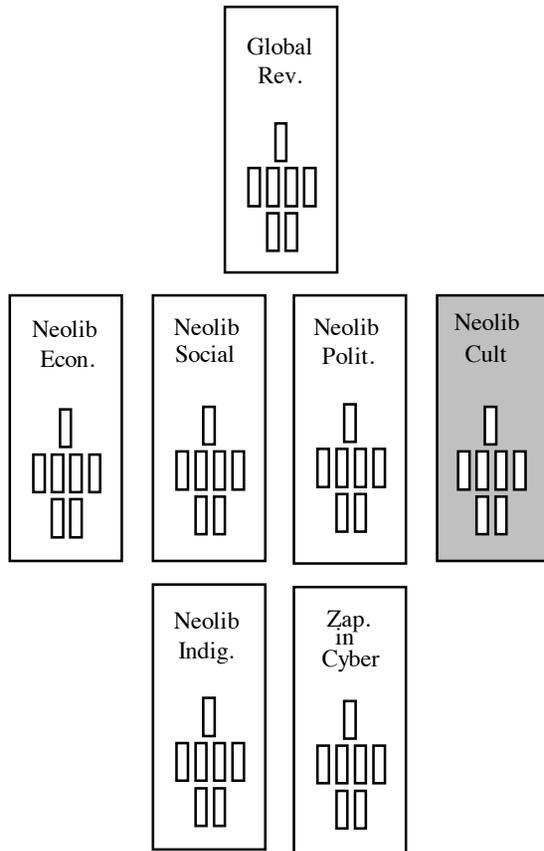


Neoliberalism: Cultural Aspects

One of a series of interconnected notes prepared by **Acción Zapatista de Austin** (www.utexas.edu/students/nave)



Neoliberalism and Culture

As the current phase of capitalism, neoliberalism necessarily involves the manipulation of culture for purposes of domination and subordination. Understood as a dynamic and plural process, "culture" refers to all of those ways in which we make sense of the world: images, stories, desires, identities, intellectual work, spiritual development and aesthetic undertakings. Emerging historically in response to a cycle of struggle that included very powerful cultural components, neoliberalism has sought to commodify, instrumentalize or destroy all those cultural activities that have undermined capitalism while pushing the human experience in new directions.

Thus, in response to the struggles of cultural and ethnic "minorities" for a true cultural pluralism where their differences are accepted and valued, neoliberalism has responded with educational and corporate multiculturalism within which these differences are given token recognition within a context of accentuated hierarchy. In the US Chicanos are allowed to honor labor leader Cesar Chavez while, at the same time, racism is intensified against *Mexicanos* along the border. Cable TV allows local communities some autonomous cultural expression, while an increasingly concentrated corporate culture industry pumps a flood of Western images, narratives and worldviews into the rest of the world -- accentuating the marginalization of that autonomy. Such cultural strategies amount to a new stage of what we might call the flexible homogenization of world culture.

Resisting Neoliberal Culture

Such cultural strategies, however, have not succeeded in reducing everyone to passive subjects or co-optable active ones. People continue to maintain and invent alternative cultural traditions of resistance and "do not plan to die though they may be killed." New intersections between people in the North and South produce ungovernable alliances. Autonomous desires continue to produce values and social relations to which business has always been hostile, including sisterhood and brotherhood and the formation of communities where individuals can define themselves beyond consumerism within collective, shared, and idiosyncratic frames.

Against the business reduction of cultural difference to trivial variations among similar commodities, the valuing and respecting of differences among groups has become an essential political priority. The multiple Zapatista

initiatives to call upon ALL sectors of civil society is culturally as well as politically instructive. This directs us to the experiences of everyday life, which is precisely where a revolution to make possible a revolution must occur, which is to say, ... a revolution in culture. The homogenizing and universalizing forces of business and its Left mirror must give way to endless dialogue and the elaboration of new non-hierarchical relations across cultural difference. This too is Zapatismo!

Cultural Struggle

Axes of differentiation such as gender, sexuality, and ethnicity are constitutive of cultures, even when they regard themselves as unified and insular. Cultural projects of discovering, telling, and revaluing denigrated identities and histories is absolutely essential to the political project of creating the space within which a dialogue can take place between equal political subjects. Thus our struggle against global, neoliberal capital must confront sexism, racism, homophobia, casteism, and religious/ethnic violence, all of which intersect to form the existing structures of domination. At the same time, we must also undertake the very difficult work of translation across sectors and positions, a project that seeks interconnectedness within the context of autonomy.

Essential to the further elaboration of cultural struggles is the democratization of the means through which people can become cultural producers and have access to a range of audiences. New media technologies, like the Internet (and related computer projects like ZAPNET! on CD-ROM), micro radio, public access cable and satellite stations, and cheap video equipment for popular filmmaking, all offer the potential for extending the means of cross-cultural expression to hitherto excluded voices. To create more space for such activities we can also fight for a roll-back of the current concentrated corporate domination of the means of cultural expression.

