourse. Derrida believes there is a level of unconscious textual production writing a discourse, and deconstructive reading searches for symptoms of this underlying level in order to locate and track it. Therefore he proposes to read any text in an *anti-centric* way, which causes the centre to disintegrate, and discloses the structurality of the structure. This is the deconstruction of that text. Questioning the internal structure of a discourse as symptoms, presents a trace of symptoms as a sign for something else, for the discourse’s ‘other side’. For example, take away the anti-monotheistic elements of a humanistic text without building up a new logocentric text and what remains is a fully and pure humanism that liberates all human artefacts from its imprisonment in the humanistic structure.⁴¹ If this is correct, Derrida’s work is on the top of humanism.

No doubt, Peirce would have argued that the Zapatistas’ thoughts are what they are saying to themselves, ‘that is saying to that other self that is just coming into life in the flow of time.’ Anthropologist Laura Graham provides a minor extension that will bridge us even further to the psychological dimensions of the argument thus far:

While not adhering to the 'simplistic view' that culture *acts on* a person or that 'dictates of a culture' can be taken for granted to explain why a person does something, I suggest that the creation and expression of subjectivity is intimately linked to surrounding discursive and expressive practices.⁴²

Hence, identity as agent play within an articulated but poorly centred and liberal structure. The Maya struggle can be seen as an attempt to differ and defer at the same time. In practice this could mean to build up a Maya order within the Mexican state. And indeed, they constantly expressed that 'gaining respect' was one of the Zapatistas main goal. The Zapatistas only exist by *différance*, their mythological cosmovision being an instrument of their economy of *différance*. Their agency cannot exist without the Mexican Other. Their existence is not they but through which they are constituted. The continued usage of the mythological cosmovision cannot be but an indication of essentialist reasoning. This is another characteristic to investigate among the Zapatistas. The essentialism I mentioned is not to be found in the cosmovision of the Maya but in its frequent repetition throughout the centuries. The Maya were differing and deferring from the world of the Whites and the Mestizos. No doubt, this *différance* included fortune-tellers and shamans. By playing out this *différance* logocentrically indeed, the Maya constructed their identity during the centuries fighting Spanish rule and resisting Mexican rule within the same discourse, working continuously with the same signs, signifiers and signifieds. This logocentric, essentialist centre is the interpretant within the Maya sign between any signifier and signified. History (interpretant / interpreter) is thus presented as part of the sign. The survival of ancient historical narratives like myths is not important because of the content of the myths, but because its *sustained* significance in particular historical periods.⁴³

Abduction as Peirce has introduced it, should bring me to look for details that are in the sources of the Zapatista moment, but left out of the dominant discourses. Where Peirce speaks of 'some surprising phenomenon, some experience which either disappoints an expectation, or breaks in upon some habit of expectation of the *inquisiturus* [...]',⁴⁴ the social scientist should look for an interesting detail, rarely mentioned in general discourses of the revolt, and then treat it as a sign of the movement. This would simply lead to a different version of the Chiapas narrative. The sources are appropriate for such an examination. The authors of the articles in Mexican newspapers and journals, some published on the Internet, have based their work on oral testimony of

some kind. In most cases I was able to verify the statements with other material. But there is considerably more to it. At the time, Mexico was a hegemonic society, which means that members of one social group – of the then ruling party PRI (Partido Revolucionario Institucional) – controlled the main sources of information actively and passively. And although initially the Zapatistas denied access to their territory to the most important government media, their audience of the so-called ‘opposition press’ was also educated within the Mexican system. Despite for example the liberty the Internet offers for Mexican writers, in general all are instructed in the ‘official history’ of exploitation before the Revolution of 1910 and the ‘process of liberation’ that set in afterwards. These writers coloured their articles with the conviction that to continue that process, the country should do without the PRI. This is one of the mentioned threats and both within and outside government circles the country’s ‘official historical narrative’ still dominated political discussions. As a result, commentators and participants saw in the Zapatista movement legacies of the heroes of the Independence Movement of 1810 – Miguel Hidalgo and Vicente Guerrero – and of the Revolution of 1910 – Emiliano Zapata and Pancho Villa. Foreign observers were likely to follow this course too. Even North American political scientist and Chiapas specialist Neil Harvey chose to include a few paragraphs on Mexico’s ‘rebellious tradition’ in his small book *Rebellion in Chiapas* (1994). Comprehensibly this commitment might be,⁴⁵ we might claim that such hegemonic distortion in the sources as its logocentre should be avoided by following traces throughout the sources that made lead us to the ‘inner voices’ of the sources, in this case, to the Zapatistas’ own vision on their actions. In short, we definitely should ‘unlearn’ the Revolution of 1910.

Derrida suggested deconstructive reading by identifying and following *traces*. The trace is a difficult concept in his writing. A trace in a text can be found by reading, but it cannot be materialized. Although a trace is ‘nothing’, as Derrida continuously says, it represents however past (residue), present (inscription), and future (difference) at the same time. It suggests an always-present logocentre. The trace is to be understood as dynamic, not static, not substantial. The trace is also called *grammè*, from Greek *gramma*: letter, writing, a small weight.⁴⁶ As such it points to the activity of writing, not to its results. It reflects the advance of thinking and doing, not any of its products. Reading deconstructively, however, one does trace indexical signs. Its shared abductive posture requires to start from recognized ideology/paradigm/theory and newly observed ‘facts’ without having any particular new

theory in view, although the recognized ideology/paradigm/theory and newly observed facts must be merged into a new theory. Think of the image of a Paleolithic hunter who recognized from paw prints that a lion he had never actually seen, heard, touched, or smelled had come along. Like Derrida's traces, this hunter also observed traces of something that was not and was at the same time. It could not be materialized, it was 'nothing', but did refer to a past, a present, and a future. And where the importance of ancient historical narratives is not to be found in the content of the myths, but in its *sustained* significance in particular historical periods, the traces the method prescribes to look for combine past and future through the present. What is left is to corroborate then is that the Zapatista ski-masks were just like this kind of trace for the Zapatista soldiers as faceless warriors to present themselves to the outside world as well to root themselves, among themselves, within their ancient culture.

However, where the 'inner voices' originated, where the ski-mask sign was designed was not clear to most outside observers. Although most books and articles on the 1994 uprising look alike and tell, in fact, the same story,⁴⁷ some differences can be identified. I recognized two groups of commentators: one from-the-inside and one from-the-outside. The first group builds its history of the New Year's Revolt on the problems in the Selva Lacandona, the cloud forest on the border with Guatemala - as if their IntrO-Semiosis was primarily fuelled by life in the jungle. They concentrate upon the problems of the peasantry in a real frontier area. Most important was the area of Las Cañadas (The Canyons) in the western part of the Lacandón. Another revolutionary area was to the north of San Cristóbal de Las Casas, near the town of Simojovel.⁴⁸ These 'from-the-inside-commentators' sketch the impact of poverty and overpopulation and end with a detailed narrative of the origins of the EZLN. The second group of writers builds its history on the economic disasters of the past decades in the State of Chiapas in general. Their IntrO-Semiosis was fuelled by life on the highlands in Central Chiapas, called Los Altos. These authors paint a sorry development of poverty and exploitation in the rural highland townships of the State and see the Zapatista Revolt as one of its main consequences. More and more, I detected a preference by the first group to speak of *The Lacandona Revolt*, and by the second group to stick to the designation of *The Chiapas Revolt*. I am tempted to regard these the two basic interpretations of the Revolt caused by outside observations, and my own position articulated to the first group.

FORGET LOS ALTOS?

What were the circumstances in which the initial presentation of the ski-masked to the outside world as faceless warriors took place? For the answer we need to read the works of the Mexicanists, and the sometimes scholastically closed world of the scientific observers. Interestingly, despite scientific claims to predict developments, no one had ever mentioned the EZLN. In 1994, also the Mexicanists were indeed taken by surprise. They needed to respond, to side up, and explain. Soon hundreds of people travelled to the area in Eastern Chiapas to see the revolt with their own eyes, among them tens of journalists and social scientists. The University Libraries had to clean another shelf for the books they produced. But to hear an inner voice we need to establish what the external sounds like. This is the thread through the usual analyses of the revolt in Eastern Chiapas. It is a thread of an almost typical Latin American guerrilla war, with some peculiarities.

Judged from the collections in the library, it seems as if the State of Chiapas has already received more anthropologists than it abounds in communities. Since in the mid 1990s, so it seems, the situation in the State had been the topic of a publication craze that reminds me only of the Cuban and Nicaraguan Revolutions, the Central American guerrillas or the Bolivar and Columbus Commemorations over the past decades. But the EZLN uprising was serious matter. It meant the end of the Maya peasants' hope of eventual improvement in their condition rather than economic deprivation that led to the explosion of January 1994. In the Declaration of January 6, 1994, the Zapatista leadership expressed this prospect as follows: 'Here we are, the dead of all times, dying once again, but now with the objective of living.' It looks as if Mexico as a country favouring peasant's life was finished, and that in response something entirely new, and yet very old, seemed to have manifested itself: the re-assertion of native people's right to their own form of organization. No doubt, when the historical revisions of the Revolution of the present-day gain in significance *and* new sources on the Chiapas uprising show up, the interpretation of the movement could be very different.

Differences

As recently as June 1993 the weekly magazine *Proceso* had published an article claiming that guerrilla groups had attacked some targets near Ocosingo, a small town on the road from San Cristóbal de Las Casas to Palenque. They were thought to originate from the Lacandón rain forest east of the town. The Minister of Interior was interviewed live on radio and stated: 'There are no guerrillas in Chiapas. To say that there are causes grave damage to the state's development.' He referred to the North American Free Trade Agreement or NAFTA negotiations with the U.S.A. and Canada. However, the army had found six guerrilla camps after dropping about one thousand paratroopers in the Lacandón jungle. Typically, political analysts would repeat, the Mexican government used to deal with groups like this, and indeed opposition in general, in two ways: First it tried to bribe the leaders into abandoning their deviant ways, and if that fails, it tried to frighten them. Some State governors would do both at the same time. Indeed, in Chiapas from the late 1970s the State governors – most of them belonging to the landowning elite of the State – Jorge de la Vega Domínguez (1976-78), Salomon González Blanco (1978-80), Absalón Castellanos Domínguez (1982-88) and Patrocinio González Garrido (1988-93) did both. They sent army units into one indigenous community after another.

In accumulation, the respect for human rights got worse than ever before. In fact, Absalón and Patrocinio presided over an army campaign that was similar to the Guatemala case of the early 1980s, including selective assassination of Amerindian leaders. As a result military-style weapons came in during the 1970s and 1980s, sold by Guatemalan army officers and the Guatemalan revolutionaries both to armed indigenous groups (some led by *caciques* or local Amerindian bosses) and to cattle-ranchers. At the same time Patrocinio allowed government programs to be introduced 'to pay the opposition off', until the state and federal budgets fell by ninety percent during the crisis of the 1980s. Curiously, the State government facilitated the distribution of land in Chiapas' central valleys and the northern parts to loyal Indians from 1986 or so,⁴⁹ but such distributions were often done at the same time that neighbouring groups were being repressed just to demonstrate to everyone that it was better not to dispute government policies. In the central highlands and mountains of the State of Chiapas the message was heard: no massive and organized rebellion took place there before 1994 and afterwards social and political movements only could develop

because the Zapatistas had set the clocks. Remember: it were the Maya colonists living in the Lacandón Jungle on the border with Guatemala that seized the city of San Cristóbal and the towns of Las Margaritas, Altamirano and Ocosingo. All movements and insurrections that developed in the central highlands or Los Altos between 1995 and 2000 could do so thanks to the Faceless Warriors who had come from the Eastern Jungle of the State.⁵⁰

Prior to 1994, the Zapatistas could keep out of centralist focus, outside this kind of government control, and left alone in the eastern forests. There, they developed their rebellion as a modern, indigenous and rural uprising. First there was the struggle for the land. This made the uprising 'rural'. Second, there was the struggle for greater political autonomy. This could be one of the central features that made the uprising 'indigenous'. However, although the quest for autonomy was present in the speeches delivered by Amerindian spokesmen at the 1974 First Indigenous Conference, it was not included in the official proceedings. Also the Zapatista speakers only started to talk about it later on in the revolutionary project, not immediately after the uprising in 1994. This has to do with a typical form of 'indigenous' leadership in the Maya area of the central highlands, as will be explained within a few pages. In addition, my own focus is upon the CCRI-text already introduced. To show that the 'indigenous' in this revolt was more than just political autonomy, I need to read this text carefully. Fourth, there is the utopian vision – expressed by most Zapatistas in interviews with Mexican and foreign journalists as well as in their texts. Because the utopia came from Maoist teaching it made it a 'modern' uprising. And, because the Zapatistas called themselves 'a product of 500 years of struggle', some historical digging cannot be avoided.

With my own 1994 book, I realized to have chosen for the option of the *Lacandona Revolt*, and not of the *Chiapas Revolt*. After all the rebels *did* come from the north and eastern cloud forest and not from the central highlands – or Los Altos. True, the rebels must have had their roots in the highlands once, because the peasants in the Selva Lacandona are migrants, or children of migrants, who have left the overpopulated highland communities during the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s. This was a Diaspora of Tzeltals and Tzotziles from the Los Altos, who had based themselves in the forest, and who saw the area as their last resort. It was their promised land. Nevertheless, it seems somewhat inept to call a book on the revolt *Los Altos de Chiapas*, as Romero Jacobo and Urbina Nandayapa have done, because this is missing the crux of it. The radical solution to go to war was particular

to the Lacandón area. Also true, misery all over Chiapas had intensified. The cruelties and inequalities of the State are shocking: Within the Mexican State, Chiapas leads in infant mortality, illiteracy, no running water or electricity. Life is violent because of poverty and repression. ‘The river-rich state provides one fifth of the country’s electricity and a third of its coffee production, but none of this wealth trickles down to the various Maya peoples,’ well-informed journalist Alma Guillermoprieto writes.⁵¹

Of course, the works of the anthropologists and sociologists ‘from-the-in-side’ – the *Chiapas Revolt*-group – belong to the best-written analyses on the economic and social situation in the State of Chiapas that can be found in the libraries. In their publications, George Collier, Neil Harvey and Jan Rus, amongst others, point to the problems of development in general: population growth, national resources that were distributed wrong, the collapse of coffee prices, and the Administration’s abrogation of agrarian reform.⁵² They also point the policy of President Carlos Salinas de Gortari (1988-94) to develop Mexico in Neo-Liberal directions and join the North American economy officially by the NAFTA. It receives all the attention it deserves to explain rural problems all over Mexico, and in Chiapas in particular. Fortunately, in these works there is hardly any analysis based on the Black Legend discourse that was popular in the days of authors like Gerrit Huizer or Ernest Feder, who more than thirty years ago traced all rural problems of Mexico back to the period of *Conquistadores* and *hacendados*, or to some latifundium/minifundium conflict which was stated to be the essence of Mexico’s heritage.⁵³

However, their treatment of the 1994 Revolt included images from all over Chiapas, not ‘just’ from the Lacandón in particular. Let me discuss a few. For example, the uprising was intrinsically linked to the presidency of Salinas de Gortari. Until the revolt, the president was talking tall, basking in the apparent success of a bold program of economic reforms and preparing to hand over power after elections in August that same year. He had stated that he was leading the country out of the ‘Third World wilderness’. His economic reforms were credited with reducing inflation from 150 percent to about ten, consolidating the country’s economy as the world’s thirteenth biggest. The moment of Mexico’s entry into the promised land of industrialized nations after January 1, 1994 by means of the NAFTA, would have been his finest hour. However, in only a few days, with all the violence in the southern state, Salinas’ apparent popularity was being undermined. Therefore, for most analysts the rebellion signalled a legitimization crisis both for

the process of economic liberalization and for the ruling party's *PR-ista* state.⁵⁴ If one focuses mainly on these signs of the 1994 Revolt, the Zapatistas would be articulated to an all-Mexican opposition movement against NAFTA and Neo-Liberalism.

Indeed, there is much truth in viewing the events in Chiapas after New Years Day 1994 within a context of macro-economic changes. We know that the free-market reforms of the De la Madrid (1982-88) and Salinas Administrations have excluded Chiapas peasants from markets in and outside Mexico. We also know that for some years peasants all over Chiapas were in great discontent. Mgr. Samuel Ruiz García, Bishop of San Cristóbal de Las Casas,⁵⁵ had reported that the miserably poor peasant communities of the Chiapas highlands were increasingly frustrated by government neglect of their needs: 'We spoke out, but there was no echo.' The so-called caciques – local political bosses, mostly members of the indigenous township elites – had ruled the villagers by keeping order with terror. The caciques arranged the voting of the peasants, owned the stores where they shop, and bought their corn. Cattle-ranchers to the north and east of the Chiapas highlands – *ganaderos* – had taken over high jungle land that was promised for Indian *ejidos* – collective agricultural communities, fruits of the reforms of the 1930s and 1940s which followed the 1910 Revolution – and existing *ejidos* became concentrated in the hands of an ever smaller portion of their members. We knew about the agricultural industry with its large landowners, who wield quite a bit of power in the state. Land hungry peasants had invaded hundreds of hectares of agricultural land in the state, while the cattle-ranchers whose land was threatened muttered about their willingness to take up arms themselves.

But despite of being the 'most shamefully neglected of all Mexico's poor', the inhabitants of the Los Altos de Chiapas did *not* take the radical solution of going to war in 1994. The Maya of Los Altos had tried to opt for the most legal way: court cases, elections, political protests and marches. Some communities had arms, but left them mostly unused. Even the occupation of town councils endured without open warfare. In fact, during the second armed attack of January and February of 1995, the EZLN received no armed support from highland communities. On the contrary, I observed in most villages that could be visited at the time, that white flags were waving from the tiny peasant shacks. And we all know, poverty itself does not cause armed rebellion. What followed was a ruthless military offensive against them in February. The EZLN was pushed back far into the jungle. In short,

although everyone agrees this was truly a dirty war from the side of the Mexican government, and that the country was ‘in fact in the throes of a profound crisis of the state,’⁵⁶ outside observants could have concentrated on erroneous signs, staging interpretations of the Zapatista revolt far beyond the rebels’ own.

Reading a good number of the works of the ‘all-Chiapas-group’ of analysts – undisputed though their narratives about Chiapas are – it seemed as if something was missing, as if the presentations were too economist, or too politically focused on the fall of the PRI. This disagreement was a problem to me, for the scientists of this group are the ones that obviously know Chiapas best. They have long lists of publications, know local families and communities personally, and have lived there for years in a row. But their focus had above all been upon the communities that lie in the mountains of the Los Altos and the main question here remains: why did the peasants from the Selva Lacandona take up arms? Apparently, the guerrillas received very little support on the highlands during the first weeks of the uprising, and, indeed, seen from the highlands the Zapatistas should be considered outsiders in Chiapas. Systematic solidarity with the EZLN per se came only later, despite the obvious fact that a lot of Zapatista penetration of the highlands had been going on.

During the 1980s several small groups of Marxist revolutionaries were attempting similar strategies throughout Mexico but did not succeed. Why was it that the EZLN did? And was it to fight NAFTA or the globalization of the Mexican economy? What were their motives? Why did their possible brothers-in-arms outside the forest area not participate in 1994? To answer these questions, the publication craze I mentioned before comes to my benefit. Most of the books in Spanish are round-ups of newspaper articles, consisting of reports of life in the jungle and of interviews with individual rebels. Also hundreds of pages of the Mexico City newspaper *La Jornada* can be used thoroughly as historical documentation because its journalists, still bewildered of what had happened, penetrated deep into the jungle to interview any Maya they met and simply wrote page after page full of impressions. They reproduced peasants’ statements and published all EZLN and government messages. A historian will rarely find such a wealth of information of such a small group of persons. It gives him the best opportunity possible to read the material critically and make cross-documentary comparisons.

And it did not stop there. The stream of information doubled, tripled or even more by postings on the Internet.⁵⁷ These included new reports, communiqués, interviews, and stories that created sustained

international pressure on the Mexican government to withdraw weapons by an increasingly well-informed audience all over the world. Sociologist David Ronfeldt and his collaborators have discussed the future of 'netwar' as a strategically influential means of 'combat' that came out of this Zapatista development.⁵⁸ They show not only how the Zapatistas could survive a war against an overwhelming military force but also how the *guerrilleros* and their followers used the Internet to achieve many of their goals. The pressure through the media indeed influenced the Mexican President not to crush the EZLN within a few weeks. One general declared the survival of the Zapatistas had a political background, not a military. The Internet had become a successful weapon in the Zapatista revolt. The reporters of the newspapers were labelled the 'third army' in the conflict, both because they occupied the city of San Cristóbal, a few key towns in the lowlands as well as main areas of the Lacandón itself, and because they supported the revolt with images and words, many words. The coverage was favourable for many reasons – sympathy with the Amerindian peoples, exploited for so many centuries, and still extremely poor – but among them not at least because the Zapatistas provided the reporters with information, while the government kept silent. The EZLN was more interested in getting out messages than overpowering an enemy by force. This is a technique that will have numerous consequences for future actions both in Mexico and elsewhere around the globe. Curiously, even the PRI-dominated television contributed to the Zapatista success. Anthropologist June Nash writes that despite the discrediting messages, 'the mere appearance of indigenous people in the media [...] was recognition that they were making their own history.'⁵⁹

Despite this coverage, however, it remains that above all the Internet could be used in favour of the Zapatistas. Because where the government officials could block telephones, prevent the distribution of newspapers, hinder reporters to do their work, and even sent them away, especially the foreigners, the Internet grew in messages, images, stories, interviews, comments etcetera from all over the world as killing bullets to the repressive apparatus of the Mexican State. In effect, the Zapatista e-mail messages, which bypassed local censoring agents, were crucial but not central. It was international communication and information exchange that made the 1994 uprising one of the first great Internet successes. To this came a great number of videos, taped mainly by sympathizers that circulated internationally. In the words of Mexican journalist Hermann Bellinghausen, it all 'turned Zapatismo into an uncontrolled phenomenon. They broke so many barriers that the whole

power structure had to be reformulated in order to recuperate national and global control to plug up the opening.’ One Mexican reporter suggested, says Nash, that ‘the army forget about disarming the Zapatistas and just take away Subcomandante Marcos’ typewriter’.⁶⁰

Conclusion

All this means that I focus on the origins of the revolt and not on its successive developments in the rest of the State of Chiapas and other parts of the republic. Several social scientists have successfully studied these developments. As anthropologists Lynn Stephen reminds, in the fall of 1994, as a consequence of the Zapatista presence almost half of the municipalities of Chiapas declared themselves to be part of pluri-ethnic autonomous regions. A few months later, the first national meeting of the National Indigenous Convention CNI was held. Its purpose was, among others, to launch a nation-wide campaign for such regions across the country.⁶¹ This and other political facts belong to the consequences of the Lacandona Revolt, not to its origins.

UNLEARNING THE REVOLUTION

The second problem signalled above is the role played by the overall hegemonic discourse of the Mexican Revolution of 1910. This is Mexico's *agrarian question*.⁶² It has generally been assumed that in Mexico an unequal distribution of land has been the historical reality since the Spanish conquest of the early sixteenth century. It stipulated that gradually the Amerindians were forced to leave their own fields and start working for the haciendas. Indians became peons. Eventually, they would rebel against their oppressors. The first impression of the rebellion in Chiapas made me to conclude that the Zapatista EZLN has nothing to do with this once widely accepted vision on peasant wars of the twentieth century. Recent research has documented a more complex development of ownership and possession of land throughout Mexican history in general. Historians accept few of the traditional generalizations today. In fact, by now it is generally recognized that colonial rule confirmed important characteristics from the period immediately prior to the conquest. And in extension to this, it is argued that the Mexican Revolution of 1910 should also be viewed in connection to the new history of the colonial period. It seems that heirs to former Amerindian elites had first backed dictator Porfirio Díaz (1876-1911) and later rebelled against him. This vision, of course, is too simple. Several important revolutionaries had nothing to do with these Amerindian elites.⁶³ So the question is, if the Revolution, identified probably as a Peasant Revolution, was to be regarded as a forerunner to the Chiapas Revolt, both to the Zapatistas as to their foreign observers?

An extended detour seems now inevitable, a detour based on a reformulation of a central question of the present work: Should we *unlearn* the Mexican Revolution as a predecessor to the rebellion in Chiapas? The charge to 'unlearn' is taken from the interviews with Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak in the *Spivak Reader* (1996). It means working critically back through a particular stance, including its prejudices and 'learned, but now seemingly instinctual, responses'.⁶⁴ If we have learned about the persistent importance of the Revolution for

contemporary Mexican politics, we can also unlearn it to open up the possibility of novel articulations.

