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## Them and Us, Part VI: The Gaze Part 1

One may gaze to impose or gaze to listen.  
*Zapatista National Liberation Army*

*"For once I could say  
Without anyone contradicting me  
That he who desires something  
Is not the same as he who covets it  
Just like words said to be heard  
Are not the same  
As words said to be obeyed  
Just as he who speaks to me in order  
to tell me something  
Is not the same as  
He who speaks in order to make me be  
quiet."*

**Tomás Segovia.**

"Fourth Search" in "Searches and Other Poems" from the press that has the good taste to call itself "Nameless." Thanks and an embrace to María Luísa Capella, to Inés and Francisco (how good that dignified blood beats in their hearts) for the books and lyrics guide.

To gaze is a form of asking, we say, we the Zapatistas.

Or to search...

When gazing into the calendar and into the geography, however far one may be from the other, one asks, one interrogates.

And it is in this gaze where the other (*el otro, la otra lo otro*) appears. And it is in this gaze where the other exists, where they draw their profile as strange, as foreign, as enigma, as victim, as judge and executioner, as enemy...or as *compañer@*.

The gaze is where fear dwells, but it is also where respect can be born.

If we don't learn to see with the other's eyes, what sense can our own gaze have? Our questions?

Who are you?

What is your story?

Where is your pain?

When are your hopes?

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But it doesn't only matter at whom or at what you gaze. Also, and above all, it matters from where.

And choosing where to look is also choosing from where one is looking.

Or is it the same to see from above the pain of those who have lost those whom they love and need to senseless, inexplicable, and definitive death, as it is to see all this from below?

When someone from above looks at those below and asks, "how many?" what they are really asking is "how much are they worth?"

And if they aren't worth anything, what does it matter how many there are? To obscure this inconvenient number, we have the commercial media, the armies, the police, the judges, the prisons, the cemeteries.

And from our gaze, the answers are never simple.

To look at ourselves looking at what we look at gives us an identity that has to do with suffering and struggle, with our calendar and our geography.

Our strength, if we have one, is in this recognition: we are who we are, and there are others who are who they are, and others who we still don't have the words to name, and are nevertheless who they are. When we say "we" we are not absorbing and, in doing so, subordinating identities, but rather emphasizing the bridges that exist between different sufferings and different rebellions. We are equal because we are different.

In the Sixth, the Zapatistas, reiterate our rejection of any attempt at hegemony, that is, to say, any vanguardism, whether it places us at the forefront or alongside or, as over the course of these long centuries, at the rearguard.

If with the Sixth we search for our kin in sorrows and struggles, regardless of the calendars and geographies that distance us, it is because we know well that that the Ruler cannot be defeated with only one way of thinking, one force, one leadership (however revolutionary, consequential, radical, clever, numerous, powerful, daring, etc. it may be).

We have learned from our dead that diversity and difference are not a weakness for those below, but rather a strength from which to birth, from the ashes of the old, the new world that we want, that we need, that we deserve.

We know well that we are not the only ones who imagine this world. But in our dream, this world is not one, but many different, diverse worlds. And in their diversity lies their strength.

It is the repeated attempts to impose unanimity that have caused the machine to go mad and move closer, by the

minute, to the final moment of this civilization as we have known it.

In the current phase of neoliberal globalization, homogeneity is nothing other than mediocrity imposed as universal standard. And if it differs in any way from a Hitlerish madness, it is not in its objective but in the modernized means to achieve it.

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And yes, we are not the only ones who look for the how, the when, the where, the what.

You all, for example, are not *Them*. Well, although you don't seem to have any problem allying yourselves with *Them* in order to...deceive and defeat them from within? To be like *Them* but not as much as *Them*? To slow the speed of the machine, to file down the fangs of the beast, to humanize the savage?

Yes, we know. There are many arguments to sustain this line of thinking. In fact, you could even force a few examples.

But...

You tell us that we are equal, that we are trying to do the same thing, that we are in the same struggle, the same enemy... Hmm...no, actually you don't say "*enemy*," you say "*adversary*." Agreed, that also depends on the current context.

You say that we must all unite because there is no other path forward: it is either elections or arms. And you, who sustain your project through this false argument to invalidate anything that does not submit to the repeated spectacle of the politics of above, summon us: die or surrender. And you even offer us an pretext, arguing that, since this is about taking Power, there are only these two paths.

Ah! but we are so disobedient: we don't die, nor do we surrender. And, as was demonstrated on that day of the end of the world: neither electoral struggle nor armed struggle.

And what if it is not about taking Power? Or better: what if Power no longer resides in the Nation-State, that Zombie State populated by a parasitic political class that preys on the remains of the nations?

And if those voters that you are so obsessed with (and hence your fascination with the multitudes), do nothing other than vote for someone who others have already chosen, as has been demonstrated time and time again by *They* who amuse themselves with each new trick they invent?

Yes, of course, you hide behind your prejudices: those who don't vote? "*it is because they are apathetic, disinterested, uneducated, or because they're playing to the right*"...your ally if found in the many geographies, in more than a few calendars. Those who vote, but not for you? "*it is because*

*they are rightwing, ignorant, sell-outs, traitors, lowlifes, because they are zombies!"*

**Note from Marquitos Spoiler:** *Yes, we sympathize with the zombies, not only because of our physical resemblance, (even without makeup we would take every spot in the casting of "the Walking Dead"). Also, and above all, because we think, like George A. Romero, that, in a zombie apocalypse, the craziest brutality would be the work of the surviving civilization, not of the walking dead. And if some vestige of humanity survives, it will glow within the pariahs of always, the walking dead for whom the apocalypse begins at birth and never ends. As now occurs in any corner of any of the existing worlds. And there is no film, nor comic, nor television series that acknowledges this.*

Your gaze is full of contempt when you look below (even if that is in the mirror), and full of envy when you look above.

You can't even imagine that someone would have no other interest in looking "above" except to figure out how to get them off our back.

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The gaze. Toward where and from where. That is what separates us.

You believe that you are the only ones, we know that we are just one of many.

You look above, we look below.

You look for ways to make yourselves comfortable; we look for ways to serve.

You look for ways to lead, we look for ways to accompany.

You look at how much you earn, we at how much is lost.

You look for what is, we, for what could be.

You see numbers, we see people.

You calculate statistics, we, histories.

You speak, we listen.

You look at how you look, we look at the gaze.

You look at us and demand to know where we were when your calendar marked *your* "historic" urgency. We look at you and don't ask where you've been during these more than 500 years of history.

You look to see how you can take advantage of the current conjuncture, we look to see how we can create it.

You concern yourselves with the broken windows, we concern ourselves with the rage that broke it.

You look at the many, we at the few.

You see impassable walls, we see the cracks.

You look at possibilities, we look at what was impossible until the eve of its possibility.

You search for mirrors, we for windows.

You and us are not the same.

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You look at the calendar of above and subordinate to it the spring of mobilizations, the masses, the parties, the multitudinous rebellion, the streets overflowing with songs and colors, slogans, challenges, those who are now many more than one hundred and thirty- some, [i] the packed plazas, the ballot boxes anxious to be filled with votes, and you hurry because it-is-clear that – they lack a – leadership – revolutionary-party-a-politics-of-ample-flexible-alliances- because-the-electoral-is-their-natural-destiny-but-they-are-very-young-bourgeois-petit-bourgeois-spoiled kids- / -and then – lumpen – barrio – hood – prole – voting-numbers – potentials-ignorant-naïve – clumsy – stubborn, above all, stubborn. And in each mass action you see the culmination of the historic moment. And afterward, when there are no masses clamoring for a leader, nor ballot boxes, nor parties, you decide that it's over, no more, that maybe on another occasion, that we have to wait six years, six centuries, that we have to look elsewhere, but always to the calendar of above: party registration, political alliances, official posts.