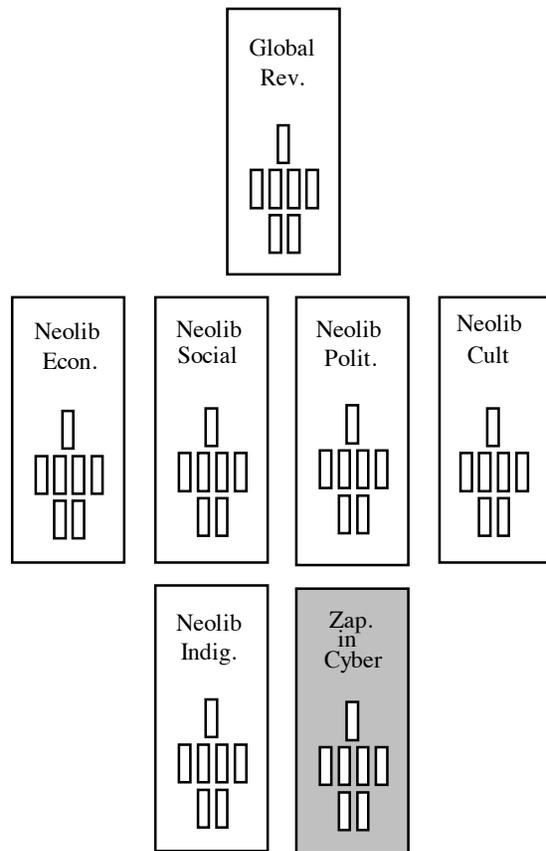
In cultures based on the domination of many by the few differences are manipulated to divide and conquer. This necessarily involves the creation or reinforcement of hostility and intolerance toward those outside particular traditions. In a truly pluricultural world, differences can be valued as essential stimuli to mutual development. Such a new political culture has been under construction for some time. Its development is an essential component of rebuilding the world exemplary model of this movement. This forum allows for permanent dialog among indigenous communities and opportunities for joint action against potentially devastating neoliberal policies at both local and national levels.

"It is necessary to construct a new political culture.... There are no recipes, lines, strategies, tactics, laws, regulations or universal slogans. There is only one desire: to construct a better world, that is, a new one."
Subcomandante Marcos, May 1996

Neoliberalism:

Zapatismo in Cyberspace

One of a series of interconnected notes
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Communications and Popular Struggles

Talking to one another is a human quality. Innovation in the means of communication has derived from repeated human inventiveness. Within capitalism, however, such innovation has fallen prey to greed and commodification. Mail, telegraph, telephone, radio, television, and fax have all been turned into industries dominated by business and further developments in their technologies manipulated for profit. Groups in struggle have often been able to find ways to use these means of communication for their own purposes but they have been forced to operate in the shadow of business control (e.g., public access TV on the margin of the networks and cable companies). As business has followed its normal path of increasing monopoly in each of these industries, people have been forced to seek new avenues of communication.

Computer Networks

The extremely rapid expansion of computer networks for purposes of communication can be seen, in part, as a response to such forces. Whereas access to radio and television broadcasting has been limited and the costs of long distance telephone and fax prohibitive for sustained interaction, computer networks have been created whole cloth and have provided a dynamic new means of grassroots organizing and solidarity among geographically dispersed groups.

Prior to the Zapatista uprising, computer networks had been utilized extensively by grassroots groups in Canada, the US and Mexico to oppose NAFTA. After January 1, 1994 both pre-existing and newly created networks in cyberspace made possible a mobilization and coordination of solidarity that helped limit the Mexican government's military offensive and made possible the opening of a political terrain where the Zapatistas soon out-classed the government and its apologists.

Computer communications have by no means replaced other essential forms of organizing, from face to face encounters to radio programs, underground newspaper articles, revolutionary artwork, music and the occasional TV show. But computers have made possible a more rapid dissemination of information and analysis than has ever been possible in grassroots movements. Not only has dissemination been fast, but the ease of archiving in gopher and web sites has made possible the creation of easily accessible reservoirs of information unlike anything we have had before.

Zapatismo in Cyberspace

Computers have also made possible a new kind of organizing very much in keeping with the spirit of Zapatista organizing in Chiapas. Computer networks allow the creation of a rapid and free flowing fabric of democratic communication and cooperation. Unlike traditional organizations which have tended to have rigid, top-down hierarchical structures -- including revolutionary organizations-- this electronic fabric of organization is a horizontal networking with infinite cross-linking. Efforts to IMPOSE hierachial structures in cyberspace are very difficult because participants can easily abandon such a terrain and create their own new contacts, lists, conferences or newsgroups.

