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Decolonizing the Mind: A Comparative Approach to Indigenous Movements and Globalization

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DECOLONIZING THE MIND:

A COMPARATIVE APPROACH TO INDIGENOUS
MOVEMENTS AND GLOBALIZATION

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by

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Abstract

Indigenous political movements represent an emerging challenge to globalization as embodied by the spread of capitalist free markets and neoliberal reform. Indigenous groups are creating new spaces in which to express agency and propose alternatives to the dominant growth economic model. Although these processes have led to the creation of new and hybrid norms of development, they have also resulted in conflict between indigenous peoples and the nation-states within which they reside. The role of scholarly analysis in exploring and understanding these processes is crucial. However, conventional Western approaches- namely Marxist and Liberal- may prove insufficient for two reasons, one empirical and the other normative. First, these approaches are derived from a set of specific historical experiences which differ greatly from those of the indigenous societies they would presume to study. Such divergent experiences necessarily limit the scholar's ability to analyze and comprehend these processes. Second, relying exclusively upon Western modes of inquiry may be perceived as a colonial imposition. Such an approach would appear to reproduce the colonial relationship by privileging Western knowledge and assumptions. The goal of this research is to address these issues by incorporating native perspectives into a broader scholarly approach. When deployed alongside Marxist and Liberal frameworks, the *Indigenist* paradigm should provide greater comprehension of indigenous movements as they confront globalization. Furthermore, indigenous perspectives are here represented alongside Western perspectives as equals, thus "decolonizing" the mind. To accomplish this task, I have constructed a theoretical framework for charting the knowledge and assumptions of Marxist, Liberal, and Indigenist thought. Indigenist literature from North and Central America is reviewed in order to develop a coherent native ontological and epistemological perspective.

Finally, all three conceptual paradigms are applied to the case of the *Zapatista* movement in

Mexico from the 1980's to the early 2000s. This comparative approach reveals both the

strengths and limitations of each perspective, with particular emphasis on the contributions of

Indigenism to scholarly inquiry.

Introduction

On December 10, 1994, the United Nations declared the beginning of an "International Decade of the World's Indigenous Peoples." This pronouncement was in many ways portentous, as the period from 1994 to 2004 witnessed an unprecedented expansion of indigenous political influence around the world, particularly in Latin America. Objective measures of this phenomenon include higher numbers of indigenous representatives in government, more legislation specifically targeting indigenous populations, and greater funding for projects related to indigenous growth and development (Hall and Patrinos 2006, 1). However, more profound than this quantitative shift in representation and resource distribution has been a concurrent qualitative shift in grassroots indigenous attitudes regarding globalization and the liberal epoch. Resistance, the perennial mantra of indigenous activists, assumed a new meaning in the wake of Chiapas.

Indigenous resistance in Latin America was historically a struggle over land and autonomy waged between "indigenous nations and one or more states presuming an authority to subordinate them (Churchill 2003b, 273). The state, as the logical extension of the colonial enterprise, was viewed as the primary facilitator of the oppression of indigenous peoples. Resistance to the state thus characterized the indigenous political agenda since the 15th century. The scope and intensity of this resistance has fluctuated over time, peaking with events such as Tupac Amaru II's rebellion (Moses 2008), the Caste War of Yucatan (Reed 2002), and, more recently, the Zapatista uprising. These events gave the Western world a glimpse into a universe in which politics, community, and development are all shaped by a centuries-old struggle over land, identity, and equality.

The institutional decline of the state which has accompanied economic globalization since the 1970s (Strange 1996, van Creveld 1996) might suggest a softening of indigenous political attitudes regarding autonomy and resistance in Latin America. In reality, the opposite has occurred. Coinciding with the growth of indigenous political influence in national politics has been an intensification of indigenous resistance attitudes. These attitudes have matured beyond the anti-state rhetoric of the past to contest the very nature of globalization. The Zapatista rebellion is the best example of this emergent paradigm of resistance, although its ideological undercurrents were formed long before NAFTA and have persisted into the 21st century. This trend of indigenous resistance indicates a strong negative answer to globalization's driving question: "Will you accept capitalist economic development as the way forward and submit yourself to the global economy?"

The interpretation of indigenous resistance attitudes and practices relating to globalization is often filtered through ideological and paradigmatic assumptions, leading to potentially incomplete and relativist conclusions. For example, Latin American politics have taken a dramatic "Left Turn" over the past decade (Castenada 2006, Corrales 2006), and the temptation may exist to classify anti-neoliberal indigenous attitudes as a result of this regional *zeitgeist*. However, a closer examination reveals an equally profound anti-Marxist sentiment embedded in the indigenous resistance philosophy. Marxist and liberal paradigms are thus insufficient at explaining and understanding the driving political forces behind modern indigenous resistance to globalization in Latin America. The changing nature of Latin American indigenous resistance and the increasing political leverage being exercised by indigenous peoples necessitates a more valid and complete assessment of modern indigenous political attitudes which extends beyond

conventional Western paradigms.

If Marxist and liberal paradigms fail to adequately explain the increasing resistance to globalization by indigenous peoples in Latin America, what theory might support a more comprehensive analysis of this phenomenon? I assert that the paradigm known as "Indigenism" offers a more complete and valid program of inquiry than its dominant Western counterparts. Indigenism is an anti-colonial resistance philosophy practiced by many of the world's indigenous peoples. Indigenists assert that the global political system is illegitimate because the territories upon which nation-states are constructed were wrongfully expropriated from indigenous peoples. Because it is derived almost entirely from intellectual sources within native culture, indigenism provides a conceptual means of translating indigenous political values to a Western audience which overcomes normative barriers such as essentialism, relativism, and ideological assumptions. Indigenism has acted as the catalyst for indigenous resistance in Latin America throughout the past five-hundred years, but has only recently been addressed in the literature (Manuel & Posluns 1974, Batalla 1981, Churchill 1995, Batalla 1996, Churchill 2003b, Churchill 2003c, Niezen 2003). I will therefore review the available literature in order to conceptualize a paradigmatic framework similar to that of Marxism and liberalism, and then apply this framework to a case study relating to contemporary Latin American indigenous resistance to globalization.

As the epicenter of modern indigenous resistance in Latin America, Chiapas provides a compelling opportunity for a scholarly application of the indigenist paradigm to an empirical case. The Chiapan narrative of resistance extends far beyond the confines of the Zapatista uprising and provides a linear frame of reference for the study of the interaction between the

forces of globalization and Latin American indigenous peoples. This narrative begins in the

early 1980s, when Mexico first began to liberalize its economy, and continues into the present. I

will apply Western and indigenist paradigmatic theories to the Chiapan case in an effort to

explain local indigenous resistance to globalization, and demonstrate how the indigenist

framework contributes to a greater understanding of the indigenous experience with

globalization.

Chapter 1 will provide an atheoretical historical account of the Chiapan narrative highlighting

the important events pertaining to the growing indigenous resistance to globalization.

Chapter 2 will explore mainstream Western paradigms as they apply to indigenous response to

globalization.

Chapter 3 will review the indigenist literature and conceptualize indigenism as a valid

theoretical alternative to liberal and Marxist paradigms.

Chapter 4 will apply this streamlined indigenist paradigm to the historical Chiapan narrative

described in Chapter 1 and demonstrate how indigenism helps to form a more complete

understanding of collective indigenous resistance to globalization.

   I will conclude by arguing that attempts to conceptualize indigenous resistance attitudes

through Western paradigms reinforces the claims of indigenist advocates by "colonizing the

mind," or imposing non-native theoretical assumptions upon the native intellectual conscience.

Not only do Marxist and liberal paradigms lead to flawed assumptions and incomplete

conclusions about indigenous attitudes, they perpetuate the relationship of colonizer and

colonized which is fundamentally opposed by the indigenist philosophy. This problem is not

merely an issue of relativism, but one of equality and voice. Colonialism has deprived Latin

America's indigenous peoples of land and autonomy, and paradigmatic bias threatens to deprive them of ideas and perspective. The indigenist paradigm offers a means of intellectual access to indigenous political attitudes and values which proposes, rather than imposes, a new way forward.

Chapter 1: Chiapas in Transition- A Brief History of Political Reform in the 20th Century

This chapter will provide an abridged history of the modern Chiapan indigenous narrative

from 1928-2001. Although the main goal of this project is to explore indigenous resistance

attitudes toward *globalization* from a paradigmatic standpoint, it is important to address *pre-*

globalization Mexican history, as conditions during this period contributed significantly to the

shaping of Mexico's experiences under globalization. I will therefore begin this chapter by

summarizing the goals and key events/policies of the corporatist regime, which governed Mexico

from the early Revolutionary period (1928) until the advent of liberalization (1982). Next, I will

recount the dismantling of the corporatist regime through liberalization, which signified

Mexico's integration with the global capitalist marketplace (1982-1994). Finally, I will

summarize the Chiapan indigenous resistance to Mexico's increasing commitment to

liberalization, which most visibly manifested in the Zapatista rebellion and continued into the

21st century (1994-2001).

1.1. Mexican Corporatist Regime: 1929-1982

The Revolutionary Period

The term "Mexican national politics" was somewhat of a contradiction before the *Partido*

Revolucionario Institucional (Institutional Revolutionary Party or PRI) consolidated power after

two decades of revolution and civil war in 1929. Mexico's heterogeneous constellations of

ethnic, social, and economic groups had prevented the realization of a unified Mexican polity

since it first gained independence from Spain in 1821. In fact, the earlier dictatorship of General

Porfiorio Diaz (1876-1911) actively repressed the formation of a national political consciousness

in the interest of promoting stability and facilitating industrialization. However, Diaz's failure to

promote *social* reform concurrent with political and economic reform ultimately led to his downfall and the beginning of a fractious civil war (Rowe 1912, Kirkwood 2000).

Numerous political coalitions representing a wide array of interests fought for control of Mexico's future throughout the decade of 1910-1920. Although peace, following a new constitution, was established in 1920, the political schizophrenia which had characterized the revolutionary period did not quickly abate. Instability and political violence were the hallmarks of the revolutionary regime until 1929, when a new coalition party, the PRI, came to power. The PRI was the first umbrella organization to effectively manage its constituent members and subdue the political chaos which had pervaded Mexico since the overthrow of Diaz in 1911 (Kirkwood 2000). For the next fifty years the PRI promoted a corporatist vision of Mexico, seeking to create a modern industrial state in which a homogenous national identity would provide the stability necessary for sustainable economic growth and political control (Otero 2005).

PRI and the Corporatist Era

The corporatist regime sought to create a new Mexican polity and workforce from the ground up. The PRI was acutely aware of the top-down failures of the earlier Diaz regime, which attempted to promote rapid development through macro economic investment rather than through human capital development and social control (Kirkwood 2000, Otero 2005). Mexico's social terrain was too fractured to permit sustainable economic growth without considerable setbacks, and maintaining order and control was equally tenuous under the existing conditions. Corporatism, having gained significant traction globally during the 1930's, appeared to be the answer to the Mexican question of development (Yashar 1999, Otero 2005).

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It is important to clarify the distinction between Mexican corporatism and the forms of corporatism found in Europe during the same period. Corporatism is broadly defined as "a system of interest representation in which its constituent units are organized in a limited number of unique categories that are obligatory, non-competitive, hierarchically organized and functionally differentiated, recognized or authorized (if not created) by the state, which are given a representational monopoly, within their respective categories, in exchange for the observance of certain controls in the selection of their leaders and in the articulation of their demands and supports" (Schmitter 1974: 93-94). The degree to which corporate organizations enjoy autonomy and negotiating power with the state largely depends on the strength of the nation's civil society. States with a strong civil society typically produce "societal corporatism," whereas states with a weak civil society are more inclined toward "state corporatism." Societal corporatist organizations result in a more democratic politico-economic environment and were common throughout Europe during the 20th Century. Conversely, state corporatist systems invested a much higher degree of power in the state and typically resulted in centralized control and authoritarianism (Otero 1996).

Mexico's weak and fragmented civil society allowed the PRI to implement a version of *state* corporatism which significantly constrained the agency of its constituent organizations. The corporatist regime maintained hegemony by reducing nearly all political activity to the corporate organizational level. Inputs and demands were channeled through the corporate organization, whose leadership was directly chosen by the state. Therefore, the degree of political agency exercised by ordinary Mexicans was very low. The corporate organization operated on a patron-client basis which fostered a direct relationship between the individual and a local political boss,

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or *cacique*. So long as the *cacique* provided a reasonable level of economic stability, the individual was expected to remain loyal (Otero 2005).

Land reform played a central role in the PRI's strategy to pacify the rural peasantry. Wealthy land barons had monopolized rural property ownership under the Diaz regime, forcing peasants and indigenous farmers into a relationship resembling modern serfdom. The PRI gained the tacit support of these groups by invoking Article 27 of the Mexican constitution, which dissolved the estates and redistributed land into collective holdings. These communal organizations were initially conceptualized as part of the corporate interest mediation apparatus, but soon devolved into a means of maintaining political control through identity manipulation (Kirkwood 2000, Rus et al., 2003; Yashar 2005).

The success of the corporatist system was largely contingent upon the construction of a homogenous Mexican national identity. Racial and ethnic fragmentation had contributed greatly to Mexico's perceived historical backwardness by hampering the realization of a national consciousness and thwarting economic development efforts. Its large population of indigenous peoples was perhaps the largest barrier to the consolidation of Mexican national identity. The corporatist regime therefore sought to reorganize the relationship between indigenous communities and the state in an effort to abrogate traditional identity. Indigenous peoples were thus categorized as peasants and organized into agricultural organizations within the corporatist hierarchy known as *ejidos*. These "peasant" federations received subsidies and social services from the state in exchange for participation in national education programs and political fealty (Yashar 1999, Rus et al., 2003).