And we, always with our crooked gaze, go back to the calendar, look for winter, swim upstream, passing the creek, arriving at the source. There we see those who begin, the few, the least. We don't speak to them, we don't greet them, we don't tell them what to do, we don't tell them what not to do. Instead, we listen, we look at them with respect, with admiration. And they, perhaps never notice this little red flower, so similar to a star, so tiny that it is only a pebble, which our hand leaves below, near their left foot. Not because we want to say to them that that flower-stone belonged to us, the (*las/los*) Zapatistas. Not so that they can take this pebble and throw it against something or someone, although there is not lack of desire or motive for that. But rather because maybe it is our way of telling them and all of our *compas* of the Sixth, that houses and worlds are built with tiny pebbles, and later they grow and almost no one remembers that what are now boulders began so tiny, as such small things, so useless, so alone. Along comes a (*un/ una*) Zapatista, and sees the pebble, and greets it, and sits by its side, but they don't talk, because the little stones, like the Zapatistas, don't speak...until they speak, and then, as the case may be, become quiet. And no, they are never quiet, what happens is that sometimes there is no one to listen. Or perhaps it is because we looked far ahead in the calendar and we knew, before, that this night was coming. Or perhaps because in this way we tell them, although they don't know it, but we know, that they are not alone. Because it is with the few that everything starts and restarts.

You did not see us before...and you continue not seeing us.

And above all, you don't see us watching you.

You don't see us looking at you in your arrogance, stupidly destroying bridges, digging up the paths, allying yourselves with our persecutors, scorning us. Convincing yourselves that that which does not exist in the media, simply does not exist.

You didn't see us watching you tell others and yourselves that that was how to remain on firm ground, that the possible is solid ground, telling them that you cut the oars of that absurd boat full of those absurd and impossible people, those crazy people (\*us) who remained adrift, isolated, alone, without direction, paying with our lives for sticking to our principles.

You could have seen the resurgence as part of your victories, and now you consider it as another one of your defeats.

Go, follow your path.

Don't listen to us, don't look at us.

Because with the Sixth and with the Zapatistas, you can't look or listen with impunity.

And this is either our virtue or our curse, depending on where you look, and, above all, from where your look arises.

(to be continued...)

From whatever corner, in whichever world.

SupMarcos.

Planet Earth.  
February 2013.

Translation by Translation by Kilombo Intergaláctico

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### Notes

1. Translator's Note: During a speech at the Universidad Iberoamericana during the presidential campaigns, then presidential candidate Enrique Peña Nieto (PRI) was confronted by students protesting events that occurred during his tenure as governor of Mexico State. Peña Nieto hid and eventually fled the University, but party affiliates later dismissed the protesters in the media as a handful of non-student opposition supporters that were sent to disturb the event. Iberoamericana students then made a youtube video in which 131 of them held up their university ID's and testified to their participation in the protest, sparking the name for a wider student movement "Yosoy#132," "Iam#132."

## Them and Us, Part VI: The Gaze Part 2

### To look and to listen from/toward below.

### *Zapatista National Liberation Army*

Can we still choose toward where and from where we look?

We could, for example, look at those who work in supermarket chains, scolding them for their complicity in the electoral fraud[i] and ridiculing them for the orange uniforms they must wear, or, we could look at the employee who, after cashing out...

*The cashier takes off her orange apron, grumbling her rage at being accused of complicity in the fraud that brought ignorance and frivolity into Power. A woman, young or old, single or divorced, a widower, a mother, a single mother, an expecting mother, a woman without children, or whatever the case may be. She starts work at 7 in the morning and is let out at 4 in the afternoon, if there are no overtime hours, that is. That's without counting the time it takes for her to get from home to work and back, and the time she spends afterward on school work or housework, that "women's-labor-that-one-can-do-with-a-bit-of-flair." She read this accusation of complicity in one of the magazines beside the cash register. They blame her, who supposedly they are going to save, it's just a question of a vote and ta-da, happiness. "What, do*

*they think the owners wear the orange apron?" she murmurs, irritated. She fixes herself up a bit from the purposeful disheveledness with which she arrives to work so that the manager doesn't hit on her. She leaves. Her partner is waiting for her outside. They hug, kiss, touch each other with a gaze, walk together. They enter an internet café or cybercafé or whatever you call it. 10 pesos per hour, 5 for a half hour...*

*"Half hour," they say, mentally calculating their budget-transit-time-metro-bus-walk.*

*"Cover me Roco, don't be a jerk," he says.*

*"Okay, but come mid-month you'd better come by and pay up or the owner will be all over me and it will be you covering me."*

*"Fine, I'll cover you, but it will be when you have a car, man, because I'm working at the car wash."*

*"Well wash it then man," Roco says.*

*The three of them laugh.*

*"Number 7," Roco says.*

*"Go ahead, look for it," she says.*

*He starts to put in a number.*

*"No," she says, "look for when this all started."*

*They search. They get to where there were just a few more than 131.[ii] They play the video.*

*"They're bourgeois" he says.*

*"Calm yourself, revolutionary vanguard. You're wrong in the head if you judge people on their appearance, look at how they call me white girl and bourgeois for having light skin, and don't see that I live paycheck to paycheck. You have to look at what each person does and where they come from, dummy," she says, giving him a smack upside the head.*

*They keep watching.*

*They watch, fall silent, listening.*

*"Well the fact that they went at him right to his face, to that Peña Nieto... they're brave, that's for sure, you can see they've got balls."*

*"Or ovaries, idiot," she gives him another smack.*

*"Keep that up princess, and I'm going to accuse you of interfamilial violence."*

*"It would be gender violence, idiot," and another smack.*

*They finish watching the video.*

*Him: "So that's where things started, with a handful of people who weren't scared."*

*Her: "Or they were scared, but they controlled it."*

*"Half hour!" Roco yells.*

*"Yeah, let's go."*

*She walks out smiling.*

*"Now what are you laughing at?" he asks.*

*"Nothing, I was just remembering," she walks closer to him, "that thing you said about 'interfamilial.' Does that mean you want us to be, like they say, a family?"*

*He doesn't even skip a beat.*

*"That's right my princess, I mean we're already headed there, that's what we're already doing, but without so many smacks on the head, make them kisses instead, lower and to the left."*

*"Hey don't mess with me man!" Another smack. "And enough of this "princess" stuff, aren't we against the fucking monarchy?"*

*Expecting an even bigger smack, he says: "Okay then, my... plebian."*

*She laughs, and he does too. After a few more steps, she says:*

*"So you think the Zapatistas will invite us?"*

*"Definitely, my buddy Vins said he's buddies with the sockface[iii] because he let him win at Mortal Combat, at the arcades, so we'll just say we're Vins' people and we're in," he explains enthusiastically.*

*"You think I'd be able to take my mother? She's getting pretty old..."*

*"Of course, with any luck my future mother-in-law will get stuck in the mud," he ducks the smack he expects but that doesn't come.*

*She's angry now:*

*"And what the hell are the Zapatistas going to give us if they're so far away? What, they're going to give me a better salary? Make people respect me? Make those fucking men stop looking at my ass in the street? Make the fucking boss stop using any pretext to touch me? Are they going to help me pay my rent? Buy my daughter or my son clothes? Are they going to bring the price down for sugar, beans, rice, oil? Are they going to make sure I have enough to eat? Are they going to confront the police that come every day to the barrio to harass and extort the vendors that sell pirated DVDs telling them that it's so they don't have to denounce them to Mr. or Mrs. Sony...?"*

*"It's not called 'piracy,' it's 'alternative production' my princ... plebian. Don't get all bent out of shape with me, we're on the same side."*

*But she's on a roll now and there's no stopping her:*

*"And for you, are they going to give your job back at the factory, where you were already certified as whatever-the-hell-it-was? Are they going to make your studies, all your training courses, worth something so that in the end that jackass of a boss takes the business who the hell knows where, along with the union and the strike and everything you did, so that you end up washing cars?" Or what about your buddy El Chompis, they took his job away and*

disappeared the official employment records so he can't even defend himself? And the government with its same story about how it's going to improve service and be world class and all that nonsense, and what about that stuff about lowering rates, now they're more expensive! And the electricity goes out all the time[iv] and fucking Calderón is going to go give classes on shamelessness to the gringos,[v] who are the real mothers of this mess. And my father, god bless his soul, who went to work on the other side [in the US], not as a tourist but in order to get some bread, some dough, some pay to maintain us when we were still real little, and when he was just crossing the border la migra [immigration agents] grabbed him like he was a terrorist rather than an honest worker and they never even gave us his body back and that fucking Obama whose heart appears to be the color of the dollar.