Inspired by the Zapatista struggle, and by accounts of direct democracy in Zapatista communities, people all over the world are using the Net not only for solidarity but also for discussing the meaning of these new approaches to organizing and democracy outside of Chiapas. All of this suggests not only that the Net has become an important vehicle for the rapid circulation of struggle but that it is also circulating new ideas and new approaches to struggle. The active role of the Net in the preparation of the Continental and Intercontinental Encuentros demonstrates vividly its potential in creating an international movement of complementary local struggles against neoliberalism and for new ways of life.

The Net and a New Global Movement

If a great weakness of contemporary struggles against neoliberalism around the globe is their isolation, then the Net provides an important vehicle for linkage. Those struggles which can access the Net, can have frequent and efficient contact with others in such a way as to feel a part of a global movement. They can know quickly what is being done elsewhere and can act accordingly. Those struggles which do not have access can, of course, use more traditional and slower methods to achieve the same end --but the efficiency of computer networks suggests that their extension to all communities around the globe should be an urgent priority. NOTE BENE: we emphasize the importance of collective access to the Net rather than individual access because acquiring it can be achieved more quickly and because not everyone will either need or want to be involved in this aspect of organizing and struggle.

For more information visit the Accion Zapatista home page which contains links to many other pro-Zapatista web sites and information about participating in Net activism: (<http://www.utexas.edu/students/nave>)

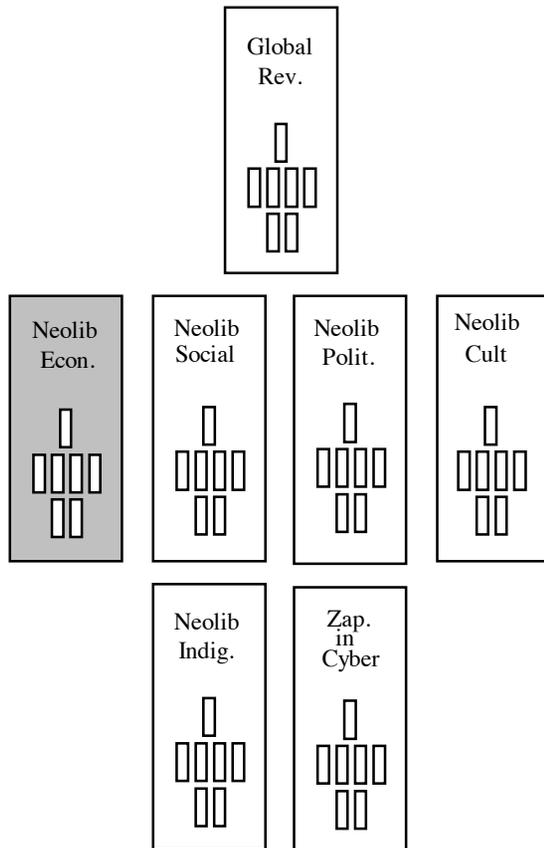
“What governments should really fear is a revolutionary expert in communications technology.”

El Sup

Neoliberalism:

Economic Aspects

One of a series of interconnected notes prepared by Acción Zapatista de Austin (www.utexas.edu/students/nave)



“Neoliberalism is the chaotic theory of economic chaos, the stupid exaltation of social stupidity, and the catastrophic political management of catastrophe.”

Don Durito of the Lacandon, July 17, 1995

Neoliberal Economics

Neoliberalism is a variation on the classical liberalism of the 19th Century when British and other imperialisms used the ideology of competition and “free trade” to justify their own colonialisms. Anti-colonial revolt ended the empires. Worker revolt in the 1930s and anti-colonial struggles ended classical liberalism but was contained by Keynesianism: government management of the wage, the welfare state and “development.” An international cycle of worker, student, peasant, woman, and pro-ecology revolt in the 1960s ended Keynesianism which was replaced by neoliberalism.

Neoliberalism has been designed, pushed and implemented by some of the biggest, most powerful institutions in the world, beginning with the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank. Think tanks, university departments and government agencies house an international army of neoliberal architects, planners and apologists --backed up by the armed might of the state in all its forms. This history suggests that defeating neoliberalism will not be enough, we must go beyond reformism to defeat all forms of capitalism.

Neoliberalism is both an ideology and a strategy. Like so many criminals, it has many aliases, “Reaganomics,” “Thatcherism,” “supply-side economics,” “monetarism,” “new classical economics,” and “structural adjustment.” The ideology of neoliberalism is the worship of the “market” and subordination of all other economic actors to its demands, including government and individuals. The strategy of neoliberal economics includes privatization, reduced social expenditures, union busting, land enclosure, lower wages, higher profits, free trade, free capital mobility and the accelerated commodification of nature.

The Impact of Neoliberal Economics

Neoliberal economics empowers and enriches big business -- especially multinational corporations-- and impoverishes damned near everyone else, including workers, peasants, the middle class and small business. Governments’ debt reduction policies shift income and wealth from wages to profits. Slashed food subsidies, welfare payments and education funding cut the floor from under the labor force. Anti-inflation is a euphemism for anti-wage. Monetary policies attack wages through high interest rates and high unemployment. Unemployment, reduced wages and expensive credit all dramatically increase the amount of unwaged work we have to do to survive. Financial deregulation has diverted profits from new machines to all kinds of unproductive speculation.