The PRI was largely successful in promoting social stability and economic development in

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Mexico for over fifty years. Despite its apparent democratic deficit, the corporatist regime transformed Mexico into Latin America's largest economy, and appeared to overcome the ethnic divisions which had destabilized the region for centuries. However, centralized state management of economic affairs proved disastrous in the 1970s, as the collapse of the oil industry wrecked the patron-client foundation of the corporatist system. *Caciques* received the majority of their income as subsidies derived from oil profits. The worldwide collapse of oil prices severely constrained their ability to pay their clients- the rural peasantry. As economic outputs from the *caciques* decreased, social unrest and the demand for economic recovery forced the national government to seek an alternative to the corporatist system capable of maintaining stability regardless of global macroeconomic conditions (Nash 2001a, Rus et al., 2003).

1.2. Structural Adjustment and the Birth of Mexican Neoliberalism: 1982-1994

International political economy changed significantly during the Mexican corporatist epoch, and a growing liberal consensus had emerged during the late 1970s. Autarchy and protectionism were viewed as valid economic options in the wake of post-Depression hysteria, but the international norms promulgated by the United States, specifically Bretton Woods, heralded a fundamental shift in the configuration of the global economy. Interconnectedness, whether through voluntary participation or structural adjustment, was to be the prime directive of the emerging global economy. Neoliberal reform was branded as the means of reversing the economic decline of the 1970s, and the PRI was forced to confront this reality in 1982 as the corporatist regime slipped deeper into fiscal crisis (Pastor & Wise 2003).

In 1982 the Madrid Administration attempted to stabilize the national economy by seeking a loan from the International Monetary Fund (IMF). This loan was contingent upon Mexico

enacting neoliberal "structural adjustments" to its national economic system, and signified the country's initial encounter with globalization. The IMF stipulated that Mexico abrogate tariffs, cut farm subsidies, eliminate price controls, and otherwise drastically cut government spending (Kirkwood 2000, Rus et al., 2003). The decline of the patronage system which began during the previous decade was now accelerated as part of the neoliberal reform package. However, the organizational structure of the corporatist regime had the unintended side-effect of creating groups of workers and peasants with similar interests that could now collectively express their frustration with the state. Support for the PRI rapidly diminished during the 1980s, as neoliberal reform failed to halt the decline of the national economy (Kirkwood 2000, Pastor and Wise 2003).

The dismantling of the corporatist system combined with a surge of popular dissatisfaction to significantly weaken the PRI's ability to maintain control over the various post-corporatist interest groups. Consequently, a resurgence of ethnic politics filled the emerging political vacuum in the predominantly indigenous regions of the country. Indigenous organizations, created under the corporatist *ejido* system, began to outwardly protest the economic and social conditions resulting from neoliberal reform (Yashar 2005). On October 12, 1992 a confederation of these indigenous organizations held a celebration of 500 Years of Resistance in Chiapas. During this festival *campesino*, or rural peasant, demands for land reform and economic justice evolved into indigenous demands for autonomy and social justice. Indigenous groups from disparate geographic regions used the opportunity to establish political networks, considerably strengthening the climate of resistance (Benjamin 2000, Nash 2001a).

The indigenous cause was intensified by the reform of Article 27 of the Constitution by the

Salinas Administration. This reform effectively stripped the provision of its *raison d'etre* by disbanding and privatizing the communal *ejidos* which had formed the basis of the indigenous economy since the 1930s. Few *campesinos* could afford to buy back their land at market prices, and the threat of foreign speculation contributed to bleak prospects for indigenous farmers. Free trade with the United states further weakened the economic position of Mexico's indigenous peoples. The North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) was signed on January 1, 1993, threatening to flood Mexico with cheap, subsidized agricultural products from the North. The consummation of the Mexican neoliberal project through NAFTA and constitutional reform appeared to provide the impetus for Mexico's indigenous peoples to rise up and directly confront the forces of globalization (Kirkwood 2000, Nash 2001a, Nash 2001b).

1.3. Indigenous Resistance in Chiapas: 1994-2001

NAFTA and the EZLN

On January 1, 1994, the day NAFTA went into effect, the *Ejercito Zapatista de Liberacion National* (Zapatista Army of National Liberation, EZLN, or Zapatistas) launched a guerrilla war against the Mexican state in Chiapas. Two thousand indigenous soldiers, with the tacit support of thousands of regional villages, quickly seized the cities of San Cristobal, Ocosingo, Alta-mirano, and Las Margaritas. The government responded by deploying twelve thousand federal troops to Chiapas in an effort to quash the rebellion by force. The initial fighting resulted in a total of 145 deaths, and drove the rebels out of the cities and into the surrounding jungle (Benjamin 2000, Kirkwood 2000).

A cease fire between the government and EZLN forces was quickly negotiated, although the Zapatistas retained control over the rural areas they had captured. Dozens of towns and hamlets

subsequently declared allegiance to the Zapatistas, and federal authority in Chiapas was virtually extinguished by late 1994. In February 1995 the Zedillo Administration broke the ceasefire and launched a renewed offensive to capture the leadership of the EZLN. The national army failed in its stated objective, but succeeded in retaking large portions of Chiapas from the insurgents. Despite this renewed violence, efforts were made in October 1995 to negotiate a more permanent settlement between Mexico and the EZLN. By February 1996 an agreement had been reached, granting an unprecedented degree of autonomy and concessions for indigenous rights to the EZLN and its supporters. Known as the *San Andres Accords*, this agreement represented the first substantial victory for Mexico's indigenous peoples in centuries (Washbrook 2007).

Despite its initial promise of ending the conflict between EZLN and the state, the *San Andres Accords* ultimately failed to create a stable political environment in Chiapas. The EZLN unilaterally withdrew from the agreement shortly after its signing, expressing frustration with its piecemeal implementation. A political and military stalemate ensued throughout most of 1996 and early 1997, during which time the government attempted to co-opt indigenous communities through the provision of much-needed humanitarian assistance. Ultimately, little progress was made by either side throughout the late 1990's. Indigenous demands for official autonomy were rejected by the federal government, and the military's counterinsurgency campaign failed to produce a viable military solution. However, the state's inability to assert control over the majority of indigenous communities in Chiapas created an *unofficial* autonomous zone in which the Mayan Indians could effectively govern themselves. Despite the lack of official recognition, regional indigenous communities instituted forms of self-government based on traditional cultural values and practices which had been repressed and even outlawed under previous

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administrations. This form of unofficial autonomy allowed Chiapas' indigenous peoples to confront globalization on their own terms, resulting in a renewed vision of resistance in the 21st Century (Nash 2001b, Washbrook 2007).

Throughout the late 1990s, the EZLN continued to exert pressure on the federal government for the official recognition of indigenous autonomy in Chiapas. The PRI, which had monopolized power since 1929, was ousted in the election of 2000, instilling new hope in the indigenous movement. Incoming president Vincinte Fox promised to ratify the rejected provisions of the *San Andres Accords* which granted full administrative autonomy to the indigenous peoples of Chiapas. The EZLN organized a peaceful march on the capitol in support of the revised legislation in the Summer of 2001. However, the Senate drastically reduced the scope of autonomy granted to indigenous communities, and the EZLN withdrew its support of the new government. Although military tensions between the government and EZLN had lessened by this point, it became clear to indigenous activists that a legal solution with the state would not be feasible (Washbrook 2007).

Although the EZLN failed to achieve its goal of attaining official autonomy for the indigenous communities of Chiapas, it succeeded in creating an environment in which indigenous peoples could simultaneously challenge both the state and globalization. The tactics employed to establish this new precedent for indigenous peoples may not have been conventional, but their disruptive influence belies an attitude of resistance which is seemingly without parallel in the modern world. Why would the indigenous peoples of Chiapas fight so hard and risk so much to maintain autonomy from global capitalism? Why was indigenous resistance to the neoliberal state so much stronger than resistance to the corporatist state? In the

following chapter I will attempt to demonstrate how conventional Western paradigms are

insufficient at answering these difficult questions, and in Chapter III I will propose one possible

alternative theoretical approach- Indigenism.

Chapter 2: A Paradigmatic Deficit- Liberalism, Marxism, and the Indigenous Epoch

Paradigms provide the tools, concepts, and theoretical approaches that make social inquiry possible. They establish a commonly-accepted platform from which to investigate society, and allow researchers to focus on theory-testing, methodology, and case selection without needing to constantly "reinvent the wheel." However, choosing the appropriate paradigm for a project necessarily involves a normative choice on the part of the researcher. Social science paradigms reflect the values and attitudes of those who create and reproduce them, and are often considered to lack the universal "objectivity" of paradigms in the natural sciences.

Political science has generated two overarching paradigms which have historically dominated the discipline: Liberalism and Marxism. These paradigmatic approaches each contain their own assumptions about human behavior and predictions about the future of society. An analysis of these embedded assumptions provides a solid opportunity for comparison and evaluation. This chapter will summarize the core paradigmatic components of Liberalism and Marxism and highlight their respective assumptions about *rationality*, *nature*, *citizenship*, and *development*. Axioms derived from these categories are essentially the building blocks of paradigms, and provide an analytical frame of reference that is more precise than narrative descriptions of paradigm found in the literature. I have selected these four conceptual categories in order to chart paradigmatic axioms from the micro level of the individual (rationality) all the way to the macro structural configuration of global society as a whole (development). This approach should help demonstrate how each paradigm is constructed from the ground up, and provide a uniform analysis of Liberalism, Marxism, and Indigenism. This chapter will apply this framework to Marxist and Liberal paradigms, while Chapter III will contain a review of the indigenist

literature and outline these assumptions as they pertain to the indigenist paradigm.

Before attempting to navigate the paradigmatic axioms of Liberalism and Marxism, I should make an important clarification of meaning. Both of these paradigms have produced numerous offshoots and sub-paradigms which provide alternative or expanded interpretations of society. For example, Marxism has seen the emergence of Leninism, Stalinism, Maoism, situationism, dependency theory, world-systems theory, ecological Marxism, neo-Marxism, etc, whereas Liberalism forms the basis of neoclassicalism, monetarism, objectivism, progressivism, libertarianism, neoconservativism, and neoliberalism. Each of these paradigmatic offshoots suggests alternative explanations and axioms to those presented in the parent theory. This condition poses a significant problem to developing an exhaustive axiomatic exposition of Liberal and Marxist paradigms. Such an undertaking is beyond the scope of this project, and would likely result in an over-complicated, possibly inconsistent depiction of each paradigm. It is therefore necessary to focus my analysis on one particular iteration of each paradigm. Marxism provides a fairly straightforward solution to this problem, as the original works of Marx are internally consistent and were developed through a unified frame of reference (Marx himself). Furthermore, Marx's original works remain firmly embedded within the social sciences, granting them contemporary relevance and legitimacy. Therefore, my analysis of the Marxist paradigm will be drawn exclusively from Marx's original works, and, where necessary, secondhand interpretations thereof. My exposition of the liberal paradigm, however, poses greater challenges to the selection of source materials.

Whereas Marxism originated in a highly specific and coordinated theoretical context, Liberalism was the product of centuries of conceptual evolution. It is therefore much more

difficult to isolate the specific paradigmatic essence of Liberalism. One option would be to draw upon the works of various liberal thinkers from each historical epoch (Locke to Voltaire to Mill to Friedman, etc.) and attempt to piece together an overarching depiction of Liberalism. However, this would most likely result in a muddled amalgamation of axioms which could not be easily generalized within the framework of this project. I have therefore elected to analyze the liberal paradigm from the standpoint of neoliberal theory. This approach should provide a similar degree of conceptual clarity to my exposition of Marxist axioms, with the goal of producing a more balanced analytical outcome. Furthermore, as the driving force behind economic globalization, neoliberal theory has a high degree of legitimacy within both conceptual and "real world" contexts.   Neoliberal theory was the axis upon which Mexico's economic restructuring turned throughout the 1980s and 1990s. Neoliberalism was thus the *de facto* context within which indigenous resistance occurred.

I will now proceed to extract the core axioms of neoliberalism through the framework of assumptions described earlier. This analysis will be followed by a similar treatment of Marxism.

2.1. Liberalism: The Engine of Globalization

Liberalism gradually evolved from a nascent political philosophy in Britain (Locke 1689) to the driving force behind global political economy. Liberal theory underwent several historical phases of rapid expansion, the most prominent of which occurred in the late 18th Century. The Enlightenment and French and American Revolutions were channels through which Liberal theory gained widespread acceptance and legitimacy. Smith's (1776) *Wealth of Nations* provided the economic foundation of Liberal theory, and established the field of political economy. Before Smith, the concept of political economy had not been widely considered. After Smith,

Liberals began to argue that political and economic values could, and must be, mutually supportive. This philosophy forms the basis of neoliberal theory, which is predicated on the belief that without political freedom, economic freedom is impossible, and vice versa. Neoliberal theory essentially takes the assumptions about political economy embedded within Liberalism to their logical conclusion (Harvey 2005, 5).