To start this detour of unlearning, some general observations from a few recent syntheses of the Revolution may be used. The first observation relates to the growing tendency to discuss the Revolution in a long-term perspective. Most authors of the Mexican Revolution start their analysis with the problems of the eighteenth century that led to the Wars of Independence. Obviously, the problems of these years were not solved at the dawn of the early twentieth century. The second observation concerns the breakdown of the Revolution into its regional and local components. Without any doubt, these tendencies have contributed to a re-evaluation of the Revolution as a major historical event. Looking at the numerous monographs, articles and collections of essays that have been published in the past two decades, the current consensus seems to be that the presidency of Porfirio Díaz, which preceded the Revolution, marked the full-scale adoption of 'modernization' as a socio-economic goal and provided the basis for post-revolutionary governments, especially after 1940, to accelerate the industrialization and urbanization of Mexico.⁶⁵

Four Major Works

One author of a synthetic view on the Revolution is Spanish-French historian François Guerra. He agrees with the 'modernization' interpretation, I suppose, and views the Revolution as the culmination of a minority liberalism imposed upon the country by means of Díaz' dictatorship. The Revolution was the outcome, then, of a basic polarization between the rival values of tradition and modernity; between, on the one hand, family, clan, *pueblos*, haciendas and Church, and on the other hand, the modernizing elites in their Bourbon, liberal, neo-liberal and revolutionary outfits, grouped from Masonic clubs to working class movements. It is not surprising that this author seems to be strongly influenced by the tradition of French historical discourse: he romanticizes banditry and *pueblos* based on 'solidarity', constructs an awkward vision of peonage and ignores valuable English-language sources pointing to the hard socio-economic logic rooted in the struggle for subsistence. Hence, here the revolutionary actors are presented as acting more upon a prior *mentalité*, than in response to material conditions.

According to Guerra, the Porfiriato was not the last remnant of an agonizing *ancien régime*. The strength of Porfirio Díaz lay in his ability

to mediate between the central modernizing elites and the local traditional elites and to build a compromising network of personal loyalties that incorporated the two worlds. The contradictions in the system are easy to detect. While individualism was acclaimed, people were actually ruled by traditional bonds (*caciquismo*), and while political liberalism was recorded in the constitution of 1857, the country drifted towards dictatorship. When, during the late 1890s, power shifted increasingly towards the liberal minorities in Mexico City, represented by a group called the *científicos*, the deal between Díaz and local, traditional power holders broke apart. This division within the ranks of the elites was accentuated during the difficult years of social and economic instability that plagued Mexico after 1900. According to Guerra, the result was a *refeudalización* of power. Only after years of widespread and heterogeneous conflicts did the reconstruction of a new legitimate political system make a start, in a manner very similar to the first years of Don Porfirio's rule.

Another author of a seminal work, Alan Knight, presents a somewhat different picture of the Revolution. According to him, it started only because Díaz had failed to make effective arrangements for his own succession. There was no vanguard party taking the lead and expressing a coherent ideology. The Revolution owed almost nothing to external influence. It was a process characterized throughout by an astonishing degree of duplicity, cynicism and an uninhibited recourse to violence. In short, Knight sketched a protracted fight between rival *caudillos*. Nevertheless, the characteristics of a real social revolution can be recognized, Knight states,⁶⁶ at least during the decade following 1910. It was a real Revolution, not only because of the impressive change in leaders whom it elevated to power, but also because it was achieved by recourse to arms on the part of unsophisticated countrymen seeking to remedy what they saw as economic and political oppression. Reviewer W.G. Runciman correctly praises Knight for never underestimating the deeper reasons for which different groups and categories of Mexicans fought. It did not make much difference that most of them simply followed local caciques and not a 'revolutionary cause', or that the Revolution served to settle many personal scores. It was certainly no clash between 'traditional' and 'modern'. The main thing, according to Knight, was that the major villains of the Díaz epoch would not return: the encroaching *hacendado* and the thuggish *jefe político* (state district officer).

Knight was given a chance to further explain his argument with Guerra in an issue of the *Hispanic American Historical Review*. He

correctly argues that the economic data Guerra presents, though useful, do not contribute to a rounded socio-economic interpretation, and disputes Guerra's forthright political stance, which seems to aim at refuting the old notion of a popular social revolution. Such a refutation is in agreement with the new current of imaginairism that is sweeping the historical community of France these days; and, indeed, Guerra follows warm-heartedly Fûret's political and philosophical interpretation of the French Revolution of 1789. Most historians would agree with Knight's remark that the English and American revolutions involved ideas and patterns which were also globally influential and innovative; and after reading Dealy's articles I would add, that in the Latin American case the influence of the American revolution may have had a much broader impact than has been recognized. Mexican liberals, inspired by global examples of economic development, projected the economic modernization of their country. Knight concludes, then, that the Mexican Revolution went beyond the French Revolution, which did not possess a comparable and conscious economic project. The movement against the ancien régime in France was directed against a monarchical and aristocratic old regime that was based on remaining feudal structures, whereas the revolutionary movement in late nineteenth and early twentieth century Mexico was directed against a neo-liberal dictatorship. The words *ancien régime* can be used here only metaphorically, not for analogical purposes.⁶⁷

Further evidence for Knight's thesis was provided by John Tutino's influential book *From Insurrection to Revolution* (1987). Tutino's vision underscored many published studies on popular protest: the large-scale rural revolts in Mexico between 1810 and 1940 were seen as products of agrarian grievances occurring in conjunction with popular perceptions of elite or state responsibility for worsening conditions during periods of intra-elite conflict and state breakdown. Although Tutino refers to Scott's formulation, he echoes E.P. Thompson's moral economy thesis.⁶⁸ Like other authors, Tutino placed, in a basically structuralist and materialist orientation, considerable emphasis on security and autonomy in rural economic and social relationships. The latter fragile equilibrium was destabilized by the agrarian crises of the late nineteenth century. The ensuing political conflicts, which deeply divided the power holders, permitted rural rebellions to fuel decades of Revolution. The 'pact' between Díaz and the leaders of villages and small towns was broken. The period from 1880 to 1910 did indeed bring political stability and commercial expansion – Guerra's 'modernization' – but also renewed agrarian 'social compression'. At the same time population

growth and the privatization of village lands accelerated the rapid loss of autonomy and forced a shift to dependent insecurity across much of Mexico.

Primary Lessons

To ascribe the rural rebellions after 1910 simply to agrarian discontent distorts the picture. This is a major message for the 1994 Chiapas case. In the first place, there is the global view. Both Knight and Guerra might be criticized for neglecting worldwide economic transformation and the role of international capitalism, although Knight in the letter to the *Hispanic American Historical Review* does acknowledge the influence on liberals' ideology of global examples of economic development. As John Hart successfully argues, behind the emergence of, for example, the bourgeoisie lays foreign interest: Mexico had become an economic appendage to the economy of, most importantly, the United States of America. Knight and Tutino, however, dismiss the idea of the Revolution as a nationalistic uprising. Ordinary people sought to turn the tide of capitalist commercialization and whether or not foreigners controlled that process seemed of secondary importance. What took place was mass mobilization under the control of caudillos – the heirs to the former Indian elites of colonial times – whose backgrounds and aspirations were frequently at odds with those of their rural followers. In Sonora, local chieftains put together a professional army devoid of ties to the agrarian question; in San Luis Potosí, the local leader's strong alliance with the national state limited the scope of land reform there; in Guerrero, similar local leaders rebelled against the political and economic monopoly of the central state of the *ancien régime*. In several other states no significant peasant uprisings occurred and leaders had to organize the revolution from the top down. Furthermore, half of the country's peasants, many of them on haciendas, just sat out the conflict. Finally, local leaders, the provincial caudillos, joined Francisco I. Madero. In comparison, the Lacandona Revolt needs to be viewed within some global perspective.

Second, all authors stress the enormous regional differences. This is too central a key to the Revolution to be summarized in only a few words. Analysing the Revolution from the regional perspective has strong roots. From the articulation of the regions would emerge the contemporary national state, and with it a centralized political and governmental apparatus, a decidedly national economy, and social classes capable of exercising control on a national scale. This painful

process, beginning around 1800, can be read about in many recent colonial studies. One author, Eric Van Young, even calls the economy of the late eighteenth century a disarticulated economy, which resulted from the loss of momentum of the colonial economy during the earlier and middle decades of that century.⁶⁹ He suggests that under the conditions of inflation and pauperization around 1800, with transport costs remaining relatively high, the relationship between income, consumption and markets had been set, so that the antecedent regionalization of the Mexican economy became a given. A strong spatial segmentation of the colonial economy was the result and the waning of central power after 1821 accelerated this process even further. In fact, all recent colonial studies show that the Independence movement must, in essence, be viewed more as a kind of civil war than as a national liberation war against Spain. This was to tear the country apart, with the obvious result that in the nineteenth century Mexican economic and political centralization had to begin from scratch again.

At first sight there seemed to have been a return to the characteristics of the colonial economy. The interventionist state, the politicized economy and family enterprise with its patronage networks were carried over from colonial to modern times. As in colonial times, bankruptcy was common in family enterprises, speculation still being preferred to long-lasting commercial bonds. But shortly after Independence, as state finances were constricted, productivity declined, and economic development became distorted. Business practices did not provide a consistent income for all family members. The financial disintegration of the government had already begun during the early 1800s and the Mexican state experienced a progressive fiscal breakdown after 1821, causing a corresponding erosion of power of the central government. In another study of the public debt, Tenenbaum argues that the general failure of commerce, agriculture and industry in the private sector soon after Independence encouraged the wholesale parasitization of the public sector by private moneylenders called *agiotistas*.⁷⁰

Each region viewed the demise of the Spanish empire from its own local perspective. While many ties with the old colonial structure disintegrated, a more constructive process was also underway. Several regional societies, existing since colonial times, had to decide whether or not to unite nationally. And, Tutino argued,⁷¹ the confusion during the early years of the Mexican republic reflected both the underlying struggles among members of the local elite and the various attempts to forge them into an enduring national framework, be it a federal or central state. Of course, the post-Independence breakdown scarred the

moneyed classes of Mexico so deeply, that they became very reluctant to take entrepreneurial risks. This problem notwithstanding, many studies of the nineteenth century present data from which one can infer, explicitly or implicitly, the tendency towards the formation and expansion of the national market. An analysis of the *problématique* of this century, then, must be at the same time both political and socio-economic.

The northern states played a prominent role during the Revolution. It was Chichimeca ('Barbarian') territory, the land of non-sedentary Indians who raided the central regions where relatively well-developed sedentary Indians had established their habitat. The sedentary majority of these indigenous peoples therefore lived in regions characterized by high levels of population concentration, intensive agriculture, intensive religious and architectural activity, and a large variety of professions. It seems to have been a thinly populated, peripheral area including some minor oases like Zacatecas, Saltillo, Parral or Torreón. These states experienced their first unprecedented population growth in the era of Porfirio Díaz and later on again in the middle decades of the twentieth century. In most of them population doubled, and sometimes even tripled, between 1860 and 1900 approximately. Growth figures are almost the highest of all Mexico during those years. The peopling of the region resulted from migration from other overpopulated regions, a mass movement stimulated by the promises of work and higher earnings. This is the more surprising, since the region is one of the driest of Mexico, hardly useful for sustaining an agrarian economy. As such it must be considered a frontier zone in expansion – peripheral in every sense – that underwent a sudden and dramatic transformation after 1880, when rail links with central Mexico and the United States were completed. This brought major developments in mining, stock grazing, and, where irrigation permitted, cotton cultivation and other agricultural products. Some studies emphasize the scale of change that took place in these areas during the Porfiriato, accentuating the relative brevity of the period.⁷²

Interesting for the Chiapas case is the similarity in the family history of the land-owning elites. In the Mexican North, several great enterprises had been built up in the region; and the city of Monterrey saw the emergence of a regional bourgeoisie. The rise of the commercial elite was intertwined with three processes: primitive accumulation of capital as a consequence of the growth of trade with the United States, the investment of this capital in capitalist production, benefiting from the conditions created by the Porfiriato, and the spurt of industrialization.

A typical example is the career and accomplishment of one of the most successful entrepreneurial Porfirian families: the Terrazas-Creel clan of Chihuahua. The family emerged from relatively humble origins to a pre-eminence of political power and economic fortune, which rested on foreign markets for cattle and minerals. On the basis of this they secured a real measure of political independence from central authority in Mexico City, as well as economic autonomy from capitalist partners across the border. Although every family head in the region who had enjoyed political power at the state level (such as the Maderos in Coahuila) was displaced by Don Porfirio to make way for his clients, the Terrazas maintained their positions. Political power enabled the family to extend their landed property at very low cost, and to diversify and consolidate their economic empires. This is typical of Porfirian politics in which Díaz's appointees were given the opportunities to use their political offices to enrich themselves and others were paid off by being allowed to thrive economically.

But much changed in the later decades of the century. To conclude that capitalism created wealth and poverty on the northern fringes of Mexico seems obvious. But was it the major reason for revolt? Knight argues that the quest to recover 'municipal autonomy', following the replacement of local leaders by persons from outside, became a major goal in the northern revolutionary movement only in the period of scarcity and economic difficulties around 1900. Such was the case for example in the Laguna region south of Monterrey, which became a centre of radical peasant action and became one of the areas most receptive to the activities of Francisco I. Madero. The depression of 1907-09 should be regarded as a major impetus toward the Revolution, for, although the lower classes had previously benefited through working on estates and by serving as transporters, unemployment now became widespread as different parts of the economy shrank simultaneously. At the same time the economic crisis in the United States in 1907 and scarcities caused by crop failures from severe droughts combined to push social grievances to a peak. Nationalism and hostility toward the elite increased as foreigners and the wealthy weathered the economic setback better than other groups did. More than a century later, this process would indeed repeat itself in Chiapas.

The region around Guadalajara, consisting of the states of Aguascalientes, Colima, Jalisco and Zacatecas had rates of population growth much lower than the northern states.⁷³ Of the major geographic regions of New Spain at the close of the colonial period, Michoacán and Guadalajara are often cited as being among the most dynamic

economically, and displaying the characteristics of strong regional autarchy. Despite increasing agricultural commercialization and rural proletarianization, this region sustained a remarkably complex agrarian structure during this period, including a large group of *rancheros*. The markets there were of a very limited geographic range, the level of regional export for agricultural commodities was low, as was the overall level of exchange with other regions. In fact, only cattle were exported. Knight and Tutino put so much emphasis on the *rancheros* in modern historiography that we almost forget that many *hacendados* were also living in this region. They were 'modern' entrepreneurs, not feudal lords or absentee seigneurs, who applied themselves assiduously to the business of estate administration, reduced production costs and raised levels of productivity. Miller shows that *hacendados* administered profitable, bourgeois enterprises. He stresses that these kinds of strategies were not merely limited to the adoption of bourgeois attitudes to production, but that they were also translated into another essential bourgeois attribute: investment. Due to these characteristics, possibilities for comparison to understand better the 1994 Chiapas case based on the experience of this region do not exist.

However, during the nineteenth century the Guadalajara region saw a lot of rebellions come and go and several villages and ranchero settlements, especially those in the Altos de Jalisco, northeast of the city of Guadalajara, suffered subordination for years. It was also a region of bandits who sometimes participated in local insurrections. Upland sections became known as districts of *rancheros*, where landed elites, who could either let their lands to poor sharecroppers or sell off their estates in fractions, saw the decline of the hacienda and the triumph of *rancheros*. Estate production was turned over to many tenants who, like sharecroppers in the northern states, gained limited autonomy in the face of persisting insecurities. Interestingly, as early as the 1820s, the local state government proposed the abolition of the peasant community landholding (the so-called *desamortización*). Liberalism was obviously very strong in this region. But although much village land was officially privatized, the measure created sufficient disruptions to delay the process for decades.

Michoacán consisted of the states of Guanajuato, Michoacán, Querétaro, and San Luis Potosí.⁷⁴ Here the rate of population growth was somewhat higher than in neighbouring Guadalajara. The number of inhabitants per square kilometre was also higher, especially in Guanajuato. Ranchero societies flourished from the eighteenth century in regions formerly sparsely populated, which had been hardly integrated

into the colonial system. (The integration of the *rancheros* was a typical nineteenth-century phenomenon.) As in Guadalajara, the *ranchero* communities were settled by tenants or owners on large, but poorly developed, estates and expanded through both local population growth and immigration from the nearby highlands. In this region, there is no evidence that the Porfiriato witnessed any concentration of landownership in the hands of landlords. Estate ownership became increasingly unstable in times of financial constraints and weak markets and elites sold their lands to gain some income. After 1880, sharecropping was the primary means of cultivating maize on estate lands, a system that would provoke agrarian grievances as soon as elites tried to press more demands upon their tenants. Tutino rightly concludes that the result of the expansion of the tenant production was a system of social relations of dependent insecurity.

It will be clear that there were not many Indian villages in Michoacán. The ones that existed since colonial times were confronted by difficulties in the second part of the nineteenth century. After 1856 local politicians had to decide whether to execute the Ley Lerdo or not. Local politicians, under strong political pressure of caciques and other village leaders, skilfully delayed the implementation of the desamortization law. The privatization of lands held by a village called Churumuco, for example, first had to wait until 1868, when liberal state officials began to press local leaders to implement the law, then again until 1878 because local leaders managed to delay the process for another ten years. In the end, over 200 local residents received titles to community lands, but conflicts going on between villagers since 1872, when a village minority started to support liberal state officials, became endemic right into the twentieth century. In the village of Tamazunchale, and some surrounding villages in San Luis Potosí, a long and violent uprising from 1876 to 1883 impeded privatization as well. The government of Porfirio Díaz began to discuss it only in 1894, emphasizing that privatization would not cause the loss of lands among villagers. When local officials ignored this advice, Díaz imposed a *desamortización* that left the lands in the hands of the villagers. After 1900, being aware of the fact that the Ley Lerdo had been a pretext for the expropriation of village lands all over the country, Díaz amended it to allow non-Church corporations to hold lands.

On the other hand, it has long been assumed that the Indian villages had lost their lands because of the effects of the 1883 law on the *compañías deslindadores* (land surveying companies), which authorized the federal government to hire companies to survey public lands. Since

these companies were granted one-third of the lands they surveyed, it is said that they rode roughshod over the land rights of villages. This conclusion, which used to be found in almost all major textbooks, has been sharply disputed in the past decades by several authors. One of these, Robert Holden, was one of the first scholars to examine surveying companies' records. After studying six Mexican states, he concluded that despite some flagrant cases of expropriation of village lands, the villagers in general successfully opposed the companies' claims. They were even backed by local authorities, which forced the companies' to respect village communal land holding.⁷⁵

For reasons of comparison, the region of Central-Mexico is more important, especially to understand the history of autonomy of the Amerindian units called *pueblos*. This region consisted mainly of the central highlands and the surrounding mountains, called the *faldas*. Included are the states of Mexico, Hidalgo and Morelos (once a single state), Tlaxcala and Puebla. The states of Guerrero (formed in 1857 with provinces from Mexico, Puebla and Michoacán) and Veracruz may also be included in this regional entity. Growth rates of population were high only in coastal Veracruz and the tiny state of Tlaxcala; elsewhere population growth was moderate. It was predominantly an Indian region, except for the big cities of Mexico City and Puebla. The central highlands had experienced a different development from that of the surrounding *faldas*. In contrast with the western and northern states, there were hardly any *rancheros* to be found in the highlands. It was Indian in the sense of its colonial heritage: the existing Indian villages were descended from the *pueblos de indios* of the colonial period. These *pueblos* had a kind of autonomy based on the administrative principle of the two republics, the *república de españoles* and the *república de indios*. The *pueblos* in Central Mexico were controlled by *caciques* who served as *gobernadores* and *alcaldes*. These *caciques* belonged to a group of 'nobles' who had profited from the collapse of traditional *cacicazgos* in the late sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Lower nobles, the *principales* and *caciques* of lesser importance, *recreated* the traditional *cacicazgo* within Spanish legal requirements.⁷⁶ This *nouveaux noblesse* called itself *caciques y principales*. It had been a quiet region, in which the Spanish state, merchants and hacendados provided the support of the poor, and above all, of course, by the villagers themselves, who knew how to handle the Spanish economic and political system.⁷⁷

As Tutino correctly notes, in 1848, a major, widespread agrarian uprising developed across the communities of the central highlands, directed against the landed elites and their estates. In Chalco, a district

just to the southeast of Mexico City, the elites had faced repeated problems in financing their estate operations, but after the war with the United States they were able to seek new means. They built new irrigation systems, they experimented with seeds to increase production, and they tried new products like dairying. These innovations provided the chance for estate revenues to expand, but as one might expect, the scarcity of good cultivable land due to population growth immediately led to confrontations with the villagers in the district. A new phenomenon had occurred: elites claimed village lands. At first, by going to court the villagers responded according to their colonial heritage. But, contrary to their Spanish predecessors, the courts repeatedly backed elite claims.⁷⁸ Several years of lengthy protests, strikes, violent obstructions and open revolts were the obvious result.

In 1849 the state of Mexico also declared the end to communal property rights: the *pueblos de indios* would cease to exist. However, the state lacked the power to implement the Ley Lerdo. It was torn apart by civil war and the French invasion. As in Michoacán, the village leaders and local caciques were able to postpone the process of *desamortización* for decades. A new sequence of rebellion in Chalco in 1868 brought villagers to demand the redistribution of estate holdings. An impressive army was necessary to defeat a nascent guerrilla-group. The army was immediately sent in to put down the rebellions that had followed in the Valley of Mezquital, the state of Hidalgo, and several districts elsewhere on the altiplano. Privatization began in non-rebellious communities in the 1870s. According to Tutino, in the state of Mexico, in 1870, about 65,000 claimants of village lands around Zumpango, Tenango del Valle and Tenancingo obtained titles worth nearly 1,000,000 pesos. But the majority of community properties were not privatized until after 1885, or even perhaps 1894, in a period when the Díaz regime was increasingly successful in preventing rural protests by force or through negotiations with local village leaders, as happened in Michoacán. Village inhabitants increasingly lived as dependents of landed elites, facing the loss of autonomy and a rapid shift to dependent insecurity: a good reason to join an agrarian revolt.

The central highlands cannot be properly understood without discussing the influence of the *faldas*, the surrounding mountainous districts in Guerrero, Morelos, southern and northern Puebla, Veracruz and northern Hidalgo. In contrast to the highlands, the *faldas* were fully *indígena* districts in the colonial sense with strong *ranchero* and *cacique* influences. By 1800, the *indígena* districts in the *faldas* were not altogether Indian anymore, but a zone of immigration for Spaniards,

mestizos, and Indians from overpopulated highlands. Censuses reveal an impressive increase in the number of *rancheros*, cattle *estancias* and small sugar mills. Guy Thomson has traced the origins of power groups in the *faldas* of Puebla – he calls them the Montaña power groups – in contrast to Llanura power groups, living on the *altiplano*.⁷⁹ With Díaz's accession to the presidency, Montaña leaders, who had been loyal *porfiristas* since 1862, assumed control of state politics, until they were united with the Llanura groups during the late 1880s. Thomson's description of local politics and rivalries has a wider resonance when one considers the protracted conflicts between the landed interests of central Jalisco and the peasant forces in the Altos or the similar challenges that landed groups in the central areas of Michoacán faced from rebellions in their mountain districts, as discussed above.

The southern part of the country forms another facet of the Porfiriato. It remained badly connected with the rest of the Republic. Agricultural commercialization promoted the rise of isolated plantation economies characterized by a complete dependence on international markets. The development of Yucatán is a relatively well-known case. Until the opening of Mexico by railways and motorcars the region of Yucatán was virtually an island. This region was thinly populated, with a moderate population growth between 1860 and 1895. Gilbert Joseph emphasizes that henequen production has received significantly more attention in modern historiography than any other aspect of the region's modern past. The henequen boom caused the emergence of an agro-commercial bourgeoisie, dominated by a small number of families, called the *Casta Divina*, not much different from the Terrazas-Creel clan of Chihuahua. One man, Olegario Molina, controlled the vital elements of economic power, such as transport and marketing, due to his excellent contacts with North American cordage manufacturers. As a consequence of the henequen boom peasants were driven off their lands and turned into labourers, working under harsh conditions. According to Joseph, a *de facto* slave society came into existence. And, as Wells shows, the ultimate beneficiaries were Olegario Molina and International Harvester, leaving the rest of those involved, owners and workers alike, very much at the mercy of 'boom and bust' economic cycles.⁸⁰

Chiapas

And Chiapas? Well, Chiapas was even more isolated than other peripheral areas of Mexico, left alone to the Indian communities in the

mountains and the great cattle ranches in the lowlands. It is not clear to what extent the *principales* in Chiapas, who like in Central Mexico came into power after the fall of traditional *caciques* in the mid-colonial period there as well, performed the same role. Historian Kevin Gosner pointed to the control of the Dominican order in Chiapas. Until more research will be published we seem to have to line up with the statements of anthropology. For example, George Collier states that there 'is good evidence that Indians in highland Chiapas took advantage of [their] special status in a manner similar to that of Indians elsewhere in Mexico.' In fact, '[a]rchives of court litigation show that, time and again through the colonial period, Tzotzil and Tzeltal groups could articulate their ethnic status into sanctions and action on their behalf against colonist exploiters and even clerics.'⁸¹

In much the same way I interpret Gosner's work on the *repartimiento* trade. He describes governmental practices that I recognize as similar to Central Mexico's, especially the historical circumstances after 1690 when in Chiapas the authority to collect tribute was given to the *alcalde mayor*. The *pueblos* were assessed as one body, with the native *justicias* or governors responsible for the collection of tribute goods. Precisely as in Central Mexico, the *repartimiento*-trade was executed by these *justicias* – described by Gosner as *alcaldes*, *gobernadores* or *caciques* – acting as middlemen. Gosner notes that Spanish officials 'preferred to co-opt local civil authorities rather than strong-arm them' with the obvious result that 'many *caciques* and [Indian] *alcaldes* in Chiapas were able to use the more intensive production of cash crops to enhance their rank and status.'⁸² However, among the highland Tzeltal, where the *repartimiento*-trade was less profitable for traders and middlemen, the local *caciques* complained bitterly of their personal poverty. Nevertheless, rich or poor, the *caciques* here performed the same role as their counterparts in Central Mexico; they controlled crucial aspects of local government much the same way. This brings me to conclude that also in Chiapas the separate institution of the *república de indios* gave the indigenous groups a kind of 'privileged position' as well. This position, I suggest, should indeed be labeled (semi-) autonomous.