"Whoa, cool your jets, my plebian," he says.

"It's just that every time I even think about it I get angry, so much work and effort so that in the end those above end up with everything, the only thing left is for them to privatize laughter, although that's not probable because there is so little of it, but maybe they'll privatize tears, those are abundant, and they'll get rich... richer. And then you come with this stuff about the Zapatistas this and the Zapatistas that and that below and to the left and that the eighth..."

"The Sixth, not the eighth," he interrupts her.

"Whatever, if those guys are so far away and speak worse Spanish than you."

"Hey now, don't be mean."

She wipes away her tears and mutters: "Damned rain, it's ruined my Este Lauder and I had fixed myself up to please you."

"Ahhh but you please me without anything... especially clothes."

They laugh.

She says, very serious: "Well, then, tell me, are these Zapatistas going to save us?"

"No my plebian, they're not going to save us. That, among other things, we're going to have to do ourselves."

"So what then?"

"Well, they're going to teach us."

"And what are they going to teach us?"

"That's we're not alone [solos]."[vi]

She is quiet a moment. Then suddenly:

"Nor alone [solas],[vii] dummy," another smack.

The minibus is packed. They wait to see if the next one has room.

It is cold, rainy. They hug each other tighter, not to keep from getting wet, but rather to get wet together.

Far away someone waits, there is always someone waiting. And that someone waits, with an old pen and an old tattered notebook, keeping count of the gazes below that see themselves in a window.

(To be continued...)

From whatever corner, of whichever world.

SupMarcos.  
Planet Earth.  
January of 2013.

Translation by Translation by Kilombo Intergaláctico

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#### Notes

2. Translator's Note: The PRI was accused of buying votes during the presidential campaigns in 2012 with gift cards to the popular chain store Soriana. Many on the institutional left blamed the working class people who used the gift cards for "complicity" with the PRI's electoral fraud.
3. Translator's Note: During a speech at the Universidad Iberoamericana during the presidential campaigns, then presidential candidate Enrique Peña Nieto (PRI) was confronted by students protesting events that occurred during his tenure as governor of Mexico State. Peña Nieto hid and eventually fled the University, but party affiliates later dismissed the protesters in the media as a handful of non-student opposition supporters that were sent to disturb the event. Iberoamericana students then made a youtube video in which 131 of them held up their university ID's and testified to their participation in the protest, sparking the name for a wider student movement "Yosoy#132," "Iam#132."
4. Translator's Note: Sockface is a reference to the ski-mask worn by Subcomandante Insurgente Marcos.
5. Translator's Note: This is a reference to Calderón shutting down the public electric company Luz y Fuerza del Centro and union-busting the Mexican Electrical Workers Union (SME). The official reason for the shut-down was inefficiency, but people complain that under the private company that took over the service area rates are higher and service worse. The implication is that *El Chompis* was an electrical worker with Luz y Fuerza.

6. Translator's Note: Ex-president of Mexico Felipe Calderón is slated for a teaching position at Harvard University in the United States.
7. Translator's Note: The masculine form of "alone."
8. Translator's Note: The feminine form of "alone."

## Them and Us, Part VI: The Gaze Part 3

### Some Other Gazes.

#### *Zapatista National Liberation Army*

#### **one: A dream within that gaze**

Somewhere on a street, a cornfield, a factory, a tunnel, a forest, a school, a department store, an office, a plaza, a market, a city, a countryside, a country, a continent, a world...

The Boss is critically injured, the machine is broken, the beast is exhausted, the savage has been incarcerated.

The changes of names and flags did no good, nor did the blows, the prisons, the cemeteries, the money flowing through the arteries of corruption, the reality shows, the religious celebrations, the paid ads, the cybernetic exorcisms.

The Boss calls the only overseer he has left. He murmurs something in his ear. The overseer leaves, going out into the hordes.

He says, asks, demands, insists:

*"We want to talk to the man who..."*

He pauses in doubt. The majority of those in front of him are women.

He corrects himself:

*"We want to talk to the woman who..."*

He doubts himself again, as the number of Others in front of him is not few.

*"We want to talk to whoever is in charge."*

In the silence that follows an elderly person and a child step forward, they stop in front of the overseer and in an innocent and wise voice say:

*"Here we are all in charge."*

The overseer shakes, as does the voice of the Boss as he shouts his last.

The gaze awakens. "*Strange dream.*" And, without regard to the calendar or the geography, life, struggle, and resistance go on.

The gaze remembers only a few words of this strange dream:

*"Here we are all in charge."*

#### **two: an other gaze, from an other calendar and an other geography**

(fragment of a letter received at the general headquarters of the eezeelen, undated)

*"Greetings Compas.*

*(...)*

*In my opinion, it was all a bunch of crap. But I don't deny that I say this with hindsight. It would be very easy to say that I understood the silence perfectly well, that it didn't surprise me at all. But, it would be untrue, I too was impatient with the silence (though in my case it had nothing to do with all that junk about 'before now the Zapatistas weren't talking at all.' I did in fact read all the denunciations).<sup>9</sup> The thing is that, having seen what has happened and what is happening, it turns out that the logical conclusion is this: we are in the midst of the Zapatistas' most daring initiative, at least since the insurrection. And in my opinion, it is related to everything, not only the national situation but also the international one.*

*Allow me to tell you what I understood to be the most significant aspect of the 21st [of December, 2012]. Naturally there were many significant things: the organization, the militant effort, the demonstration of strength, the presence of the young people and women, etc. But for me what was most impressive was that they marched carrying those wooden boards, and upon arriving at the plazas constructed stages. Much of the private media and some of the independent media were speculating about the arrival of some of the Zapatista leaders. They didn't realize that the Zapatista leaders were already there. That the leaders were the people who walked over the stage and said, without speaking, here we are, this is what we are, this is what we will be.*

*Those on stage were those who should have been on stage. No one has noticed this fact, I don't think, and yet, I think, there it is in a nutshell, the profound meaning of a new form of doing politics. A politics that breaks with the old, the only*

*thing that is truly new, the only thing that deserves [illegible in the original] 21st century.”*

*The plebian, libertarian soul of conjunctural moments throughout history has been recreated here without grand theoretical fanfare. That is, through subterranean practice. It has been going on for too many years now to be a mere occurrence. It is already a long, solid, social historical process on the terrain of self-organization.*

*Finally, they took down their stage, converting it back into wooden boards, and we should all be a little ashamed and a bit more modest, and recognize that we are faced with something new and unexpected, and that therefore we should watch, hush, listen, and learn.*

*An embrace for everyone. I hope that that, to the extent it may be possible, you are all well.*

*El Chueco.”*

### **three: “Instructions for what to do in case... they’re looking at you”**

If someone is looking at you, and you realize that:

They aren’t looking at you as if you were transparent.