The development of neoliberal theory was largely a reaction to the growth of the welfare state following the Great Depression and World War II. Starting in the 1940s, Liberal economists began to formulate a highly coherent theory of political economy in which the role of the state should be reduced to the enforcement of contracts and the provision of general security. Unregulated markets could provide in a more efficient manner the public goods which were, at the time, provisioned by the state. These theorists saw the welfare state as denying intrinsic freedoms to individuals within society, and prescribed privatization, deregulation, and tax reform as the best means of increasing personal freedom. This form of Liberalism gained widespread legitimacy in 1978 and 1980 with the elections of Margaret Thatcher and Ronald Reagan, respectively (Harvey 2005, 1). Since then, international institutions such as the IMF, World Bank, and WTO have promoted neoliberal values to much of the rest of the world, creating a global neoliberal consensus (Harvey 2005, 3).

The liberal paradigm contains a set of assumptions regarding human behavior, nature, citizenship, and development. The following sections will summarize these axioms and demonstrate how Liberalism may be insufficient for indigenous studies.

Liberal Rationality

Liberalism first and foremost assumes that people behave rationally. This assumption applies

equally to both political and economic behavior, and is the basis for liberal rational choice theory (Rostow 1960). Enlightenment rationality was revolutionary because it replaced a system of thought based on superstition and the legitimation of religious authority. Rationality effectively destroyed public support for the monarchy because monarchical legitimacy was derived from God, not society. Rationality thus transferred political sovereignty from the divine monarch to the individual, a concept which, before the Enlightenment, was widely suppressed in Europe (Weber 1958).

The rationality of the "human calculator" is the most basic assumption of neoliberal economics, but works equally well in a political context. People are assumed to make political decisions based on rational self-interest. Voting, political activism, and leadership decisions are all made through the same cost/benefit analysis as that of liberal economics (Friedman 1962). The emphasis on self-interest embedded in these rationalist assumptions is particularly important to understanding the broader assumptions of liberalism. The individual is considered to be the primary unit of political measurement, thus marginalizing the importance of *collective* rationality and identity (Hayek 1944, 11). The good of the collective only matters to the extent that it affects the good of the individual. Liberal assumptions about rational human behavior can thus be summarized as follows:

Liberal Assumption 1: The individual, as the primary unit of political analysis, behaves on the basis of rational self-interest. Collective/group interests are secondary to those of the individual.

This assumption is problematic to indigenous studies for several reasons. First, indigenous

peoples view the collective, not the individual, as the primary unit of political measurement. Political outcomes are measured by their impact on the entire community, tribe, village, nation, etc., with individual considerations being secondary. Although individuals within indigenous communities are entitled to certain rights and liberties, the needs of the collective supersede those of the self. Indigenous communities view themselves as much more than groups of individuals interacting through the mechanism of rational self-interest. They are organic sociopolitical entities with distinct needs, habits, and identities (Manuel & Posluns 1974; Smith 1999). Second, ecological, not individual, rationality is considered to be the driving force behind human behavior. Because humanity belongs to a natural ecosystem, it must shape its behavior accordingly so as not to disrupt the natural balance of the world. This view is strongly reflected in the indigenous conception of citizenship, and contrasts sharply with that of liberalism (McLaughlin 1993; Churchill 2003a).

Liberal Citizenship Regime

Liberal and indigenous assumptions about the individual and rationality are in many ways reflected in their contrasting citizenship regimes. Citizenship within a liberal society is extended to the individual, not to the collective or to non-human actors:

> Liberal citizenship, based upon Enlightenment principles and values, posits that *people* are candidates for the benefits and obligations of citizenship, not ecological communities. People are capable of the rational self-governance that citizenship requires. Natural "resources" are merely extrinsic goods to be used wisely for the benefit of this and future generations of people. (Curtin 2002, 293 *emphasis original*)

The liberal citizenship regime clearly distinguishes mankind as being separate from and superior to the natural world. Individual rationality is the mechanism through which people can safely govern themselves outside of nature (Friedman 1962).

The extension of citizenship to the individual assumes that identity is generated at the individual level. The individual is responsible for creating his or her own political, economic, and social identity. The liberal citizenship regime is obligated to provide the necessary protections to the individual which allow him or her to succeed at these goals, but does not extend such protections to distinct *groups* of individuals (Von Mises 1949). This axiom does not mean that society must exist in a state of nature in which every individual acts in self-interested isolation. It does mean that society has no intrinsic value in itself. Society is merely an instrument for the realization of the maximum potential of each individual within (Hayek 1944, 22-23). Liberal assumptions about citizenship and identity can therefore be summarized as follows:

Liberal Assumption 2: Individual human beings should be extended the rights and responsibilities of social citizenship. Because individual rationality is the basis of citizenship, it cannot be extended to distinct groups of people or to non-human actors.

This assumption belies an even sharper contrast between indigenous and liberal assumptions about political life. One might assume that, given the emphasis on communal rights and identity discussed earlier, that indigenous peoples conceptualize citizenship as a collective good. This assumption would not be incorrect, but incomplete. Indigenous citizenship regimes do recognize the intrinsic value of the collective, but also include the individual *and* the natural world under the umbrella of citizenship. This principle is best represented in Salmon's (2000) theory of "kincentric ecology." Through Salmon's conceptual framework, all three are considered equal actors whose needs must be balanced against those of the other two. Indigenous citizenship is

also highly similar to Curtin's (2002) ecological citizenship regime. The relationship between people and nature is most profound, and is the source of indigenous assumptions about human behavior as ecological rationality. All human sociopolitical and economic decisions must be reached through an awareness of the ecological context within which they originate. Nature is considered by the indigenous citizenship regime to possess all the rights and necessary considerations of a fellow human being (Manuel & Posluns 1974; McLaughlin 1993; Churchill 2003a). This sharp conceptual divergence between liberalism and the indigenous worldview raises further questions about people and their natural environment.

Liberal Nature

Unlike Marxist and indigenist theories, neoliberalism does not actively construct a role for the natural world in relation to the social world. However, several implicit assumptions may be derived from a careful examination of neoliberal literature. With its emphasis on the importance of individual human liberty, neoliberalism creates a circumstance under which nature is essentially subjugated to human action (von Mises 1949). In its celebration of *human* freedom and *human* agency, neoliberalism articulates a pattern of interaction in which, through their rightful exercise of freedom and liberty, individuals may exploit the natural environment for personal gain (Hayek 1944, 17; Friedman 1962,). This relationship is one of subject (human beings) and object (the natural world), in which only the former may act upon the latter. Thus, human exploitation of the natural environment is not intrinsic to neoliberal theory (as in Marxism), but is instead an outcome of the deliberate exercise of rationality by free individuals.

Liberal Assumption 3: Human liberty, as the most fundamental value, allows for the

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exploitation of the natural world by self-interested individuals. Any intrinsic value in nature is superseded by the intrinsic value of human freedom.

Indigenous conceptions of ecological citizenship indicate a fundamental disagreement with liberal attitudes about nature. As an independent agent deserving the same respect and consideration as a person or community, nature cannot be reduced to the role of mere object in relation to humanity.

Hence:

> All of this must be contrasted to the typical indigenous practice of dialectics, a worldview recognizing the human entity as being merely one relation among the myriad, each of which is entirely dependent upon all others for its continued existence. Far from engendering some sense of "natural" human dominion over other relations, the indigenous view virtually requires a human behavior geared to keeping humanity *within* nature, maintaining relational balance and integrity- a condition often referred to as "harmony"- rather than attempting to harness and subordinate the universe. (Churchill 2003a, 249 *emphasis original*)

From an indigenous perspective, the commodification of nature would equate to the practice of human slavery. Liberal attitudes of dominance towards nature thus represent a loss of the human behavioral capacity for ecological rationality. These divergent attitudes regarding nature represent the most basic incompatibility between liberalism and the indigenous worldview, and clearly sustain a wide array of assumptions about behavior, citizenship, development etc.

Liberal Development

Liberal assumptions about human development are largely oriented around assumptions about *economic* development. Liberal modernization theory provides a linear path to development for all peoples, regardless of culture or historical experience. This singular path to development is modeled after that of Western Europe, and breaks down the development process into five distinct stages, ranging from traditional society (IE pre-rational) to advanced democratic

societies of high mass consumption. All societies in the world are assumed to be progressing

through one of the five stages of development, and the goal of high mass consumption is

considered to be the endpoint of development for all peoples (Rostow 1960). The means of

achieving this pinnacle of development are prescribed by the Bretton Woods international

financial institutions (IFI's), including the International Monetary Fund, World Bank, and, most

recently, the World Trade Organization. These IFI's embody the neoliberal economic

development principles first introduced by Hayek (1944), von Mises (1949), and Friedman

(1962). Under this regime, economic prosperity is most fully-realized when the state removes

itself from economic affairs, allowing market forces to efficiently govern society. This process

has hence been labeled as "liberalization."

Liberal Assumption 4: Development is a linear process of resource accumulation and

exploitation which works the same for all peoples, with the ultimate goal being a democratic,

mass consumer society.

   According to indigenous peoples, the primary feature which distinguishes them from the

Third World and oppressed national minorities such as African Americans, Kurds, etc. is the fact

that they are *not* developing. Indigenous peoples reject the notion of a universal development

imperative, and view the imposition of development regimes as an extension of the colonial

enterprise (Manuel and Posluns 1974). However, the fact that indigenous peoples reject the

concept of linear development does not mean that they view themselves as static historical

fixtures (Smith 1999). Indigenous attitudes towards development are more akin to Sen's (2000)

conception of development as *freedom*. For indigenous peoples, development means "human

beings gaining the capacity to achieve their own goals in their own contexts" (Cozzens et al.,

2008, 787). This view of development is not only opposed to that of liberalism, but to any

development paradigm claiming universality. Development is thus a product of locality, not

universal norms.

2.2. Marxism: Critical Theory in the Age of Globalization

Theoretical and praxical Marxism have offered the single greatest challenge to liberal

hegemony during the last two centuries. Marxism, as both a paradigmatic critique and practical

ideology, challenges many of the basic assumptions found in liberalism. Just as liberalism arose

as a critique of the previous dominant order (feudalism and absolute monarchy), Marxism

originated as a critique of the liberal order which had achieved even greater hegemony than the

system it replaced. Marxist opposition to the exploitation and oppression generated by capitalist

production would make it appear well-suited to indigenous studies, particularly those pertaining

to resistance. However, as I will demonstrate in the following sections, the Marxist paradigm

actually reinforces many of the basic assumptions of liberalism which are fundamentally

incompatible with the indigenous worldview. I will conclude by restating the need for a new

paradigm for indigenous studies which is devoid of the relativistic, universalizing assumptions of

both Marxist and Liberal paradigms.

Marxist Rationality

Marxist assumptions about human behavior are derived from the same principles of

Enlightenment rationality as those of liberalism. However, Marxist conceptions of rationality

differ from those of liberalism in that the *collective*, not the individual, is the source of rational

behavior. Marxism asserts that the rational self-interest of the bourgeoisie is responsible for class

divisions, and that the collective rationality of the proletariat is the means of ending bourgeois exploitation and establishing a communist society. Marxist collective rationality, predicated on the idea of class consciousness, assumes that people from similar socioeconomic backgrounds will act together to serve the interests of the entire class or group (Marx & Engels 1848, 10, 16).

⑤ **Marxist Assumption 1**: The collective, not the individual, is the primary source of rational human behavior. Marxist collective rationality means that the interests of the group (IE proletariat) supersede those of the individual, and that collective rational action is the only means of ending exploitation.

The Marxist emphasis on the group over the individual appears more compatible with the indigenous worldview than do liberal conceptions of behavioral rationality. However, like those of Liberalism, Marxist behavioral assumptions remain contrary to the indigenous conception of ecological rationality (Churchill 2003a). Marxist collective rationality stipulates that class relations are the predominant avenue of political inquiry and activism (Marx & Engels 1848, 40-41). Whereas the individual rationality of liberalism and collective rationality of Marxism were derived from Enlightenment values, the ecological rationality of indigenous peoples is the product of an organic relationship with the natural world (Manuel & Posluns 1974; Churchill 2003a). Enlightenment principles of rationality reflect an anthropocentric bias which, to indigenous peoples, is irreconcilable with an ecological worldview. Therefore, Marxist assumptions of collective rationality are not well-suited to understanding indigenous resistance attitudes and behavior.

Marxist Citizenship Regime

Similar to that of liberalism, the Marxist citizenship regime is an institutionalization of its

assumptions about rational behavior. Marxist collective rationality means that the group (IE

proletariat), not the individual or the natural world, is entitled to all the benefits, rights, and

responsibilities of social citizenship. This collectivist citizenship regime is to be the foundation

of a communist society. Social equality for the proletariat is guaranteed through this form of

collective identity. Furthermore *all* identity is a product of social class. Bourgeois identity exists

in the present, but will be destroyed in the communist revolution (Marx & Engels 1848, 27).

Any sentiments regarding individual identity- such as ideology, spirituality, etc- promulgate false

consciousness and are transmitted through the bourgeois superstructure (Pines 1993, 120).

Proletarian identity, and consequently proletarian citizenship, is the highest form of social

signification (Marx & Engels 1848, 20) . Which leads to the second assumption of Marxism:

Marxist Assumption 2: The socioeconomic collective (IE proletariat), not the individual or the

natural world, is eligible for the rights and responsibilities of social citizenship. True identity is a

product of social class; all other forms of identity are bourgeois and contribute to false

consciousness.