Although their privileges were lost during the nineteenth century, the so-called *gobierno indígena* in Chiapas, mainly based upon Church cargos and *cofradía*-tasks – I will come to this system within a few pages – was a well-arranged alternative for the *caciques*. Recently, Nash pointed to the specific consequences of ethnicity in Chiapas. It is an error to look at ethnicity as a universalizing model, she suggests, because

in communities where the caciques hold power it was more exploitative whereas in the later Lacandón area it ethnicity could be used to combat State policies and globalization.⁸³ But for the time being, after the abolition of the *repúblicas*, the spirit of autonomy was kept alive for more than a century. Even in the twentieth century the legal system had kept its relative, 'colonial' autonomy. Persons involved in a quarrel had various options, from hamlet hearings for settling minor disputes, through informal but legally recognized hearings at the town hall, to the formal courts of the Mexican state government. Nevertheless, like in colonial times, the indigenous community of Chiapas should not be viewed as a 'closed' autonomous community operating outside the wider framework of the national state, for a place like Zinacantán is only a restricted social field, able to appear as it does because of its embedded position. 'Zinacanteco law will survive as a system apart from Mexican law,' writes Jane Collier, 'only so long as Indians continue to use native ideas of cosmic order to justify procedures and outcomes.'⁸⁴

Population growth was one of the main causes of the shortage of land elsewhere in the state. During the colonial period the number of Indians – 90 percent of the state's residents – decreased decade after decade, but by the end of the eighteenth century the population of Chiapas started to grow again. During the nineteenth century and especially the twentieth century it skyrocketed. Without any economic adaptation, this kind of population growth must have had strong adverse effects upon the agricultural economy of the state, causing the subdivision and fragmentation of farms, underemployment and unemployment, falling real wages and falling crop yields.⁸⁵ Also, this movement causes usually a decline in the number of livestock that can be kept because of a general increase in arable land at the expense of grazing land. The last feature, however, cannot be found in Chiapas, because powerful landlords in the tropical lowlands – traditional cattle-economies – and the caciques of the highlands impeded the cultivation of their grazing lands.⁸⁶ In fact, they even expanded their flocks, causing a doubling or more of the number of heads within a few decades prior to the 1980s. It had two important consequences. First, the arable land needed for a growing population was thus further reduced. Second, the labourers were driven off the lands and try their luck in the jungle area as colonists. Especially in a northern section of Las Cañadas most of the settlers came from former agricultural *fincas*. Because the conceptions of cosmic order became subject to change in the twentieth century, precisely in a period of extreme population growth and

economic change, the endurance of the separate law system is presently at stake.⁸⁷

Many Mexicos

At the end of the Porfiriato the contours of a national Mexican state had become visible as regional power holders clearly gave way to centralized power and railroads penetrated the vast territory, making military control more easy and effective. Don Porfirio's policies certainly enhanced political centralization and economic growth. Yet, as Guerra has argued, while Díaz marginalized regional caciques, he replaced them with his own men and thus kept the political structure essentially personalistic. Furthermore, economic expansion had quite different effects in different parts of the country. Hence, as Thomas Benjamin concludes: 'Díaz's Mexico had repressed but not supplanted its many selves.'⁸⁸ It is no wonder then that by the time the Revolution came around it was a heterogeneous uprising, linked to the specificities of local and regional societies. The 'Many Mexicos' revolted for an equal amount of many reasons. The result, as indicated by Guerra and Knight, was a brief *refeudalización* of power. Not until armies from the northern states had managed to control power and their leaders had become dominant on the national political level in the 1920s did a process of national reconstruction begin. The governments led by the northerners, the so-called Sonorenses (1920-34), were characterized by the still precarious equilibrium between central state authority and traditional regional power groups. The Sonorenses intended to fortify the central state while relying on regional bosses – like themselves – especially during times of rebellion. This makes the period between 1920 and 1934 one of transition from regional autonomies to centralized bureaucratic control. Several military and popular uprisings occurred during this period, which sometimes helped to crush certain regional power groups and fortify others. Finally, some economic integration returned, and with it a political, social and economic situation that did not look much different from the one during the last years of the Porfiriato.

By the beginning of the 1930s the power of the central state in Mexico City had become more stable. It lost its dependence upon the strong military caciques of the interior. The major political party, the Partido Nacional Revolucionario (PNR), was created and under the leadership of Plutarco Elías Calles (1924-34) a process of political institutionalization was set in motion whereby the state sought

monopoly control over the legitimate means of coercion within society. The destruction of local power groups did not end all regional islands of authorities, because some *cacicazgos* survived and others even sprang up and flourished. The new regime was able to pacify the various popular rebel movements of small-scale guerrillas without solid territorial control and to restore the position of the landowners.

Secondary Lessons

The development of the internal market, the formation of bourgeois groups joining to form a nationally dominant class, and the return of capitalist development, all united to promote the construction of Don Porfirio's national state. In the end, international capitalism, embraced by this politically centralizing regime, gripped the country. Of course, according to liberal principles, this development was not orchestrated from the centre. What could be achieved from the capital, however, was to build a nation-wide infrastructure and abolishing regional trade barriers, although that also caused discontent in the provinces. Central power, the political and administrative capacity of the state to control the country from Mexico City, was still weak and Díaz in fact ruled over regional power groups more by compromise than by force. These power groups ranged from the industrial bourgeoisie in the city of Monterrey to local caciques in the countryside. The 'creator' of the national state was finally wiped out by regional elites who were angered by Díaz's challenge to their power, by the part of the bourgeoisie that was denied a sufficient share of the profits, and by organized urban workers and peasants determined to end unjust exploitation and improve their standard of living. In several regions, capitalist development had gone so fast, that it caused untold misery among ordinary people, violation of traditional rights, and political rifts. The world recession of 1907 depressed the economy even further and, after years of political tension and suppression, the legitimacy of the Porfirian system collapsed, revealing Don Porfirio as a ruthless tyrant.

Although authors like Knight and Tutino stress the 'popular' character of the Revolution, Vanderwood correctly points to the fact that mass participation *followed* political breakdown and did not precede it. This means that reliance on a deprivation theory like Thompson's or Scott's moral economy thesis is, at least, somewhat suspect.⁸⁹ This makes the proposition by Guerra interesting to look at the breakdown of Don Porfirio's regime as not caused by political and economic tensions alone, but by cultural ones as well. The questioning of the

legitimacy of his rule was brought about by disappointment and bitterness over the results of the once-promising Constitution of 1857. During the Porfiriato, liberal ideas clashed with a ‘traditional society’, not much different from the clashes in eighteenth-century Europe. Indeed, it resembled the situation of the transformation of pre-industrial economies in general, in which the world of moral economy was not capable of adapting to the world of political economy. Political economy could not develop without accommodating itself to the moral economy, though at the same time a system built on compromise with local caciques hindered the full expansion of the political economy in the liberal sense.

Several frictions resulted: the ‘federal-liberal’ state became centralized, ‘democracy’ rested increasingly upon dictatorship, ‘elections’ brought the same persons to power again and again, and the ‘development of individuality’ was hampered by the compromise with collective and even corporate institutions (in the end even the privatization process was stopped). Eventually, during the years of crises, moral economy and political economy openly split the elites, when a *Reyista* faction, represented by General Bernardo Reyes, respecting long-held privileges, paternalist rule and the society of compromise, disagreed expressively with the *científicos*, who favoured the rapid transformation of Mexico to an industrial nation. The fatal step, if we understand Guerra properly, was Don Porfirio’s open support for the *científicos* in 1904. This ended the policy of compromise with the caciques, and sought to build a ‘true liberal democracy’. Díaz eventually abdicated in 1910, and all kinds of pretenders later erupted in a violent uprising to assume his empty throne. Madero was only one of them, but the one who carried the heritage of Bernardo Reyes with him.

The option of Tutino and Knight of labelling the Revolution as a genuine populist revolt does not, I think, contradict Guerra’s more general arguments. Once the Porfirian state had collapsed, local caciques competed for power, first regionally later nationally. The solidarity of the peasants – in some areas Indians – was with these local bosses, who had generally maintained the legitimacy of their status and power during the difficult years of crises, unemployment, and relative overpopulation. In fighting for power, the caciques served their own interests as well as those of their peasant clientele. The popular forces no doubt were ‘at best, the instruments of manipulative caciques, of aspiring bourgeois or petty bourgeois leaders,’ as Knight recalls from the contemporary observer Frank Tannenbaum.⁹⁰ Supporting the new leaders brought

the demise of the hacienda after decades of shrinking village independence.

The rural masses that rebelled were not by far the monolithic peasantry which until recently has prevailed in the literature. Although the distinctions are anything but clear, it is possible to identify peasants who fought for lands in order to distribute them among themselves on a more equitable basis, and others who wanted to regain municipal freedom and the right to make their own decisions. The first group opted for a kind of 'farmers' road to capitalism', while the second sought the return of the privileged communities that had existed before (in fact, the old colonial system of *pueblos de indios*). It is in the latter group we find the 'indigenous' population. The new *cacicazgos* promised to give both groups what they wanted. In the decades that followed Diaz' fall, land was redistributed, long-standing grudges were settled and local issues resolved. It is this image of change and improvement that constituted the legitimacy and therefore the political power of the new regime of the Sonorenses and their followers. Knight even insists that the *mentalidad* of Mexicans had changed: class and status differences were partially broken down and people 'thought themselves more equal'. They obviously were not.

Nevertheless, this change in *mentalidad* could have been much more important than the often cited goals of land reform. Of course, the mid-nineteenth-century issue of land reform, that from the outset entertained the twofold aim of encouraging commercial agriculture among smallholders and satisfying the claims of the peasantry to divide up the large estates, returned in the era of the Sonorenses. But after the Revolution most haciendas, divided into *ranchero* tenancies or not, were able to avoid the intrusion of *ejidos*. It was also the prosperous farmer, independent *ranchero* and the heir of the former hacendado who profited most from the immense increase in urban demand for foodstuffs that occurred in the twentieth century. Brading argued that it is possible that even without agrarian reform (in any case hardly present, for example, in the Bajío) the intensification of agricultural production and the subsequent rise in land values would anyway have promoted the slow dissolution of the great estate.⁹¹

Conclusion

What, finally, are the implications of these strong regional differences for generalizations on the origins of the Revolution? The construction of the national state was well under way toward the end of the nineteenth

century and had potential for consolidation during the twentieth. In this sense the Revolution was not a revolution, and modern research confirms the old theory that it was merely a step in capitalist evolution that helped to free the country from 'feudal' or 'pre-capitalist' constraints. If this could be said of the Lacandón Revolt as well, it would mean an end of the isolation of the jungle by its integration in the national state.

And thus the process comes full circle. The peasant revolution followed the political breakdown of the Porfiriato, but this breakdown was in itself caused by the lack of legitimacy of Don Porfirio's rule. The agrarian tensions of the late nineteenth century had called for a radical solution, which the Porfirian elite could not provide. Radical liberals like Molina Enríquez, who wanted to replace Díaz by a more European-style democratic regime, in fact opted, as Brading shows, for a somewhat colonial-style system in the countryside.⁹² Here the liberals and the village leaders found themselves hand in hand. So, surprisingly, Guerra's 'minority liberalism' might have had broad popular support, implying that the alliance between the resurgent urban liberals and the popular leaders might not have been so uneasy as Knight assumed. When the liberal reform was frustrated during the violent years of 1911-13 and the alliance collapsed, the village leaders and local caciques fought themselves to the top of the power structure. In this way, I think Guerra, Knight and Tutino complement each other.

Now, as a recent discussion of Mexico's New Cultural History has shown,⁹³ this 'revolutionary state' of Mexican reality is very much alive indeed, but not in Eastern Chiapas. Also, this recent work discusses questions of nation building and legitimating centralized power structures. The history of the Revolution itself was very much a mirror of the late-nineteenth-century development. Despite the references to Emiliano Zapata and the failed revolution of the 1910s, despite also the exploitation of typical symbols from the revolutionary epoch, the current Zapatista revolt is a mirror of the situation one hundred years later. Prosaic this may sound; it confirms our task to *unlearn* indeed the impact of the Revolution on contemporary Mexico, but not a few of its characteristics, especially the role of the regions, also of the caciques, and the semi-privileged position of the *pueblo de indios*. In short, the elimination of one hypothesis – referred to here as an unlearning process – brought me to some new hypotheses, about the position of these two institutions in the State's twentieth century history.

THE TRIGGER OF 1992

At this point a more detailed discussion of some of the central characteristics of the development in Chiapas up to the crucial year of 1992 is functional. For example, what can be made of the part played by the caciques and the *pueblo de indios* in this 'region?' Similarities with the 1910s do exist. The peasant revolt of 1994 could also have followed the political breakdown of the regime – the *PRI-ista* state – and also here it was a breakdown that in itself was caused by the lack of legitimacy of the PRI's rule. The detour along the route of the Revolution does indeed confirm the need to look at the EZLN and its rebellion in the light of the Revolution. Because of a need of some crucial research long-term view of developments in Chiapas runs up against problems.⁹⁴ In fact, *pueblo* landownership continued to be the rule in some way or another and colonial township titles in Chiapas were sometimes officially re-entitled in the early republican years.

By the mid-1840s, some towns had taken advantage to entitle all their major tracts.⁹⁵ Later in the nineteenth century, however, after the Liberals issued the *desamortización* of 'communal' lands into private property, lands required to be held individually could be purchased piecemeal from impoverished Indians. The *desamortización* became an issue in that period and the impression occurs that ladino outsiders who consolidated their holdings bought the land. According to anthropologist Jan Rus, in the Maya areas of the state little – if any? – traditional *pueblo* land was alienated. This is in line with findings for other Mexican regions.⁹⁶ However, what was alienated through sale was the *terrenos baldíos* – unused lands – between the Indian *pueblos*. This means that the developments in Chiapas did not culminate in the agrarian question before the last decades of the nineteenth century. But since then, all over Mexico, including Chiapas, conflicts over land have increased dramatically because after decades of population growth the Indians faced growing shortages of land.

Cargo Communities

The presidency of General Lázaro Cárdenas saw the creation of what Rus called the *comunidad revolucionaria institucional* – let us say: the PRI Community. It was the period of the political assimilation and ‘pacification’ of the peasants into the revolutionary constellation, usually through the CNC – the Confederación Nacional Campesina or National Peasant Confederation, a PRI-linked institution that worked on a national level. Research has established the operation of such state institutions through informal networks of local and regional power. In Chiapas, this would involve cacique families; in the Maya towns, the leaders of traditional Amerindian caciques. Harvey argued that for example the CNC functioned within a power structure that made state-provided goods indispensable for community development and vice versa. The CNC had made itself essential to the allocation of resources between State and town. Eventually, this meant that state linked political brokers took over the formal and informal offices in the Maya towns, referred to as *cargos*. These brokers were bilingual and sought to bolster their positions internally by taking the responsibilities that went with the cargo system; e.g. time-consuming and expensive civil and religious offices. As Harvey concludes: ‘The new brokers could uphold ‘community tradition’ while at the same time expanding their influence as labour contractors, leaders of agrarian committees, and representatives of the CNC and the PRI. [...] The outcome was the consolidation of [this] group of bilingual, politically connected indigenous caciques whose alliances with the PRI and with ladinos enabled them to accumulate wealth and land within their communities.’⁹⁷ And all this in a time of population increase. The consequences will be clear. If we think of the municipal borders as a fence, the peasant population increased that much that it ‘ran up to it’ during the 1960s or 1970s and needed to ‘jump over it’ in search for land. All available figures indicate that by 1990 the number of peasants in Chiapas had clearly out-numbered the surface that can be fruitfully used for agricultural purposes. It could inspire us to a chilling diagnosis of imminent calamity, including political violence.⁹⁸ The subdivision of land ‘inside the fence’ affected subsistence needs severely and the peasants that ‘jumped over the fence’ migrated to areas like the Lacandón jungle or to cities like Tuxtla and San Cristóbal, or they invaded the lands of great estates. The ones that remained behind experienced an increased dependence of the cargo-officers in charge.

During most of the history of ‘500 years of struggle’ and some three hundred years of political autonomy this was nothing new. Remember, for example, how in Central Mexico – and probably in Chiapas as well – the indigenous townships were able to maintain a strong (semi-)autonomous position throughout the colonial period, with political and juridical self-government. The position of the cacique in his function as governor or any other cargo within the *pueblo* is a typical case of ‘reciprocal dominance,’⁹⁹ personalized and concrete relationships of authority and power, rooted in customary law – or sometimes written down – that entailed reciprocal obligations. Domination was understood concretely, as control over land, over labour, over the local economy, or legal courts. Although each of these authorities included the right to extract certain surpluses, like rents, dues, labour services, or the right to command obedience and loyalty from those under a jurisdiction, as Robisheaux affirms, ‘lords had always to provide protection in exchange for these rights, or their authority could be called into question.’¹⁰⁰ The legitimacy of reciprocal dominance is embodied in specific historical symbolic public forms and discourses; thus in acts as well as speech. Where legitimacy broke down – as in cases of population growth when the ‘lords’ could no longer provide a clear distribution of resources – the subjects developed a discourse of resistance based on these same historical forms and discourses, but this time expressed in rumours, in unflattering folktales and stories about the lords, in festivities like carnival, and, eventually, in open, violent rebellion. Disregard of power structures or deviant behaviour were other expressions.

Then again, it is well known that population growth could also have positive consequences for the state’s economy.¹⁰¹ Evidence suggests that it did spur economic development in the past in several regions of the world, enforcing adaptations in land use intensity and changes in the implements used. Sometimes, to cope with the problems of unemployment, industrialization would set in. And indeed, in most Chiapas communities agriculture gave way to alternative sources of income like industry and transport. Frank Cancian described this process in full detail in his latest book.¹⁰² In the 1960s Zinacantecos were corn farmers – they made *milpa*. Only the young and the poor took wages from others on a regular basis. But in the 1980s many Zinacantecos seeded no corn at all. Most men were involved in wage work all over the state (as renters on lowland cattle and corn estates, oil-industry), commerce, government jobs, and various other economic activities like trucking. In just two decades cash income and cash

expenditures had increased because fewer and fewer men were farming corn. In fact, many became dependent on wage work, some as 'proletarians' the majority as 'semi-proletarians'. A classical conclusion can be drawn: the rich got richer while many others stayed poor. Cancian labeled it 'the decline of community' and thought world-market forces had been at its root. He suggested that the impact of the expanding world capitalist system changed the rural peasant community.

Judging his own data, I think we should disagree. Indeed, the period of 'community' – the 1950s and 1960s – was characterized by close control of internal conflict by the village elite. During their period of control and afterwards, internal stratification was reproduced. Cancian acknowledged that 'the new rich are the sons of the old rich, and the new poor are the sons of the old poor.' The participation or willingness to participate in 'community government' – the *cargo-system* – was great. The civil officials in Zinacantán served three-year terms and were selected at annual political meetings attended by the important caciques of the township. They became PRI officials, controlled the distribution of *ejido* lands, and had performed as mayors before; some were schoolteachers.¹⁰³ The officials collected money for and supervised construction of public works, carried out a few ritual functions, appointed committees to organize for *fiestas* and settled disputes of any kind. In short, they could profit from their position. To reiterate, Rus points to the close relationship between local government and the revolutionary regime in Mexico City. By creating new offices to deal with labour and agrarian matters and favouring at the same time mostly young men from the communities to occupy these key positions, by the mid-1950s, 'what anthropologists were just beginning to describe as 'closed corporate communities' had in fact become 'institutionalized revolutionary communities' harnessed to the state.' Though not for long, the *cacicazgo-system* had recreated itself, and once again in close relationship with national state policies.

In Zinacantán, from the 1940s onward Mariano Hernández Zárate, a local indigenous cacique, controlled much of what happened in this respect. He controlled the redistribution of sources in the township, especially land. His influence weakened as he grew old in the 1960s and open trouble began in 1976 when one person was named PRI candidate for mayor against the will of others. Internal splits occurred, tax collection for fiestas broke down and there were fights, jailing and continuous disputes over the control of the town hall. The willingness to accept cargos decreased rapidly. Cancian acknowledged that the events may be seen 'as a struggle to fill the power vacuum left by the

demise of Mariano Hernández Zárate.’ In short, population growth had caused alternative employment possibilities and this, I think, decreased the need to accept cargoes. I suggest the ‘subordinates’ had formerly accepted to ‘please’ the cacique in exchange for access to the resources – especially the distribution of land that the cacique had controlled in the town for three decades. The ‘decline of community’ was in fact the ‘crisis of traditional community control’, a crisis in the basic unit of indigenous social organization and state control. It was the demise of personal power bonds within the community after the death of the *patrón*, which in itself had little to do with the forces of the world-market.

The diminishing power of the traditional caciques was everywhere. In about the same period Jane Collier concluded: ‘Zinacanteco ideas of cosmic order survive in the modern world because the present structure of the regional political system encourages ambitious Indians to convert wealth and expertise in handling Mexican officials into collecting Indian followers.’¹⁰⁴ Apparently, in the past decades the traditional cargo system of the Zinacanteco caciques was lost as alternative forms of employment broke the link between the control of resources and participation in ‘community’. Only, in some places, like Chamula and Chalchihuitán,¹⁰⁵ did caciques maintain their traditional position, though with violence and aggression toward deviant subordinates. This drove many inhabitants to escape cacique-power, particular into the Lacandón jungle. Or they were sent away, like the members of the protestant minorities. In fact, Protestantism could easily be seen as political protest against *caciquismo*, since Catholicism expressed loyalty to ‘community’ and the traditional cargo-system and traditional rituals presided and sponsored by the caciques. Until very recently the alliance between the PRI and local Indian elites has been highly effective. It has enabled a number of municipalities in the highlands to maintain a strong Indian identity and semi-autonomy from the national government. Anthropologist Gary Gossen affirms that these ‘side benefits of the cacique system have [in January 1994] created the apparent paradox of some Chiapas Indian communities asking the Mexican army for protection from Indian insurgents.’¹⁰⁶

Poverty

Besides such changes in economic life, intensification of agricultural resources hardly took place in Chiapas during the 1980s. First, landowners impeded the expansion of peasant agriculture on their lands.

Second, the agricultural sector was too poor. Agriculture was generally practiced by rain fed, shifting cultivation. According to recent data about one million persons occupy a little over three million hectares of land, of which only about forty percent is classified as good for agricultural use.¹⁰⁷ Though some intensification took place only one new profitable cash crop could root: coffee. This brings me to the question if peasants can create an economic *take-off* purely by themselves? Sure. It was done in several European regions, for example, in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries and without any interference from outside. But in our time the world economy had such an impact and the pace of population growth has been so high that the solution for developing a modernizing sector must include state intervention and large scale financing. The infrastructural and economic assistance for highland Chiapas was hindered by a strong lack of interest from the Mexican government and private capital. In 1988 only one tenth of the *ejidos* reported to have paved roads to their community centre. Electricity and drinking water were absent in half of the *ejido* communities. Harvey calculates that during the period 1985-89 only twenty-two percent of the *ejidatarios* and communal agriculturalists had access to a yearly credit. The number even fell in 1990 to some sixteen percent and not more than six percent of producers received credit for machinery in 1985-90.¹⁰⁸

Poverty increased during the late 1980s. Obviously, seen from a moral economy point of view (*buen gobierno*), something had to be done. The ruling elites in the indigenous parts of the country were in desperate need of government programs to support their subordinates and hold on to their legitimacy. In the late 1980s the Salinas Administration announced the National Solidarity Program PRONASOL (better known as *Solidaridad*) to 'combat rural poverty'. *Solidaridad* had a significant, though not extraordinary budget: from 547 million pesos in 1989 to 2.5 billion in 1993. There is little doubt that *Solidaridad* functioned as a political agenda to generate greater support among peasants and the poor for the government. It served its purpose for the ruling powers in Chiapas, small though its contribution was.¹⁰⁹ Most money was invested in schools and municipal funds, basically to construct assembly halls and to improve some roads.¹¹⁰ These funds were funnelled to the caciques once again, with no particular link to any type of educational, cultural, economic or social agenda. Economist Julio Moguel concludes:

The program has a clear political-clientelistic character. [...] The formation of the committees mostly has to do with political-electoral necessities rather than any specific anti-poverty requirements.¹¹¹

But it did not have any economic impact beyond comparable programs provided as early as 1982, and it would not be sufficient to allow the caciques to regain control of their clients. Besides the fact that all this counted mainly for the highlands and the area of coffee production, the Salinas Administration in fact progressed in dismantling social security for the peasants while embracing free trade. This exposed even favoured crops like coffee to falling prices. Although poverty, exploitation and anger over the Salinas Administration were not unique to the eastern areas of Chiapas, the peasants of the Lacandón jungle did have reasons to feel abandoned by the state. This brought them to realize the background of the *Solidaridad*-program.