Industrial restructuring breaks workers' power and increases that of corporate capital. Lower-waged workers and poorer communities are pitted against higher-waged workers & better off communities. The global effect is a downward leveling for most and increased power for capitalism. Underdevelopment has replaced development.

Resisting Neoliberal Economics

People are fighting back on every front. Most effective struggles have been collective. Efforts to reduce wages are resisted by rank & file workers. Efforts to reduce social expenditures are fought in legislatures and in the streets. Efforts to enclose free space are fought by peasants, urban squatters and cybernauts. Efforts to use new technologies to break workers' self-organization are resisted. Efforts to reduce wilderness and community lands to “natural resources” are fought by peasants and eco-warriors. Racist and xenophobic efforts to attack multinational workers (immigrants) are resisted by cross-border alliances. Efforts to monopolize the new informational industries are outflanked by freeware and the creation of new “spaces” in cyberspace.

Struggling Against Neoliberal Economics

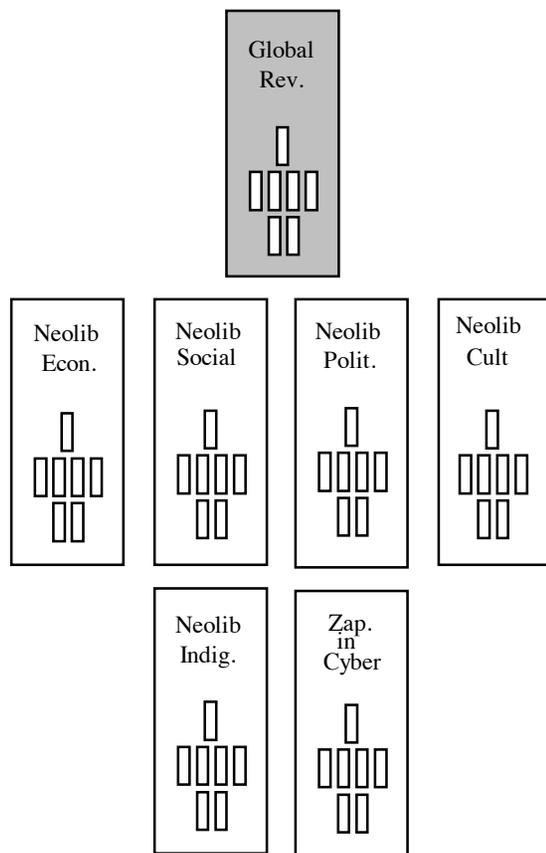
The strength of these struggles of resistance lies in their ability to recompose local social relations to block attacks while elaborating joint or complementary self-defined projects. A weakness is their isolation and separation from each other. We must organize our struggles across regions, sectors, habits and languages through linkages that can achieve a level of global collaboration capable of stopping the global capitalist offensive which oppresses us. The very global scope of neoliberalism creates a fundamental vulnerability: the existence of a common enemy. Not only can its institutions be targeted, e.g., the IMF and local governments, but its policies can be counter-attacked from every direction by all its would-be victims on the basis of their own values and alternative approaches to social organization.

We must also link those alternative new ways of organizing the genesis and distribution of wealth in ways that are complementary and capable of united action. There are many on-going experiments around the world whose experiences and creativity can be shared. This does not mean unity for socialism or any other unified post-capitalist “economic” order, but rather the elaboration of cooperative interconnections among diverse projects. Nor does it mean a delinked and divided localism. It means elaborating a new mosaic of interconnected alternative approaches to meeting our needs and elaborating our desires.

Neoliberalism:

Global Revolution

One of a series of interconnected notes
prepared by Acción Zapatista de Austin
(www.utexas.edu/students/nave)



Revolutionary change “is about a process which incorporates different methods, different fronts, different and various levels of commitment and participation...[it] is no longer the problem of THE organization, THE method, THE caudillo.”
Don Durito of the Lacandon, June 11, 1995

Reform and Revolution

Neoliberalism is a form of capitalism. Each time mass movements have successfully fought against earlier forms of capitalist exploitation the system has metamorphosed and survived. In the 1930s, North America and European workers fought arbitrary management and periodically devastating unemployment. They demanded control over their work, steadily rising wages, full employment, unemployment compensation, paid vacations and collective voices in social policy and politics. They got Keynesianism: trade unions which collaborated with management, productivity deals that ignored their growing needs for free time, and in general government policies structured in favor of business but wrapped in the rhetoric of a “welfare state” for all. Out and out revolution has been subdued into reform. Mexican, Russian and Chinese peasants and workers who fought revolutionary wars for bread and land, dignity and justice found themselves saddled with a kind of state capitalism where revolution survived only as rhetoric and reforms were structured for the most rapid accumulation of capital possible. Anti-colonial struggles resulted in neo-colonialism ---a change in form but not in substance. The implication is clear: we must change everything, everywhere, i.e., achieve a real revolution.