They don’t want to convince you of something.

They don’t want to co-opt you.

They don’t want to recruit you.

They don’t want to lead you.

They don’t want to judge-condemn-absolve you.

They don’t want to use you.

They don’t want to tell you what you can or can’t do.

They don’t want to give you advice, recommendations, orders.

They don’t want to reprimand you because you don’t know, or because you do.

They aren’t disrespecting you.

They don’t want to tell you what you should or shouldn’t do.

They don’t want to buy your old car, your face, your body, your future, your dignity, your will.

They don’t want to sell you something...

*(a time share, an LCD television in 4D, a super-ultra-hyper-modern machine with an instant crisis button (note: don’t confuse this with an ejection button, the warrantee doesn’t include amnesia caused by ridiculous media), a political party that changes ideologies as the wind blows, life insurance, an encyclopedia, VIP access to a show or to a revolution or to a fashion heaven, a piece of furniture on a payment plan, a cellular telephone plan, an exclusive membership, a future gifted to you from a generous leader, a pretext for surrender, for selling out, for giving up, a new ideological paradigm, etc.).*

In that case...

First. Make sure you can throw out the idea that this person isn’t a degenerate. You can be as dirty, ugly, bad, and rude as you like, but to each their own, you have that sexy and arousing touch that those who work hard always have; and that “**that**” can awake anyone’s passions. Hmm... well, true, a comb to that hair wouldn’t be out of order. Anyway, if it isn’t a degenerate person, don’t be discouraged, the world is round and keeps turning, and continues on below (this list, that is).

Second, make sure that they are looking at you. Are you sure they are not looking at that ad for deodorant behind you? Or perhaps they are thinking (the person looking at you that is): “I think that’s what I look like when I don’t fix my hair.” If you’ve discarded those possibilities, continue.

Third. Are you sure the person doesn’t look like a cop trying to reach a quota to report to his supervisor? If it is a cop, go, run, there’s still time to leave without losing your bus money. But if you’re sure it’s not a cop, continue on to the next point.

Fourth. Look back at them, with a severe frown. Use a look with a mix of anger, stomachache, annoyance, and murderous expression. No, that looks like a constipated teddy bear. Try again. Okay, passable, but keep practicing. Now, they didn’t flee terrified? They didn’t look away? They didn’t come closer exclaiming, “*Uncle (aunt) Juan(a)! I didn’t recognize you at first! But then you made that face...*” No? They didn’t do any of those things? Okay, continue on.

Fifth. Repeat steps one, two, three, and four. There may be failures in our system (which, of course, was made in China). If you get back to this point again, go to the following:

Sixth. There is a good probability that you have run into someone who is part of the Sixth. We’re not sure if we should congratulate you or send our condolences. In any case, what follows that gaze is your decision and your responsibility.

### **fourth: A gaze toward a Zapatista outpost. (undetermined calendar and geography)**

SupMarcos: You all need to hurry because time is running out.

The *insurgenta*<sup>10</sup> from the health commission: *Listen Sup, time doesn't run out, people run out. Time comes from a long ways away and follows its path waaaaaay out there, where we can't even see. We are like little bits of time. That is, time can't walk without us. What we do is make time go forward, and when we are gone someone else comes and pushes time along a little more until it gets to where it needs to go. But we aren't going to see where it goes, it will be others that see if arrives alright or if all of a sudden it doesn't have the strength to go on and somebody has to come give it a push again, until it gets there for real.*

(...)  
The infantry captain [female]: *Why are you so late?*

The *insurgenta* from the health commission: *Well, I was giving the Sup a talk on politics, that is, I was helping him understand something so that he could better explain that we have to look far into the distance, further than either time or our gaze can reach.*

The infantry captain: *I see. And then?*

The *insurgenta* from the health commission: He reprimanded me for not working fast enough and he sent me to my post.  
(...)

**five: Extract from “Notes for watching Winter.”**

(...)  
And yes, everyone marched over the stage with their fists in the air. But you didn't look hard enough. You didn't see the gaze of those men and women. You didn't see that, when they crossed up and over the stage, they looked down and saw their tens of thousands of *compañeros*. That is, they saw themselves. Those who gaze at us from above didn't

see us seeing ourselves. Above, they didn't understand, nor will they understand, anything.

(...)

**six: Put your own gaze here (or your complaint, even if it's not so nice)**

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(To be continued...)  
From whatever corner of whatever world.

SupMarcos.  
Planet Earth.  
Mexico, February of 2013.

Translation by Translation by Kilombo Intergaláctico

Notes

9. Translator's note: A reference to the many complaints that the Zapatistas were “silent” for so long. In “Postscript to a cartoon,” Subcomandante Insurgente Marcos points out that between May 7, 2011 and December 21, 2012 alone, the *Juntas de Buen Gobierno* [the Good Government Councils] put out 27 denunciations. He counterposes the fact that people complain about his role as spokesperson to the fact that they barely read the frequent denunciations from the entirely indigenous and community-based Good Government Councils.
10. Translator's note: female insurgent.

**Them and Us, Part VI: The Gaze Part 4**  
**Look and communicate.**  
**Zapatista National Liberation Army**

I'm going to tell you something very secret, but don't go around telling it... or do, you decide.

During the first days of our uprising, after the ceasefire, there was a lot of commotion regarding the eezee-elen. It was, of course, all of the media paraphernalia that the right tends to use to impose silence and blood. Some of the arguments that were used back then are the same ones as now, which demonstrates how outdated the right is and how antiquated its thinking is. But that is not a topic for now, and neither is the topic of the press.

But well, now I will tell you that at that time people were starting to say that the EZLN was the first 21st century guerrilla organization (yes, us, who still used sticks to sow the land, who had only heard rumors about yokes and oxen—no offense—, and who only knew about tractors from

photographs); that supmarcos was a cybernetic guerrilla who, from the Lacandón Jungle, launched into cyberspace the Zapatista proclamations that would turn the world upside down; and that he had satellite communications in order to coordinate subversive actions that would be carried out all over the world.

Yes, that's what they were saying, but... *compas*, in the days leading up to the uprising, the “Zapatista cybernetic power” that we had was one of those computers that used those big old floppy disks and it had a DOS version -1.0 operating system. We learned to use it with one of those old tutorials, I don't know if they still exist, that told you what key you should push and there was a voice that said in a Madrid accent, “Very good!”; and if you messed up it told you, “Very bad, idiot, try again!” In addition to playing Pacman, we also used it for the “First Declaration of the Lacandón Jungle,”

which we reproduced on one of those old dot matrix printers, which made more noise than a machine gun. The paper came on a roll and it jammed all the time, but it had carbon paper, and we managed to print off about two copies every couple of hours. We made a shit-ton of copies, about 100, I think. They were divided up amongst the five commanding groups that would, hours later, take seven municipal seats in the southeastern Mexican state of Chiapas. In San Cristóbal de Las Casas, which was the one I was supposed to take, once the plaza had fallen to our forces, we used masking tape to hang up the 15 copies that were ours. Yes, I know that that doesn't add up, that there should have been five, but who knows where the missing five ended up.

Well, when we pulled out of San Cristóbal, in the pre-dawn hours of January 2, 1994, the wet fog that covered our withdrawal unstuck the proclamations from the cold walls of the magnificent colonial city, and some floated around the streets.

Years later someone told me that anonymous hands had snatched some and that they were kept carefully guarded.