The exclusion of nature from the Marxist citizenship regime is unmistakeable. As discussed

earlier, the indigenous ecological citizenship regime includes nature as an equal actant with the

same significance as a human person or community (McLaughlin 1993; Salmon 2000). I will

refrain from restating the divergence between Enlightenment rationalist and ecological

conceptions of citizenship at this juncture; my critique of the liberal anthropocentric citizenship

bias applies equally to that of Marxism. Instead, I will focus on Marxist assumptions about

identity which are at odds with those of the indigenous worldview. Whereas both Marxist and indigenous citizenship regimes emphasize collective over individual identity, the source of that identity is contested.

Marxism asserts that *class* identity is the only legitimate form of identity (Marx & Engels 1848, 20), whereas the indigenous worldview sees the *nation* as the primary source of collective identity. From the indigenous perspective, the term "nation" refers to "bodies of people bound together by their *bio-regional* and other *natural* cultural affinities" (Churchill 2003c, 293 emphasis added). Indigenous nationhood thus differs from Western conceptions of national identity (Anderson 1983 and Gellner 1983) in that it includes nature in a way that extends beyond random geographical proximity, and assumes that some groups (IE traditional or indigenous groups) are produced through natural, not social, processes (or, more precisely, that this social process is mediated by nature [Manuel & Posluns 1974]). Social class is incompatible with national identity because it is an *unnatural* derivative of Enlightenment rationality. Because Enlightenment rationality, predicated on an imbalanced view of the natural world, created the conditions under which social class is perpetuated, it is incapable of supporting a legitimate citizenship regime (IE one that includes nature). The redistribution of scarce resources between socioeconomic classes is therefore no substitute for a reconsidered holistic relationship with the natural world.

Marxist Nature

Whereas liberalism implicitly excludes nature from the terrain of social relations, Marxism explicitly distinguishes the natural world from the social world. Marxism assigns value to nature primarily as a commodity, which is characterized by a fluctuating scale of valuation. Each

commodity has an inherent use value, which is calculated by its degree of importance in fulfilling human needs, and exchange value, which is an abstraction existing wholly within the social construct of the marketplace. Use value, as a primitive means of governing exchange, can be understood within almost any social context. Exchange value, however, is calculated through a complex array of variables such as inputs (labor, raw materials, manufacturing capacity, etc) and market forces (demand, macro economic stability, purchasing power). The normative Marxist critique of the commodity denounces the *social* relationship resulting from capitalist production, not the underlying exploitation of nature upon which capitalist production is predicated (Marx 1952, 13) A communist society does not seek to change this fundamental relationship with the Earth (IE by reimagining the commodity). The goal of communism is to more equitably distribute the wealth generated by the capitalist mode of production. The proletariat, rather than the bourgeoisie, determines the relationship between society and the value of the commodity (Marx & Engels 1848, 27-28). From the perspective of the worker in relation to the commodity, communism is thus the ultimate expression of capitalism. Therefore:

Marxist Assumption 3: The natural world exists as a commodity to be consumed by human beings. A socially-reconfigured capitalist mode of production is the ultimate expression of the relationship between humanity and nature.

From an indigenous perspective, the Marxist view of "egalitarian" capitalism as the paramount human achievement is the ultimate expression of Enlightenment rationality (Churchill 1994; 2003a). This view legitimizes and reinforces the exploitation of nature upon which capitalist production depends. Again, the similarities between liberal and Marxist assumptions

are so similar that they need not be repeated here. The indigenous critique of liberal assumptions about nature applies equally to those of Marxism. However, the Marxist theory of the commodity and its system of valuation provides some important insights into indigenist perspectives on nature and development. This theoretical cross-pollination will be explored more fully in Chapter 4.

Marxist Development

The Marxist view of history defines development as a process by which political economy is constantly reinvented through dialectical evolution. Primitive and less efficient politico-economic formations are replaced by more advanced and efficient formations. For example, parochial agricultural societies are replaced by feudalism, feudalism is replaced by capitalism, and, finally, capitalism is replaced by communism. Marx's (1964, 37) exposition of patterns of development bears many similarities to that of Rostow (1960). The man difference between liberal and Marxist accounts of development thus pertains to the future, not the past. According to Marxism, communism is considered to be the ultimate historical endpoint of the human development cycle (Marx and Engels 1848, 16-17). Capitalism *must* precede a communist revolution as it is the only form of politico-economic organization capable of establishing an industrial mode of production (Marx & Engels 1848, 15-17). Those societies which have not yet attained this level of social and technological progress exist in an earlier stage of development according to Marxism (Marx 1964, 81).

Marxist Assumption 4: Development is a dialectical process through which less efficient socioeconomic systems are replaced by more efficient systems. All human societies progress

through sequential stages of development, with global communism being the ultimate goal of human achievement.

From an indigenous perspective, the Marxist dialectical model of development is nearly indistinguishable from the linear process of modernization posited by the liberal paradigm (IE Rostow 1960). Hence, communism is not a "potential revolutionary transformation of world capitalism," but a "*continuation* of all of capitalism's worst vices in a 'more efficient form'" (Churchill 2003a, 251 emphasis original). Because indigenous national identity is not derived from class identity within the capitalist system (Pines 1993, 120), indigenous peoples would appear to be excluded from a communist society. The Marxist view of development as a continuation of capitalism's tendency to commodify and subjugate the natural world further alienates Marxism from the indigenous worldview (Churchill 1994).

2.3 Reconsidering Paradigm: The Case Against Marxist and Liberal Hegemony

The previous sections summarized the underlying assumptions of Marxist and liberal paradigms which reflect a distinctly European heritage. The indigenous perspective presented in counterpoint to each of these assumptions uncovered a distinct cultural incongruity between traditional and Western theoretical approaches. Liberalism and Marxism are thus less than ideal forms of analysis for the Chiapan narrative presented in Chapter I. Indigenous resistance to globalization was the product of indigenous, not Western, assumptions about society, political economy, and the natural world. However, the indigenous worldview alone lacks the capacity to directly challenge liberalism and Marxism on a paradigmatic level, demonstrating the need for a new paradigm for indigenous social inquiry. The next chapter will present a novel paradigmatic approach to the study of indigenous resistance to globalization which is derived entirely from

native culture. In Chapter IV I will apply this approach, known as "indigenism," to the Chiapan

narrative in order to demonstrate its explanatory capacity for indigenous research.

Chapter 3: The Indigenist Alternative- A Non-Western

Approach to Political Economy

The previous chapter summarized the fundamental assumptions which underlay the Western paradigms of Liberalism and Marxism. These assumptions belie a specific set of experiences with society, nature, and technology which are far from universal. Nevertheless, political science often seeks to apply these assumptions to peoples whose experiences differ from those of Western Europe. This norm results not only in questionable conclusions, but in a perpetuation of the dominant relationship between the occidental and the "other." This imbalanced relationship is much more deeply-rooted than that of North and South or Core and Periphery. Many in the South seek to develop by imitating Western life, whether liberal or Marxist, and are thus deprived only of access to material, not intellectual, capital. However, the values and attitudes of indigenous peoples are alien to those of the West, yet they are still subjugated by Western theoretical paradigms.

The application of Western paradigms to indigenous peoples is problematic for two reasons: one conceptual and the other normative. Conceptually, (as demonstrated in Chapter II) Western paradigms are often ill-suited to the task of conducting research in non-Western contexts. Normatively, the application of Western paradigms to indigenous societies extends colonial relations onto the intellectual plane, a figurative colonization of the mind. If colonialism historically deprived indigenous peoples of land, livelihood, and autonomy, the inappropriate use of paradigm threatens to deprive them of perspective. How, then, can political science understand and explain the political processes, attitudes, and assumptions of indigenous peoples in a manner which is both conceptually valid and normatively acceptable?

I propose that the search for a new paradigm is the only way to address these conceptual and normative problems. Paradigm shifts historically occurred when a new paradigm emerged to challenge and critique the existing dominant paradigm (IE Liberalism to feudalism/monarchy and Marxism to Liberalism). What paradigm thus has the potential to challenge the dominant status of both Marxism and Liberalism in modern social theory? The emergent philosophy known as "indigenism" is perhaps the best answer to the paradigmatic challenges for indigenous peoples in the age of globalization. Indigenism originated as a resistance philosophy among North and Central American Indians during the mid-to-late 20th Century, thus ensuring its normative credibility. As I will demonstrate in the following sections, indigenism also contains the intellectual rigor and explanatory power to achieve paradigmatic legitimacy on par with that of Marxism and liberalism.

3.1. Defining Indigenism: An Exercise in Conceptual Schizophrenia

There clearly exists no standard definition of indigenism within either the academic literature or mainstream (alternative/subaltern) theoretical discourse. The term "indigenism" has been used interchangeably with numerous labels pertaining to indigenous peoples and the state. In the following section I will compare and contrast the various meanings given to indigenism within the literature and indicate those which are best-suited for the construction of an indigenist paradigm. The remainder of the chapter will detail the assumptions and normative considerations of such a paradigm as represented by the indigenist literature.

Indigenismo

According to Ramos (1998, 6), indigenism is "a set of ideas (and ideals) concerning the incorporation of Indian peoples into nation-states." This view of indigenism refers to official

state policies toward indigenous peoples. Also known as *Indigenismo*, this top-down approach was originally devised by Latin American corporatist states (such as Mexico) as a means of incorporating indigenous peoples into "modern" society (Batalla 1996, Brass 2007). *Indigenismo* was practiced by the Mexico from 1940-1970 and provided much of the impetus for indigenous resistance organization in the 1980's and 1990's (Solano 2007). Referring to *Indigenismo* as "indigenism," although not technically incorrect given the contested meaning of the latter, is at best a misnomer. *Indigenismo* is still used in many Latin American (non-indigenous) political circles, but has largely been replaced by neoliberal conceptions of citizenship with the waning of state corporatism in the 1970s and 1980s.

Indianismo

The epistemology of Latin American *Indigenismo* led to the emergence of a grassroots opposition movement in the 1980s known as *Indianismo*. Also considered a form of indigenism, *Indianismo* was the dialectical antithesis to *Indigenismo*. Whereas Indigenismo sought to create a modern homogeneous national culture, *Indianismo* was an attempt to define and preserve indigenous cultures as separate and distinct. Brass (2007) gives the most basic definition of *Indianismo*:

> [*Indianismo* is] a 'from below' theory/agency designed to promote the 'liberation of the Indian as a member of an indigenous civilization.' (Brass 2007, 242)

Velasco (2003) provides a more detailed account of *Indianismo:*

> [*Indianismo* is an] ideological and political movement the objective of which is centred on the liberation of the Indian, not the liberation of the individual Indian but the Indian as a member of indigenous civilization, who lives in the collective memory of indigenous groups, and rather than having been destroyed, waits patiently for liberation. (Velasco 2003, 122)

Solano (2007) expands upon Cruz's (2003) conception of the *Indianista*[1] philosophy and

provides a normative framework for the preservation of indigenous society:

> Indian civilization, in the opinion of the *indianistas*, offers an alternative version of the
> future that contrasts with the civilizing project of the West, and which accordingly needs to
> be liberated from its current subjugation within Latin American nation-states. In order to
> realize this objective, a strategy was needed in which recuperation, re-valorization, and re-
> Indianization went hand in hand with demands for the recognition of ethnic groups as
> political entities. (Solano 2007, 152)

Solano's (2007) account of *Indianismo* is of particular interest because of its demands for ethnic

citizenship as a legitimate means of protecting indigenous society. This version of ethnic

citizenship shares many similarities with the ecological citizenship regime described in Chapter

II[2], and opposes the concepts of citizenship promoted by Marxism and Liberalism.

Indigenista

Like *Indigenismo* before it, *Indianismo* has also been used interchangeably with the term

"indigenism." For example, Niezen (2003) refers to this form of indigenism as the driving

ideology behind the International Movement of Indigenous Peoples. To further complicate the

indigenist epistemology, the philosophy of the Latin American *indigenistas* has also been

frequently referenced under the rubric of indigenism. *Indigenista* is best represented in the

collected works of Guillermo Bonfil Batalla[3], but has become a common reference point for

indigenous resistance movements in Latin America. *Indigenista* is closely related to *Indianismo*,

but differs in its normative interpretation of the source of indigenous oppression. Whereas

Indianismo seeks liberation through the legal recognition of cultural difference and ethnic

citizenship, *indigenista* asserts that the entire system of colonial relations must be deconstructed

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1   A descriptive term for those who practice and promote the tenets of *Indianismo*.
2   The concept of ecological citizenship will be further expanded later in this chapter.
3   Few of Batalla's works have been translated into English. Unless otherwise noted, my assessment of his works is
    derived from translations cited by other authors such as Churchill (2003c).

(Brass 2007). For the i*ndigenista*, complete autonomy from the nation state, the institutional

embodiment of colonial relations, is the only means of ensuring the survival of indigenous

civilization.   Within the context of the Mayan situation described in Chapter I:

> [*Indigenista*] contrasts an harmonious, egalitarian, and spiritual indigenous past with an impoverished present, in which the Maya are subordinated to and exploited by a range of non-indigenous (foreign) oppressors. The presence of the latter is attributed to the Spanish Conquest and- more generally- colonialism, and is a category that ranges from NAFTA to local *mestizos*, all of whom are blamed for the poverty and suffering of indigenous communities. (Brass 2007, 242)

Rather than co-existing with modernity, *indigenista* seeks nothing less than the full reconstitution

of a pre-colonial indigenous society. Issues of citizenship and cultural recognition are to be

addressed through radical action and separation, not through compromise and integration.