Struggling Against Neoliberalism

A great weakness of our existing struggles against neoliberalism is our isolation from each other. The business interests and policies which have crafted and imposed neoliberalism are, unfortunately, much more united and coherent than we have been. Neoliberalism has been designed, pushed and implemented by some of the biggest, most powerful institutions in the world. Overcoming our own fragmentation does not require creating similarly concentrated institutions of power but rather elaborating a different kind of unity on as great a scale.

Organizing need not mean creating AN organization. Organizations tend to become bureaucratized, rigid and unresponsive to the evolving needs of organizing --witness the recurrent efforts to “reform” trade unions, etc. Better that we undertake a process of global organizing that consists of establishing linkages among variously organized local struggles and broader movements with the object of accelerating the circulation of struggles and the capacity to undertake joint or complementary actions.

In the past revolutionary efforts have sought “unity”

through the promulgation and adherence to ideologies. We have learned the hard way that this doesn't work. We humans, our ideas, our cultures, our ways of doing things are extremely diverse. Efforts to homogenize us are doomed to fail. Instead, we need to seek a more organic unity, like that of the divergent but complementary life forms that evolve to constitute a self-sustaining ecology.

Communication and the Circulation of Struggle

Struggles against capitalism have always circulated. In the past they have followed or ruptured the circuits of capital itself. Struggles in different areas have been mediated and affected each other through trade and investment. Sailors and immigrants have carried their experiences and practices of struggle from place to place, and sometimes back again. With the development of increasingly rapid means of communication such circulation has accelerated. Trains and automobiles have permitted both news and organizers to circulate more rapidly. Telephone, mass media and fax have each, in turn been used to accelerate the circulation of understanding and cooperation of those in struggle. In the last few years computer networks have dramatically accelerated this process and their spread has made increasingly global complementarity and coordination possible. The mobilization of worldwide support for the Zapatistas has been a vivid demonstration of the usefulness of this new technology.

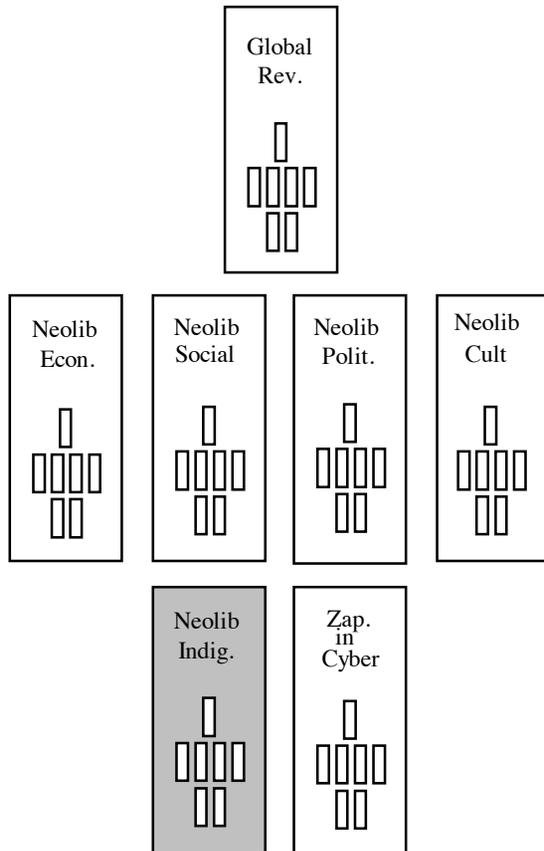
Defining our Desires

To be global a revolution need not happen everywhere, all at once. It suffices that struggles intensify, link and expand, accelerating each other and multiplying to rip apart the sinews of business and empire faster than they can be reformed. For this to happen people need to be clear not only about the kinds of social, economic, political and cultural relationships that they want to abolish but also about those they wish to elaborate and develop. Although moments of revolutionary upheaval are vastly creative, that creativity springs from existing struggles renewed by collective energy. One of the most exciting things today is the plethora of alternatives that are being elaborated. New kinds of human relationships, new kinds of relationships between humans and the rest of nature, new forms of politics, new kinds of families, new approaches to learning, new ways of caring and sharing. The problem of revolution is that of freeing these diverse processes of invention from the stultifying bonds of business: commodification, a one-dimensional measure of value, profit maximization and above all, the subordination of life to endless work.