During the 1980s, in the tropical lowlands private capital developed commercial enterprises to produce soybeans, peanuts, sorghum, tobacco, bananas, cacao and sugar in greater amounts than before. The production of meat quadrupled in just a decade. But the market for coffee collapsed. The Instituto Nacional Mexicano del Cafe INMECAFE, established in 1958, had supported the expansion of peasant and farmer cultivated coffee exports during the 1970s. With the all-over economic crisis of the late 1980s the position of this state agency declined. Its share in the market fell from about forty percent in the early 1980s to less than ten percent at the end of the decade. Privatization during the Salinas government (1988-94) undermined INMECAFE's position even further. In June 1989 the International Coffee Organization failed to agree on production quotas and the world price fell by fifty percent. In the end, as Harvey shows, both productivity and total output in the sector fell strongly between 1989 and 1993. Small producers suffered a seventy per-cent drop in income without much possibility of climbing out of their debts and poverty. We should realize that Chiapas is Mexico's principal coffee producing state: some seventy thousand of the 190 thousand coffee growers in the country live in Chiapas, and seventeen thousand alone in the Lacandón Jungle.

This last figure is remarkable and crucial for our theme. Land reforms might have brought some relief, but it is usually argued that in Chiapas the 'Revolution passed by'. For sure, local elites and the central government in Mexico City allied to pacify the rural areas by only imposing limited agrarian reforms. Even during the Cárdenas presidency (1934-40), peasants received generally marginal land of low productivity. In general, the 'Revolution' was used by the elites because land reforms

were implemented that served the interests of the landowners. For example, only *pueblos* that were willing to be inscribed in the new PRI-party institutions and corporate organizations were granted lands. The *pueblos* reshaped themselves into *comités ejidales* or *de bienes comunales* and their leaders became their official chairmen. The rural poor received very little. Around 1940, there were still 733 estates of a thousand hectares or more. These holdings incorporated more than half of the arable land destined to be redistributed among the rural poor and were still in the hands of less than three percent of the State's landowners. Of the latter, 21 owners possessed some 860 thousands hectares; while 14.6 thousand owners possessed holdings smaller than 5 hectares. In short, although the redistribution of land in the state was not absent, it certainly was far from sufficient and quite different from other rural areas in the Mexican republic.¹¹²

The government encouraged the landless peasants to colonize what was then seen as a promising agricultural frontier: the forest region of the Lacandón Selva. Already by 1970 an estimated 100,000 migrants had settled in the area. These settlers came as the losers of the agrarian struggle, affirms Mexican sociologist Luis Hernández,¹¹³ as people who had been unable to recover land from large landowners or to take over the towns of origin from the caciques. They had undertaken a real exodus, also obeying to the unspoken but clear message: 'try your luck in the jungle'. There they joined the migrants from the haciendas who had turned into cattle-producers. It could have worked well. If intensification of agricultural techniques and enterprises hardly is possible and political change to impose land reforms do not bring sufficient room to cope with population growth, migration usually offers the way out. Indeed, during most of the nineteenth century migration from the central highlands to the Mexican West and North brought considerable overall relief. And in the time under review for Chiapas, peasants migrated away from the highlands, into the tropical lowlands and into the Lacandón Selva. There, they started to clear the fields in a kind of pioneering agricultural communities. As said, it was their Promised Land, the only future landless migrants from the highlands felt they had.

But soon the jungle was filled up. The colonists became enmeshed in constant struggles, competing for space with the timber industry and even with one another. Slash and burn farming deforested the jungle and degraded its fragile soils. Then, entrance to the Promised Land was cut off as the result of two government decrees. One decree was issued to protect the Lacandón Selva from further exploitation

and destruction. The Salinas government issued both decrees. The first was intended to create an ecological haven for rainforest flora and fauna. It obstructed the younger peasants in the jungle – children of the first colonists – from finding new opportunities for agriculture near their parent’s homes. The second aimed to ‘modernize’ Mexican agriculture and abolish the *ejido*-system of collective agriculture: the reform of Article 27 was announced. In the eyes of Salinas’ technocrats, by the end of the twentieth century the *ejido* was considered an anachronism, impeding economic progress in the countryside. Here then, indeed, is an important link to world-market developments and Salinas’ claim on entering the First World. The withdrawal of credits was a deliberate choice of the Salinas’ Administration. In response, the CCRI held a secret referendum in their communities. Their basic lists of demands consisted of land, health care, education, housing, work, and, above all political liberty in the form of indigenous autonomy: ‘This is what all the Indian *campesinos* of Mexico want and until we get it we won’t stop fighting.’ Because the Article 27 had encompassed the possibility of a fruitful claim on latifundio-lands for redistribution among peasants, its modification cut off peasant expansion to the areas bordering the Lacandón Selva, where a considerable number of the latifundios in Chiapas could be found. ‘This slammed the door shut for indigenous people to survive in a legal and peaceful manner,’ Subcomandante Marcos declared. We can label this ‘the collapse of economic support for the peasants’. The Mexican State probably did not know that for the EZLN the year 1992 had been decisive. The mestizo leadership of the EZLN was told that the indigenous fighters were ready to prepare for war.¹¹⁴

The need for a solution to the problem could not have been more acute. The pressures were compounded mainly by one external and two internal factors. The drop in international coffee prices has been mentioned. Equally important was the deterioration of maize yields after decades of uncontrolled expansion into the jungle. This resulted in the reduction in slash-and-burn farming cycles from thirty to two years.¹¹⁵ On October 12, indigenous and peasant organizations organized a march through San Cristóbal. Thousands of peasants belonging to different groups pointed to 500 years of indigenous resistance. A group of peasants marched in military-like formation to the central plaza where they toppled and ritually destroyed the symbol of the Spanish conquerors, the statue of Diego de Mazariegos. At least half of the protesters belonged to the recently founded radical union Alianza Nacional Campesina Independiente Emiliano Zapata (ANCIEZ).

To many participants, this was an important psychological turning point and marked the beginning of armed struggle. Most ANCIEZ members soon joined the EZLN. The landless peasants found themselves without much future. Not that their petitions had always been answered. Some villagers from the jungle area had pressed their demand for expansion of their *ejido* for more than a decade without any quick solution.¹¹⁶ One villager stated:

But they always lied to us. They would tell us to go home and get a certificate of this or that and then come back on such-and-such a date. So we would go back on the appointed date, and they would say, 'Oh, no, El Señor isn't here, he had to leave, come back another day.' And we would come home again, thinking, Well, it couldn't be, and now we've spent our *compañeros'* money on the trip. And then the government changed Article 27, and now we can't file a claim on that land anymore, and we'll never be able to take out a loan, because the interest rates are very high, and if we don't pay our debts on time the bank can take the land we have away from us. The end of Article 27 was what made us decide we'd had enough.¹¹⁷

Salinas closed a door that always had stood open. In January 1994 the Zapatistas would demand the reparation of Article 27. They attacked the cattle producers' offices and occupied the town of Ocosingo in the centre of the latifundista-area. It was their hope to reopen the entrance to this last resort for the landless.

Due to the creation of PRI-communities in Los Altos, support for the Zapatistas could only come from towns that were not dominated by *PRI-istas* as described above. These towns were Simojovel situated to the north of Los Altos, and Venustiano Carranza, to the southeast of Los Altos, in majority an area of Tzotzil Maya, and some Chol Maya. Harvey discusses briefly the creation of corporate ownership of land – *ejidos* – in that particular area between 1940 and 1960. Coordinated movements for further more land reforms emerged in the 1960s in Venustiano Carranza and in the 1970s in Simojovel. The early leaders in the area emerged from the courses that prepared the regional delegations for the 1974 Indigenous Congress, because it was then that they began to make contact with each other and discuss strategies for land recuperation. First in 1971, then in 1976, because of the lack of response to petitions filed with the federal government, the Maya peasants began to invade private coffee plantations. Landowners reacted by forming 'counterinsurgency militia'. By 1977, the federal troops were introduced to restore order, and to stay during most of the 1980s. New groups of political activists emerged at the scene, with a policy to

promote the creation of community assemblies to claim land and labour rights. The National Coordinator Plan of Ayala, which took its name from Emiliano Zapata's 1911 land reform plan, had followers in the area since 1979. In Simojovel the number of large estates owned by outsiders was unusually high and since the early twentieth century the Amerindian population had been bounded to these landowners as peons. The Revolution meant no improvement here either because of the 750 thousand hectares legally destined to be distributed, by 1980 only 141 thousand had been granted to the poor, and about two-thirds of the pueblo's population still worked as peon for *latifundistas*.¹¹⁸ The early 1980s saw an increase in rural violence of unprecedented rate. The Central Independiente de Obreros Agrícolas y Campesinos (CIOAC) took over power in peasant representations. Their work had to be redirected to protests against the construction of a hydroelectricity dam in the region, a theme also very present in the 1990s Chilean case. Some 14,000 peasant families faced resettlement, worsening the already critical demand for land. Actions organized by CIOAC eventually stopped the project, a success that was followed by more radical proposals to expropriate thousands of hectares from the state's elite. At the same time, in Venustiano Carranza agrarian struggles led to the organization guerrilla movement, soon repressed violently by the army. Short-termed though this was, it witnessed the radicalization of the land recuperation movement. Outside the Lacandón this was the best-organized radical peasant region of Chiapas. The role of CIOAC was finally taken over by a more radical union, the Organización Campesina Emiliano Zapata (OCEZ).¹¹⁹

Anti-caciquismo opened the possibility for alternative strategies. One of these – consisting in fact of the major option – came from other indigenous groups in Latin America, in countries where similar processes of political and social change were halted by the recognition of separate, semi-autonomous indigenous enclaves. In Colombia the state re-created recently, as I see it, the system of separate *repúblicas*.¹²⁰ As Stephen recapitulates, Mexico was in the late 1980s among the first to recognize indigenous rights as formulated by Convention 169 of the International Labour Organization, and even amended its Constitution with an article declaring the Mexico was a multicultural nation, 'originally founded in its indigenous peoples', and granting full legal authority to these peoples.¹²¹ That was the early 1990s, but where, until then, the traditional caciques had tried to form a *gobierno indígena* inside the Mexican political system – all started as the local *PRI-istas* – the alternative strategy of indigenous self-rule after this amendment to

the Constitution offered new ways of government, even in a more democratic form. It implied autonomy. No wonder in 1994 the Zapatistas demanded such autonomy for the Mexican indigenous peoples and afterwards continued to strive for the recognition and also factual acceptance for the fact that Mexico is a pluri-cultural and multiethnic society. But they did so carrying heavy weaponry, because after the promotion of Patrocinio to Mexico City – to become the Secretary of *Gobernación*, the Interior – all possibilities of arranging such a program by talks were over.

Conclusion

The colonists in the Lacandón jungle had fled overpopulation or the dominant rule of the caciques in the highlands, to look for their Promised Land where a traditional way of *campesino*-life could be continued. Because the Maya regarded themselves as citizens of the Mexican State and wished to participate in the Mexican Republic according to its national standards, and following the abduction played out with the caciques and the *pueblos*, the history of Chiapas after the Revolution brings me to introduce Utopia. In addition, since the 1940s, out of bitterness about the failure of the PRI-government, mainly because the jungle was left outside most government programs, the number of migrants that were *anti-cacique* in the Lacandón area grew steadily. There was no education, few medical care, and no credit facilities. Mexico's economic and social policies were incapable of mitigating this extreme poverty. 'The Zapatista rebels,' Gossen concludes, 'are thus Indians who have believed in Mexico's public Revolutionary rhetoric, but who now feel utterly betrayed by the nation's revised priorities.'¹²² Accordingly, caciques and their caciquismo in Los Altos, within or without a *pueblo* structure, were identified as a part of the Mexican State.

NEW COMMUNITIES

Modern aspects were important triggering factors for change in the Lacandón. Overpopulation haunted the Amerindian migrants also in the forests of Eastern Chiapas. It was a general problem. Already in 1992, overpopulation hung over the country and caused visions of impending doom. Peasants all over were inspired by the 1994 uprising to seize more farmland than ever before. Perhaps as much as ninety thousand hectares were occupied after the seizure of San Cristóbal. The squatters have infuriated the cattle-ranchers, who in turn have threatened to throw the squatters off their land if the government would fail to support them. And they did. Around twenty thousand landless Tzotziles live in San Cristóbal. Most of them were sent away from San Juan Chamula after embracing Protestantism. (But not all Chamulas in San Cristóbal are Protestants.) Conflicts still run high, erupting now and then in a gun battles and killings. This can only work if population growth can be slowed down and collective actions be improved.

Utopia

In the West we should be careful to join those who think that people in the South should be forced to restrict their family size. After all, the increase of the African, Asian and Latin American population during the past decades has only been a *restoration* of the balance, which was disturbed earlier on. Previously, about 1650, the share of Asia and Africa, for instance, was some eighty percent of the world population. Then the balance was lost because of rapid growth in Europe that coincided with industrialization there. Even today, despite the recent growth figures, the combined share of Asia and Africa is still below the 1650 level: seventy percent. The point to make here is that industrial development in Europe can be linked to increased security, education and health care. This has stimulated people *voluntary* to reduce the birth rate. Economist Amartya Sen stated recently: 'There can be little doubt that economic and social development, in general, has been

associated with major reductions in birth rates and the emergence of smaller families as the norm.¹²³ In short, increasing security, education and health care should halt population growth. This is precisely what the Zapatistas demanded. But, of course, it will be a long-term remedy. No doubt, population will double again if any reforms could begin to affect the reproductive behaviour of the people. Another way out is change in culture; mentality as it were.

Survival in such difficult surroundings like a subtropical forest with a tendency to overpopulation needs a lot of utopian vision. The Lacandón forest is presently divided into some six-sub regions. Most important for the Zapatista population were the western valleys of Las Cañadas de Ocosingo – populated by Tzeltal and Chol Maya – and Las Cañadas de Las Margaritas – a Tojolabal Maya area. During the 1970s, these of colonists organized themselves in one peasant union. If I talk about the ‘Lacandón rebels’, I basically mean the immigrants of both Las Cañadas. Belgian historian Jan de Vos wrote a multi volume history of forest exploitation since the Spanish conquest.¹²⁴ Of the six sub regions, only one could keep its particular forest character: the Reserva de Montes Azules. By 1902, the forest was divided into less than a dozen possessions, all by owners who wished to produce timber, the Green Gold of the time. The near slavery labour system here was harsh.¹²⁵

The labourers on the premises were the first colonists of the Lacandón to settle there permanently, mainly around Ocosingo. Later on, during the mid-1970s migrants from Los Altos, who moved basically to the Las Cañadas de Las Margaritas, joined them. During the same period, Tzeltales from Los Altos moved into the Northern Lacandón. Also Tzotziles joined, pushed out from Chamula, bringing with them Protestantism and some political experience of fighting caciques. During the 1980s even more colonists sought refuge from repression in Los Altos. At the time, members of opposition groups were expelled massively from highland towns to San Cristóbal and the Lacandón. They were welcome, for by official decrees in 1957 and 1961 the jungle was declared open for colonization. Even landless Amerindians from Oaxaca and Veracruz settled there, although in 1972, in an attempt to stop the colonists from penetrating too much into the limber areas, the government had issued a decree declaring a part of the forest free from colonization. This area became known as the Comunidad Lacandona, supposedly owned by 66 families of traditional Maya Lacandones, followed by the foundation of the Montes Azules National Park. Almost ten thousand colonists had to move to other parts of the

forests. According to writer Carlos Montemayor, the displaced of Las Cañadas recall this procedure as the germination of resistance.¹²⁶

In his address to the Conference of Mexican and North American Historians in Mexico City, autumn 1994, Rus made a perceptive observation about the influence of the 'new communities' in Chiapas; the 'new communities' being founded by migrants – economic and political refugees – in the jungle areas as well as in the major cities and *ladino* towns of Chiapas. These migrants have acquired their new status without having had to forego their native identities (e.g. languages). Traditional caciques had no influence on these groups and were even looked upon as state-linked oppressors. As time has gone on, Rus affirmed, a pan-Maya ethnicity seems to have been adopted, as the basis of higher levels of organization and opposition to the *PRI-istas*. After a few decades every traditional community has former members who live in the 'new communities' at the edge of the cities and in the jungle, with the result that there is probably not a family in the highlands that does not have relatives participating in 'new' organizations. Most of these people are in contact with each other, exchanging information and ideas. In fact, because most traditional communities are conflict ridden – fraught, as indicated before, with factionalism in which parties contend for the power to designate who belongs to the community and what are its traditions and customs – the political prospects before the 'new communities' sound more promising. Furthermore, Gossen thought that the grassroots support for the Zapatistas derives, in part, from the great concentration of displaced individuals: 'Many of them have nothing to lose, and perhaps something to gain, through political activism.' And Rus believed that it seemed likely that the more open, democratic nature of the new communities is eventually to flow back and change the social structures of the traditional communities as well. In fact, 'many members of these same supposedly 'loyalist', 'traditional' communities also expressed admiration for the Zapatistas, thrilling to their victories over the 'kaxlanetik', or *Ladinos*.¹²⁷

Influential Outsiders

In both the Las Cañadas, three groups had been strengthening or, indeed, constituting the character of the Maya colonists. First, liberation lay-deacons and fieldworkers had entered the lowland jungle on initiative of Bishop Samuel Ruiz García of San Cristóbal. From the late 1960s onwards the Bishop was one of the principle liberation theologians of Mexico, indeed of Latin America. In fact, in putting the tenets of the Medellín Conference

of 1968 to work he was one of their leaders right from the beginning. His work is characterized by preaching a radical gospel in favour of the indigenous poor. Like the indigenous colonists, the Bishop saw the Lacandón forests as their promised land. He commissioned a translation of the *Book of Exodus* into Tzeltal. In October 1974 he had organized an Indigenous Congress in San Cristóbal to commemorate the 500th anniversary of the birth of Fray Bartolomé de Las Casas. The 1230 Maya delegates representing 327 communities directed their agrarian and political demands against the government – considered corrupt and arbitrary – and refused co-optation by the PRI. Since then, a network of lay preachers worked among the pioneers in the jungle to work out catholic liberation and support the poor. The message was that only radical egalitarianism could lead to ‘salvation’. The lay deacons hoped to create a society free of what they call the *social sin* of Mexico’s unequal, in-egalitarian capitalist society. Important was that in preparation for the Congress, the diocese had set up an educational program in the villages, including courses in agrarian law, history, and economics. These courses offered the first political schooling to community leaders in the twentieth century. Later on, the lay preachers became more radical and went even beyond the Bishop’s policies to revolutionarize the peasants’ ideology. Nevertheless, the church remained the protective umbrella for indigenous groups, giving legitimacy to their demands for land and for the protection of human rights. A further rift between the state government and Bishop Ruiz developed in the years shortly before the Zapatista uprising, when the military intensified their repression. The Bishop had in fact set up a human rights office that had performed an essential task in defending indigenous people.

But the Roman Catholics were not the only religious force. Presbyterians and Evangelicals formed the majority of the Protestant infiltration of the new lands. At the time of the revolt, the Las Cañadas of Las Margaritas had a quarter of its population belonging to Protestant churches. Like Liberation theologians in the Roman Catholic Church, the Protestants opened their doors for active participation of women. In addition, as a religion of ‘the Word’ they favoured education. In line with the major slogan of 1974 Indigenous Congress – Planting and Harvesting the Word/*Sembrar y Cosechar la Palabra* – it was an almost revolutionary doctrine that was preached here. The Tzeltal translation of the Bible spoke persistently of ‘liberty’, ‘liberation’, and ‘stand up’.

Second came the Maoists of *Política Popular*, (PP, People’s Politics), on the initiative of Mexico City University professor of economics Adolfo Orive Berlinguer, but invited, in a way, by Bishop Samuel Ruíz who had met the activists in Torreón (Coahuila, Northern Mexico) in

1976.¹²⁸ These men and women had also worked in Mexico City, and some had even been invited to go to North Korea for guerrilla-warfare training,¹²⁹ although it should be stressed that from the mid-seventies onwards the Mexican Maoists did not promote armed struggle any longer.¹³⁰ These political field-workers spend the stretch to 1984 organizing the colonists' communities to win bureaucratic battles for land, press for agricultural credits, subsidies, and education. In vain, the Lacandón became overpopulated without much relief of the poverty. Some communities sent the Maoists away during the mid-1980s (although they returned within a few years), because they had felt that a part of the Maoist-bred leadership in their own ranks had become too close to the Mexican bureaucracy, even negotiating behind their backs or 'selling them out'. Other communities have had continuous contact with Orive since the late 1970s. Anyway, by the mid-1980s the Maoists had succeeded in the reorganization of local decision-making. They had set up a system for decision-making that included every voice of the community, including that of children. This is what is meant by 'democracy' in the Zapatista declarations. Small assemblies – *asambleas chicas* – consisting of some five to ten leaders from the Maoist vanguard worked out proposals. This gives me the impression that some were 'more equal' than others: the Maoists had started to guide the peasants. Otherwise, decisions could take weeks or months of debate. In short, free from manipulation by CNC as well as by the PRI itself and its INI (Instituto Nacional Indigenista), the Maoists had created a distinctive political mentality among the people of the Selva Lacandona. And they had built up a network of information exchange at the grassroots level all over the Lacandón area.

Both groups of Maoists and liberation lay-deacons had formed a peasant union, called the Unión de Uniones, UU, to coordinate their socio-political struggle. It was the first and largest independent peasant organization in Chiapas, writes Harvey, 'representing 12,000 mainly indigenous families from 180 communities in eleven municipalities.' In 1980, the UU had also a foothold in and around Los Altos, in San Cristóbal, Larráinzar, Huitiupán, Yajalón, and Comitán, as well as in Ocosingo, Altamirano, and Las Margaritas. From 1977, Orive himself had lived and worked in the northern towns of Chiapas' UU strongholds for a few years. But in due course the union split several times. One fraction saw their primary demand as land. This fraction was dominated by the lay-preachers and supported by the Church. They were utterly distrustful of the government and pleaded for the most radical road to 'salvation'. The other main fraction saw that, given the rate of increase

of the population, land alone would not solve the problems, but marketing and credit mechanisms as well as skilful negotiations with the government might do so. The Maoists, leading this fraction, supposed that precisely such reformist actions could bring 'salvation' and reorganized their members into the Asociación Rural de Interés Colectivo, ARIC.¹³¹ The UU later split once again because of the issue of executing violent resistance or not. Guillermoprieto thinks the most radical group, opting for armed struggle in 1989, incorporated about sixty percent of the population in the area.¹³²

It is good to look at the decision-making structure of the local communities in Las Cañadas, above all how it formally should work. There are few reliable reports about it, but in interviews repeatedly the same arrangement is discussed. The communities form an assembly of all their members. They elect representatives for the Autonomous Municipal Council, which govern the municipality during the mandate of a year or two. One municipality consists of a few tens of communities. The Council arranges for questions of coexistence and cooperation between the communities. The representatives can be removed if the community wishes to do so. This Council has at best a very small budget and its members are not paid. They are supported financially and with labour by the communities they represent. A few years after the Revolt, some thirty autonomous municipalities were constituted.¹³³ However, the basic device of the councils was consensus, which meant a slow process of decision-making, but also one open to informal leadership and the creation of new power structures. From the initial years of colonization, in some communities Maya lay-priests called *tu'uncles* filled the power vacuum and took the lead in organizing local councils.¹³⁴ However, the indigenous leaders soon realized that peaceful communication with the state governor was very difficult. Peasant organizations all over Chiapas suffered from heavy repressions. State police and members of the CNC were involved in numerous attacks on these organizations. Demonstrations organized by radical unions, like the OCEZ or the CIOAC, were violently broken up. Some leaders disappeared, others were murdered. Or were shot during demonstrations. Significantly, in July 1991 a protest march by 300 Indians from the Lacandón jungle was broken up by the police in Palenque, using clubs and tear gas grenades; the peasants' leaders were arrested.

In addition, in the colonists' communities of the Lacandón, it was the *Solidaridad* that fuelled anti-caciquismo even further. Subcomandante Marcos expressed their feelings most clearly:

Pronasol has the mentality of a son of a bitch that sees the indigenous people as children, as ill-bred children. Instead of giving his kids a spanking like they deserve, the father – who is so understanding and generous – is going to give them candy after getting them to promise not to misbehave again, right? A dictator, then, a dictatorship.¹³⁵

The *Solidaridad*-program was conceived as humiliation and failed to curtail poverty in Chiapas. Of the State's three million people, in 1992, two-thirds were registered as without education; eighty percent earned way below the official minimum salary. Half of the population lived in houses with mud floors and no drainage, toilets or water. About thirty percent of the people younger than fifteen years could not read and write. Two thirds of the population lived in very small communities with less than five thousand inhabitants.