Then came the Cathedral Dialogues. At that time I had one of those portable lightweight computers (it weighed six kilos without the battery), "Scrap" brand, 128 ram, and I mean 128 kb of ram, 10 mb hard drive, I mean, it could save e-v-e-r-y-t-h-i-n-g, and a really fast processor that, when you turned it on, you could go prepare your coffee, come back, and you could still re-heat your coffee, 7 times 7, before being able to start to write. A fantastic machine. In the mountains, to make it work we would use a power inverter connected to a car battery. Later, our Zapatista Department of Advanced Technology designed a contraption that would make the computer run off of D batteries, but it weighed more than the computer and, I suspect, had something to do with the PC expiring with a sudden flash, yes, very flashy, and a plume of smoke that kept the mosquitos away for the next three days. The satellite telephone that the Sup used to communicate with "international terrorism?" A walkie-talkie with a maximum range of 400 meters on flat land (there should be some photos still around of the "cybernetic guerrilla", ha!) So internet? In February 1995, when the federal military was pursuing us (and not for an interview), the portable PC was tossed into the first stream that we forded, and the communiques from that era were made on a manual typewriter that the ejidal commissioner from one of the towns that protected us loaned to us.

That was the powerful high technology equipment that we the "21st century cybernetic guerrillas" possessed at that time.

I'm really sorry if, in addition to my battered ego, I am destroying some illusions that some might have had, but that's how it was, exactly as I am telling you now.

Finally, afterwards we learned that...

A young student in Texas, USA, perhaps a "nerd" (as you would call him), made a web page and he called it only "ezln." That was the EZLN's first web page. And this compa began to "upload" there all of the communiques and letters that were being published in the written press. People from other parts of the world, who learned of the uprising from photos, images, and video recordings, or from news articles, looked there for our word.

We never met that *compa*. Or maybe we did.

Maybe one time he came down to Zapatista lands, just like any other. If he did come, he never said: "I'm the one who made the EZLN's page." Nor: "Thanks to me people all over the world know about you." And certainly not, "I've come so that you might thank me and pay me homage."

He could have done it, and the thanks would have been few, but he never did.

And maybe you don't know, but sometimes there are people like that. Good people who do things without asking for anything in return, without payment, "without a commotion," as we say, we the Zapatistas.

And then the world kept on spinning. Some compas came who did know about computation, and other pages were created and we are how we are now. That is, with a damn server that doesn't run like it should, not even when we sing and dance "the colored monkey" to a cumbia-corrido-ranchera-norteña-tropical-ska-rap-punk-rock-ballad-popular rhythm.

Also without creating a commotion, we thank that compa; may the firstest gods and/or the higher being in which he believes or doubts or disbelieves bless him.

We don't know what became of that compa. Perhaps he is an Anonymous. Perhaps he's still surfing the web, searching for a noble cause to support. Perhaps he's disregarded due to his appearance, perhaps he's different, perhaps his neighbors, his co-workers or classmates look at him suspiciously.

Or perhaps he's a normal person, one of the millions who walk in the world without anyone recording what they do, without anyone watching them.

And perhaps he manages to read what I'm telling you, and he reads what we write you now:

*"Compa, now there's schools here where before only ignorance grew; there's food, but not very dignified, where at the tables hunger was the only daily guest; there's relief where the only medicine for pain was death. I don't know if you were expecting it. Perhaps you knew. Perhaps you saw something of the future in those words that you relaunched out into cyberspace. Or perhaps not, perhaps you just did it because you felt that it was your duty. And duty, we Zapatistas know a lot about it, it is the only slavery that is*

*embraced under our own free will.*

*We learned. And I'm not talking about learning the importance of communication or of knowing the ways of the sciences and techniques of information technology. For example, aside from Durito, none of us has been able to solve the challenge of making a tweet communicate. Faced with 140 characters, I'm not only useless, falling and refalling back on the commas, (the parentheses), the dots... and my life is passing me by and I lack characters. I think it is improbable that I could one day do it. Durito, for example, has proposed a communicate that stays within the tweet limit and says:*

**123456789 123456789 123456789 123456789 123456789  
123456789 123456789 123456789 123456789 123456789  
123456789 123456789 123456789 123456789**

*But the problem is that the code to decipher the message occupies the equivalent of the 7 volumes of the "The Differences" encyclopedia, which all of humanity has been writing ever since its regretful walk over earth began, and whose editing has been vetted by the Power.*

*No. What we learned is that there are people out there, far away or close, whom we don't know, who perhaps doesn't know us, who are compas. And it's not because they have participated in a support march, have visited a Zapatista community, wear a red bandana around their neck, or have signed a printout, a registration sheet, a membership card, or whatever it's called.*

*It's because the Zapatistas know that just as there are many worlds that inhabit the world, there are also many forms, ways, times, and places to struggle against the beast, without requesting or expecting anything in return.*

*We send you a hug, compa, wherever you are. I am sure that you can answer the question that one asks him or herself when s/he begins to walk: "Will it be worth it?"*

*Perhaps later you find out that in a community or in a base, a Zapatista computer lab is called "he," just like that, in lowercase. And perhaps you find out later that if one of the invited people ran into the lab, stopped in front of the sign, and asked who was that "he," we responded: "we don't know, but he does."*

*Ok then. Cheers, and yes, it was worth it, I think.*

*From etc. etc.*

*We Zapatistas from the eezee-elen dot com dot org dot net or dot whatever it's called."*

*-\*-*

And all of that is relevant because perhaps you all have realized that we place a lot of trust in the free and/or independent media, or whatever it's called, and in the people, groups, collectives, organizations that have their

own ways of communicating. People, groups, collectives, organizations that have their web pages, their blogs, or whatever they're called, who give a place for our word and now, the music and images that accompany it. And people or groups who perhaps don't even have a computer, but even if it's just chatting, or with a flier, or a broadsheet, or graffiti or a notebook or public transportation, or in a play, a video, a homework assignment, a song, a dance, a poem, a painting, a book, a letter, they look at the letters that our collective heart sketches.

If they don't belong to us, if they're not an organic part of ourselves, if we don't give them orders, if we don't command them, if they're autonomous, independent, free (which means that they command themselves) or whatever it's called, why do they do it then?

Perhaps because they think that information is everyone's right, and that everyone has the responsibility of what they do or undo with that information. Perhaps because they are in solidarity and they have the commitment to support in that way whoever also struggles, even if it's with other methods. Perhaps because they feel the duty to do it.

Or perhaps because of all of that and more.

They will know. And surely they have it there written, on their website, their blog, in their declaration of principles, on their flier, in their song, on their wall, in their notebook, in their heart.

That is, I'm talking about those who communicate and with others they communicate that which they feel in our hearts, that is, they listen. From who looks at us and looks at themselves thinking about us and they turn into a bridge and then they discover that those words that they write, sing, repeat, transform are not the Zapatistas', that they never were, that they're yours, everyone's and no one's, and that they are part of one score that who knows where it's at, and then you discover or confirm that when you look at us looking at ourselves looking at you, you are touching and talking about something bigger for which there still isn't an alphabet, and that isn't in that way belonging to a group, collective, organization, sect, religion, or whatever it's called, but rather that you are understanding that the step towards humanity is now called "rebellion."

Perhaps, before you click on your decision to put our word on your spaces, you'll ask yourselves, "Will it be worth it?" Perhaps you ask yourselves if you wouldn't be contributing to Marcos being on a European beach, enjoying the wonderful climate of these calendars in those geographies. Perhaps you ask yourselves if you wouldn't be serving an invention of "the beast" to fool people and simulate rebellion. Perhaps you respond to yourselves that the answer to that question of "Will it be worth it?" lies with us, the Zapatistas, and that by clicking on the computer, the spray can, the pencil, the guitar, the CD, the camera, you're committing us to respond "yes." And then you click on "upload" or "publish"

or “load” or the first chord or the first step-color-verse, or whatever it’s called.