Neoliberalism:

Identity Aspects

One of a series of interconnected notes prepared by Acción Zapatista de Austin (www.utexas.edu/students/nave)



Neoliberalism and Identity

Neoliberalism's most dramatic impact on indigenous communities has been its attack on their access to land. Throughout North America NAFTA has provided a rationale for new enclosures of indigenous lands for purposes of commercial exploitation. In Canada indigenous land claims are being overridden with growing ferocity. In the US efforts to privatize public lands and commercialize indigenous ones are rampant. In Mexico the privatization of *ejidal* lands is aimed at their concentration in the hands of agribusiness. On a world scale the GATT has provided a rationale for the enclosure of all public and indigenous lands and the reduction of life everywhere to private property exploitable for private gain. Such enclosure degrades all of nature to a mere "natural resource" to be raped via mining, clear cutting, ranching, the rip off of indigenous knowledge or genetic engineering. But such enclosures not only destroy the land, its flora and fauna, mountains, river systems and oceans. It also wipes out the material foundations of indigenous community survival and cultural development.

As a replacement for the cultures undermined, and for the self-determined identities of those excluded from the land, neoliberalism offers only the hollow rhetoric of development and a new identity of "homo economicus" --the selfish economic person without ties to others and standing alone in work and consumption. The rhetoric is hollow because it hides a vast concentration of wealth and spreading poverty. Homo economicus is not only an impoverished abstraction but even the usual formulation of "consumer" rings false amidst starvation wages and endless work for the wealthy.

Indigenous Resistance to Neoliberalism

From local artisan and farming cooperatives to human rights watchgroups and armed guerrilla movements, indigenous peoples throughout the Americas have organized themselves to resist such attacks. Local coalitions have merged to form multi-ethnic alliances and multi-national organizations that recognize the common struggles that all indigenous and subordinate groups face. The Foro Nacional Indigena in Mexico stands as an

exemplary model of this movement. This forum allows for permanent dialog among indigenous communities and opportunities for joint action against potentially devastating neoliberal policies at both local and national levels.

Decades of repression and subsequent political struggle have developed strong, vibrant and militant indigenous movements that present sophisticated, well-organized challenges to the capitalist system and the new era of neoliberal policymaking. Because of their well-developed sense of purpose, of the clarity of their autonomous conceptions of alternative, non-capitalist ways of being and doing, the influence of these indigenous movements has reached far beyond their own communities and organizations. Their ideas and self-activity have come to provide models of organization against neoliberalism for others engaged against the same enemy. Perhaps most obvious in this regard has been the struggles of those concerned with ecological degradation who have often looked to the indigenous for alternative approaches to the relations between humans and nature.

Indigenous Leadership Against Neoliberalism

With the development of the struggles against neoliberalism around the world, growing numbers have also come to appreciate the politics of indigenous networking: collaboration with respect for autonomy and new, creative ways of discussing democracy, justice and peace. Through their discussions of self-determination and democratic practices rooted in community-level cultural, political and economic traditions and needs, the international indigenous movement has reinvigorated debates over developing democratic practices and alternative community consciousness in many non-indigenous left and radical communities.

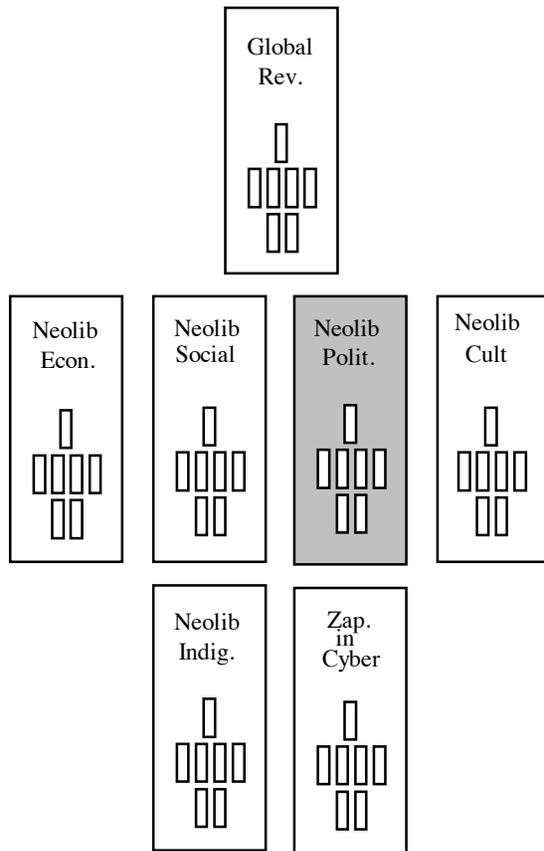
The indigenous movement has placed community autonomy at the center of the development of democratic practices and the renewal of community consciousness and identity. Indigenous autonomy goes beyond simple economic self-determination to include social, cultural, legal and political community autonomy. This notion of autonomy recognizes local and ethnic differences and is not based on a universal notion of rights, needs, culture and desires but on a plurality of political, economic and cultural systems. This conception of autonomy allows for a radical pluralism that accepts and fosters both differences and dialog among people everywhere --an essential ingredient of a better world.