By the end of the 1980s a third group that had been strengthening or constituting the utopian character of the communities had done its work. This group consisted of guerrilla fighters that formed the leadership of the EZLN. Some most likely were veterans of the 1970s guerrilla rebellion in the state of Guerrero, or had worked in the slums of northern cities. Among them was Subcomandante Marcos, its eventual leader, who is thought to have worked several years in Nicaragua as well.¹³⁶ They were and remained independent of UU and ARIC and included a small group of twelve political activists from the central Mexican highlands – or five, as Subcomandante Marcos repeatedly stated. From 1983 on, they sought a new-armed revolution and thought that the Promised Land of the Lacandón colonists was the perfect place to begin. The bureaucratic battles had not brought too many victories. The new radicals convinced the peasants that they never would: 'More than anything, it's like an aspirin; when your head aches, it doesn't cure the illness, but only relieves the pain for a little while.'¹³⁷ They offered to train the peasants in armed struggle and waited in the Lacandón Mountains near the Guatemalan border. In this initial period, legitimization of an armed struggle came out of violent attacks by CNC groups in Las Cañadas and Simojovel. Hence, the EZLN claim to be born out of a self-defence network. The guerrilla fighters waited in the mountainous area of the cloud forest until the indigenous leaders would express their willingness to go to war. They had to wait almost a full decade, because during most of the 1970s and 1980s the peasants fought for a better future with the help of the Church and Maoists' outsiders. The EZLN really had been quite traditionally Marxist in origin. Most of them were influenced by the ideas of Ché Guevara but their strategy failed and the leaders decided to change profoundly. Above

all, the ancient principle of a strong leadership was regularly but sometimes bitterly given up.

In the beginning, few peasants from the Lacandón showed up but during the late 1980s almost all communities had boys and young men, even women sent to the Zapatista training camps. Above all, the communities were not willing to accept their leadership and they learned – as they say – to ‘lead by obeying’ to the Maya councils that had been formed in the communities. Harvey paraphrases Marcos’ words of learning the Amerindians’ demands and wishes by listening to their stories and getting to know their specific historical memory. Above all, Marcos learned the political importance of patience. ‘Learning how to wait was, for Marcos, the most difficult exercise, but one that was now imposed by the indigenous leaders and their method of organization.’ Marcos stated several times that the ideas of the non-Indian guerrillas were turned over by the Amerindians’ conceptuality. He said: ‘We are the product of a hybrid, of a confrontation, of a collision in which, luckily I believe, we lost.’ However, this setback facilitated growth, from 80 to 1300 members in 1989 alone. And after 1992, after the 500 Years of Struggle Movement – in the wake of the Columbus Memorials – and the reforms of the Salinas Administration – a mass of youngsters joined the guerrillas. This was especially because the revision of Article 27 of the Constitution early 1992 made a future in cloud forest more difficult and expansion impossible. The government’s measures were aimed to ‘modernize’ Mexican agriculture and abolish the system of collective agriculture (*ejidos*) because in the eyes of Salinas’ technocrats, by the end of the twentieth century the *ejido* was considered an anachronism, impeding economic progress in the countryside. The youngsters joined the men and women of the most radical UU split. Only about forty percent of the ARIC leftover and the tiny Protestant groups refused to vote for war.¹³⁸ The CCRIS were set up to govern the communities. According to language groups present in the Lacandón – Tzotzil, Tzeltal, Chol, Tojolabal – the local Committees began electing four regional Committees, and indirectly the General Command. And the Subcomandante kept on declaring that was under command of this General CCRI.

This shows that the EZLN was not just an army. Several of the EZLN’s young soldiers made declarations similar to the one given by Captain Elisa:

When I lived in my house, with my family, I did not know anything. I did not know how to read, I did not go to school. But when I joined the EZLN, I learned how to read, I learned all of the Spanish I know, how to write, and I was trained for war.¹³⁹

Another woman stated to have been recruited while working on the land in the forest: 'And then study advisors came and we understood and advanced.' The Zapatista leadership offered education, especially in language, history and politics. Sometimes, entire communities participated and went into hiding to be educated and trained. Bases were set up in isolated areas all over the Lacandón. The type of education offered to them is not known, but deducing from the EZLN declarations and 'laws', it must have had a radical, utopian yet very Mexican and nationalistic character. In the end, all soldiers expressed to have learned that they had to struggle for the so-called Ten Points: land, work, housing, health-care, bread, dignified education, freedom, democracy, peace, and justice.

Tensions Ran High

Also by the end of the 1980s, two other measures had radicalized peasants' attitudes already. As early as 1972, President Luis Echeverría had issued a decree granting seventy Lacandón Maya families control over a large track of the cloud forest. It was meant to be an ecological measure in favour of preserving the jungle. But it deprived the first settlers of further room for expansion. Then, some fifteen years later, the Salinas Administration had refrain from stepping in with subsidized prices for coffee after the collapse of world prices in 1989. This was a blow to the small coffee farmers in Chiapas, who produce a third of the country's coffee exports. In the period 1989-93 productivity and total output had fallen by about thirty percent, but small producers suffered a drop in income to about seventy percent. Of course, global developments, NAFTA, and neo-liberal policies were behind this, but for the peasants it was just more evidence of *mal gobierno*. After decades of support, they felt betrayed. A majority of the communities in the Las Cañadas secretly began preparing violent resistance. But also, indeed, the Revolution itself was betrayed. The Article 27 reform, to free *ejidos* for sale, brought above all confirmation for this: a general feeling of chaos was coming up. Surely, the utopian answers to this situation make the Lacandón communities unique to the Mexican context. Revolutionary education appealed to the people's desperation with the glorious past of Aztecs and Maya, a terrible present in a forgotten corner of Mexico and a non-existent future. At the same time, it brought them to anger at recent defeats and humiliation in Mexico City.

The struggle for land developed into a political issue. In their first *Declaration from the Lacandón Jungle*, dated December 1993, the

Zapatistas stated that the armed attack was above all a desperate way of making them heard.¹⁴⁰ The group that had seized San Cristóbal, the major city in Los Altos, full of tourists, reporters, NGO's and indigenous opposition groups, made it clear that the major aim of the EZLN army was not to occupy the city for long, but to gain extensive attention inside and outside Mexico by using all these people present in the city for the dissemination of their complaints. They quoted Article 39 of the Mexican Constitution: 'The people have, at all times, the inalienable right to alter or modify their form of government.' Remarkably, this statement goes back to John Locke's philosophy on government, dated 1690, written after the English Revolution of 1688.¹⁴¹ The Subcomandante Marcos, stated that armed struggle only came 'after trying everything else'. Patrocinio's terror was a major factor. They could get a hearing with the appropriate authorities in the national capital, a stop to the repression remained within reach, but with Patrocinio presiding over the Interior this hope was lost.

Remarkably, all these political activists could develop their projects in the Lacandón area because the Mexican government let them free to do so. State governors seemed to have had an agreement with the Guatemalan guerrilla forces – which found refuge for themselves and their families on the Mexican side of the border – not to intervene with each other's interests.¹⁴² The idea must have been that the Mexican army would stay out of the jungle if the guerrillas did not organize a Mexican guerrilla movement. The possibility of any operation of the Mexican army was severely restricted by the NAFTA negotiations: the Mexican government wanted to keep up the image of tranquillity within its borders. The army, of course, kept remote control, and left in practice political control in the area to the Guatemalan guerrilla leaders. But in the years before the Zapatista uprising, the Mexican government began to press the refugees to return to Guatemala. Perhaps knowledge of the EZLN training camps lay at the root of this change in attitude. Anyway, after New Years Day 1994 Patrocinio declared that he felt betrayed. He was ready to send the army to the jungle area to kick the guerrillas out. President Salinas stopped him, no doubt because of fear of national and international condemnation. To avoid confusion, it should be stressed that I believe the Guatemalan guerrilla leaders had nothing to do with the EZLN uprising.

Conclusion

Tales of mobilization and repression as touched upon in this chapter will be part of any Zapatista 'inner voice', as will be the account of violence that intensified all over Chiapas in the years following the uprising. A well-known case are the Acteal killings of December 22, 1997, probably executed by a paramilitary group with links to the PRI, when, in a town near San Pedro Chenalhó, some forty-five unarmed people were assassinated. For the sake of causes and consequences, it should be noted that the paramilitaries in Chiapas are identified as young men frustrated by landlessness and unemployment, precisely as their peers from the Lacandón.¹⁴³ In the last quarter of 1997 alone, over 7,000 people fled their homes due to military and paramilitary violence. The right to 'live and participate as equal and valued members of a political community,' as Harvey explained the peasants' motives to continue their struggle despite such great suffering,¹⁴⁴ will be powerfully recognizable in any 'inner' vision of the movement itself. And if we follow Marcos' remarks about his 'defeat', a specific Amerindian cosmology should be recognized as the 'true' Zapatista inner voice.

LACANDÓN MAYA THOUGHT

Whether Maoists or liberated Catholics, we should not forget that indigenous militancy came on the heels of decades of varied experiments in Latin America. Reacting to overpopulation and commercial expansion into the rural areas, indigenous peoples tried to reformulate their role in society. To maintain traditional way of lives or even to control the pace of change Indians started to organize themselves as *indígenas* during the 1970s. This had not been done before. Critical also in this development of international solidarity were the 1992 commemorations of Columbus' landing in the Americas. The 500 Years of Resistance Movement (1992) took the vindication of demands from the hands of urban intellectuals into their own.¹⁴⁵ Increasingly, during the past decade the Maya speaking population of Chiapas and Guatemala started to call themselves *maya*. In Chiapas in 1988, for example, I did not run across many locals who claimed to be *maya*. But this was changed fundamentally in 1994. To call yourself Maya had become a political statement. Revolutionary education certainly appealed to the people's desperation with a glorious past, a terrible present and a non-existent future, to anger at recent defeats and humiliation, and to a utopist desire of recovering, as I see it, the lost *república de indios* of the Spanish period. Like the Colombian Indians did. In fact, the Zapatistas constantly talked about *pueblos indios* or *pueblos indígenas*, not *comunidades indígenas*, as the Government officials. Apparently, at this point we touch upon a major discourse discrepancy.

Ethnic Movement

It is time to return to some 'essentialist' language. The persistence of Maya groups in maintaining themselves in the contemporary world as a distinct ethnic group is beyond question. Their specific culture, including language, a few myths, and the sacred Earth, has survived until our time.¹⁴⁶ Large groups of Maya still believe strongly in the fate

of predictable, astrological cycles which were once designed by their Classic or even pre-Classic ancestors. These cycles typically consist of twenty days (names), thirteen 'months' (numbers), 260 days (20 x 13), a year (365 days), 52 years, 260 years and much more. These figures indicate the return of events once in every 260 days, 52 or 260 years. The idea is everything that *is*, once *was*, but will also *return* sometime. According to the calendrical cycles of the classic Maya – the so-called *Short Count* of 260 years – the years 1992-93 must have belonged to a period of transition from chaos to a new order. According to their calculations, one of the main cycles seems to have ended on December 24, 1993. To the religious Maya members of the Zapatistas it must have been all too clear: the decision to go to war at precisely that time had the support of the Gods. In fact, more signals were thought to be in their favour: the successful protests against Colombian festivities all over America and the Nobel Peace Prize was awarded to Guatemalan Indian Rigoberta Menchú. However, I wonder if Maya religion is still that alive.¹⁴⁷ All towns in indigenous Mexico have a Catholic chapel of some kind, although priests do not read mass often there, not even a 'liberated' one. Protestant missionaries came instead. Whole communities split into factions, Born Again Christians in one camp, Pentecostals in another, and Catholics – including 'traditional' Maya – off to the side. In fact, the chief obstacle that the Zapatistas face in organizing the peasants will be uniting men and women who disagree about God. Here the utopian stance could blind their leaders for a more plural, realistic political bond between repressed groups in the countryside. A good start was to limited themselves to ten demands only in 1994: land, jobs, housing, food, health-care, and independence, freedom, democracy, justice, and peace. The EZLN demanded *respect* for the Amerindian peoples. Instead of focusing on remnants of Maya religion, the Zapatistas' inner voices might perhaps foremost be found at this point.

The Lacandón Selva, the Zapatista habitat, is indeed at the heart of 'Maya-land'. Anthropologist Barbara Tedlock believed that the uprooting and dispersion during the Cold War may lead to a cultural and political regrouping into an ethnic nation that transcends the boundaries of established nation-states like Mexico and Guatemala.¹⁴⁸ No wonder a fusion took place in the Lacandón area where Mexican Tzeltals, Tzotziles, Tojolabals, Zoques and Mams, and Guatemalan Cakchiquel, Tzutuhil, Kekchi and Quiché refugees try to make a living. In the Maya Diaspora to the jungle they found themselves in resistance to Western domination and control. Can Maya culture survive time,

that is, the pressures of the twentieth century? Gossen seems not so certain. At some points, the Maya could easily make changes and adaptations, he shows, but with other aspects of modernization they could not but change their cultural habits significantly. New artefacts are articulated with modern narratives (think of Protestantism), but at the same time, new groups like the Tzotzils living in Diasporas could reinvent artefacts and persist ‘ancient’, or ‘old’ ways of living in a thoroughly new historicized landscape. Think of the communiqué released by the CCRI, on February 27, 1994, I quoted in the opening chapter above. It revealed the possibility of an attempt to restore the sacred order by the faceless warriors. This, no doubt, is as ‘ancient’ as we could wish. Gossen has argued that much of the traditional Maya characteristics survived in this area. *These characteristics*, he thinks, *must not be sought in particular variants of Maya cultural identity, but, in stead, in general principles of values and conduct that all might share*, be they Tzotziles, Tzeltales, Tojolabals or Zoques.¹⁴⁹ This key sentence has enough magnitude to be printed in italics. Values and conduct that all may share include, I think, following *caciques*, living in *pueblos*, preferring the Maya language, and believing in some occurrences of cyclical time, including prophecy and divination. The faceless warriors would be included.

At first the ‘indigenous’ character of the Zapatistas was not made too explicit in the EZLN’s proclamations, but the combatants themselves were quite conscious of it. On the first day of the revolt one of them declared to a journalist: ‘Don’t forget this: this is an ethnic movement.’¹⁵⁰ In fact, the new, Maya members had changed the character of Marcos’ original EZLN. The EZLN’s white leaders had to adjust their vision. The Tzeltales, Tzotziles, Tojolabales and Mames did not explain their struggle in terms of ‘bourgeois and proletarians’ but of ‘wrong and right’. And this in a particular fashion. The Tzotzil Maya of Chamula, for example, regard themselves as the only ‘true’ people on earth, *batz’i viniketik*. They speak the only ‘true’ language, *batz’i k’op*. It is a narrative of Maya self-confidence and self-affirmation that fascinate and surprise visitors and researchers who come to Southern Mexico and Guatemala. But Gossen points to a confusing paradox. The Maya have a pantheon of white-skinned deities and black-skinned demons, and the leaders of their revolts – 1712, 1869, 1999 – were almost every time Whites. It is as if in these distinct situations the White man could be of service to the Indians. Gossen argues that in Maya cosmology, the Whites belong to some past time. In cyclical time, different ‘creations’ preceded the present one, but each of them inferior. ‘Cyclical time reckoning allows

for selective accommodation and comprehension of new actors and new ideas by placing them morally in past time.’ During his fieldwork, Gossen himself was historicized this way – being a sexless predecessor – and where arrangements must be made with the world of those historicized Whites, it is pure intelligence to make use of the assistance of one of them.¹⁵¹ Especially when the world of the Whites, and their shattered time, previously destroyed by the gods, comes frightening close to the ‘centre of the Earth’ the Maya live on.

Another example of this logic was broadcasted widely around the world. The Kogi in the Sierra de Santa Marta Mountains of Northern Colombia emerged from their self-chosen seclusion to issue a warning to the White man. Disturbing changes they observed in the environment around their habitat caused them to plead for a different attitude towards nature. In the late 1980s, they invited a BBC reporter to come to the mountain and record their message on film to be relayed to the White man’s world.¹⁵² They stated that the White Man should stop the mistreatment of the earth or life as we know it will come to an end. The Kogi see the mountains they inhabit as the centre of the world, and at the same time as the ‘present’. The world around the mountain is past and future taken together. All time, they seem to think, comes out of *aluna*, the memory of the past and the potential for the future. In a way, *aluna* is an inner world of thought. The Mother of all life, the Earth, came out of *aluna*, as did the Kogi. Instructions from this inner world come through the *mamas*, the shamans. The Kogi call themselves ‘the Elder brothers’, the guardians of life on Earth, who have to shield the Mother from being damaged, for example by the activity of the ‘younger brother’, the White man. These actions, they fear, threaten the harmony of the world. The White man has made the Mother ill, anyway, because the snow has vanished from the mountain and the rivers run dry. The White man has sold the clouds, taken petrol, and made Mother vomit. If their mountain was ill, so must be the entire world.

The Face

But why are the Zapatista warriors *faceless*? Anthropologist Munro Edmonson, known for his editions of two of the most important indigenous documents on the Mayan faith (the *Popol Vuh* and the *Book of Chilam Balam of Chumayel*), writes that the Maya see the face as one’s visible self.¹⁵³ It is not only one’s physiognomy and costume but the behaviour one presents to the world. It is the most important

projection of one's ego, and must be carefully protected from insult, criticism, and ridicule. To destroy the enemy is to destroy his face; classical Maya art is known for its destroyed faces, the literal defacement of the portraits of deified rulers at the ending of a dynasty. Because appearance and speech are the external manifestations of the soul, the face is strongly linked to the mouth. The prominence of masks and disguises in Mayan ritual, Edmonson continues, and the rigid formalization of speech militates against the easy assumption that things are what they seem. Faceless and masked men are not only shielded against insult and ridicule or, indeed, against violent assaults, by their masks, they can also act as men ritually transformed into sacrosanct warriors. Then, these warriors are men sacrificed to God and the Saints; the spiritual powers who command over life and death, the very existence of human families and the rebirth of society. The sacrifice of the warriors is at the very centre of Maya belief. In ancient Maya language, sacrifice is not summed up in a unitary word, Edmonson concludes, because it is the point of nothingness, the point at which the 0 of death equals the 1 of life.

Man, the Maya appear to believe, cannot deal with the opaque nature of human access to reality.¹⁵⁴ It is the human condition, that in the great scheme of things, people are never to have easy admission to the 'true scheme'. Man can merely respond to an approximation of reality. The Maya believe that there is always something beyond and outside this. Therefore, for us, it is vital to realize, that the notion of chance happenings or accidents is foreign to them. Despite utopian education on combating 'social sin', on Maoist education and guerrilla tactics, the Lacandona immigrants likewise know that anything that occurs is potentially subject to interpretation in spiritual terms. It is as if they are looking for the world through a steamy window. This brings me to the understanding, that I may read some EZLN expressions differently from my Western mode of understanding. For example, the EZLN is not just based in the cloud forest; it is above all based, like the Kogi, on a *mountain*. Soldiers repeatedly stated: 'The mountain protects us, the mountain has been our *compañera* for many years.'¹⁵⁵ A mountain in the Amerindian vision is not just a strategic place to hide away from the helicopters of Mexico's federal army. On the contrary, most soldiers interviewed by the press continuously confirmed that on the mountain they could not be spotted. According to military information coming from their opponents, this is not true; the Mexican army showed photographs of their camps on the mountain. But the Amerindians insist. The mountain, a female creature, is like their mother

in childhood. She is the source of all life, she is even the gate to 'heaven'. In her womb, they will never be defeated. In the mountain itself, men live on.

Then there is the figure of Emiliano Zapata, introduced by the EZLN white leadership. Had this symbol of the Mexican Revolution of 1910 any appeal to the Amerindian members of the Lacandona movement? Anthropologist Evon Zogt was surprised to know that no small chapel in the cloud forest, containing an image of a new *santo* in the form of Zapata called San Emiliano, had been found.¹⁵⁶ In the sources, I only found one personal reference: soldier Ángel, a Tzeltal Maya, was proud to have read the Spanish translation of John Womack's book on Zapata. It took him three years of struggle to finish it.¹⁵⁷ Certainly, for the non-Indian commanders, Zapata might be viewed as a kind of apotheosized embodiment of twentieth-century Revolutionary ideology, but not for the Amerindians. The mestizo leadership might have carried Womack's book around and might have used the symbol of Zapata to disqualify the Presidential Administration in Mexico City, where every new president presents himself as a new phase of the Revolution. The Zapatistas could deny this by turning to the same symbols. In general, I guess that for the Lacandona migrants this symbol did not work at all. Where Marcos pointed to Mexico's historical heritage, rarely did I come across references to Zapata as the revolutionary hero of ordinary rebel fighters.

There is an exception. In another official statement of the CCRI-CG of April 10, 1994, Zapata did appear as a major deified warrior of the EZLN. In fact, he has materialized as the source of life itself:

Votán Zapata, light from afar, came and was born here in our land. Votán Zapata, always among our people, timid fire who lived 501 years in our death. Faceless man, tender light that gives us shelter. Name without name, Votán Zapata watched in Miguel, walked in José María, was Vincente, was named Benito, flew in bird, mounted in Emiliano, shouted in Francisco, visited Pedro. He is and is not all in us. He is one and many. None and all. Living, he comes. Without name he is named, face without face, all and none, one and many, living dead. Tapacamino bird, always in front of us. Votán, guardian and heart of the people. He is the sky in the mountains.¹⁵⁸

Of course, this is not the hero of the 1910s at all. Additionally, we also learn that this Votán Zapata came to 'our mountain' to be re-born. It was Votán Zapata who took the face of those without faces. Because of his presence, the CCRI-CG explained, unjust peace was *transformed* into

a just war: death that is born. This is order reborn out of chaos, a classic theme of Mesoamerican culture indeed.¹⁵⁹

To me, the name of Votán is known from the work of Fray Ramón de Ordoñez y Aguilar. In 1773, this canon of the cathedral town of Ciudad Real in Chiapas (San Cristóbal) went to visit Palenque. The ruins had so much impact on him that he decided to write a book on the place and its history. He claimed to have received the material from a book, written by Votán himself in Quiché. Votán was said to have travelled from the land of Chivim, Ordoñez thought, somewhere in the Near East, to the Americas and to have settled in Palenque. He is said to have submitted the Amerindians and founded the cities of which the present ruins are its remnants. According to Ordoñez, Chivim must have been the city of Tripoli in Phoenicia. Curiously, Votán's name stuck to the Amerindians of the area; or must indeed have been known there before and inspired Ordoñez to write his odd narrative. Now I am obliged to take another detour because on Votán much more can be said, in great detail and speculative though this is. I think the Quiché-link here is of considerable substance. Despite its many paragraphs and great detail, the significance for the Zapatista interpretation will soon be clear.

One way of introducing this link is by Dennis Tedlock's *Breath on the Mirror* (1993). In this imaginative literary and anthropological excursion into the mental universe of the modern Quiché Maya,¹⁶⁰ Tedlock writes that when First Dawn came after the long darkness and present time began, all the animals climbed *Jakawitz* Open Mountain of Creation and greeted the new light with cries. The first sound came from a parrot, and then pumas and jaguars were heard. All the earth was soggy but it got drier as soon as the Sun sent his first beams. It was the day Seven Marksman, *Wuqub' Junajpu*. The vigesimal beings – ten fingers, ten toes: *winaq* in Quiché, humans – knelt down. The Sun was a burning person, all in flames and very hot indeed. Later on, the vigesimal beings saw nothing but his face. But that first day, because of the enormous heat of the Sun's body, some animals turned into stones, especially the ones with powerful mouths – puma, jaguar – and they remained there as gapes, or gods, who need food and drink from the humans to our very day. Also the demons that still walked the earth were turned to stone. That is how the mountains were formed. However, one demon escaped: White Sparkstriker, *Saq K'oxol*. He/She escaped with one shoe – the other burned to stone. White Sparkstriker was male and female or *neither*. S/He kept wandering along the earth, never belonging to one particular place – like the other demons and gods

who burned that First Dawn – never had its own temple or mountain shrine. Whenever someone sees White Sparkstriker somewhere, he or she notes his/hers red face. S/He is red all over, touched by the Sun at First Dawn.¹⁶¹

During the Spanish Invasion of 1523, White Sparkstriker Saq K'oxol tried to prevent the invaders from taking over the Quiché realm. He joined Black Butterfly Grandson of Many Hands, *Tekum Umam K'iq'ab*, the grandson of one of the most powerful Quiché kings ever, K'iq'ab (Many Hands). Tekum, masked, asked White Sparkstriker what the invaders' intentions were. White Sparkstriker answered Tekum, also from behind a mask, and told him about extermination. Consequently, Tekum set out to fight the invaders. Because time returns daily, weekly, monthly, yearly *et cetera*, the masked dialogue between Tekum and Saq K'oxol is repeated in that very same rhythm. People can visit the dialogue today, each year when in some forty towns in Guatemala Tekum and Saq K'oxol make a masked appearance in a play, called by anthropologists *La Conquista*, the Dance of the Conquest. White Sparkstriker Saq K'oxol appears in a red mask and a nineteenth-century full-dress military uniform, red with silver and gold trim. The invaders of 1523 were called the Sons of the Sun. They came from the West, the place of Sunset, and the place of the End of Time. They brought disease and death. Someone who was called Tonatiuh led them; He-who-goes-along-getting-hot, a fanatic, a diehard, a radical.