Because the juridical apparatus is a core component of the colonial system, *Indianista* legal

solutions cannot adequately ensure the safety of indigenous communities from future attempts to

integrate native peoples into modern society (Churchill 2003c).

Epistemological Convergence

Thus far, the contested epistemology of indigenism has produced a broad array of ideologies

either labeled as, or claiming to be, indigenist. However, all have followed a central

epistemological thread linking indigenous peoples to the nation-state. This common theme

suggests the possibility of a unified indigenist perspective capable of supporting a new

theoretical paradigm. The forms of indigenism reviewed thus far have pertained, albeit with

appropriate measure, exclusively to Latin America. The constitution of a legitimate indigenist

paradigm will require a broader perspective and the incorporation of theories originating outside

the confines of the Latin American experience.

North American indigenous society (IE the territorial United States and Canada) has shared a

similar colonial past with that of Latin America, but has produced a more consistent indigenist

philosophy. The theoretical foundations of North American indigenism are heavily influenced by

Latin American *indigenista* and *Indianismo* resistance philosophies, thus uniting several existing

"indigenist" perspectives. North American indigenism mainly differs from these Latin American

approaches in that it is highly conceptual/theoretical rather than praxical. Whereas *indigenista*

and *Indianista* are most often used as descriptive terms for specific indigenous movements,

North American indigenism is a multifaceted ideology encompassing everything from social

relations to environmental stewardship. North American indigenism effectively combines the

colonial critique of *indigenista*, *Indianista* conceptions of ethnic citizenship, and the basic

assumptions of the indigenous worldview[4] to create an entirely new impetus for indigenous

resistance. The following sections will detail the epistemology of North American indigenism

and conclude by providing a paradigmatic indigenist framework for the study of indigenous

resistance to globalization.

3.2. Conceptual Origins of North American Indigenism

The North American indigenist philosophy is the product of a substantial pool of literature. I

have gathered and reviewed the most influential works pertaining to this version of indigenism.

These works are as follows: Manuel & Posluns (1974), Snyder (1982), Mander (1991),

McLaughlin (1993), Glendenning (1994), Heider (1994), Churchill (1995), Batalla (1996),

Churchill (1996)[5], Knight (1998) Glendenning (1999), Kohr (2001), Isin and Turner (2002),

Churchill (2003a; 2003b; 2003c)[6]. The following sections contain a review of the North

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4   As described in Chapter II of this paper.
5   The essays contained within were revised and expanded in Churchill (2003). I will reference these essays as
    they appeared in that work for the remainder of this paper.
6   See also the combined works of Richard J.F. Day, who proposes a similar indigenist philosophy known as
    anarcha-indigenism. Day's theory promotes feminist and anarchist values over the anti-colonial emphasis of
    other authors such as Ward Churchill.

American indigenist literature and a summary of the core components of the indigenist philosophy.

Before reviewing the available literature, I should note the importance of Ward Churchill to the philosophy of North American indigenism. Churchill is a North American Indian, claiming Muscogee and Creek heritage, as well as a professional scholar. He was professor of ethnic studies at the University of Colorado- Boulder from 1990-2007, where he devoted most of his attention to indigenous issues and colonialism. Churchill's works are critical to the construction of a legitimate indigenist paradigm because his life experience bridges the gap between Western academia and indigenous society. He effectively translates the indigenous worldview to a Western intellectual audience, something which adjacent disciplines such as anthropology often fail to accomplish. Churchill draws upon theoretical sources from within indigenous society to construct his arguments, and presents a hybrid ideology which is neither wholly indigenous or Western. Churchill also bridges the gap between theory and activism and has been known to apply his ideological perspective to real-world situations[7]. Furthermore, Churchill provides the most comprehensive conceptual summary of indigenism available in the literature. Therefore, my construction of an indigenist paradigm comparable to those of Marxism and liberalism will draw heavily upon Churchill's writings and influences.

Ideational Genesis

The modern indigenist philosophy originated in the 1970s as a vision of radical social, political, and economic transformation led by the world's aboriginal peoples. This vision promotes the non-violent creation of a new stateless society reflecting the values of community, nature, and the equality of all living things. Early examples of this ideation can be found in

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7   Churchill's most famously participated in the Indian disruption of the 1992 Columbus Day parade in Denver.

Manuel's and Posluns' (1974) *Fourth World* and the combined works of Guillermo Bonfil

Batalla. The concept of a Fourth World is integral to the indigenist philosophy and represents the

foundation upon which North American indigenist thought has been constructed since the 1970s.

Even more fundamental, however, is the assumption that there exists in the world a category of

peoples known as "aboriginal" or "indigenous." The Western world employs these labels to

describe atomized and fragmented pre-industrial peoples living within the confines of modern

nation-states. However, Batalla (1981) insists that global indigenous societies are in fact a

unified totality standing in direct opposition to the Western "colonial" regime. Indigenous

societies the world over share a common past and a common plan for an independent and

decolonized future. Furthermore, the world's indigenous peoples all practice a deep

environmental ethic which is antithetical to that of modern society. Therefore, the labels

"indigenous" and "aboriginal" possess the same descriptive power as terms such as "Western"

and "modern" within the context of the indigenist literature. Therefore, in summary:

There exists in the world a distinct category of peoples known as "indigenous" or aboriginal."

Their common shared experience of colonialism and strong relationship with the natural world

distinguishes them from other sociopolitical groupings and supersedes issues of cultural

difference and geographical distance.

The Fourth World: A Quest for Indigenous Utopia

The life cycle of the term "Fourth World" is in many ways similar to that of the "Third

World" after which it is modeled. The term "Third World" originated as a rallying cry for newly-

independent countries in the 1960s who envisioned themselves as a "...great coalition of

oppressed peoples of the world rising up against the technology and tyranny of the Western

European peoples" (Manuel & Posluns 1974, ix). The Third World was positioned to radically

redefine the balance of power in the international system through unified resistance against the

West and the USSR. Why, then, did the world's indigenous peoples not consider themselves part

of this emergent liberation struggle in the 1960s?

> The distinction between the Third World and the Aboriginal World is at present political,
> but will eventually be seen as religious and economic. The Third World is emerging at this
> time primarily because it is rapidly learning to adapt its lifestyle to Western technology...
> and Western political concepts. The Aboriginal World has so far lacked the political muscle
> to emerge: it is without economic power; it rejects Western political techniques; it is unable
> to comprehend Western technology unless it can be used to extend and enhance traditional
> life forms; and it finds its strength above and beyond Western ideas of historical process.
> While the Third World can eventually emerge as a force capable of maintaining its freedom
> in the struggle between East and West, the Aboriginal World is almost wholly dependent
> upon the good faith and morality of the nations... within which it finds itself." (Manuel and
> Posluns 1974: 5-6)

History has shown that the Third World envisioned in the postcolonial 1960s never emerged, and

that even the term "Third World" itself was eventually co-opted by the developed world as a

synonym for poverty and underdevelopment. Regardless, Manuel and Posluns (1974) were

critical of the Third World primarily for its admiration of Western forms of technology and

political economy. This imitation of Western life necessitated the construction of an entirely new

liberation movement. If the Third World did not reflect the values and attitudes of aboriginal

peoples, then a Fourth World movement would represent a more logical manifestation of Indian

resistance. Such a movement would be predicated on the tenets of indigenous society and

fundamentally opposed to the statist colonial regime:

> Our celebration honors the emergence of the Fourth World: the utilization of technology
> and its life-enhancing potential within the framework of the values of the peoples of the
> Aboriginal World... the free use of power by *natural human groupings, immediate
> communities, people who are in direct contact with one another,* to harness the strength of
> the torrent *for the growth of their own community...* An integration of free communities and
> the free exchange of people between those communities according to their talents and

temperaments is the only kind of confederation that is *not an imperial domination*. (Manuel and Posluns 1974: 12 *emphasis added*)

This emphasis on local community and "natural human groupings" belies the assumption that larger and more complex forms of sociopolitical organization, namely the state, are artificial constructs imposed through a colonial or imperial apparatus. Batalla's (1996) *Mexico Profundo* takes this concept one step further by proposing that the state actively obfuscates these "natural" communal formations. Like Marxism, Batalla's (1996) *Mexico Profundo* assumes that the state generates a false consciousness in order to sustain itself. However, unlike Marxism, Batalla's (1996) "natural" communities are based upon common cultural, geographic, and genealogical identity, not upon class identity. The *Mexico Profundo* thus refers to the "natural" community of Mexico's indigenous peoples whose identity has been falsely suppressed by the state. Like a microcosm of the Fourth World, the *Mexico Profundo* can emerge in its true form only when it recognizes the unnatural social conditions imposed by the colonial regime.

From Utopianism to Realism: The Theoretical Rebirth of the Fourth World

The ideational Fourth World described by Manuel and Posluns (1974) never became a reality. Their prescription for the creation of a new type of multi-ethnic state through passive, non-violent resistance was seen as increasingly unrealistic by the 1980s. The violent suppression of indigenous peoples at events such as Wounded Knee (1973), Guatemala (1980), and Oka, Quebec (1988) established a strong precedent against peaceful resistance (Niezen 2003). During this period the American Indian Movement sought to realign the Fourth World philosophy with that of the Latin American *indigenistas*. Like the Third World before it, the Fourth World was rebranded with a negative connotation, referring to indigenous peoples living under the yoke of colonialism.

The 4th World is the name given to the indigenous peoples descended from a country's

aboriginal population and who today are completely or partly deprived of their own

territory and its riches... The Peoples to whom we refer are the Indians of North and South

America, The Inuit (Eskimos), the Sami people [of Northern Scandinavia], the Australian

aborigines, as well as the various indigenous populations of Africa, Asia, and Oceania...

Taken together, these nations comprise a non-industrial "Fourth World," a "host world"

upon whose territories and with whose natural resources each of the other three, the worlds

of modern statist sociopolitical and economic organization, have been constructed.

(Churchill 2003b, 263-264)

The Fourth World was thus transformed from a rallying cry for the world's indigenous peoples to

a moral indictment of the nation-state. Furthermore:

> In substance, the very existence of any state... is absolutely contingent upon usurpation of
> the material and political rights of every indigenous nation within its boundaries. To put it
> another way, the denial of indigenous rights... is integral to the creation and functioning of
> the world order which has evolved over the past thousand years or so, and which is even
> now projecting itself in an ever more totalizing manner into our collective future.
> (Churchill 2003b, 264)

This revised conception of the Fourth World is the foundation upon which the rest of the North

American indigenist philosophy is constructed. Therefore:

The existence of every nation-state is predicated on the usurpation of the territories and riches of

the world's aboriginal peoples. This process has created a marginalized "Fourth World" which

exists within the boundaries of nation-states, and is deprived of autonomy and control over its

traditional lands, resources, and way of life.

The vision of the Fourth World described by Churchill (2003b) is important to the indigenist

philosophy because of its normative precedent. If every nation-state is considered to be the

result of an illegal and immoral conquest of indigenous lands, then the resident indigenous

population enjoys a moral advantage over its colonizers. For Churchill (2003b) this moral

prerogative translates directly into a call for internal decolonization:

> The point is that the right of the Fourth World to decolonize itself exists independently of any direct benefit this might impart to colonizing societies or any of their subparts... More strongly, the right of the Fourth World to decolonization exists *undiminished* even if it can be show that this is tangibly *dis*advantageous to our colonizers. (Churchill 2003b, 267) emphasis original

Churchill (2003b, 268) reaches this conclusion through the Nietzschean/Foucauldian system of

genealogy, which seeks to "define what is objectionable in a given institution and then trace its

'lineage' backwards in time to discover how it went wrong and, thus, how it can be 'fixed.'" He

traces the contemporary experiences of the Fourth World to the initial moment when Europeans

discovered the Americas in 1492. He asserts that the colonial enterprise began with Columbus'

first contact with the natives of Guanahani (San Salvador), and that only a return to the "pristine"

(Brass 2007, 239) conditions before this encounter can liberate the Fourth World. The

illegitimate process begun by Columbus is currently maintained by the nation-state. Hence,

liberation from the state is the best option for "fixing" the colonial problem. In summary:

Fourth World peoples possess an intrinsic right to decolonization due to the illegitimate origins

of the nation-state. This claim is derived from morality and is constrained by neither colonial

law or any potential harm to the state that would result from the decolonization process,

including the loss of territorial integrity and economic stability.

Like Marxism, Churchill's (2003b) description of the Fourth World portrays an unjust and

ubiquitous socioeconomic arrangement in which one group oppresses and exploits another. Also

like Marxism, the intrinsic immorality of this arrangement demands radical action on the part of

the exploited. This action translates into a sweeping reconfiguration of society capable of

transforming power relations on a global scale. This precedent for decolonization is clearly the

crux of the North American indigenist philosophy. How, then, should this process of

decolonization occur? How does indigenist "decolonization" differ from subaltern nationalism?

What would a reconfigured indigenist society look like? Why is this approach preferable to the

more pragmatic and attainable goals of mainstream progressivism?