"In my view it was the reform of Article 27 that most radicalized the *compañeros*. That reform closed the door on the Indigenous people's strategies for surviving legally and peacefully. That's why they rose up in arms."
Subcomandante Marcos

Neoliberalism:

Political Aspects

One of a series of interconnected notes prepared by Acción Zapatista de Austin (www.utexas.edu/students/nave)



Liberalism

NEO-liberalism is a “new” classical liberalism in its political as well as economic aspects. Classical liberalism was long the core of Western capitalist ideology. Portraying the world as made up of myriad individuals following their own selfish interests, it provided a rationale for replacing both feudal and communal structures with market capitalism and various kinds of pro-capitalist government. Political life came to be organized through formal elections controlled by professional parties --usually organized around a more or less shared ideology. Behind a facade of pluralism, democracy was confined to those allowed to vote and to lobbying for those who could afford it.

As a result representative democracy as we have known it has been neither representative nor democratic. Democracy has been primarily a spectacle rather than a process through which people control their own destinies. This has been true whether one party has put on the show or many parties have collaborated. (So that shifts from one party states to multiparty systems --as in the ex-Soviet bloc or Mexico-- hold little hope of substantially increasing democracy.)

Despite these structures workers and peasants have won some concessions from the state, usually through non-electoral mass movements. Success in such efforts in the 1930s produced the Keynesian welfare state of the post-WWII period --one that sought to structure capitalist development around conceded improvements in the standard of living. Civil rights movements in the 60s opened the vote to new citizens and garnered new concessions. Eventually, such movements drove beyond the welfare state and threw it into crisis.

Neoliberalism and Democracy

Today, in the wake of the crisis of Keynesianism, neoliberalism rationalizes the destruction not only of traditional communities but of government social programs won in past struggles to protect people from market forces. It seeks to impose market value in every sphere of life. Nature, pollution, human welfare, education and all social behavior are measured purely by their contribution to profit-making in the most insane capitalist hysteria the world has known.

Neoliberal shifting of public programs to the private sphere has sought to remove all protection from market forces. Shifting power from legislative to executive branches has reduced the effectiveness of grassroots lobbying. The use of mass media to dominate electoral

debate has concentrated power in the hands of those with money and strengthened the monopoly of political parties and corporate backers.

Resisting Neoliberal Politics

All these changes have been resisted, sometimes on a piecemeal basis, e.g., the effort to protect socially beneficial programs, sometimes structurally, e.g., efforts to defend what little democracy there is in contemporary political systems. There has been more success in these struggles than is often recognized. If we compare what the neoliberals have wanted to do with what they have been able to do so far, we can see the extent of their failures. A major problem with most of these struggles of resistance, however, is that by accepting the framework of the system itself they have only been able to hope for marginal reforms. The best ways to resist neoliberalism lie outside and against its own undemocratic framework.

How to Struggle Against Neoliberal Politics

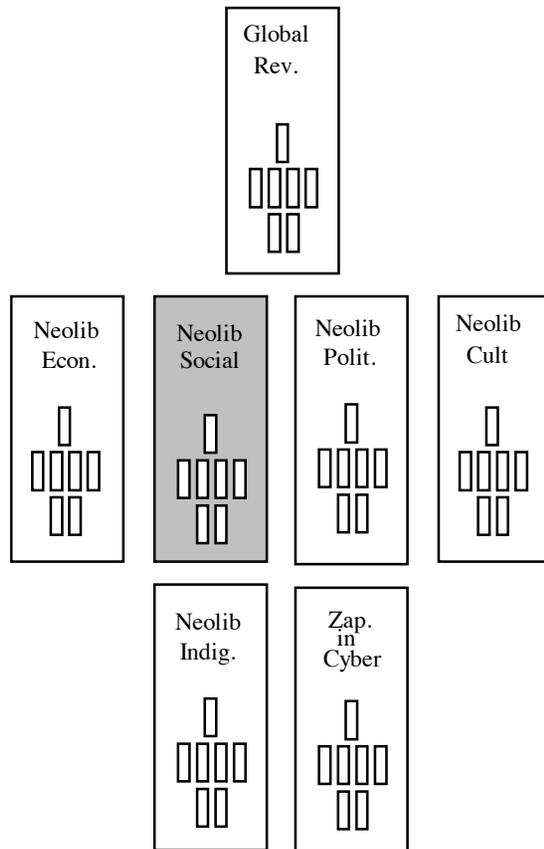
What this history of liberal, Keynesian and neoliberal politics teaches is the need to fundamentally transform the structures of politics: the ways through which people come together to make collective, public decisions about how they live. The democratic facade of professional politics must be ripped away and new kinds of democratic politics invented. While ideologically based parties may survive, they must be demoted to only one form of collective self-organization among others within a truly democratic system. There are alternatives. A wide variety of political self-activity demanding a more participatory democracy contributed to the demise of Keynesianism and defies neoliberal attempts to repress or co-opt it.