Tonatiuh was Pedro de Alvarado alias El Adelantado (The Precursor). The Precursor led the military conquest of Central America in the form of a series of bivouacs, stations and battles. Obviously, Tonatiuh had arrived to make this land his own for him and his followers,¹⁶² but strangely enough, the Adelantado brought peace because he ended a period of protracted inter-Mayan warfare. It was peace in the European sense of 'no war'. This was a virtue in Spanish eyes but not necessarily so in Amerindian eyes. It was not until 1527 that the Spaniards settled permanently and built their cities. The Amerindians remembered the period of inter-Mayan warfare very well. For example, in the sixteenth century, the Amerindians of Santiago Atitlán told Spanish officials that they fought several wars with the *Tecpan Cuauhtemala* (Sololá) and the *Tecpan Uhtlatlan* (Santa Cruz Quiché), kingdoms in itself.¹⁶³ In classical times, this kind of warfare was according the wishes of the gods and in a way had to return at least every 584 days, when the Morning Star (Venus) accompanied the sun at the horizon on the place of dawn. However, for the ordinary people of Central America this kind of war was something between gods and nobles.

In Amerindian eyes, who were the Spaniards? For example, who was Alvarado? What did it mean, that the Amerindians called him Tonatiuh? For the Aztecs of Postclassic Central Mexico Tonatiuh was the sun god.¹⁶⁴ However, they regarded him as the god of the *East*, the Maya region. Indeed, he typically appeared with red body paint, an eagle feather headdress, and a large rayed solar disk. Archaeologists first found him in Early Postclassic Maya art from Ixtapantongo and Chichén Itzá. In his aspect as the Morning Star (Venus), Tonatiuh was frequently paired with Quetzalcoatl. His costume seems to be based on that of the classic Maya kings, which is in line with the relationship between kingdom and the sun god modern researchers have established. The peoples of Central Mexico saw Tonatiuh as a fierce and warlike god, precisely the image of the Maya kings of the Classic (AD 300-900) and Postclassic (AD 900-1520s) periods. This could mean that during the invasion of 1523, Tonatiuh returned to Maya land to start a new time. In Nahuatl, the Aztec language of Postclassic Central Mexico, the terms for the rising sun (*cuauhthlehuānitl*) and the setting sun (*cuauhthemoc*) can be translated as ascending eagle and descending eagle.¹⁶⁵ In the Classic, the eagle served as the personified form of the twenty-year period called the *katun*. At the same time he served as a symbol for the sky, in Mayan writing written as *can* or *chan*, meaning sky.

In the Late Postclassic Aztec calendar, Tonatiuh served as the patron of the day Quiauhuitl. In the *trecena* (thirteen days) of 1 Miquiztli, or 1 death, he appeared with the lunar god Tecuciztecatl. Also the Postclassic Mixtec sun god (Oaxaca, Southern Mexico) was known as 1 Death. Tonatiuh's relationship with the lunar god Tecuciztecatl suggests he was part of a twin. The sacred Quiché book *Popol Vuh* or Council Book relates the mythical adventures of two sets of twins fathered by the figure of Jun Junajpu: Junajpu and Xbalanque, the so-called Hero Twins, and Jun Batz and Jun Chuen, the Monkey Scribes. The *Popol Vuh* was probably an Amerindian divination text, written in the style of native screen fold books formed of strips of pounded bark paper or deer hide painted on both sides with mythical drawings and scenes accompanied by calendar signs, astronomical information and, mostly, glyphic writing. These books were meant to pass on oral mythical history and astrological information. Around 1700, the Quiché-speaking Spanish Fray Francisco Ximénez, priest of Chichicastenango, Guatemala, 'found' or was given a manuscript based on such an indigenous book. It tells about the creation of the earth and suggests its continuous recreation. The last part of the *Popol Vuh* tells the orally

recalled, mythical history of the origins of the Quiché people and their destination as the chosen people of the gods. Tonatiuh was Junajpu, and therefore the Amerindians could have interpreted the wars of the conquest as a new version of the struggles of the Hero Twins in the underworld Xibalba. In that case, the beginning of Spanish rule, which came with Alvarado/Tonatiuh, was literally the beginning of a new dawn, a new era, and a new cycle.¹⁶⁶

Order reborn out of chaos, by faceless warriors under the leadership of Votán Zapata, and this – if we go back to the collective statement of the CCRI-CG – on the ‘just moment’ of to ‘beat the night’. It does all articulate to what Gossen called the ‘tyranny of time’. The divine mandate of solar, lunar, and Venus, in combination with the 260-day calendar cycles intimately affected the unfolding of each day for each individual and his community in the ancient Maya world. This chronovisionary attitude does not imply a deification of time, but an acknowledgment that all things, human and natural, were programmed with shifting valences of cause and effect as divine cycles located outside the body dictated. Humans have no choice but to adjust their behaviour accordingly. Gossen concludes that at this point emerges ‘an almost unlimited opening for the interpretive skills and political control of shamans and secular leaders who claim to have a less opaque vision than ordinary people.’¹⁶⁷

That these leaders can be white should not amaze us, Gossen writes in an interesting essay.¹⁶⁸ For according to the Tzotzil Cosmology of Chamula – mother-town of many Lacandona colonists – the creators of life, the Moon/Virgin Mary and the Sun/Christ, are white, the overseers and guardians of life, the Saints, are white, and so are the earth lords who control land and water. Gossen shows that the Indians themselves remember none of earlier indigenous leaders of movements seriously, to the contrast of mestizo commanders. This not, he warns us, because Chamula as a *pueblo* should be viewed as a *colonial creation*: ‘The plot is not that simple.’ One answer to this question may lie in the cyclical time-reckoning, for this allows for selective accommodation and comprehension of new actors and new ideas by placing them morally in the past, in fact, in some past cycle. Every destruction in a period of chaos and each restoration of order yield a new and better truly indigenous reality. The white men of a previous epoch have become Sun and Moon, Saints and earth lords. These ‘former men and women’ are historicized in order to foreground and frame an always-emergent Indian present. It is renewal in time that equals the rebirth of the indigenous present. In sum, during the period of chaos, destruction

has already set in and thus produced already ‘historicized men’, like the men who had become Saints after a prior cycle. Zapata was such a man, but animated or deified with the spirit of *Votán*.

Finally, this brings me to Marcos himself. Marcos communicated the written statements to the outside world and debated furiously with the Mexican media. Apparently, he read everything that was published in Mexico on the movement and reacted to it. Marcos saw himself as a servant of the CCRI-CG and possibly he is nothing else but this. In interviews, other *comandantes* of the EZLN confirmed this role. However, some common soldiers described him as a *cat*, which could escape from soldier’s attacks through the jungle, or as an *eagle*, flying high in the air to judge the development of the struggle. Obviously, like in typical Maya thinking on the metaphysics of personhood, he was seen as Marcos the military leader and as his co-essence at the same time. The co-essence of the person consists of his spiritual companion that resides outside the body, usually identified with animals. These spirits are given at birth and share with each individual the trajectory of his life, from birth to death.¹⁶⁹ Man’s destiny is shared with this co-essence, it is perhaps even known to his spiritual companion. Hence, a ‘faceless’ Marcos is seen as a spiritual being who comprehends the world ‘behind’ the tangible and immediately accessible senses. White ‘non-humans’ like Marcos were indispensable to lead the faceless ones into this divine combat. Because reality is opaque, trusted interpreters and leaders are indispensable to influence or even alter that reality. And precisely the whites of the previous cycle that operate in times of chaos are the ones to follow.

Now, these trusted-ones need to ‘know’ the hidden reality to do so, including the ‘sacred tyranny of time.’ They do so, because as white historicized humans they already belong to the previous cycle and stand outside present time. In short, Marcos’ actions could not have been so successful without being cast as something that was somehow destined to happen in the first place and destined to be initiated by some supra-human leadership from the spiritual world. The overthrow of ‘chaos’ and the *re-creation* of ‘order’ was a magical, transcendental struggle in which human fighters transformed themselves into divine warriors. These warriors themselves are part of the cycle that is being destroyed during the transition from chaos to order. Then they vanish into the other world, the new order does not need them anymore. Remember what the CCRI-CG had to say on this: ‘[...] from the night and from the earth our dead should come, the faceless ones, those who are jungle, who dress with war so their voice will be heard, that their word later

falls silent and they return once again to the night and to the earth, that other men and women may speak, who walk other lands, whose words carry the truth, who do not become lost in lies.' Here then is a curious congruency of indigenous sacred and predestined fate and the Maoist theory of the transition from socialism to communism. According to both ideological constructions Marcos and his faceless warriors will made themselves superfluous in the end.

Autonomy as Order

One book on the Lacandona Revolt began with the phrase:¹⁷⁰ 'The time of the revolution has not passed.' True this might be, I nevertheless have my doubts for the Mexican case. True as well, general discontent with the Mexican government, anger about repression and despair after many years of economic crisis stood at the root of rural movements, organized or not, in the State of Chiapas. But only in the Selva Lacandona it lead to armed resistance. The isolated situation in the cloud forest made it a playground for radical groups to transform the mentality of the people. Maoist ideology, liberation theology and traditional Maya faith in predestined time came together in a unique stance towards the fear for chaos and the end of the world. This brought the faceless warriors of the EZLN at the stage. Poor youth, men and women, were prepared to 'transform' themselves to, as they expressed, defeat the night and vanish with the 'past cycle'. This unique ideological combination is not present in the other areas of Chiapas. The decision to opt for a radical solution was typically so made on the micro-level of the Selva Lacandona.

Independent of this, but not really to be seen apart from it was the issue of a Declaration of Autonomy on October 12, 1994 – *Día de la Raza* or Columbus Day. It included the projection of so-called 'regional parliamentary groups'. Indeed, most important and constantly repeated, the EZLN demands a *separate status* for indigenous communities. By December 1994, more than 40 Maya communities, most of them outside of the EZLN zone, had responded with the formation of four autonomous regions. These are to be governed by a directorate of local indigenous groups from various townships. For the Maya, the restoration of traditional *pueblos de indios* would mean a return of *order* and the defeat of chaos. Order means self-governing institutions, a 'just' distribution of land, and modern health-care and good education, but also the establishment of commercial centres for the benefit of the peasants to buy and sell at a 'just price' as well as amusement centres

for a 'dignified' rest without *cantinas* or brothels. One of the CCRI-CG members declared to *La Jornada* in February 1994,¹⁷¹ that there is 'no need to hold our hand. We believe that our people are capable of governing themselves because our people are aware. That is why we do not need a government that only wants to manipulate us, to have us under its feet. As Indians, we need our own autonomy, we need that identity, that dignity.' The *pueblo* is autonomy, identity and dignity; it means social order. Those words were heard already in the eighteenth century.

Seen from this perspective we may agree with Gossen that the Zapatista Operation is but one dramatic move in a general pan-Maya cultural and political affirmation movement that is well underway in Mexico and Guatemala.¹⁷² 'Only on rare occasions,' Gossen writes, 'have Indian political and religious movements [...] crossed ethnic and linguistic lines in terms of their constituencies and military mobilization.' This is happening nowadays in Chiapas and Guatemala. Gossen sees: 'Pan-Indian groups range from intellectual, educational, and religious organizations to craft guilds [...] catering to the tourist and export trade. There are also numerous writers' and artists' cooperatives whose members are working to create a corpus of literature in Maya languages, as well as graphic and performing arts that express traditional and contemporary Maya themes.' The Pan-Indian movement is in search for a new indigenous social order, discipline, and hierarchy. Guatemala is moving toward the creation of a parallel indigenous education system.¹⁷³

As was made clear from the outset, the program of the Zapatistas – e.g. the movement in general, not just the its military arm, the EZLN – is substantially political. Think of what occurred in mid-March 1994, when shamans representing the five major Maya groups in Chiapas arrived at Palenque, the ancient town of Lord Pacal (Shield). Pacal was entombed in the well-known Temple of Inscriptions there in the year 683. More than thirteen hundred years later, these shamans set up a sacred shrine with multi-coloured candles, copal incense – seen as 'the heart of heaven and the heart of earth' and the 'food for the ancestors inside the mountain' – and wild plants. The Fifth Sun had ended, they stated later, hunger and disease were soon over. The Sixth Sun had begun, a time of hope and unity for the *pueblos indios*.¹⁷⁴ But this act had more to do with representation, a political theatre that belongs to the twentieth century. The faceless warriors form a typical 'Maya' feature of the Zapatista movement. Also, in the story of Votán Zapata the typical 'Maya position' of the leaders can be encountered: coming from

the past, they are there to vanish. These traits point to the fact that not war or resistance is constitutive for the 'essentialist' Maya but time and rebirth.

In short, the Maya have an *inward identity*. This is what makes up the movements' own, inner voices in the sources. Think once more of the cosmology of the living mountain and consequently the living Earth, cyclical time and its consequences, distinctive gender circumstances with women in service 'inside' the community or family and men operating 'outside', the role played by *caciques* and their *pueblos*, the character of occasional White leadership, and, of course, resistance to malpractice of the State and ensuing political consciousness. As a colonialist, in the texts presented above by the Zapatistas for autonomy I recognize the semi-autonomous *república de indios*. This suggests a political inheritance of Amerindian autonomy, and, indeed, autonomy as another 'inner voice' coming out of the sources. Shortly after the initial revolt, President Salinas took some of the wind out of the rebellious' sails by appointing Manuel Camacho Solís – a leading figure of the PRI,¹⁷⁵ and Salinas' major political companion during much of his administration – as 'personal peace commissioner' and calling for a ceasefire just twelve days after the takeover of San Cristóbal. Camacho, EZLN/CCRI negotiators and the visionary mediator Bishop Samuel Ruiz worked out specific solutions to all but two of the Zapatistas' thirty-four demands. And this within a few weeks: the negotiations, which began on February 22, were concluded on March 2 with the publication of the 34 demands of the EZLN and 32 replies from Salinas' negotiator.¹⁷⁶ The EZLN and the Government only seemed to differ at the point of integration: the EZLN demanded autonomy outside the context of the Mexican Republic, Camacho offered some autonomy inside the Republic. In reality, the military occupied the State of Chiapas.

In the years following 1994, the Zapatista movement, limited though it originally was to the specific situation in the Lacandón jungle, has made national impact in Mexico. Although because of its peril to the nation state, the issue of autonomous territories was not included in any official treaty, when the twentieth century reached its final years, the question had nevertheless increased enormously in importance all over the country. As early as October 1994, some five areas in Chiapas declared themselves to be autonomous pluri-ethnic regions, two of them outside of EZLN-territory. These regions had to be *pluri-ethnic* indeed, because large non-indigenous groups as well as different Amerindian minorities inhabited them. The 'regions' prepared to

organize their own parliaments. Backed by a few NGO's and Mexican leftist politicians also new amendments to the Constitution were suggested. In other Mexican states, Amerindian representatives suggested the co-evolution of pluri- and mono-ethnic constitutions. In Las Cañadas, writes Stephen, 'instead of claiming their right to territory based on primordial rights of association, [the Amerindians] staked their claim based on political unity and a common political strategy and culture.' And all this in the midst of heavy militarization of the State of Chiapas and ensuing repressions.¹⁷⁷ In fact, during the 1990s chances for success became ever more meagre. Almost ten years after the outbreak of hostilities, the situation had become desperate for the Zapatistas. The army has chased them from their bases, has destroyed the villages in the Lacandón, and occupied and militarized the State of Chiapas wherever it found it necessary. But at the moment I write this, Marcos and his companions are still not captured and imprisoned. Marcos continues to write statements and stories commenting upon the Mexican reality. And also the territorial autonomy claims were alive as ever since 1994.

In a recent contribution, anthropologists Lynn Stephen and George Collier suggested to articulate autonomy with the construction of 'political and legal regimes for local, regional, and national political cultures that can restrain or at least ameliorate the human cost of neo-liberalism.' This excludes right-wing autonomy, for example by caciques in Chamula. Autonomy includes women who want their men out of the influence of the caciques; or who simply want to decide who to marry, rather than being forced to marry someone chosen by their parents. It also includes town and village leaders who wish to protect traditional customs, but to control the economic resources within town or village boundaries as well. And it includes peasants to be freed from constraints and pressures from the national state.¹⁷⁸ Of course, after the promulgation of international legislation protecting their rights (ILO Convention 169), autonomy had been central to the Amerindian movement since the late 1980s. The Amerindians started to voice their particular demands within the ranks of peasant organizations such as the CIOAC. All traditional, historical signs of the *pueblo de indios* were kept in tact in Chiapas and other southern states like Guerrero, Oaxaca, even Puebla: the political system of *presidentes* and *cabildo* within a cargo system of an Amerindian elite, the *cofradías* and *hermandades* and other sodalities, life around the village church tower, the dress-code of the women, a market system, etcetera.

Autonomy became a key word to join a series of demands. Of course, it had been a central claim by popular groups since the late 1970s, but the Lacandona Revolt brought Amerindian militants to attune their diverged discourses into this main direction. As Mattiace recorded from political scientist Héctor Díaz-Polanco in 1996: ‘Beginning at this moment [of the Zapatista Revolt], autonomy becomes a more notable concept, hegemonic within the more organized sectors of the movement.’¹⁷⁹ It were the municipalities and not the regions that began opting for autonomous governments, although the EZLN at first wished to encourage the latter. Now, a large problem is how to select communities suited for autonomy. If we privilege Amerindian above pluri-ethnic – something deliberately avoided by the Zapatistas but in line with ILO Convention 169 – then what constitutes an Amerindian community? For the Las Margaritas area in Zapatista territory there are hardly any problems: it is a Tojolabal *region* – where inter-community cooperation flourishes – while elsewhere in the territory as well as in Los Altos, the areas are indeed pluri-ethnic but also more community based.¹⁸⁰

In general, however, the Mexican State could simply obstruct any far-reaching agreement on autonomy by applying a very specific and out-dated definition of an ‘indigenous community’. According to Mexico such a community is characterized by detailed cultural traits like identifying clothing, traditional medicine and organization like cargo systems, and conservation of these, by their language described as their ‘mother tongue’, community solidarity and communal labour, and subsistence agriculture. Most rural communities do not have all these traits in common and can easily be excluded from any future program.¹⁸¹ In turn, the solutions to the problems offered by the State did include budget provisions and several administrative measures approved by the relevant government ministries. All the demands that could be satisfied with money were quickly agreed upon. The solutions further included political and juridical autonomy as well as reforms of the state’s electoral law to curtail the power of the caciques. But other demands did not meet an open commitment. Camacho would order an ‘analysis’ of the consequences of the NAFTA-agreement for the specific indigenous groups. Also a ‘study’ would be undertaken to break up large land holdings, considering reforms to ‘constitutional articles that deal with land tenure.’ In later peace-talks, during the summer of 1995, they agreed to discuss similar points. All this, however, in vain. The ‘dialogue’ came to a standstill in 1996, after the government had signed a first set of accords on culture and rights in February that year.

Conclusion

Despite the repression, the Zapatistas became one of the most successful Amerindian movements ever.¹⁸² The regional forces that were proposing social, economic and political rehabilitation in all of the Mexican republic were no longer based in the cities only – as was previously thought – but include the indigenous CCRI of the Lacandón jungle and the peasant and popular organizations with their own bases of development elsewhere in Mexico. A wave of national joy and solidarity at their appearance has given the Zapatistas one of their primary positions. This impact is illustrated by a testimony of an Indian scribe, a member of the indigenous elite of the township of Chilchota in Michoacán, Western Mexico, who stated somewhat crestfallen, that before the events in Chiapas the commoners of his town resigned themselves to the rule of the caciques. ‘They knew that they needed more attention to their demands,’ he said, ‘but they stayed cool.’¹⁸³ After the revolt everything was changed. They wished to change the fate of their poor life and they wanted this fast. ‘And now we [the ruling elite] are really concerned, because they stand firm to reach their goal anyhow.’ Another illustration comes from Xun Mesa, an Amerindian from Tenejapa, Chiapas. Mesa, president of one of the numerous new indigenous organizations in Chiapas, gave a lecture in Austin Texas and answered a question about the EZLN identity: ‘No, we do not know who they are. They came, made their list of demands and then they left. But we are with them because those demands are ours too. It is why I am here now. Without them, we would not have a voice.’¹⁸⁴ In short, after the Zapatista uprising, Indian social identity and political stance has shifted from the prior localist perspective to a new national and pan-Indian identity or Pan-Maya cultural perspective, forged from the mixing of the indigenous. The autonomy process is one of its key devices.

PSYCHOLOGY

It is time to answer the key questions asked before. Why would the Zapatistas recognize the ski-mask warriors as instruments of time? And what constituted the process of *making their own*? To answer these questions I return to semiotics and find its psychological mechanism. Remember, every sign's iconic, symbolic, or indexical quality is established by context – community, time and place. This I will refer to as the ecology of the sign. The faceless warriors transmitted three sets of information. First, they expressed their current state of mind. It was *their* activity and task to assist time. Second, they underscored a century-old Maya cosmovision in which order relieves chaos in endless repetitive sequences. Third, they revived an equally century-old tradition of resisting the State. The first set of information is indexical or symbolical; the second is canonical; it may also have worked through symbolism. The Zapatista ski-mask is taken iconic for the Amerindian people as a sign of the end of chaos, the mask is also an index of change, and a symbol of Amerindian struggles for dignity. All interpreters, including the Amerindian people, make their own narratives. Because, as said, the logic of signs is an abductive logic, the iconic quality of the Zapatista ski-mask can only be revealed to us thanks to its indexical quality that opens to us of following its traces through our sources. Simply by pointing at mainly indexical signs of what I called *their inner voices* we can hold an enhanced grip on the Other's experiences.

And in the end, the ski-masked warriors may become icons of the revolt itself, inspiring other revolutionaries to wear them simply because the sign language of the Amerindian revolt now requires it. Therefore, the faceless warriors were not simply indices of the coming order, for the Zapatista Maya they were also *symptoms* of this. As said before, symptoms are *natural* indices, a 'natural effect' of a specific cause.¹⁸⁵ This is the second problem of the signifier – signified relationship as summarized by anthropologist Rappaport – 'it can occur in the absence of its *signification* or *referent*, and, conversely, events can occur without being signalled'¹⁸⁶ – and is in line with Eco's theory of the lie.¹⁸⁷ Rituals

like wearing ski-masks rely ‘heavily on indices that are virtually impervious to falsification and resistant to misinterpretation.’¹⁸⁸ This is the only way I see some alien ritual or ideologies can be made ‘their own’.

If we also return to Derrida’s vision on the sign-structure,¹⁸⁹ with the ‘centre’ and its irreplaceable and central presence, a transcendental signified, the ultimate source of meaning which cannot be replaced with a satisfactory signifier, the ‘centre’ of the Zapatista movement is not easy to define. Although I have resisted this temptation, I cannot contest the suggestion of ‘socialism’ and ‘Mexican Revolution’ as Marcos’ centre, contrary to ‘Maya cosmology’ as the ordinary warriors’ centre.¹⁹⁰ The strength the centre can generate is limited, though, leaving some room for *play* to the elements in a structure. What most writers on the uprising discussed were characteristics articulated to both the situation in Los Altos and the writings, utterances, and actions of Marcos. There was a lot of play involved for every participant, including the rise of other *comandantes*. This left the ordinary warriors’ centre somewhat out of attention, and therefore too little was heard of the crucial inner voices of the EZLN.

The signifiers and signified are ‘in the world’ to be identified and the ‘Other’ should indeed be studied in his habitat. This avoids considering the habitat as given fixed object and space, having an elemental and independent existence. As Maya mythology clearly indicates, the environment cannot be fully specifiable in physical terms. Semiosis could definitely expose the illusion that the person should be discussed as the essential source as well as the supreme single achievement of the human condition itself. ‘We are in thoughts rather than thought is in us,’ Peirce wrote.¹⁹¹ He would have argued that a Zapatista’s thoughts are what he or she is saying to him- or herself, ‘that is saying to that other self that is just coming into life in the flow of time.’ Consequently, the Zapatista Maya’s were in myth, in their cosmovision. The Zapatista struggle can be seen as an attempt to differ and defer at the same time, once more. In practice this could mean to build up a Maya order within a Mexican state. The Zapatistas only exist by *différance*, their mythological cosmovision being its instrument. Their agency cannot exist without the Mexican Other. Their existence is not they but through which they are constituted. The continued usage of the mythological cosmovision cannot be but an indication of essentialistic reasoning.