Indigenist Liberation Strategem

Manuel and Posluns (1974) cite the Aboriginal World's lack of access to material resources

and unwillingness to adapt to Western political systems as the greatest obstacles to indigenous

liberation. These purported disadvantages preclude the possibility of achieving liberation

through conventional military or political avenues. If direct confrontation is unrealistic, then

Churchill (2003b, 268) proposes actions designed to "materially erode the power concentrated in

centralized entities like the state, major corporations, and financial institutions..." Furthermore:

> The primary purpose of everything we do must be to make this society increasingly
> unmanageable... The more disrupted, disorganized, and destabilized the system becomes,
> the less its ability to expand, extend, or even maintain itself... Hence, we must seek nothing
> less than the dismemberment and dissolution of every statist/corporate entity in the world...
> In their stead, we seek the reconstitution of that entire galaxy of *nations* upon which the
> states have imposed themselves. (Churchill 2003b, 270) emphasis original

Churchill (2003b) provides few details as to how this disruption of the nation-state and corporate

system would be carried out, although he is clear that pursuing new "progressive" legislation

through conventional legal channels is not desirable[8]. Instead, he proposes that existing

legislation of all types be repealed or obstructed through indigenist activism. Legislation,

regardless of intent, is assumed to always restrict freedom. What is freedom to an indigenist?

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8   Here Churchill clearly favors the *indigenista* position over that of the *Indianistas*.

> [F]reedom is typically presented as a sort of abstract concept. Well, it's not really so abstract... In fact, I think it can be quantified and measured... Freedom may be defined as absence of regulation. The more regulated you are, the less free..." (Churchill 2003b, 269)

A "freer" indigenist society is a stateless indigenist society. It is "an entirely new praxical symbiosis, one which is not so much revolutionary as devolutionary. We don't want China out of Tibet so much as we want China out of China" (Churchill 2003b, 270). Thus, the goal of indigenism is "not the creation of a state, but the expulsion of alien rule and the reconstruction of societies" (Churchill 2003c, 280). The indigenist goal of a stateless society is not entirely dissimilar from those of Liberalism and Marxism. The means may differ, but the decline of the state is integral to all three paradigms. Whereas liberalism predicts that the state will give way to market forces and Marxism assumes that the state will whither with the death of the bourgeoisie, indigenism sees the end of the state at the hands of a righteous aboriginal insurrection. The immoral foundation upon which the state is constructed ultimately guarantees its destruction. The indigenist insurrection must be actively pursued by indigenous peoples, and Churchill (1995, 2003b, and 2003c) calls for a vanguard-style approach designed to arouse the spirits of the Fourth World:

The liberation of the Fourth World is inevitable and will be led by a vanguard-style indigenist cadre. Indigenous peoples will free themselves by using any means necessary (both legal and illegal) to disrupt, destabilize, and otherwise weaken the authority and power of the state.
The indigenist literature does not directly mention the terms "terrorism" or "guerrilla warfare," but its vague calls for radical action against the state can nevertheless be interpreted as a tacit approval of unconventional tactics. Why must the Fourth World adopt such a hardline approach in order to achieve its goals of autonomy and equality? An alliance with other minorities and

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progressive ideologues of the New Left would seem to have a more immediate impact on the

daily lives of indigenous peoples. For example, during the 1960s the African American civil

rights movement won substantial political victories through peaceful engagement and

cooperation with progressive political coalitions. Why is this not an option for indigenous

peoples?

3.3. Alternatives to Indigenism: The Left and Colonialism 2.0

Progressivism: The Highest Stage of Colonialism

Those on the New Left have lobbied for equal rights and equal benefits for all peoples,

regardless of race, ethnicity, creed, etc. since its emergence in the 1960s. As the most oppressed

and socially fractured collective group in the world, indigenous peoples would seemingly have

much to gain through cooperation with domestic and international progressive movements. The

North American indigenist philosophy condemns the possibility of cooperation with progressives

because of their intrinsic link to the colonial system. The egalitarian society pursued by

progressives is untenable because its very existence is contingent upon the expropriation of land

and resources from indigenous peoples:

> [T]he existence of the United States is, as it has always been and must always be,
> predicated first and foremost on the denial of self-determining existence to every
> indigenous nation within its purported borders... Absent this denial, the very society
> progressives seek to transform would never have had a landbase upon which to constitute
> itself in any form at all. So, it would have had no resources with which to actualize a mode
> of production, and there would be no basis for arranging or rearranging the relations of
> production... You can't end classism in a colonial system, since the colonized by definition
> comprise a class lower than that of their colonizers... So long as indigenous nations are
> subsumed against our will within 'broader' statist entities... colonialism will be alive and
> well. (Churchill 2003b, 265-266).

If, for example, feminist struggles achieve significant victories in a colonial society, they are

irrelevant because the resident Fourth World population continues to suffer a more profound

oppression. Furthermore:

> Let's imagine that the United States as a whole were somehow transformed into an entity defined by the parity of its race, class, and gender relations, its embrace of unrestricted sexual preference, its rejection of militarism in all forms, and its abiding concern with environmental protection... When all is said and done, the society resulting from this scenario is still, first and foremost, a colonialist society, an imperialist society in the most fundamental possible sense, with all that that implies. (Churchill 2003c, 284)

To the indigenist, progressivism represents the culmination of the colonial project. Not only does progressivism neglect the most fundamental concerns of indigenous peoples (IE colonial relations), it in fact strengthens the colonial system by "increasing the degree of comfort" experienced by those who live within (Churchill 2003b, 266). A comfortable, equitable, and egalitarian society built upon an unjust colonial genesis is the single greatest threat to the indigenist cause. If everyone can live comfortably within a colonial society, then the incentive to pursue decolonization is greatly diminished. Progressivism is thus not only a poor alternative to indigenism, it is a significant barrier to the liberation of the Fourth World.

The indigenist genealogy of colonialism traces the origins of other forms of oppression (IE sexism, racism, classism, homophobia) to the initial moment of colonization as well. The failure of progressivism to achieve meaningful social equality for all peoples is a result of its failure to acknowledge the colonial genesis of *all* forms of oppression:

> [Progressives] therefore inevitably pursue the wrong goals and objectives, putting last things first and often forgetting the first things altogether, perpetuating the very structures of oppression and degradation they think they oppose. (Churchill 2003c, 276)

The oppression of indigenous peoples thus legitimizes the oppression of women, homosexuals, and others. A society capable of justifying the oppression of a land's original inhabitants can logically justify the oppression of its own peoples. Churchill (2003b) asserts that the liberation of indigenous peoples will result in the liberation of all other oppressed peoples by destroying

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the precedent which has perpetuated *all* social inequality since the time of colonization. A return

to Indian rule will in fact accomplish many progressive goals because Indian society is

intrinsically egalitarian:

> It follows that realization of Indian land rights serves to undermine or destroy the ability of
> the status quo to continue imposing a racist, sexist, classist, homophobic, militaristic order
> upon *non*indians. (Churchill 2003c, 287 *emphasis original*)

Therefore:

The colonial system is responsible for perpetuating all forms of social oppression and inequality.

Progressivism actually reinforces the system of colonial relations, and ending colonialism is the

only way to promote freedom and equality for all peoples, indigenous and non-indigenous alike.

The indigenist vision of a future utopian society is not entirely dissimilar from those of Marxist

or Liberal paradigms. Also in accordance with Western paradigms, the indigenist approach seeks

to establish equality through the deconstruction of what is considered "objectionable." What

differs is their respective normative interpretation of what exactly is objectionable in society. For

Marxism it is the bourgeoisie, for Liberalism it is excessive government regulation, and for

indigenism it is colonial relations. Conclusions about what is and is not objectionable, in turn,

are based on the foundational assumptions of each respective paradigm.

3.4: The Indigenist Polity

To this point indigenism has been described mainly as a critique of the dominant modes of

sociopolitical organization inherent to the modern world. Although both Marxist and Liberal

paradigms also originated as critiques of the hegemonic political orders of their respective eras,

they inevitably put forth their own plans for radical social transformation. The normative

societal blueprints described by both Liberals and Marxists were similar in that they contained

inclusive universalizing assumptions about the future of humanity. Future Marxist and liberal

polities will purportedly incorporate all of humanity into their respective normative regimes.

Each predicts an increasing degree of homogenization as their assumptions and ideologies are

disseminated across the non-Western world. Both paradigms are considered

universalizing/inclusive because each sought to subsume the entirety of humanity under its

respective ideological umbrella.

North American indigenism, too, offers its own vision of a radically-redefined sociopolitical

world order. However, whereas Liberalism and Marxism promote a universalizing/inclusive

normative regime, indigenism advocates one which is universalizing/*exclusive*. The implication

is that, although indigenism promotes a set of values and assumptions which would reconfigure

the global system, the resulting normative regime would not impose itself onto non-Indians. Put

differently, once the system of colonial relations has been deconstructed and indigenous peoples

have secured land and autonomy, they would not seek to impose their own values or political

order upon the non-indigenous peoples of the world. This distinction is the most critical

between Western paradigms and the indigenist paradigm. Differing assumptions and attitudes

about nature and citizenship are much less problematic if they are formed in a context of mutual

respect and cultural heterogeneity.

The remainder of this section will detail the North American indigenist plan for a post-

colonial indigenous polity. The indigenist system is predicated on four distinct socio-technical

concepts: soft-path technology, deep ecology, green anarchism, and global balkanization. Each

of these conceptual categories plays a specific role in the overall function and organization of the

indigenist polity. Taken Furthermore, each concept reflects the underlying assumptions which

support the indigenist paradigm. Taken together, these four components constitute an old form of indigenous socialism which Marx referred to as "primitive communism" (Churchill 2003c, 279). Following my description of this indigenist polity I will summarize these assumptions in the same format as those of Marxism and Liberalism in Chapter II.

Soft-Path Technology

According to both Marxist and liberal paradigms, human development and progress are directly related to technological innovation. This assumption of technological development as human development has become a central theme of modernity, and is one of the driving forces behind globalization. However, as demonstrated in the indigenist literature (Manuel and Posluns 1974; Churchill 2003a; 2003b; 2003c), indigenous peoples have a very different view of technology. Technology has a much smaller role in indigenous society than in Western society. The North American indigenist perspective on technology and its normative social application is best represented in Mander (1991), Glendenning (1994), and Churchill (2003a). These works serve as both an indictment of Western attitudes toward technology and normative prescriptions for a more balanced socio-technical worldview.

Mander (1991) portrays Western assumptions about nature as the root of its imbalanced view of technology. From this perspective, technology is measured by its increasing capacity to commodify and subjugate the natural environment. Technology further acts to reinforce underlying assumptions about the natural world through media such as television and movies. The "natural" (IE ecological-rational) relationship between humanity and nature is thus replaced by a linear (IE developmental) relationship between humanity and technology. Glendenning (1994) characterizes this techno-centric relationship as an "addictive" circumstance through

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which humanity is consuming the natural world at an ever-increasing rate.

As the antithesis to both Marxist and Liberal conceptions of developmental technology, the indigenist polity would be founded on the principle of "soft-path technology" (Churchill 2003a). Soft-path technology differs from Western technology in that it considers the natural world as indistinguishable from the human world. The goals of soft-path technology are to sustain human civilization and environmental wellbeing *simultaneously,* and to "extend and enhance traditional life forms" (Manuel and Posluns 1974, 5). According to Mander (1991) and Glendenning (1994), traditional indigenous attitudes and stewardship practices regarding nature and technology represent the crux of soft-path technology. The indigenist imperative is thus to preserve, institutionalize, and expand these underlying socio-technical values. The encroachment of global capitalism and forces of modernity represents an existential threat to the practice of soft-path technology, thus necessitating a radical indigenist call to action. The institutionalization of soft-path technology within an autonomous indigenist polity is thus the best means of preserving- and possibly expanding- the indigenous socio-technical worldview.

Deep Ecology

Deep ecology refers to the underlying ethical imperative of the indigenist polity (Churchill 2003a). It is the basis for both indigenist soft-path technology and the ecological citizenship regime, and is the philosophical foundation of what I have termed "ecological rationality." Deep ecology, as expounded by McLaughlin (1993), is a nonanthropocentric ethic which ascribes morality to both social and environmental contexts. Whereas Western ethical philosophies reduce moral decisions and outcomes to human society, deep ecology includes the natural world under the rubric of moral consideration. This norm affects both individual choices and the most

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fundamental organization of society. Human social structures, economic systems, modes of

production, etc. are all shaped by ethical considerations for the wellbeing of the natural world.

Nature is viewed as a totality, not as a series of individual components- the concept of the

commodity is therefore incompatible with a deep environmental ethic. McLaughlin's (1993)

deep ecology diverges from other radical environmental philosophies in that it fuses critique with

praxis (Heider 1994). Deep ecology as a normative social platform is described by McLaughlin

(1993, 173-74) as follows:

Table 1: Eight Basic Principles of Deep Ecology

1. The well-being and flourishing of human and nonhuman Life on Earth have value in themselves (synonyms: intrinsic value, inherent value). These values are independent of the usefulness of the nonhuman world for human purposes.
2. Richness and diversity of life forms contribute to the realization of these values and are also values in themselves.
3. Humans have no right to reduce this richness and diversity except to satisfy vital needs.
4. The flourishing of human life and cultures is compatible with a substantial decrease in human population. The flourishing of nonhuman life requires such a decrease.
5. Present human interference with the nonhuman world is excessive, and the situation is rapidly worsening.
6. Policies must therefore be changed. These policies affect the basic economic, technological, and ideological structures. The resulting state of affairs will be deeply different from the present.
7. The ideological change is mainly that of appreciating life quality (dwelling in situations of inherent value) rather than adhering to an increasingly higher standard of living. There will be a profound awareness of the difference between big and great.
8. Those who subscribe to the foregoing points have an obligation directly or indirectly to try to implement the necessary changes.