And perhaps you don’t know, even though I think it’s obvious, but you’re really cutting us a “break” as they say around here. And I’m not saying that because our page “goes down” sometimes, as if it were in a mosh pit and when it dove off the stage there weren’t any comradely hands to relieve the fall that, if it is on cement, will keep hurting without its calendar or geography mattering. I point that out because on the other side of our word there are many people who don’t agree and they say so; there’s even more who don’t agree and don’t even bother to say so; there are a few who do agree and who say so; and there’s a few more of those few who do agree and don’t say so; and there’s the great immense majority, who don’t even know about it. It’s those last ones who we want to talk to, that is, look at, that is, listen to.

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Compas, thank you. We know. But we’re sure that even if we didn’t know, you know. And that is precisely what we the Zapatistas believe is what all this about changing the world is all about.

(To be continued...)

From any corner of any world.

SupMarcos.  
Planet Earth.  
February 2013.

P.S.- Yes, perhaps there is, in the letter to him, a clue to the next password.

P.S. THAT UNNECESSARILY CLARIFIES.- We don’t have a Twitter or Facebook account, nor an email, nor a phone number, nor a post office box. Those that appear on the web site are those of the site, and these compas support us and send us what they receive, just as they send out what we send them. Moreover, we’re against copyright, so anyone can have their Twitter, their Facebook, or whatever it’s called, and use our names, although, of course, they are not us nor do they represent us. But, according to what they’ve told me, most of them clarify that they are not who they supposedly are. And the truth is that we have a lot of fun imagining the quantity of derision and insults (which aren’t minty<sup>11</sup>) they’ve received and will receive, originally directed at the eezee-elen and/or whom it may concern.

Translation by Translation by Kristin Bricker

[<http://mywordismyweapon.blogspot.com/2013/02/them-and-us-vi-gazes-4-by-subcomandante.html>]

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#### Notes

11. Translator’s Note: A play on words that only makes sense in Spanish. “Mentada” is insult, but it also sort of sounds like “menta,” which means mint.

## Them and Us, Part VI: The Gaze Part 5

### To gaze into the night in which we are.

#### Zapatista National Liberation Army

*(From the new moon to the crescent moon)*

**Many moons ago: under a new moon, brand new, just barely peeking out, barely enough to make shadows below...**

**We-are-he** arrives. Without needing to consult or check notes, his words begin to draw an image of the gazes of those who rule here, and those whom they obey. When he finishes, we look.

The message from the people is clear, short, simple, blunt. As orders should be.

We, male and female soldiers, don’t say anything, we only look, we think: *“This is very big. This doesn’t just belong to us anymore, nor just to the Zapatistas. It doesn’t even belong just to this corner of these lands. It belongs to many corners, in all worlds.”*

*“We must care for it,” **we-are-all** [feminine] say, and we know what it is that we are talking about, but we are also talking about **we-are-he**.*

*“It will turn out well... but we have to be prepared for it to turn out badly, that is our way in any case,” says **we-are-all** [masculine].*

*“So then, we have to prepare it,” **we-are-all** [feminine] say to ourselves, “take care of it, make it grow.”*

*“Yes,” **we-are-all** [masculine] respond to ourselves.*

*“We must speak with our dead. They will show us the time and the place,” **we-are-all** [feminine] say to ourselves.*

We gaze at our dead, below, we listen to them. We take them this tiny stone. We lay it at the foot of their house. They look at it. We watch them looking at it. They look at us and they take our gaze far, far away, beyond where the calendars

and the geographies reach. We see what their gaze shows us. We are silent.

We return, we look at each other, we talk to each other.

*"We have to prepare far ahead, prepare each step, prepare each eye, prepare each ear... it will take time."*

*"We will have to do something so that they don't see us, and later something so that they do."*

*"In any case they don't see us, or they see only what they think they see."*

*"But yes, we will have to do something... It is my turn."*

*"**We-are-he** will take care of what corresponds to the peoples. **We-are-all** will look out for things, gently, quietly, hushed, as is our way."*

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**A few moons ago, it was raining...**

*"Already? We thought they would need more time."*

*"Well yes, but, that's the way it is."*

*"Okay then, think carefully about what we are going to ask: Do they want others to turn and look at them?"*

*"They do, they feel strong, they are strong. They say that this belongs to everyone, and to no one. They are ready, they say."*

*"But, you realize that not only those who are like us will see those who are like us, but that the Bosses from various places who hate and persecute what we are, will also see?"*

*"Yes, we have taken that into account, we know. It is our turn, your turn."*

*"Okay then, then it is only a matter of deciding the place and the time."*

*"Here," a hand gestures to the calendar and the geography.*

*"The gaze that we provoke will no longer be one of pity, of shame, of compassion, of charity, of hand-outs. There will be happiness for those who are like us, but rage and hate from the Bosses. They will attack us with everything they have."*

*"Yes, I told them. But they gazed at each other, and this is what they said: 'We want to see those who we are, to see ourselves with those who we are, even though neither we nor they know that they are what we are. We want them to see us. We are ready for the Bosses, ready, and waiting.'"*

*"When, where then?" Calendars and maps are spread out on the table.*

*"At night, when winter awakens."*

*"Where?"*

*"In your heart."*

*"Is everything ready?"*

*"Everything is ready, yes."*

*"Okay."*

Everyone went about their tasks. We just shook hands. Nothing more was necessary.

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**A few nights ago, the moon sleepless and fading...**

*"They are ready, that which we look at. The next part will be for other gazes. It's your turn, we say to **we-are-he**."*

*"I'm ready, willing," says **we-are-he**."*

***We-are-all** concurs in silence, as is our way.*

*"When?"*

*"When our dead speak."*

*"Where?"*

*"In their heart."*

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February 2013. Night. Crescent moon. The hand that we are writes:

*"Compañeroas, compañeras y compañeros of the Sixth:*

*We want to introduce you to one of the many **we-are-he** that we are, our compañero Subcomandante Insurgente Moisés. He guards our door and through his word the we that we are speaks. We ask you to listen to him, that is, that you look at him and thus see us. (...)"*

(To be continued...)

From whatever corner of whatever world.

SupMarcos.

Planet Earth.

February 2013.

P.S. THAT GIVES NOTICE AND HINTS: The next text, which will appear on the Enlace Zapatista webpage on February 14, the day the we the Zapatistas honor and greet our dead, is principally for our *compañeros*, *compañeras* y *compañeroas* of the Sixth. The complete text can only be read with a password (for which we have given various hints and should be easy to guess) which has already been sent via email wherever we could send it. If you haven't received it and you can't figure out the hint (you can find it by reading closely this text and the previous one, "Gaze and Communicate"), you can send an email to the webpage and you will get a response with the password. As we have

explained before, the independent media are free to publish, or not, the complete text according to their own autonomous and libertarian considerations. The same goes for whatever *compañera*, *compañero* y *compañeroa* of the Sixth wherever they are. We have no other aim but to let you know that it is you to whom we are talking, and also, importantly, those to whom you decide to extend our gaze.

Translation by El Kilombo Intergaláctico, edited by Kristin Bricker.

[<http://www.elkilombo.org/ezln-them-and-us-vi-the-gaze-5/>]

## Them and Us, Part VI: The Gaze Part 6 WE ARE HE. Zapatista National Liberation Army

February 14, 2013.

To: The Adherents of the Sixth all over the World.  
From: Subcomandante Insurgente Moisés.