The Maya were differing and deferring from the world of the Whites and the Mestizos. No doubt, this *différance* included fortune-tellers,

shamans and day-keepers. By playing out this *différance* logocentrically indeed, the Maya constructed their identity during the centuries under Spanish and national Mexican rule within the same discourse, working continuously with the same signs, signifiers and signifieds. This logocentric, essentialist centre is the interpretant within the Maya sign between any signifier and signified. History (interpretant / interpreter) is thus presented as part of the sign. The survival of ancient historical narratives like myths is not important because of the content of the myths, but because its *sustained* significance in particular historical periods.¹⁹² The ski-masks are signs of anti-chaotic struggle to open up the door to a forced renovation, back to order. This interpretation is derived from their mythology. A close reading of the sources unmasked much more signifiers/representamen connected in this way to the possibility of the return to order by the interpretant of Maya cosmology. The recognition of the White Marcos as the leader of the Amerindian warriors is one of them. For example, in the preceding pages I noticed at least two signifiers: the faceless warriors, and the demands for local autonomy. I imagined two signifieds: time/cosmogony; and anti-colonialist struggles. The benefit of using the semiotic arrow is that all signifieds are supposed to be amalgamated inside the brains of individual Maya. This gives us anti-(post)colonial struggles *because of* a specific Maya cosmogony, or, a Maya cosmogony *coming out of* anti-(post)colonial struggles. Moreover, autonomy can be articulated to demarcations in the landscape, by maps in their archives, and the narratives of history and geography/territory they tell themselves – think of the semi-autonomous *pueblo de indios* during 300 years of Spanish rule as the juro-political unit of the *república de indios*. These signs become interpretants if the discussion of the political fate of contemporary towns turns up.

Transmission

The faceless warriors should indeed be interpreted using Lang's semiotic process, a kind of 'metabolism' on the information level between the person and the world shows semiotics as a general device of analysing causation, and the creation of memory and history. Of the many implications, I focused deliberately on the mythology of faceless warriors into the sign vehicle of the ski-masks. Semiosis is a sign process that transforms signs through signs into new or other signs. What should be understood as Lang's IntrO-Semiotic process from 'outside into the individual', is popularly understood as the result of the interaction

between the child – the subject of IntrO-Semiosis – and its parents. Consequently, the human unconscious is formed by the nurture provided by any individual child's family. Nature give parents a baby, but the person that grows out of it depends on how it is nurtured by them. This should be called the *nurture assumption*, after a book by development psychologist Judith Harris (1999/98). Harris argues convincingly that, principally, Sigmund Freud developed the nurture assumption at the end of the nineteenth century, and that since then it is difficult to publish anything with general recognition if it goes against it. In the end, the nurture assumption has turned children into objects of anxiety: parents are nervous about doing the wrong thing and ruin their child's chances forever. Freud instituted the myth that two parents of opposite sexes cause untold anguish in the child simply by being there. The agony and the anxiety are unavoidable and universal, no one and nothing can prevent it.¹⁹³ All this anxiety, agony and anguish reside in the unconscious, Freud wrote, and cue dreams, folklore, myths, legends and the like. Hence, we feel to live in a culture of fear, in a society of distress, misery, and pain, and all that enters the unconscious or comes out of it, is touched deeply by this. And curiously indeed, in Freudian theory it is the family that constitutes all this. Freud does not discuss psychoanalysis outside of the family; the family is the cornerstone of his worldview.

Now what if the nurture assumption is far beyond modern psychological validity? A large list of published parent-child socialization research does indeed point to a limited influence of the parents on the development of their children's personalities. We must give Harris the credit for putting the cat among the pigeons, but her work is based on a bibliography of almost 700 titles, a reading of more than thirty years into child development literature. She had followed the nurture assumption most of the time, until the facts most psychologists had filed away in 'that mental folder we all keep for undeniable truths that do not fit into our belief systems' – as Steven Pinker notes in the foreword of *The Nurture Assumption* – made her to change direction. Some microscopic extracts. In 1983, two North American psychologists published a long review of socialization research – the influence of parents on children, concluding that there is 'very little impact of the physical environment that parents provide for children at home and very little impact of parental characteristics that must be essentially the same for all children in a family', like education. A study of the development of children that were born after donor insemination and raised by single mothers or lesbian mothers showed that they were well

adjusted and well behaved, even a little above average. There were no differences among them based on family composition; the ones without fathers were doing as well as the ones with fathers. After reviewing all the data on the variation of personality with birth order and doing a huge research of their own, two Swiss psychologists found no birth order effects on personality.¹⁹⁴ And so on and on and on. Indeed, by each one of those 700 titles Harris' bold conclusions can easily be corroborated: it is the child's peer group that mattered, and a peer group of 7 to 15 years, not a family history or the absence of a powerful father.

For the question of the transmission of culture it is interesting to look both at the peer group of the children and of the parents' peer group, and corroborate this with the schemata involved. In the first chapter of this *Cuaderno* I mentioned Cognitive Schema Theory as the central theory of scientific psychology. Schemata are devices to order and group thoughts, including the emotions connected to them, which are set, adapted, stored, and maintained by the brain. It follows that most of memory is developed in the form of schemata that can be activated at wish and at random with all its connections to develop a procedure for future behaviour. Because schemata are set, stored, reset, and maintained by encoding, and because a message must contain a code that is understood by both sender/addresser and receiver/addressee, the process works within an experienced world of agreement about the meanings of words, gestures and other signifiers, or signs in general.¹⁹⁵ Indeed, one of the great surprises of recent neuro-imaging has been the discovery of brain responses to words as highly distributed patterns of activity.¹⁹⁶ The case of the Lacandón Revolt, of course, supported the theory of a discursive mind. It showed how words could cue an entire complex of encoded cultural characteristics the Maya had developed over time. However, schemata are also activated by smell, light, non-verbal sounds, and other inputs from the senses, without any discursive interpretation whatsoever, but with a similar neuro-imaging effect.

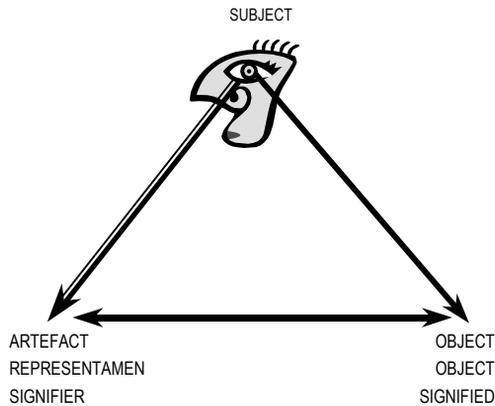
Schemata and schematic processing permit humans to organize and manage huge amounts of information indeed with great efficiency. Instead of having to perceive and remember all the details of each new object or event, people simply note that it is like one of their pre-existing schemata and encode, thus remember, only its most prominent features. Schematic encoding occurs rapidly, automatically, and unconsciously. In their introductory text on social psychology, Michael Hogg and Graham Vaughan mention four steps of social encoding.¹⁹⁷ First, they say, people are subjected to pre-attentive analysis in which a

general automatic and unconscious scanning of the environment takes place. Second, focal attention is directed towards certain stimuli that are first made conscious, but are soon identified and categorized, unconsciously. Third, comprehension takes place, unconsciously, to give the stimuli semantic or discursive meaning. And forth, by elaborative reasoning the semantically or discursively represented stimuli are linked to other knowledge present to allow for much complex inference. Almost every 'new' encoding is articulated or even integrated to 'old' encoding. Daniel Schacter, author of well-known publications on memory, describes remembering as a procedure similar to writing a book from fragmentary notes. When an event takes place, the 'notes' that are encoded in memory are greatly influenced by pre-existing knowledge and goals, as well as the passions and emotions of the moment. Also moods influence both encoding and retrieval. This is the major reason to call schemata biasing filters.¹⁹⁸

One central feature of schematic encoding, however, is what is called the self-reference effect. Individuals, for instance, recall a list of words better if they are told to decide whether each word describes themselves as they go through the list. This effect is due to more 'deep' thoughts – factually deeper in the brain – about such relations as he or she ponders whether or not it is self-relevant, as well as to the fact that schemata about the self link in memory what otherwise remains unrelated information. For example, if people are explicitly instructed to remember as much information as they can about someone, they actually remember less than if they are simply told to try to form an impression of that person. This impression induces them to search for various person-relevant schemata that help them organize and recall the material needed in a better way.¹⁹⁹ In short, the 'old' encoding the 'new' is articulated to is basically about experiences of the self. People continuously ask themselves: 'What has this to do with me?' Curiously, despite its collective significance, on a social level, historical narratives and myths might function in this way. Historians like to present history as a society's memory. Mythology could belong to the same category. As Levi-Strauss informed us long ago, myths are a language because they have to be told in order to subsist. These stories will lead the encoding into specific directions, all articulated to the self-image and self-knowledge of the people hearing those myths.

Reading Cues from the World

Certain cueing of schemata activation like wearing ski-masks is, so to speak, a feature of certain groups of people who share language, religion, ideologies, and norms and values. People use instruments to assist the process, *artefacts*. Michael Cole, one of the leading cultural psychologists, advises his readers to understand an artefact as both material object manufactured by humans, and as something produced by material culture. This definition includes texts. Material culture contains features that have been modified over the history of its incorporation into goal-directed, human action. The artefact is material *and* ideal, conceptual. It will not be out of the context to define this determination in semiotic terms as developed in the previous chapter. The artefactual meaning of the environment and the language in which it can be expressed locally is always included. No object, no situation, no event can be grasped 'objectively' only. Cole designed a figure to illustrate this process. I have made the following adaptation:²⁰⁰



Again, we recognize the subject as interpretant within Peircean procedures. The subject is the interpreter/interpretant, who combines artefacts as signifier/representamen/referent and the object as signified/presentant in a sign.

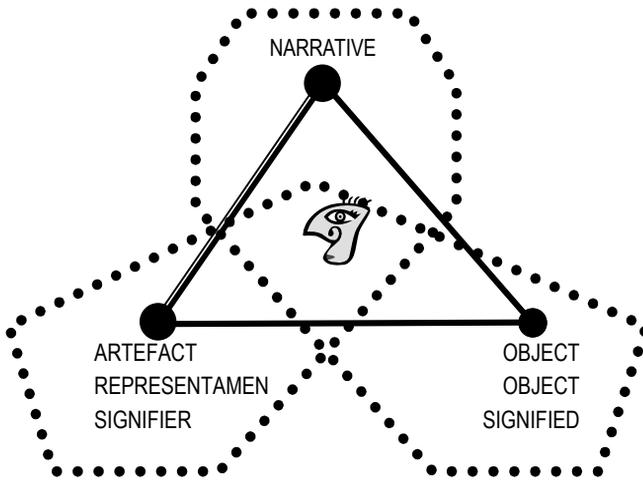
For Cole, the blueprint of this figure is the basic mediational triangle of perception in which subject and object are seen not only 'directly' connected but also simultaneously as 'indirectly' through a medium constituted of artefacts. The central point to investigate is the interpretation made by the subject of a signifier/artefact. This, argues Cole, is how culture works. Every cultural element, every cultural trait, has a subjective and an objective aspect that people participating in

that culture find it almost impossible to separate. Observers from outside might be able to do so, but that is due to their own subjective treatment. Also Cole seconds the social interpretation of the thinking process. The schemata interpreted as *narratives-people-tell-themselves* with the aid of artefacts are transferred through learning to the next generation.

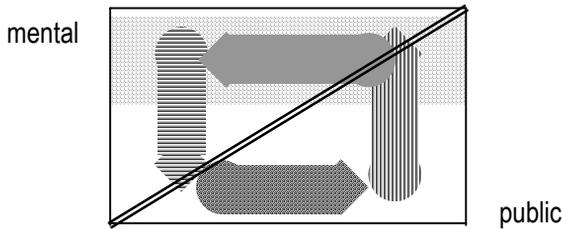
As in some Darwinian process, several complexes of schemata survive generation after generation – this is the culture of the people – being gradually adapted to recent changes in environment and ideologies until ‘something better’ is found. The extremes are cut off or simply forgotten, the shared general features of the complexes of schemata live on as the ‘core’ of the culture. Although far from static and unchangeable, the ‘core’ of its thinking remains present as footprints of the past in any contemporary culture. It is the culture people inherit and can be described as ‘living’ on a certain spot in space and time. The origins of the ‘core’ could be long forgotten, perhaps only the idea of the ‘core’ survives, but because of this survival of core features, psychologist Yzerbyt and his co-writers speak of it as psychological essentialism:

In other words, we function on the basis of surface level similarities as if some deeper properties of the object supports the decision process. When people adopt a psychological essentialistic stance, their working hypothesis is that things that look a like tend to share deeper properties.²⁰¹

For them, this is reason to argue for a subjective essentialistic view of social categories. This essentialism is likely to prevail when seemingly objective indicators are available. Where people actively participate, we may obviously take for granted that the subject consists of the religion, the ideology or any individual set of schemata build up as a narrative making up a persons interpretative device of the world. Hence this vital concentration on religion and myth in my narrative of the Maya revolt in Chiapas. As adapted to the figure below, this does make a different figure in which artefact and objects are all part of the individual including the subject or ideology/religion/narrative. This adaptation suggest a dynamic process of meaning that includes the triadic sign in all its facets in the individuals head, with some preference for the narrative \leftrightarrow artefact articulation.



In *Explaining Culture* (1996), CNRS (Paris) based Dan Sperber offers impressive groundwork for an assimilation of cognitive psychology and semiotics. For what is referred to above as a sign, he gives a much better common sense word: representation. A representation, Sperber argues, sets up a relationship between that which represents, that which is represented, and the user of the representation.²⁰² This is familiar language now. But, Sperber distinguishes two kinds of representations: mental and public. Mental representations consist of beliefs, intentions and preferences, and many other complexes of schemata. In the figure above, they can in part be equalled to the narrative-side of the triangle. Actually, Sperber's proposition seconds once more the extra-linguistic nature of human thinking, for there is much more to the formation of representations than just narratives or discourses. Public representations are made up of signals, utterances, texts and pictures.²⁰³ These have a material aspect that would make them the identical to Cole's artefacts. Public representations could be seen as the semiotic sign proper, because they usually are interpreted and therefore represent something for someone. If we opt for a separation of mental and public, the semiotic arrows, indicating a process and suggesting movement between public and mental, can be set as follows:



For reasons of argument, both spheres were separated, as they are in the equation:

$$(narrative)/mental \leftrightarrow artefact/public \text{ articulation.}$$

The figure suggests that by the four semiotic processes defined by Lang, any 'novelty' intro-semiotically coming in from outside – hence a recent representation that pops up in the 'public' – is intra-semiotically domesticated by the schemata working in the 'mental' field of the people, and then put back to the 'public' field as cultural artefacts that extra-semiotically constitute a culture. It lives on as a domesticated representation, a novelty 'made their own'.

As can be concluded, an important aspect of Sperber's work is the suggestion to investigate the representations as part of the material world. Beliefs, intentions and preferences are man-made in local, ecological contexts; like all schemata of thought processing, even if they do not result directly in material products. However, this assumption of a non-material foundation of the schemata/mental representations vanishes if indeed we read a vast quantity of psychological literature. Eventually, they too are to be regarded as material, for they consist of electric circuits charging interconnected, specially developed brain cells. There will be no brain cells without 40-Hertz electric currents without mental representations without schematic encoding. Because of the material basis of both types of representations the semiotic process can be described in material, naturalistic terminology. It follows that also Cognitive Schema Theory can be described materially. Therefore, the ski-masks were materialized Maya schemata.

Conclusion

The major adjustments in schemata processing in Eastern Chiapas would have occurred among the younger members of the Lacandón

communities. The younger people made up the key peer groups in the Lacandón in 1992 when they lost a future in the forests or the nearby tropical grazing lands when Article 27 was taken out of the Constitution. They knew of course the stories about the Mexican Revolution as local uprisings; they had heard discourses of social justice told by Maoists and lay preachers; they had also heard negative testimonies about caciques and anti-democratic power groups in the central highlands; and they had consumed these intro-semiotically into their previously prepared minds of Maya thought and Maya culture. The 'prepared minds' consisted of complexes of schemata formulated and constituted by their parents peer groups. This way of encoding makes it easy to 'read' Maoist or other contemporary political discourses within the terminology of traditional Maya culture. As stated, schemata and schematic processing allow for both the previously encoded schemata and the newly intro-semiotized information to more or less merge into new schemata, basically by intra-semiosis. This became the 'new culture of the Lacandón Maya' the foreign observers wrote about. The parents of the Zapatista youth never took up arms; their children did – in their despair of a future cut off and supported by a Maoist-Maya ideology in which they could explain their despair as the culminating point of chaos. By replacing, as it were, their own faces with the ski-masks, they took the chance of operating as the divine instruments of time and restore order.

NOTES

Preface

- ¹ Louise Burkhart, *Slippery Earth* (1989), pp. 28-29, quote from p. 28.
- ² Martin and Ringham, *Dictionary* (2000), p. 34.
- ³ Schacter, *Searching* (1996); Riccio, *et al.*, 'Memory' (1994); Zimbardo and Leippe, *Psychology* (1991), pp. 187, 256-257
- ⁴ However, but happily, I found my work in line with most of the specialists; which is quite a relief for an outsider like me. See amongst other, Aubry, 'Lenta acumulación' (1994); (Autonomedia), *¡Zapatistas!* (1994); Camú Urzúa and Tótoro Taulis, *EZLN* (1994); Collier, *Basta!* (1994); Guillermprieto, 'Letter' (1994), and 'Shadow War' (1995); Harvey, *Rebellion* (1994), and, *Chiapas Rebellion* (1998); Romero Jacobo, *Altos* (1994); Ross, *Rebellion* (1994); Rovira, *¡Zapata Vive!* (1994); Rus, 'Local Adaptation' (1994).
- ⁵ My reading of the newspapers and review articles resulted in my book *Alweer* (1994). After its publication I received Neil Harvey's essay *Rebellion in Chiapas* (1994; with additional essays by Luis Hernández Navarro and Jeffrey W. Rubin), and *Chiapas Rebellion* (1998). Other references follow in due course, but in 1994 I had used: Barkin, 'Specter' (1994); Moguel, 'Salinas' Failed War' (1994); G.A. Collier, 'Background' (1994); Aubry, 'Lenta acumulación de fuerzas' (1994); Rus, 'Jelavem' (1994); and a special issue of *Cultural Survival Quarterly*, 18:1 (1994), with short essays by R. Nigh, G.A. Collier, G.H. Gossen, D. Earle, J.D. Nations, E.Z. Vogt, and F. Cancian and P. Brown. All 1994 data concerning the Zapatista Revolt come from the daily newspaper *La Jornada*, from some other daily newspapers like *Excelsior*, and above all *El Financiero* and *UnoMásUno*. Also the new *Reforma*. *Corazón de México* offered news, as well as other publications like the weekly *Proceso*, or the review *Nexos*. Smaller reviews with articles were *Época* and *Memoria*. From the world of the indigenists were *Ce-Acatl. Revista de la Cultura de Anáhuac* and *Ojarasca*. *Ojarasca* was particularly useful, as was *La Jornada*, which reserved for weeks in a row about a third of its pages to the rebellion. Furthermore, one book served as a source, written by the journalist (*Época*) Romero Jacobo, *Altos de Chiapas* (1994). Later material comes from the Internet.
- ⁶ Ouweneel, *Alweer* (1994), and Gosner and Ouweneel, *Indigenous Revolts* (1996), and my own pieces: 'Away From Prying Eyes' (1996), 'Faceless Warriors' (1999) and a minor text 'Maskers' (1996).
- ⁷ Quote from Cunningham, 'Ethnography' (2000), p. 583.
- ⁸ Abu-Lughod, *Writing Women's Worlds* (1993).
- ⁹ Also quoted in Brysk, *Tribal Village* (2000), p. 38.
- ¹⁰ From A.D. Smith, 'The Origins of Nations', in: G. Eley and R. Grigor Suny, eds, *Becoming National*, Oxford 1996, pp. 109-110, quoted by Brysk, *Tribal Village* (2000), p. 38.

Their Own

- ¹¹ See the essays in Gosner and Ouweneel, *Indigenous Revolts* (1996); also Bricker, *Indian Christ* (1981); Vogt, 'Possible Sacred Aspects' (1994); also, Ouweneel, 'Verleden leefde voort' (1995).
- ¹² (Autonomedia), *¡Zapatistas!* (1994), pp. 62-63.

- ¹³ At http://www.ezln.org/Guadalupe_dibujos/ (20/05/2000).
- ¹⁴ At: <http://www.ezln.org/archive/ezln000510.htm> (11/05/2000).
- ¹⁵ Ross, *Rebellion* (1994).
- ¹⁶ ‘Communiqué from the Clandestine Indigenous Revolutionary Committee High Command of the Zapatista National Liberation Army (CCRI-CG del EZLN)’, made public by telefax, E-MAIL and on paper on February 27, 1994. Also published by *Cultural Survival Quarterly*, 18:1 (1994), p. 12.
- ¹⁷ Mattiace, ‘EZLN’ (1997), p. 34.
- ¹⁸ This also confirmed by Rappaport, *Ritual* (1999), pp. 54-68.
- ¹⁹ Taken from Eco, *Búsqueda* (1996), pp. 152-153.
- ²⁰ Here I follow Lidov, *Elements* (1999).
- ²¹ Eco, *Theory* (1979), pp. 7 and 16; Illich *Vineyard* (1993). Also: Lidov, *Elements* (1999); Brent, *Charles Sanders Peirce* (1993); Simpkins, *Critical Semiotics* (1998); Shank, ‘Abductive Multiloguing’ (1993); Lang, ‘Toward’ (1994); Deacon, *Symbolic Species* (1997).
- ²² Eco, *Theory* (1979). Eventually, the combination of semiotics with cultural psychology as elaborated by Swiss psychologist Alfred Lang and Michael Cole’s ‘Laboratory of Comparative Human Cognition’ will take on the function of a theoretical ground for the practice of reading and understanding the CCRI-text of early 1994; Lang, ‘Toward’ (1994), ‘Non-Cartesian’ (1997), and, ‘Evolutive’ (1998); Cole *et al.*, *Mind* (1997).
- ²³ Shank, ‘Abductive Multiloguing’ (1993); Auspitz, ‘Wasp’ (1994); Chandler, *Semiotics* (2000).
- ²⁴ A.P. Fiske, ‘Learning’ (1997), quotes from p. 1, and, below, pp. 3 and 6.
- ²⁵ Bourdieu, *Outline* (1977). Also: A.P. Fiske, ‘Learning’ (1997).
- ²⁶ See Eco, *Kant* (1999); Kersenboom, *Word* (1995), p. 2; Deacon, *Symbolic Species* (1997).
- ²⁷ Rappaport, *Ritual* (1999), p. 11.
- ²⁸ Eco, *Theory* (1979/76), pp. 6-7, also frequently in *Zeichen* (1977/73).
- ²⁹ Sebeok, *Signs* (1994), pp. 43-60.
- ³⁰ From Rappaport, *Ritual* (1999), p. 56.
- ³¹ This is derived from Derrida, *Of Grammatology* (1976/67); and information from a few sites: <http://www.Colorado.edu/English/ENGL2012Klages/1derrida.html>.
- ³² Derrida, ‘Structure, Sign, and Play’ (1978/67), also in *Of Grammatology* (1976/67).
- ³³ Examples taken from <http://www.Colorado.edu/English/ENGL2012Klages/2derrida.html> (1999). Also, Derrida, *Writing* (1978).
- ³⁴ Chandler, *Semiotics* (2000); Van Driel, ‘Peirceanse semiotiek’ (1993); Sebeok, *Signs* (1994); Eco, *Zeichen* (1977/73).
- ³⁵ Lang, ‘Evolutive Semiotic Function Circle’ (1998), ‘Non-Cartesian Artifacts’ (1997), and, ‘Toward’ (1994)
- ³⁶ Baudrillard, ‘Modernity’ (1987), p. 71; Lang, ‘Non-Cartesian Artifacts’ (1997), p. 193.
- ³⁷ Eco, *Role* (1979).
- ³⁸ Lang, ‘Non-Cartesian Artifacts’ (1997), pp. 191-192.
- ³⁹ Lang, ‘Adopted’ (1994).
- ⁴⁰ Lilla, ‘Politics’ (1998).
- ⁴¹ Derrida, *Of Grammatology* (1976/67). Also, Harvey, *Derrida* (1986).

⁴² Graham, 'Dialogic Dreams' (1994), p. 724, quote from Peirce (above) from p. 723.

⁴³ See also Parmentier, *Sacred Remains* (1988)

⁴⁴ Quoted by Van Driel, 'Semiosis' (1999/93).

⁴⁵ For a summary of this paradox, see the essays and references in Ouweneel and Pansters (eds), *Region* (1989); Ouweneel and Miller (eds), *Indian Community* (1990).

⁴⁶ This above all in Derrida, *Of Grammatology* (1976/67).

⁴⁷ It sounds as if the Revolt is easy to explain, its origins easy to trace. One of the best histories, powerful in its shortness, is by Guillermprieto, 'Shadow War' (1995).

⁴⁸ Personal communication of historian Jan de Vos.

Forget Los Altos?

⁴⁹ Information provided by anthropologist Jan Rus in one of his letters to me.