Political struggle today must carve out more space for such self-activity to elaborate and consolidate itself, on all levels, in every aspect of society. The Indigenous people of Chiapas have articulated the conceptual and organizational key to real democracy quite clearly: autonomy. The way to organize it varies widely but the autonomy of communities, of ethnic and linguistic groups, of regions and other self-defined groupings is the only possible basis for a true pluralism, a neo-pluralism which is truly democratic. Autonomy does not mean the abolition of politics or the fragmentation of societies. Politics is an inescapable element of human social life. The politics of autonomy simply refuses the structuring of this dynamic through the imposition of a pervasive set of universal rules of value and behavior. Instead, it celebrates a vision of endless dialog and interaction within an ever-changing community of communities, both locally and on a world scale.

“A profound and radical change of all the social relations in today’s Mexico is necessary. A revolution is necessary, a new revolution. This revolution is possible only from outside the system of the Party-State.”
Don Durito of the Lacandon, June 11, 1995

Neoliberalism: Social Aspects

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(www.utexas.edu/students/nave)



Neoliberalism

Neoliberalism as an ideology contains meanings, ideas, and values based on the social tenets of classical liberalism: the free market, individualism, the pursuit of narrow self interest and the proposition that these will lead to the social good. Neoliberalism also supplies a repertoire of strategies through which people may be dominated, subordinated, assimilated and excluded. A response to an earlier cycle of struggle by workers, students, women, minorities and peasants which threw an earlier stage of capitalism into crisis, neoliberalism seeks to disempower all of these groups by converting their differences into antagonisms along lines of income, race, gender and ethnicity.

Neoliberalism's neoconservative public policies undermine the middle class while redirecting their fear of decline against those struggling further down the wage hierarchy. Cuts in social programs and legal rights aim to disempower grassroots movements, leaving them vulnerable to the demands of big business. Struggles for equality are attacked through the criminalization of affirmative action. Victories for cultural heterogeneity in school systems and universities are countered by reducing the diversity of faculty, curriculum and funded programs. Women's reproductive freedom, sexual liberation and economic independence have come under especially ferocious attack by the organized Christian right. Homophobia has also been given religious sanction to roll back gay rights through private violence and public law. Xenophobic nationalism has been used to foster an anti-immigrant hysteria and fear of people of color. Such efforts have produced walled and guarded suburban communities and work places.

Neoliberalism and Violence

Central to the creation of such antagonisms is violence, both manifest and structural. Manifest or physical violence has been enacted legally through the terrorism of public executions, mass incarcerations, and the militarization of many communities and the border. It has been enacted illegally through private lynchings, rape, police beatings and paramilitary shootings and burnings. Structural violence, both economic and social, has been accentuated through symbol, ideology and policy to subject some to poverty, hunger, avoidable disease, under-education, peonage and disfranchisement while only threatening others with these horrors. Despite a pervasive rhetoric calling for the limitation of government, the state

has actually increased its intrusive role in society through the war on drugs, public surveillance and police and military intervention at home and abroad. The Army, INS, FBI and other military units and police agencies have opened low intensity war on the border and in urban areas with such operations as Operation Hammer, Operation Rock Crusher, and Operation Hold the Line. Rapidly multiplying prisons and work camps house growing numbers of young people of color criminalized for their youth, associations with alternative communities and attempts to exploit lucrative illicit markets.

Resistance

Resistance to all this manifest and structural violence has been both individual and collective. The most effective efforts have been based in earlier struggles where people learned to work together in autonomous informal networks, communities and social spaces that accepted difference and diversity. It has not been easy for neoliberals to roll back the gains of the 1960s and 1970s. People have resisted attacks on wages, social expenditures and free time through work slow downs, theft, sabotage and riot. Others have exploited alternative markets through illicit trade and underground systems of redistribution. Still others have elaborated evolving cultural critiques through music, art and theater.

Struggle Against Neoliberal Social Policies

Overcoming neoliberal social policies depends on the creative transformation of traditional institutions into new social networks which allow people to control their own learning, to redistribute their resources according to their needs and to enjoy difference without antagonism while pursuing the elaboration of their own desires. Many people have broken free from the traditional restrictive exaltation of the nuclear family by pursuing alternative lifestyles, living arrangements and social relationships. Others have openly challenged neoliberal values of private property, competition and emphasis on individual success through endless work and ostentatious consumption. Becoming a part of community organizations, centers and neighborhoods, they promote cooperative efforts in the production and distribution of necessities while reshaping their personal relationships into more self-empowering and mutually supportive forms. Many of these alternatives have incorporated a search for new approaches to the interrelationships between humans and the rest of nature. Successful abolition of neoliberal social policies can only come as all of these efforts to build a new world overshadow the old and provide the strength for its final destruction.

"It will primordially be a revolution that is the result of struggle on various social fronts, with many methods, under many social forms, with varying degrees of commitment and participation."
El Sup, January 20, 1994