*The time has come, and its moment too. There are times that all human beings experience, good or bad; one is born, comes into the world, dies, and is gone. Those are times. But there is another time, in which one can decide in what direction to walk, a time when the time arrives to look at time. That is, when one can understand life, how life should be, here in this world, and that no one can be the owner of that which makes up the world.*

*We were born indigenous and we are indigenous. We know that we came into the world and that we will leave this world, that is the law. We began to walk through life and we realized that we as indigenous people were not doing so well, we saw what happened to our great great great grandfathers and grandmothers, that is, in 1521, in 1810, and in 1910, that we were always used, that we gave our lives so that others could take power, that once in power they forgot about us again and went back to disrespecting, robbing, repressing, and exploiting us.*

*And we encountered a third time. The third time is where we are now, for a while now we've been walking, running, learning, working, falling, and getting back up. This is important because one has to record, to fill a tape that can be reproduced later with more lives from other times. Yes, we have been left a full bag of tapes, even though some of us aren't here anymore. So others continue on and the process moves forward like that, and what is yet to come is yet to come, until we get to the end and we begin that other work of construction, where another world begins to be born, where they cannot screw us over again and where we are not forgotten as original peoples, we will not allow that again. Now we have learned. We want to live well, in equality, in the city and the countryside, where the people of the city and the people of the countryside rule and the government obeys, and if it doesn't, it gets kicked out, and another is instituted.*

*Yes, we are indigenous, we work mother earth, we know how to use tools to harvest the fruits that she provides. We are various peoples with distinct languages. My mother tongue is Tzeltal, though I also understand Tzotzil and Chol, and I learned Spanish in the organization, with my *compañeras* and *compañeros*. And now I am what we are, together with my *compañeros* I have learned what it is that we want in order to live in a new world.*

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*I write this in the name of all of the Zapatistas, since the Sup's computer is broken. I saw that he went to get it fixed, and when I asked him what happened to his computer he said the *zuich* [switch] is fucked. Ah, I said. He was carrying a chisel and a 5-kilo sledge hammer. That thing is done, I said, it can't be fixed. So he told me that I should write to you so that you can start to get to know who is responsible for our door, and also so that we start getting to know you through what you write and say to us from everywhere, and what you tell us and have told us as *compañeras* and *compañeros* of the Sixth.*

*I know a little about typing on the computer and somebody gave me one to practice on a while back. Now it's time for me to write as well, but I'm a little worried that the same thing that happened to the Sup's computer will happen to me. I have a solution though, a swing of the axe and done, on to pen and paper. Problem solved.*

*In any case, I have to tell you that the task of peering out the window, which falls to Supmarcos, isn't finished. That is, what is to come is yet to come, but it will remain pending until the Sup's computer gets fixed.*

*Yes, the Sup's job will be peering out the window at those who watch us, those who say they are "good" and who fight for the people and who have led the people but haven't gotten anywhere, and who say it's because the people don't understand anything and that they understand everything, but that no one will follow them. Why? That is what they don't understand, and won't understand, because they only*

*think about above, look toward above, and try to climb up above.*

*Well, that, and much more, is the Sup's work, because he's in charge of the window, he is like the frame of the window.*

*It is also his job to see what's going on with the people who don't follow those who only look above, to understand why those people are the way they are, what they think, and how they think. We think that maybe those people think like we Zapatistas do, that maybe they too think that it should be law that the people rule and the government obeys.*

*It is also his job to be the target of the critiques, the insults, and the go-to-hells [mentadas], as he says, and the mockery from those on the outside. But he doesn't worry about those insults and lies, he just laughs, because, of course, we prepared him for that, we made him into steel. So now those insults and such don't hurt him, well, yes actually sometimes his stomach hurts from laughing so hard at the things they say.*

*He tells me that they might start mocking me, or anybody else who speaks, also. But oh well, that's how it goes, it could be that they make fun of me or insult me, or mock me because I am indigenous, just as they mock him for what he is. But we only care about the people that want to fight to end injustice, so as long as they don't throw bullets or bombs at us, there's no problem. And if they do throw those things at us, it also won't be a problem, because there are already other compañeros and compañeras ready for the work that is and will always be the struggle. That is, we're ready for anything they throw at us and we're not scared.*

*These years, the Sup tells me, many people were blocked the view of our window, but that one can still tell rather quickly who is like us. He wanted to count how many people like that were out there, but he lost count and just did it our way, the indigenous way, and said, there are a shitload. How much is that? I asked him. Many (masculine), many (feminine), he told me. Ah, I said. So that confirms that there will be many like us and that one day we will say along with them, "this is what we are," without it mattering who is indigenous or not.*

*And that's how we organize ourselves, some do some things and others do other things. For example, now Supmarcos's job is the window, and my job is the door, and others have other jobs.*

*And it is during these times that we remember an unforgettable compañero for all of us Zapatistas, SubPedro, who in the last days of December 1993, told us: learn compas, because one day it will be your turn. We are going to struggle together, workers, campesin@s, young people, children, women, men, and older people, in Mexico and around the world. It was the truth then, and it is the truth now, even without him. The truth of the truth began when we began to struggle for the people.*

*Okay compas, now you know that I am in charge of the door, what we haven't discussed yet is the new way of working*

*with the compañeros who will come to learn what it has taken my Zapatista compañeros years to build, that which we are now.*

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*Because we believe and trust the people, now is the time to do something about the damages that we have seen and endured for so many years, now is the time to join together in our thinking and learning and then to work, to organize. After so much experience we are ready to do this, and that experience will guide us so as not to repeat the mistakes that have gotten this world to this point.*

*If we don't follow the thinking of the people, the people don't follow us. And we only need to look at those who came before us in order not to fall into the same mistakes. To build something truly new will take word, thought, decision, and analysis, proposed by the people, studied by the people, and finally decided upon by the people.*

*It is like the 10 years that we worked clandestinely, when no one knew about us. "One day they will know us," we told ourselves and that's how we kept working all those years. And then one day we decided that it was time to be known. Now that you have known us for 19 years, you can say if what we are doing is good or bad. My compañeros say that they live better now with their autonomous governments. They realize that real democracy happens with the people, and not just every 3 or 6 years [with elections]. Democracy is carried out in each village, in autonomous municipal assemblies and in the zone-wide assemblies that make up the Juntas de Buen Gobierno (Good Government Councils), when each zone that makes up a Junta de Buen Gobierno gets together in assembly. That is, democracy is carried out every day and in every entity of the autonomous governments, alongside the people, men and women. Democracy addresses every aspect of their lives, they know democracy belongs to them, because they discuss, study, propose, analyse, and make the final decision on each issue.*

*They [the people] ask us, "how would this country and this world be if we organized with other indigenous brothers and sisters, and also with those brothers and sisters who aren't indigenous?" Afterwards, they give a big smile, as if to answer this question: happiness. They already know the answer, because they hold the results, the work that they are doing, in their hands.*

*Yes, that's how it is, it only requires that we organize ourselves as the poor of the city and the countryside without anyone leading us but ourselves and those that we name, and without those who only want to get into a position of power and once in power forget about us. And again and again, another just like them comes and says now this time it's for real, this time it will be different, and then, the same tricks. They are not going to honour their word, we know that, it's really not even worth writing about this, but that's how it is in this country. It is desperate, exhausting, horrible.*

*We, the poor, know what the best way of life is for us, we know what we want, but they will not leave us be, because*

they know that we will get rid of exploitation and the exploiters and that we will build a new life without exploitation. This isn't hard for us to understand, because we know how things need to change, because everything we have lived needs to change. The injustices, pains, sorrows, mistreatments, inequalities, manipulations, bad laws, persecutions, tortures, prisons, and many other bad things that we have endured, we know very well that we will not repeat the ways that have subjected us to these things. As we Zapatistas say, if we make mistakes, then we had better be up to the task of correcting them ourselves, instead of how it is now, where some people make all the mistakes and everyone else pays for it. That is, those who make the mistakes now are the representatives, senators, and bad governments of the world, and it is the people who pay the price.