⁵⁰ Esteva, *Crónica* (1995); Nash, 'Reassertion' (1995), and 'Press' (1996); Mattiace, '¡Zapata Vive!' (1997); Garza Caligaris and Hernández Castillo, 'Encuentros' (1998); Moguel, *Chiapas* (1998); Hernández Navarro, *Chiapas* (1998); Bernal Gutiérrez and Romero, *Chiapas* (1999).

⁵¹ Guillermprieto, 'Shadow War' (1995), p. 34.

⁵² For example, Collier, *Basta!* (1994) and 'Background' (1995); Rus, 'Local Adaptation' (1995); Harvey, *Rebellion* (1994), and, *Chiapas Rebellion* (1998).

⁵³ Feder, *Rape* (1971); Huizer, 'Emiliano Zapata' (1970) On this, see my *Onderbroken groei* (1989).

⁵⁴ Harvey, *Rebellion* (1994), and, *Chiapas Rebellion* (1998); also the essays in *NACLA Report of the Americas*, 28:1 (1994), pp. 17-51 ('Mexico Out of Balance').

⁵⁵ Fazio, *Samuel Ruiz* (1994); MacEóin, *People's Church* (1996).

⁵⁶ Hernández Navarro, 'Escalation' (1998), p. 8.

⁵⁷ On this topic, see for insynance Brysk, *Tribal Village* (2000), pp.160-162.

⁵⁸ Ronfeldt, *et al.*, *Zapatista* (1998).

⁵⁹ Quotes from Nash, 'Press Reports' (1997), pp. 49-56.

⁶⁰ Quotes from Nash, 'Press Reports' (1997), pp. 44, 53 and 55, also pp. 49-56.

⁶¹ Stephen, 'Zapatista Opening' (1997), pp. 5-6.

Unlearning the Revolution

⁶² For one way of argumentation, see De Janvry, *Agrarian Question* (1981).

⁶³ Currently, at least four major syntheses of the Mexican Revolution of 1910 are in vogue. All these appeared as a result of the build up of in-depth historical research during the 1980s. First there was the book of François Guerra on the origins of the Mexican Revolution of 1910: *Le Mexique*, published in Paris in 1985. The next year Alan Knight came with his two volumed *The Mexican Revolution* (1986). This was followed by John Tutino's, *From Insurrection to Revolution in Mexico* (1987); and John M. Hart's, *Revolutionary Mexico* (1987). I read these books with my major question in mind.

⁶⁴ Editors' introduction, Landry and MacLean, *Spivak Reader* (1996), p. 4.

⁶⁵ See Benjamin and Ocasio-Meléndez, 'Organizing' (1984). Also the following works: Moisés González Navarro, 'Guerra' (1987); Vanderwood, 'Resurveying' (1989); Runciman, 'Viva Alan Knight' (1987). Collections of essays that focus on the nineteenth century and the Revolution that were available at the time included: Benjamin and McNellie, eds, *Other Mexicos* (1984); Brading, ed., *Caudillo* (1980); Raat, ed., *Mexico* (1982); Moreno García, ed., *Después* (1982); Katz, ed., *Riot* (1988).

- ⁶⁶ Knight, 'Mexican Revolution' (1985).
- ⁶⁷ The section 'Communication', in *The Hispanic American Historical Review* 69 (1989), pp. 381-388, includes a letter from Guerra dated November 7, 1988, answering Knight's review, and a rejoinder by Knight, dated December 16, 1988. Glen C. Dealy shows the enormous influence of the American Constitution in Latin America around 1821-1826 in his 'Prolegomena' (1968), not cited by Guerra. Compare some interesting articles that could be used in further analysing Mexican politics from this point of view, for example, Dealy, 'Tradition' (1974); and Hoberman, 'Hispanic American Political Theory' (1980).
- ⁶⁸ Thompson, 'Moral Economy' (1971). Scott, *Moral Economy* (1976); also Kaye, *British Marxist Historians* (1984), 167-220.
- ⁶⁹ Van Young, 'Modo' (1988).
- ⁷⁰ Tenenbaum, *Politics* (1986). In addition, note the striking similarity between the entrepreneurs discussed by, for instance, Torales Pacheco, *Ilustrados* (2001); or Tutino, 'Creole Mexico' (1976); and Walker, *Kinship* (1986); Bantjes, *Politics* (1991); or, indeed, Beezley, *Judas* (1987). See also the essays in Liehr, ed., *América Latina* (1989).
- ⁷¹ Tutino, 'Regional Diversity' (1980).
- ⁷² The nineteenth century is certainly no longer the 'forgotten century', for many studies from the past decades outline its basic development trends from social, economic and political points of view. For some recent overviews, see: Mallon, 'Beyond' (1991); Murray, 'Diverse' (1997); or, French, 'Imagining' (1999). On the northern peripheries Cerutti, ed., *Monterrey* (1987); Coatsworth, *Growth* (1981); Harris, *Mexican Family Empire* (1975); Hu-DeHart, *Yaqui Resistance* (1984); Katz, *Secret War* (1981); Lloyd, *Proceso* (1987); Ruiz, *People* (1988); Vargas-Lobsinger, *Hacienda* (1984); Velázquez, *Cuentas* (1983); Voss, *Periphery* (1982); Vanderwood, *Power* (1998); Wasserman, *Capitalists* (1984).
- ⁷³ Miller, *Landlords* (1995); Brading, *Haciendas* (1978).
- ⁷⁴ Sánchez Díaz, 'Transformación' (1982); Stevens, 'Agrarian Policy' (1982). On the *desamortización* see also Menegus Bornemann, 'Ocoyoacac' (1979); and the four articles by Frank Schenk mentioned in the bibliography.
- ⁷⁵ Holden, 'Mexican State' (1986). See also Katz, 'Rural Rebellions' (1988), esp. note 16 pp. 534-535.
- ⁷⁶ Ouweneel, 'From *Tlahuacayotl*' (1995), and *Shadows* (1996); Hoekstra, *Two Worlds* (1993).
- ⁷⁷ Ouweneel, *Shadows* (1996). On the nineteenth and twentieth century in the region of Central-Mexico, among other studies: Buve, 'Peasant Movements' (1975), esp. pp. 122-128, *Movimiento* (1994); Buve and Falcón, 'Tlaxcala' (1989); Escobar Ohmstede, 'Conformación' (1996), 'Gobierno' (1996), *De la Costa* (1998), *Ciento* (1998); Escobar and Schryer, 'Sociedades' (1992); González Navarro, *Anatomía* (1977); Mallon, *Peasant* (1994); Menegus, 'Ocoyoacac' (1979); Nelen, *Illustere heren* (1999); Reina, *Rebeliones* (1980), pp. 61-63, 124-126, 157-177; Siemens, *Between* (1990); Thomson and LaFrance, *Patriotism* (1999)..
- ⁷⁸ Tutino, 'Agrarian Social Change' (1988).
- ⁷⁹ Thomson, 'Montaña' (1989).
- ⁸⁰ On Yucatán see: Paoli and Montalvo, *Socialismo olvidado* (1977); Joseph, *Revolution* (1988); Wells, *Yucatán's Gilded Age* (1985).
- ⁸¹ G.A. Collier, *Fields* (1975), p. 147

- ⁸² Gosner, 'Tribute' (1984), pp. 21-22, also *Soldiers* (1992). A similar conclusion was written down by Chiapas' historian Mario Humberto Ruz, 'Word' (1999).
- ⁸³ Nash, 'Reassertion' (1995).
- ⁸⁴ J.F. Collier, *Law* (1973), p. 264.
- ⁸⁵ This is critical. As is well known, historically population pressure has led to innovations that caused yields to *rise* not fall. The yields fell because of overexploitation and loss of soil nutrients. Population data are based on the figures collected in De Vos, *Vivir* (1994), Cuadro 3, p. 62; also De la Peña, *Chiapas* (1951), pp. 211-212 (1600-1940); and, Rus, '*Jelaven*' (1994) p. 24, Cuadro 1 (1970-90).
- ⁸⁶ I use the word *cacique* in the colonial form, because I believe that the *ladinos* and current Indian political bosses who are called caciques nowadays, mostly pejoratively, recreate the traditional heritage of the colonial power structure.
- ⁸⁷ Therefore, reading Rus' essays I have the impression that the indigenous communities were striving for a recreation of their own *república* persistently. Rus, 'Whose Caste War?' (1983/96), and 'Comunidad' (1994). Also Rus and Wasserstrom, 'Civil-Religious Hierarchies' (1980).
- ⁸⁸ Quote from Benjamin's introduction to *Other Mexicos* (1984), p. 13.
- ⁸⁹ Vanderwood, 'Resurveying' (1989), p. 151. On the political and cultural meaning of the moral economy thesis, see Ouweneel, *Shadows* (1996).
- ⁹⁰ Knight, *Mexican Revolution* (1986), I, xi.
- ⁹¹ Brading, *Haciendas* (1978), 208-217.
- ⁹² Brading, 'Social Darwinism and Romantic Idealism: Andrés Molina Enríquez and José Vasconcelos in the Mexican Revolution', in his *Prophecy* (1984), pp. 63-80. On the intimate relationship between the liberals and the village leaders of former 'Indian villages' see also Thomson, '*Montaña*' (1989). Antonio Annino, who focused some of his research on the election system in nineteenth-century Mexico, has found that during electoral campaigns the liberals were strongly supported by the Indians (personal communication).
- ⁹³ See the Special Issue edited by Susan Deans-Smith and Gilbert M. Joseph of the *HAHR* 79:2 (1999), pp. 203-383.

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- ⁹⁴ G.A. Collier, *Fields* (1975), pp. 138-154; Wasserstrom, *Class* (1983).
- ⁹⁵ G.A. Collier, *Fields* (1975), pp. 143-144.
- ⁹⁶ On Chiapas, Jan Rus once again informed me. On central Mexico, see Schenk, '*Desamortización*' (1994); Halverhout, 'Macht' (1990).
- ⁹⁷ See Harvey, *Chiapas Rebellion* (1998), pp. 54-61, quote from p. 57; Rus, 'Comunidad' (1994).
- ⁹⁸ See for example, Hardin, *Living Within Limits* (1993). Curiously, there was no large-scale out-migration as in El Salvador to *El Norte*, e.g. the US. The peasants had no means for traveling *and* they were convinced that more radical solutions could be found.
- ⁹⁹ Ouweneel, *Shadows* (1996), Chapter One.
- ¹⁰⁰ Robisheaux, *Rural Society* (1989), p. 9.
- ¹⁰¹ For an overview, Grigg, *Dynamics* (1982); also, Sen, 'Population' (1994). Cancian, *Decline* (1992). See also the illustrative work of George Collier, 'Seeking Food' (1990) and 'Reforms' (1994).
- ¹⁰² Cancian, *Decline* (1992).

- ¹⁰³ Vogt, *Tortillas* (1976), p. 26.
- ¹⁰⁴ J.F. Collier, *Law* (1973), p. 265.
- ¹⁰⁵ Ouweneel, *Alweer* (1994).
- ¹⁰⁶ Gossen, 'Comments' (1994), p. 21. Independently, I had developed the same argument in my book *Alweer* (1994).
- ¹⁰⁷ Harvey, *Rebellion* (1994), p. 7.
- ¹⁰⁸ Harvey, *Rebellion* (1994), pp. 7-17.
- ¹⁰⁹ In fact, the state of Chiapas has the largest number of committees to deal with the *Solidaridad*-funds.
- ¹¹⁰ Data from Harvey, *Rebellion* (1994), Table 6, p. 19.
- ¹¹¹ Moguel, 'Salinas' Failed War' (1994), p. 41, and 'Solidaridad' (1994). G.A. Collier, 'Reforms' (1994), p. 121, however believed that the state wished to use *Solidaridad* to restore rather than abandon the historic political relation to the peasantry through new political actors without necessarily forsaking old ones at the level of community.
- ¹¹² See for example Reyes Ramos, *Reparto* (1992), for example pp. 47-50, 59-62, 65-66.
- ¹¹³ Hernández Navarro, 'Chiapas Uprising' (1994).
- ¹¹⁴ It is said to be designed by technocrat Luis Tellez and anthropologist Arturo Warman, since 1994 both on high posts in the Zedillo Administration. The quote by Marcos can be found in Stephen, 'Zapatista Opening' (1997), p. 15, quote.
- ¹¹⁵ Hernández Navarro, 'Chiapas Uprising' (1994), p. 51.
- ¹¹⁶ Hernández, 'Chiapas Uprising' (1994); Aubry, 'Lenta acumulación' (1994).
- ¹¹⁷ Guillermprieto, 'Letter' (1994), p. 54. Also Benjamin, *Rich Land* (1989), pp. 95-143, 223-243. G.A. Collier, 'Reforms' (1994), p. 119, saw the revisions of Article 27 as a modernization of the agrarian code to conform to realities already in place, and not so much as a change.
- ¹¹⁸ Toledo Tello, *Historia* (1996), pp. 61-65, 102.
- ¹¹⁹ Harvey, *Chiapas Rebellion* (1998), pp. 58-61, 91-117.
- ¹²⁰ Ströbele-Gregor, 'From *Indio*' (1994/81).
- ¹²¹ Stephen, 'Zapatista Opening' (1997), pp. 19-21.
- ¹²² Gossen, 'Comments' (1994), p. 20.

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- ¹²³ Sen, 'Population' (1994).
- ¹²⁴ For example: De Vos, *No queremos* (1990), *Viajes* (1988), *Vivir* (1994), and, *Oro verde* (1988).
- ¹²⁵ This was De Vos' *Oro Verde* (1988); see also Leyva Solano, 'Catequistas' (1995); and, O'Brien, *Sacrificing* (1998), p. 67.
- ¹²⁶ Carlos Montemayor, 'El agrarismo y la Selva Lacandona', *Proceso* 27 (September 1998), p. 41.
- ¹²⁷ Among others, Guillermprieto, 'Letter' (1994), p. 54. Rus, '*Jelavem*' (1994), p. 18, Gossen, 'Comments' (1994), p. 21; and, again, a similar argument is developed in my *Alweer* (1994).
- ¹²⁸ Curiously, Orive later served the Salinas Administration as the Coordinator of Advisers on Social and Rural Policies, and later on the Zedillo Administration.
- ¹²⁹ Interviews with Zapatista-leaders in *La Jornada*, see my *Alweer* (1994), p. 208.

- ¹³⁰ See *Proceso*, 880 (Sept. 13, 1994), pp. 12-15; Romero Jacobo, *Altos* (1994), pp. 75-89; Melgar Bao, 'Utopías indígenas' (1994).
- ¹³¹ In another stage of its development ARIC was referred to as Asociación Rural de Iniciativa Colectiva, or even as Asociación Regional Indígena Campesina. On the discourse of 'salvation' see a paper delivered by de Vos, 'Encuentro' (1996). Also, Harvey, *Chiapas Rebellion* (1998), pp. 84-85.
- ¹³² Guillermprieto, 'Shadow War' (1995) p. 38.
- ¹³³ See the article of Andrew Flood, 'Five Years of Rebellion in Mexico', at //208.206.78.232/revolt/ws99/ws56_zapatista.html.
- ¹³⁴ Among others, see Leyva Solano, 'Catequistas' (1995), p. 382.
- ¹³⁵ See 'An Interview with Subcomandante Marcos', by Michael McCaughan in *NACLA Report on the Americas*, 28:1 (1994), pp. 35-37, quote on p. 37.
- ¹³⁶ Other names frequently heard are those of Fernando Yáñez, Jorge Elloreaga Berdegue, Jorge Santiago, Silvia Fernández Hernández, and María Gloria Benavides.
- ¹³⁷ 'Interview with Subcomandante Marcos' (1994), pp. 35-36.
- ¹³⁸ Harvey, *Chiapas Rebellion* (1998), pp. 166-167.
- ¹³⁹ *La Jornada*, January 18, 1994.
- ¹⁴⁰ They issued a Second Declaration on June 11, 1994.
- ¹⁴¹ See the remarks of Robert W. Benson, 'War Talk in Mexico', on E-Mail Internet: Multiple Recipients of List on the Chiapas rebellion, July 14, 1994.
- ¹⁴² Stated by Guatemalan guerrilla-leaders in several *La Jornada* and *El País* editions, see my *Alweer* (1994), pp. 192-193. It could have been that the government had turned a blind eye to the guerrilla-leaders living there. It should be clear, however, that I do not mean to tell that the guerrilla-leadership was actively operating in the open in Mexico
- ¹⁴³ See a note by Andrés Aubry and Angélica Inda in Hernández Navarro, 'Escalation' (1998), pp. 8-9.
- ¹⁴⁴ Harvey, *Chiapas Rebellion* (1998), p. 5. On Acteal, also the articles in Hernández Castillo, ed., *Otra palabra* (1998).

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- ¹⁴⁵ For the problem of identity see Ströbele-Gregor, 'From *Indio*' (1994/81); Baud *et al.*, *Etniciteit* (1994), pp. 13-46, 49-53; Evers, 'Identity' (1985); *Latin American Special Report, SR-94-03 – Indians: New Factor on the Latin American Scene* (London, 1994). Also Hernández Navarro, 'Chiapas Uprising' (1994), p. 51.
- ¹⁴⁶ B. Tedlock, 'Mayans' (1993); also the revised edition of her *Time and the Highland Maya* (1992).
- ¹⁴⁷ The existence of religious divisions among native communities is an important theme for analysis. In Schryer's *Ethnicity* (1990), dealing with the Huasteca, there is a section discussing the role of religion and the relationship between Protestant sects and secular left-wing political parties who often received the support of the same agrarian peasants. See also: Reaves, *Conversations* (1990), p. 224.
- ¹⁴⁸ B. Tedlock, 'Mayans' (1993), pp. 172-173.
- ¹⁴⁹ Gossen, 'Who' (1996).
- ¹⁵⁰ (Autonomea), *¡Zapatistas!* (1994), p. 71.
- ¹⁵¹ Gossen, *Telling* (1999), pp. 6, 21-24, quote p. 25.

- ¹⁵² Alan Ereira, *From the Heart of the World. The Elder Brother's Warning*, Videofilm VHS 88 Min., BBC London 1990.
- ¹⁵³ Edmonson, 'Mayan Faith' (1993), p. 71.
- ¹⁵⁴ This is from D. Tedlock, *Breath* (1993); also, Gossen, 'Who' (1996) and his 'Maya Zapatistas' (1996), or, *Telling* (1999).
- ¹⁵⁵ From the second communiqué packet that the EZLN released to the Press. This is a packet that circulates among many journalists and even scientists. It contains of letters and documents dated January 17 to January 26, 1994.
- ¹⁵⁶ Vogt, 'Possible Sacred Aspects' (1994), p. 34.
- ¹⁵⁷ Womack, *Zapata* (1969). Despite its age, the book is still considered to be one of the major studies on Emiliano Zapata.
- ¹⁵⁸ *La Jornada*, April 11, 1994. The names appear of Miguel Hidalgo, José María Morelos and Vicente Guerrero, heroes of the Independence movement of 1810-21. Also mentioned is Benito Juárez of the Reform Movement in the 1870s, the great hero of the Mexican nation, and Emiliano Zapata and Francisco Villa.
- ¹⁵⁹ D. Tedlock, *Breath* (1993); also the essays in Danien and Sharer, eds, *New Theories* (1992). This story grasped the minds of speculative writers like Constance Irwin, *Fair Gods and Stone Face* (1963), and Peter Tompkins, *Mysteries of the Mexican Pyramids* (1976).
- ¹⁶⁰ At least, Maya archaeologist Michael Coe called the book as such; D. Tedlock, *Breath* (1993), pp. 37-58.
- ¹⁶¹ D. Tedlock, *Breath* (1993), see pp. 37-44. Also the next paragraphs are paraphrased from this source.
- ¹⁶² Van Oss, 'Catholic Colonialism' (1982), pp. 18-25.
- ¹⁶³ Acuña, ed., *Relaciones* (1982), pp. 88.
- ¹⁶⁴ Information from Miller and Taube, *Gods* (1993), p. 172.
- ¹⁶⁵ Miller and Taube, *Gods* (1993), pp. 82-83, 172-173.
- ¹⁶⁶ Information from Miller and Taube, *Gods* (1993), pp. 65, 134-136, 175. Also: Freidel, Schele and Parker, *Maya Cosmos* (1993); Taube, *Legendary Past* (1993), pp. 53-67; D. Tedlock, *Breath* (1993); B. Tedlock, *Time* (1992).
- ¹⁶⁷ Gossen, 'Who' (1996).
- ¹⁶⁸ Gossen, 'Other' (1993), pp. 462-468, also in *Telling* (1999).
- ¹⁶⁹ On this, see the summary in Gossen, 'Who' (1996), and several chapters in his book *Telling* (1996).
- ¹⁷⁰ (Autonome media), *¡Zapatistas!* (1994), p. 11.
- ¹⁷¹ Published on Februari, 4, 1994.
- ¹⁷² Gossen, 'Who' (1996).
- ¹⁷³ Gossen, 'Maya Zapatistas' (1996), p. 536.
- ¹⁷⁴ Vogt, 'Possible' (1994)
- ¹⁷⁵ Camacho was appointed the mayor of Mexico City and served until 1993. He resigned indignant that Salinas had not designated him the PRI Presidential candidate. The candidate, Luis Donald Colosio, was shot that same year.
- ¹⁷⁶ Published as 'Compromisos por la Paz', *Perfil de la Jornada* 3 de marzo 1994. See also Stephen, 'Construction' (1999).
- ¹⁷⁷ Also Stephen, 'Zapatista Opening' (1997), pp. 27-36.
- ¹⁷⁸ Stephen and Collier, 'Reconfiguring Ethnicity' (1997), p. 11.
- ¹⁷⁹ Mattiace, '¡Zapata Vive!' (1997), p. 44.

- ¹⁸⁰ Mattiace, '¡Zapata Vive!' (1997), p. 53. Also Stephen, 'Redefined Nationalism' (1997).
- ¹⁸¹ See Stephen, 'Zapatista Opening' (1997), p. 26.
- ¹⁸² See on this, among others, Elguea, 'Sangriento camino' (1994). This is a summary of his book *The Bloody Road to Utopia. Development Wars in Latin America*.
- ¹⁸³ Testimony published in *Ojarasca*, March 1994.
- ¹⁸⁴ Earle, 'Indigenous Identity' (1994), p. 26, see also p. 27.

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- ¹⁸⁵ Sebeok, *Signs* (1994), pp. 43-60.
- ¹⁸⁶ Rappaport, *Ritual* (1999), p. 11.
- ¹⁸⁷ Eco, *Theory* (1979/76), pp. 6-7, also frequently in *Zeichen* (1977/73).
- ¹⁸⁸ From Rappaport, *Ritual* (1999), p. 56.
- ¹⁸⁹ Derrida, 'Structure, Sign, and Play' (1978/67), also in *Of Grammatology* (1976/67).
- ¹⁹⁰ Gossen, *Telling* (1999), suggests something like this.
- ¹⁹¹ Lang, 'Adopted' (1994).
- ¹⁹² See also Parmentier, *Sacred Remains* (1988)
- ¹⁹³ Harris, *Nurture* (1999/98), pp. 2-7, 352-353.
- ¹⁹⁴ Harris, *Nurture* (1999/98), pp. 38-40, 45-49, reference to E.E. Maccoby and J.A. Martin, 'Socialization in the Context of the Family: Parental Interaction', in: E.M. Hetherington, ed., *Handbook of Child Psychology Volume Four: Socialization, Personality, and Social Development*, New York 1983, pp. 1-101, quote from p. 82; also *Nurture* pp. 50-51 reference to B.R. Gottlieb, 'Abortion 1995', *New England Journal of Medicine* 332 (1995), pp. 532-533, and S. Golombok *et al.*, 'Families Created by the New Reproductive Technologies: Quality of Parenting and Social Emotional Development of the Children', *Child Development* 66 (1995), pp. 285-298; and *Nurture* pp. 42-44, reference to C. Ernst and J. Angst, *Birth Order. Its Influence on Personality*, Berlin 1983.
- ¹⁹⁵ Martin and Ringham, *Dictionary* (2000), p. 34.
- ¹⁹⁶ McCrone, 'Bifold' (1999), p. 245.
- ¹⁹⁷ Hogg and Vaughan, *Social Psychology* (1995).
- ¹⁹⁸ Schacter, *Searching* (1996); Riccio, *et al.*, 'Memory' (1994); Zimbardo and Leippe, *Psychology* (1991), pp. 187, 256-257
- ¹⁹⁹ Atkinson, *et al.*, *Hilgard's* (1996), pp. 594-596; Cole, *Cultural Psychology* (1996), pp. 125-126; Fiske and Taylor, *Social Cognition* (1991); S. Fiske, 'Social Cognition' (1993); Klein and Loftus, 'Nature' (1988); Klein, *et al.*, 'Two' (1989).
- ²⁰⁰ Cole, *Cultural Psychology* (1996), pp. 119-120; also Schacter, *Searching* (1996).
- ²⁰¹ Yzerbyt, *et al.*, 'Stereotypes' (1997), p. 34; Jost and Banaji, 'Role' (1994).
- ²⁰² Sperber, *Explaining* (1996), p. 32.
- ²⁰³ Sperber, *Explaining* (1996), p. 24.

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