The fourth point is of particular importance to the indigenist philosophy. Manuel and Posluns (1974) and Churchill (2003c) emphasize the importance of human population limits. They view the source of the current environmental crisis- attributed largely to overpopulation- as the imbalanced Western attitude towards nature. Conversely, indigenous nations maintain population levels which are "attuned to the carrying capacity of the land" (Churchill 2003c, 293).

Furthermore:

The population of indigenous nations everywhere has always been determined by the number of people who could be sustained in a given environment or bioregion without overpowering and thereby destroying that environment. (Churchill 2003c, 293)

The restoration of indigenous control over ancestral territories will allow the ethics of deep ecology to survive and even expand. The eight basic principles of deep ecology represent the driving ethical imperative of indigenist political and cultural groupings. The indigenist polity and all its attendant parts will be motivated first and foremost by these ethical precepts. Under the system of colonial relations, the ability of indigenous peoples to affect environmental change is limited. However, the reconstitution of indigenous societies through indigenist resistance will allow for a much greater degree of environmental rehabilitation. Indigenous autonomy will thus guarantee two levels of moral vindication. First, social justice will be achieved through the liberation of indigenous peoples from colonial oppression. Second, the environmental abuse perpetrated by colonizing powers will be reversed as autonomous indigenous peoples institutionalize the ethical principles of deep ecology.

Green Anarchism

McLaughlin's (1993) precepts of deep ecology form the basis of what Heider (1994) refers to as "green anarchism." Churchill (2003a) considers green anarchism to be the "natural" form of sociopolitical organization practiced by indigenous peoples. Green anarchism is characterized by the assumption that human social groupings are produced by the natural world, and that they retain a deep spiritual tie to the land from which they were formed. This concept reflects many of the underlying assumptions inherent to the indigenous worldview and citizenship regime. Ironically, this viewpoint was first "officially" espoused by neo-fascist groups in Germany during the 1980's promoting the same "blood and soil" rhetoric as the Nazi party of the 1930s

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and 40s (Heider 1994).

Green anarchism combines these tenets of deep ecology, natural human groupings, "eco-feminism," and anarchic political organization to form a unique normative social structure. The organizational structure of green anarchism is based on the collected works of Murray Bookchin[9], and is more akin to municipalism, a form of radical local democracy, than to Bakhunite anti-statism:

> The goal of municipalism is life according to the principle: "From each according to his abilities, to each according to his needs"- a peace-loving society in which competition, market economy, and money have been replaced by *harmony between people and with nature*. (Heider 1994, 61- *emphasis added*)

Within the municipalist system the concept of a political class is abolished. Everyone contributes to the political discourse and everyone is involved in the decision-making process. Bookchin's inspiration was drawn from the New England system of town meetings:

> Once a year public meetings open to all citizens take place in all the villages and towns of [Vermont]. Problems of local government are discussed and decided in an open vote, e.g., school tuition, the construction of a new road, the appropriation of public money for recreational institutions, bicycle paths, and so on. Issues are placed on the agenda by petition. The meetings are chaired by a board of selectmen, which is responsible for implementing the resolutions... In the revived institution of the town meeting Bookchin and his comrades hope initially to assume the role of a "parallel ethical system of governance" to influence local politics. In the long term they hope to replace capitalism with a *decentralized, participatory democracy anchored entirely in public town meetings*. (Heider 1994, 61- *emphasis added*)

This form of confederational democracy differs from both "mainstream" anarchism (IE anarcho-syndicalism and anarcho-capitalism) and indigenous tribal anarchy. Bookchin's reconceptualization of production through the rubric of deep ecology[10] diverges sharply from "Western" anarchies, which mainly emphasize civil liberties and property rights. Anarcho-

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9   See Bookchin (1982, 1986, 1987, 1988, and 1989).
10 See Table 1, pp 50-51.

syndicalism and anarcho-capitalism contain the same anthropocentric assumptions about nature as liberalism and Marxism (Heider 1994). Green anarchism differs from indigenous tribal anarchy in that it expands the political prerogative of indigenous peoples beyond the tribal structure. This principle is predicated on the indigenist assumption that the world's indigenous peoples constitute a sociopolitical "class" in the vein of the Marxist proletariat. Indigenous peoples belonging to different tribal units will cooperate through the "town meeting" system to advance the collective cause of the regional indigenous populace (Churchill 2003b). Tribal identity will remain integral to indigenous political life, but extra-tribal political considerations must be made in order to sustain the indigenist polity. The perception of tribal atomization and fragmentation contributed greatly to the colonial conquest of indigenous peoples, and the creation of indigenist anarchic confederations should protect against the future incursion of indigenous society.

Green anarchism is thus the least abstract component of the indigenist manifesto for social transformation. It is the normative substance which fills the political vacuum left by the struggle for decolonization. It also differentiates indigenism from the nostalgic tendencies of *indigenista*. Whereas *indigenista* advocates the return to a "pristine" (IE precolonial) American continent, indigenism recognizes that change and progress are inevitable. Indigenous peoples must adapt to the changing political circumstances of their surrounding environment, and avoid any essentialist, "romantic" self-conceptions (Yashar 1999). In this regard, *indigenista* can be considered conservative whereas [North American] indigenism is considered radical. *Indigenista* advocates the return to a pseudo-fictional past and in the process ignores the circumstances of the present. Conversely, indigenism recognizes the value of the past, but

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articulates a plan for the future which establishes an entirely new political circumstance for indigenous peoples, one that is neither colonial or pristine, but something entirely new.

Global Balkanization

If green anarchism provides a normative framework for local and regional indigenist organization, global balkanization is its international equivalent. The concept of global balkanization is best summarized in the works of Snyder (1982), Glendenning (1999), and Kohr (2001). As the name implies, the premise of global balkanization is the promotion of the fragmentation of nation-states along ethnic and cultural lines. Here indigenist assumptions about collective identity are particularly germane. Predicated on his idea of the "human scale," Kohr (2001) argues that human beings are naturally inclined towards small, locally-oriented polities. The creation of multi-national mega-states is antithetical to human nature, and, as evidenced by the collapse of the Soviet Union, ultimately untenable (Churchill 2003c). The growing phenomenon of mini-nationalisms, or subaltern nationalisms based on ethnicity and locality, provides evidence to this claim (Snyder 1982).

This normative push for global balkanization is based upon two fundamental indigenist assumptions mentioned previously in this paper: that there exist "natural" human cultural/ethnic groupings and that all such groupings have an intrinsic right to self-determination. These assumptions provide the impetus for the uncompromising anti-colonial rhetoric employed by both North American indigenists and Latin American *indigenistas*. Colonialism, and consequently the nation-state, violate the intrinsic rights of autonomous peoples to self-determination (Churchill 2003b and Churchill 2003c). Ending the system of colonial relations will thus restore the "natural" rights of "natural" groups of people (Manuel and Posluns 1974).

The goal of global balkanization is not to impose indigenist values on non-indigenous ethnic groups, but to allow national groups to choose their own future. Some may choose to form their own states; others may construct indigenist-style anarchic confederations. Some may be troubled by the prospects of global balkanization and the death of the multi-national state. From an indigenist standpoint, this outcome is merely a result of the "ethnic false consciousness" generated by the nation-state, as described earlier in this chapter[11]. Once liberated from colonial statism, oppressed national groups will realize their true identity and act in accordance with the "natural" laws of human behavior.

Praxical Inconsistency: Pragmatism or Compromise?

The North American indigenist literature, particularly as represented by Churchill (2003a, 2003b, and 2003c), demonstrates a noticeable lack of consistency in its normative push for social transformation. Manuel and Posluns (1974), Mander (1991), Glendenning (1994), and Churchill (2003a and 2003b) all present an uncompromising view of the future which demands global political upheaval. However, Churchill (2003c) provides a more measured plan for indigenist action which is more akin to that of the Latin American *Indianistas* than *indigenistas*. Churchill (2003c, 279) presents a list of demands which contrast sharply with the uncompromising rhetoric of Churchill (2003a and 2003b):

Table 2: North American Indigenist Demands

1. Land: [the return of] occupied ancestral territories... control of the use of the land and subsoil; and struggles against the invasion of commercial interests.
2. [R]ecognition of the ethnic and cultural specificity of the Indian: All [indigenist] organizations reaffirm the right to be distinct in culture, language and institutions, and to increase the value of their own technological, social, and ideological practices.

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11 See Batalla 1996.

3. Parity of political rights in relation to the state.
4. [An end to repression and violence against] leaders, activists, and followers of the Indians' new political organizations.
5. An end to Indian family planning programs.
6. [An end to the] exploitation of Indian culture by commercial interests and an end to Indian tourism.

These demands are somewhat inconsistent with the militaristic rhetoric and assumptions of inevitability sprinkled throughout the rest of the North American indigenist literature. Rather than seeking to overthrow the entire global statist system, Churchill (2003c) presents an almost "progressive" manifesto for indigenous rights *within* the nation-state. How can this contradiction be explained? It is most likely that, despite his convictions, Churchill (2003c) realizes the practical improbability of a global indigenist revolution. A germane analogy is the relationship between theoretical Marxism and real-world Marxist workers' parties. Although they upheld the assumptions and convictions of the Marxist paradigm, Marxist workers' parties often fought for better wages and safer working conditions rather than global political transformation. Ideology can be a powerful force, but pragmatism is often more powerful. The paradigmatic assumptions of Marxism were still upheld by its supporters, but real-world conditions took precedence over abstract principles. This distinction is what separates paradigms from reality: paradigms tend to deal in absolutes, whereas people deal in the circumstances of the real world. Nevertheless, the assumptions and worldviews generated by paradigms help to shape the attitudes and behavior of their exponents. This application is what makes paradigms so useful for interpretive social theory. It also reinforces the need for an appropriate paradigm for the study of indigenous resistance to globalization.

3.5. The Paradigmatic Core of Indigenism

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The North American indigenist literature provides a compelling conceptual platform from which to frame a new paradigm. Not only does it incorporate the underlying themes of Latin American "indigenisms," it establishes an entire theoretical/normative worldview which carefully balances critique with praxis. The assumptions inherent to an indigenist paradigm would provide a valuable interpretive tool for Western social scientists. This qualifier does not mean that one must accept these assumptions as fact, only that they must be fully considered when analyzing indigenous resistance to globalization. Earlier I demonstrated the fundamental incompatibility between Western paradigmatic assumptions and those of the indigenous world. The following section will detail the assumptions of an emergent indigenist paradigm in the same format Chapter II.

Before moving forward I must make one final comment about indigenist assumptions. The assumptions inherent to the indigenist paradigm are not merely the product of a theoretical "brainstorming exercise." They are wholly derived from indigenous contexts and thus cannot be considered "imperial impositions" in the vein of Marxist or liberal assumptions about humanity and political life (Churchill 2003c). Furthermore:

> [Indigenism means that] I am one who not only takes the rights of indigenous peoples as the highest priority of my political life, but who *draws upon the traditions- the bodies of knowledge and corresponding codes of values- evolved over many thousands of years by native peoples the world over* (emphasis added). This is the basis upon which I not only advance critiques of, but *conceptualize alternatives to* (emphasis original) the present social, economic, and philosophical status quo. (Churchill 2003c, 275)

This distinction is important because it fulfills the normative requirement that a paradigm for indigenous studies be the product of native, not external, thought. Examining the genealogical purity of North American indigenism would be a considerable undertaking, and there is at present no reason to question its epistemological credibility.   Therefore it can be assumed that

the indigenist paradigm is not a "colonial imposition."

Indigenist Rationality

Indigenist assumptions about human behavior draw upon the same tenets of ecological rationality described in Chapter II. Expounded in McLaughlin's (1993) conception of deep ecology, indigenist ecological rationality asserts that human behavior is shaped by considerations for the natural world and environmental harmony. This behavioral affinity for the natural world produces natural human groupings, which, in turn, produce cultural distinctiveness. Annette & Guerrero (2004) describe such a relationship as follows:

> This [ecological rationality] can also be philosophically interpreted as the conceptual meaning of indigenism, which literally means to be born of a place, but also implies to be in reciprocal relationship with that place: as a sense of beingness or identity with a sense of place or homeland, as part of an emerging Indigenous movement for basic human rights of Indigenous peoples. (Annette & Guerrero 2004, 255)

The cultural distinctiveness of the collective is the most important sociopolitical consideration, superseding that of the individual. Ecological rationality and cultural distinctiveness shape the behavior of the individual, not vice versa.

Colonial relations are produced when ecological rationality is forfeited or lost, resulting in "unnatural" human groupings. Individual and collective forms of rationality derived from these unnatural social structures produce an imbalanced relationship with the natural world. This problematic relationship results in the subjugation of natural human groupings (IE indigenous peoples), as they are considered indistinguishable from the surrounding environment. Non-ecological forms of rationality will attempt to reproduce themselves on a global scale, further removing humanity from the natural world.

Indigenist Assumption 1: Human behavior and rationality are shaped by a symbiotic relationship with the natural world. This form of ecological rationality produces natural human groupings, which in turn produce ethnic and cultural distinctiveness. The loss of ecological rationality results in a dominant attitude toward the natural world, the emergence of unnatural human groupings, and ultimately a system of colonial relations.

Indigenist Citizenship Regime

Indigenist assumptions about rationality are reflected and institutionalized in its normative citizenship regime. Indigenist citizenship is an amalgamation of Curtin's (2002) ecological citizenship regime, the *Indianista* ethnic citizenship regime, and Heider's (1994) conception of green anarchism. Ecological rationality provides the foundation of ecological citizenship, which extends the rights of citizenship to the individual, the ethnic community, and the natural world.