One doesn't have to have a lot of education, or speak good Spanish, or know how to read much. We're not saying those things aren't useful, but that we can learn enough to do our work, enough to help us organize our work. These things are like tools for the work of communicating. What we are saying is that we know how to make change, we don't need someone to come with their campaign telling us that he or she is the change, as if we, the exploited, don't know what change we want. Do you understand what I'm saying, indigenous brothers and sisters and people of Mexico, indigenous brother and sisters of the world, non-indigenous brothers and sisters of the world?

So, indigenous and non-indigenous brothers and sisters who are poor, join the struggle, organize yourselves, lead yourselves, do not let yourselves be led, or keep careful watch over those you choose to lead you, make sure they do the things that you have decided and you will see that things begin taking shape like they have for us the Zapatistas.

Don't stop fighting, as the exploiters will not stop exploiting us, fight until the end, the end that is, of exploitation. No one will do this for us, no one other than ourselves. We have to take the reins, take the wheel and take our destiny where we want it to go. In that destiny, the people are the source of democracy, the people correct themselves and keep going. Not like now, where 500 representatives and 228 senators fuck everything up and millions suffer the deadly pestilence and toxicity that result; that is, the poor, the people of Mexico, are those who suffer.

Brothers and sister labourers, we have you in mind and all others who work, we all carry the same smell of sweat from working for the exploiters. Now that my Zapatista compañer@s are opening the door, if you understand what we mean, join the Sixth and learn about the autonomous government of the EZLN. And you also, indigenous and non-indigenous brothers and sisters of the world, we want you to understand us.

We are the principal producers of the wealth of those who are wealthy. Enough! We know that there are others who are exploited and we want to organize with them, to

fight for the people of Mexico and of the world, which belongs to us, not to the neoliberals.

Indigenous and non-indigenous brothers and sisters of the world, exploited peoples, peoples of America, peoples of Europe, peoples of Africa, peoples of Oceania, peoples of Asia.

The neoliberals are those who want to be the owners of the world, that's what we say, they want to make all capitalist countries into their own ranches, and their overseers are the capitalist governments of underdeveloped countries. And that's how they'll keep it, if all of us, as workers, do not organize.

We know that there is exploitation in the world. We should not let the distance between each of us on our side of the world distance us from each other. We should get closer, uniting our thought, our ideas, and our struggle for ourselves.

Where you are, there is exploitation, just as there is for us.

You suffer repression, just like us.

You are being stolen from, just like us, here they have been stealing from us for more than 500 years.

They look down on you, just as they continue to look down on us.

And that's where we are, that's where they have us, and that's how things will continue if we don't join each other's hands.

There are many reasons to unite ourselves and give birth to our rebellion and defend ourselves against this beast that does not want to get off of us and that never will if we don't throw it off ourselves.

Here in our Zapatista communities, our autonomous governments in rebellion and their organized compañer@s are confronting neoliberal capitalism day and night, and we are ready for anything that comes and in whatever form it may come.

These are now facts, this is how the Zapatista compañer@s are organized. It only takes decision, organization, work, thought, and putting things into practice, and then we must correct and improve without tiring, and if we rest, it is in order to gather strength and go forward. The people rule and the government obeys.

It can be done, brothers and sisters, the poor of the world, here is the example of your indigenous Zapatista brothers and sisters in Chiapas, Mexico.

It is time for us to make the world that we want, the world that we imagine, the world that we desire. We know how. It is difficult, because there are those who don't want this, and they are precisely those who exploit us. But if we don't do it

now, our future will be even harder and there will never be freedom.

That's how we understand things, and that's why we are searching, wanting to find each other, know each other, learn from each other and ourselves.

We hope you will be able to come, and if not, we will look for other ways to see and get to know each other.

We will be waiting for you here at this door that it is my job to take care of, here where you can enter the humble school where my *compañer@s* want to share the little that we have learned, to see if it is of use to you there where you live and work. We are sure that those who are part of the Sixth will come, or not, but in any case they will enter the little school where we will explain what the Zapatistas mean by freedom, they will see our advances and our failures, which we will not hide, but they will do all of this with the best teachers there are, that is, the Zapatista peoples.

The little school is very humble, it has humble beginnings, but for the Zapatista *compañer@s* it means the freedom to do what we want for what we think is a better life.

We are making this little school better every day, because it is necessary to do so and because it is in practice that we learn and demonstrate how to move forward. That is, practice is the best form through which to learn how to make things better. Theory gives us ideas, but what gives us form is practice, the practice of how to govern autonomously.

It's like they say: "When the poor believe in the poor, then we will be able to sing freedom." Only we haven't just heard this, but we are doing it in practice. That is the fruit that our *compañer@s* want to share with you. And yes it is true, just think how many bad things the bad governments have done to us and they haven't been able to destroy us, nor will they be able to, because what is built is of the people, for the people, and by the people. The people will defend it.

There is much I could tell you, but it's not the same thing for me to tell you as it is for you to see it for yourselves and have your questions answered in person by my *compañeros* and *compañeras* who are bases of support. They may answer with difficulty because it will be in Spanish, but the best answer is the practice of the *compañer@s*, which will be visible and which they are living out.

What we are doing is very small, but it will be very big for the poor of Mexico and the world. Just like we, the poor of Mexico and of the world, are very big, that is, very many, and we need to construct the world in which we will live for ourselves. We know what it is like when the opposite happens, when it is a ruling group that comes to an agreement, and not the people. We have come to understand what it really means to represent, we now know how to do this in practice, by carrying out the 7 principles of rule-by-obeying.

We can now see the horizon, which according to us is a new world, and which you will be able to see and learn from, so

as to give birth to a different world, the world that you imagine wherever it is that you might live. We can share our wisdom with each other and create our worlds differently from the way that things are now.

We want to see each other, listen to each other; this is a great experience for us, it will help us to know other worlds and to choose the best of the world that we want.

We need organization, decision, agreement, struggle, resistance, self-defence, work, practice. If there is something missing here, add it *compañeros* and *compañeras*.

So, for now, we are deciding how the little school we are making for you will be, we'll see if there will be enough space. The point is that we are getting ready. And that any *compañero* or *compañera* who we invite and who wants can come and see and feel, and even if they can't come, we'll find a way to share it.

We are waiting for you *compañeras* and *compañeros* of the Sixth.

We are preparing to receive you, take care of you, and attend to you like the *compañer@s* that we are, like our *compañer@s* that you are. And we are also preparing for our word to reach the ear of those who cannot come to our home, we will do this with your help.

And of course, we should tell you that this might take awhile, but that, as our brother and sisters of the Mapuche people says: one, ten, one hundred, one thousand times we will win, we will always be victorious.

So, to finish, next time it will be *compañero* Subcomandante Insurgente Marcos' turn to talk to you, we're going to keep taking turns back and forth, he and I, to explain everything to you. Now it is time for you to hear me too, for while I have been doing this work for many years, this is the first time that it is up to me to sign the following lines publicly...

From the mountains of the Mexican Southeast.  
For the Indigenous Revolutionary Clandestine Committee  
General Command of the Zapatista Army for National  
Liberation

Subcomandante Insurgente Moisés.

Mexico, February 2013.

P.S.- I want to take this opportunity also to tell you that the password for the next parts, which will come from the window which Supmarcos is in charge of, is "*nosotr@s*." And that's all, because in the school of struggle you can't copy off a *compa*, but rather everyone has to generate their own struggle respecting each other, like the *compas* that we are.

Translation by El Kilombo Intergaláctico.

[<http://www.elkilombo.org/them-and-us-vi-the-gaze-6/>]