> [E]cological citizenship depends on the ability to develop an *ecological identity* that functions in public ecological practices which partially define who we are... Functioning as an ecological citizen means engaging in a *public practice*, as opposed to the private pursuit of merely individual goods. (Curtin 2002, 299 *emphasis original*)

Ethnic citizenship within a broader political system (IE nation-state) is the means through which the ecological citizenship regime is either liberated or protected from external (IE non-indigenous) influence. Ethnic citizenship is derived from indigenous cultural distinctiveness, which is in turn derived from natural "bioregional" processes (Churchill 2003c). Thus, the projection of ethnic citizenship onto external sociopolitical spaces is a product of indigenist ecological rationality.

Indigenist Assumption 2: The rights and responsibilities of social citizenship are extended

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equally to individuals, ethnic communities, and the natural world. Indigenist ecological

citizenship can be protected and liberated from colonial relations through the creation of

autonomous ethnic citizenship regimes within nation-states.

Indigenist Nature

   Indigenist ecological considerations of behavior and citizenship allude to the assumption of a

profound, harmonious relationship between humanity and the natural world. Indigenist attitudes

toward nature are best articulated in McLaughlin's (1993) conception of deep ecology[12]. The

mechanism of ecological rationality maintains the relational balance between humanity and the

natural world. Ecological rationality and the philosophy of deep ecology sustain the indigenist

environmental ethic, which gives parity of rights and political considerations to both nature and

people. Nature, like every human being and social grouping, has an intrinsic value which cannot

be measured in economic terms. The natural world is not simply an inert commodity; it is a

social being. Humans may take from nature what they need to satisfy their basic needs, but the

practice of commodification is expressly immoral. Problematic social relations are often the

product of an imbalanced attitude toward nature. Attitudes of dominance towards the natural

world lead to attitudes of dominance toward the peoples who live within.

Indigenist Assumption 3: The ecological rationality of human beings maintains the relational

balance between humanity and the natural world. Nature has intrinsic moral value, not

commercial value, and should be treated with the same consideration and dignity as a person or

social group. Problematic attitudes toward the natural world are the source of political oppression

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12 See pp 50-52 of this paper.

in the social world.

Development

Indigenist assumptions regarding development are primarily oriented around the ability of *individual ethnic group*s to develop *on their own terms*. Indigenism makes no claims to a universal development regime as do Marxism and Liberalism. Instead, indigenism is more closely aligned to Sen's (2000) philosophy of development as freedom. Developmental progress for indigenous peoples is thus directly contingent upon achieving political autonomy and ending the system of colonial relations. Western linear developmental theories are always colonial/imperial impositions because they claim legitimacy over all of humanity. As the product of natural ecological processes, individual ethnic groups must determine for themselves the meaning of development. Colonial relations are reproduced when one human grouping attempts to define development for another. Once natural human groupings gain the capacity to determine their own course of development, the forces of ecological rationality will produce developmental regimes which can reverse the environmental destruction resulting from Western developmental practices.

Indigenist Assumption 4: Development is a process by which autonomous ethnic communities determine their own destinies through the use of ecological rationality. Universalizing development paradigms obstruct indigenous development and impose problematic developmental norms on indigenous society.

3.6. Indigenism: From Marginal Ideation to Global Paradigm

North American indigenism currently occupies the fringes of political discourse, its primary

exponents being "radical" organizations such as the American Indian Movement of Colorado[13].

Latin American indigenism, although encompassing hundreds of constituent organizations with

thousands of individual members, is considered equally peripheral by the political establishment

of that region. However, the conceptual and explanatory power of these marginalized ideologies

should not be underestimated. As demonstrated in Chapter II, social theory lacks the appropriate

paradigmatic frame of reference for the study of indigenous resistance to globalization. The

growing political influence and organizational capacity of the world's indigenous peoples, driven

largely by the forces of globalization, merits a new approach to the study of indigenous politics.

The indigenist paradigm described in this chapter represents one such approach capable of

producing explanatory norms for indigenous studies.   The following chapter will test this new

approach against an empirical case, the Chiapan resistance narrative from Chapter I, and attempt

to establish its conceptual credibility.

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13 The American Indian Movement of Colorado broke with the national American Indian Movement in 1993 due to ideological differences. AIMCO promotes a more radical indigenist agenda than its parent organization and is presently co-directed by Ward Churchill.

Chapter 4: Mayan Resistance to Globalization from 1982-2001:

A Comparative Assessment of Paradigm

The narrative of indigenous resistance to globalization described in Chapter I offers a unique opportunity to test the indigenist paradigm against an empirical case. This chapter will apply the principles of indigenism from Chapter 3 to the Chiapan narrative in an attempt to demonstrate the value of indigenism to academic inquiry. I will apply the axioms of Marxism and Liberalism, described in Chapter 2, to an expanded account of the Zapatista rebellion, looking beyond the broad surface narrative. The contributions of these two paradigms to understanding this episode will be emphasized, along with their shortcomings. I will then attempt to demonstrate how the axioms of indigenism help to fill in the gaps left behind by liberal and Marxist accounts of the uprising. Thus, my analysis should demonstrate how paradigms build off of one another to provide greater understanding, not compete with each other for normative exclusivity. Following this analysis, I will conclude the chapter by suggesting possible further avenues for the development of indigenism as a viable paradigmatic framework in globalization studies.

Past as Prologue: Looking Beyond the Dominant Narrative

In order to demonstrate the value of indigenism, it is first necessary to address and clarify several problematic assumptions embedded in the dominant narrative of the Zapatista uprising. One should not assume that this narrative is inherently dishonest or factually incorrect. The problem is that popular assumptions about the behavior of the Zapatistas and Maya of Chiapas are based on an incomplete reckoning of the events leading up to January, 1994. The dominant narrative correlates the timing of the rebellion with the implementation of NAFTA and thus

assumes causation. Subcommandante Marcos and other EZLN representatives publicly

excoriated NAFTA alongside other aspects of Mexican liberalization, including the reform of

Article 27. These prominent aspects of the rebellion led to the assumption that indigenous

resistance erupted spontaneously in response to policies which were condemned by the EZLN

and their supporters (Trejo & Jones 1998; Suchlicki 2001; Kirkwood 2005). The most

significant problem with this assumption is that it conceptualizes resistance in overly narrow

terms. Resistance as confrontation and open conflict tends to overshadow and displace other

forms of resistance which are equally important to the development of a broader understanding

of these events. It also contributes to a lack of clarity in the grievances expounded by indigenous

activists. A thoughtful comparison of paradigm must therefore look beyond the surface narrative

of armed rebellion and examine the underlying currents of resistance which built up to the

rebellion of 1994.

The Genesis of Indigenist Rationality and Citizenship Claims

The development and evolution of indigenous resistance in Chiapas is closely related to the

development and evolution of collective indigenous identity. A closer examination of this

process will reveal that resistance did not merely erupt in a fervor of post-NAFTA violence but

that it gradually developed along the currents of Mexican political history.   The Zapatista

rebellion should instead be viewed as the culmination of a continuum of resistance evolving

across several generations. Tracing these strands of resistance- and, concomitantly the genealogy

of collective identity- provides an opportunity to apply the various paradigmatic axioms

described in Chapters 2 and 3. Most notably, the evolution of indigenous consciousness and

resistance attitudes provides a window into the construction of an indigenous citizenship regime

as well as the underpinnings of indigenist rationality which support it.

4.1 Resistance in the Corporatist Era: 1929-1982

One of the greatest puzzles resulting from the Zapatista uprising, particularly from an indigenist standpoint, is the question of why this scale of resistance did not occur sooner. As described in Chapter 1, the corporatist regime implemented draconian *indigenismo* policies designed specifically to abrogate native identity. This line of reasoning is problematic because it supports the implicit assumptions about resistance described previously in the dominant narrative of Chiapas. In order to dispute these assumptions, I will describe the narrative of resistance in Chiapas starting in the corporatist period as framed by the paradigms of Marxism, Liberalism, and indigenism. I will then elaborate on this foundational resistance by applying the same treatment to the transformative indigenous renaissance which took place in the 1980s.

After the Mexican corporatist regime emerged from the post-revolutionary power struggle, it began to implement a national modernization program designed to unify the country. As described in Chapter 1, this program was highly authoritarian and effectively created a caste system for the people of Mexico. Political and economic life were filtered through a rigid interest-mediation program controlled directly by the state. The goal was to engineer Mexico's ethnically diverse population into a homogenous national entity. For most of the country's non-peasant mestizos, this meant providing economic opportunities in the urban industrial sector. However, the country's large rural indigenous population posed a significant challenge to the creation of a modern national identity. Most indigenous communities still functioned according to their traditional lifestyles by the 1930s, so a program was devised to promote forced modernization among the country's indigenous peoples. This program, consisting of a collection

of related policies, was known as *indigenismo*, and was articulated through the following imperatives:

1.   Prohibiting the practice of native cultural rituals.

2.   Requiring indigenous children to participate in state-sponsored education programs.

3.   Requiring indigenous peoples to speak Spanish, the official national language.

4.   Mandating worker participation in corporatist interest-mediation organizations.

5.   Rebranding indigenous peoples as peasants, thus stripping them of any claim to ethnic consideration.

During the process of liberalization, the majority of these policies were repealed in an effort to dismantle the corporatist system. However, it was against the same Liberal regime that the indigenous insurrection of 1994 was carried out. Corporatist policies towards Indians were largely underscored by colonial norms yet the indigenous peoples of Mexico did not feel compelled to openly resist. Conversely, objectionable Liberal policies towards Indians were scarce to non-existent, yet Mexico's indigenous peoples organized in opposition to the Liberal regime. This apparent paradox would appear to corroborate dominant interpretations of the Zapatista rebellion as a spontaneous response to specific policies, such as NAFTA. However, a closer examination of Chiapas under corporatism reveals that resistance was actually widespread, and raises further questions about the nature and timing of organized indigenous resistance to the Liberal regime.

    The perceived absence of indigenous resistance to the corporatist state is supported by the definition of resistance as an *overt, organized* process. However, Scott's (1987) theory of resistance in everyday life challenges this assumption by claiming that resistance can be

disorganized, decentralized, and carried out on a small scale. Resistance in everyday life

typically describes minor actions such as practicing illegal cultural rituals and misrepresenting

bureaucratic information (such as production quotas) to authorities. Scott argues that resistance

in everyday life is often overlooked because it is less spectacular and more difficult to measure

than organized resistance. However, he estimates that it is in fact more prevalent than other

forms of resistance, particularly in areas in which government oppression is most severe.

Therefore, the assumption that the Maya of Chiapas did not resist the corporatist state should be

subjected to Scott's theory in order to establish a more accurate historical narrative.

An investigation of resistance in everyday life during the corporatist period requires a deeper

understanding of actual social, economic, and political circumstances in Mexico during this

period. Although the *indigenismo* policies mentioned previously became law in the 1930s, the

state lacked the resources to provide effective enforcement. In reality, the political *ambitions* of

the PRI exceeded its *ability* to successfully integrate Mexico's indigenous population into the

national collective. Because the primary goal of corporatism was to to consolidate and

modernize the Mexican economy, the vast majority of resources were mobilized towards

developing the urban industrial core. The communal *ejidos,* which contained most of Mexico's

indigenous population, supported the urban industrialization effort with a consistent, affordable

food supply. Profits derived from the industrial sector, in turn, were filtered through the rural

caciques (regional bosses) in order to pacify the majority *campesinos* (peasant farmers).

Because of this symbiotic productive system, the majority of state investments were targeted at

the industrial sector. The more developed and profitable the industrial sector became, the more

resources would be available for rural development programs, including *indigenismo*. However,

international market fluctuations, combined with widespread regional corruption, severely limited the penetration of state influence into the *ejidos* (Yashar 1999).

By focusing the majority of its resources on developing the urban industrial core, the corporatist regime unintentionally produced autonomous political zones in the rural regions of Mexico. Federal oversight and enforcement in rural areas were minimal at best. At the community level, indigenous peoples exploited the situation to maintain their traditional lifestyles. Despite the creation of policies designed to abrogate native identity, Mayan communities were able to mitigate the effects of state *Indigenismo* through resistance in everyday life. Native customs and languages were perpetuated within the household, and the *ejido* system allowed entire communities to retain their close ties with the land. Native households privately educated their own children, thus subverting the influence of national public schools (Nash 2001a). Although the state continued to dominate the structure of economic relations, its ability to influence indigenous social and cultural norms was minimal. This process resulted in the creation of autonomous political spaces within the corporatist state (Harvey 2001). The structure of corporatist relations (focusing on urban industrial development), combined with indigenous resistance in everyday life, sustained indigenous society throughout the corporatist period. Indigenous society effectively functioned separate and distinct from the dominant national collective despite the state's commitment to *Indigenismo* (Yashar 1999). Absent this unevenly distributed corporatist system and resistance in everyday life there could have been no indigenous movements in the 1980s and 1990s. Mayan resistance in everyday life did not fundamentally transform power relations in Mexico, but it did allow for cultural survival within an outwardly oppressive system.

Indigenous resistance practices during the corporatist period may not have produced the spectacular effects of the Zapatista uprising, but they nonetheless provide an opportunity for paradigmatic consideration. The implementation of everyday resistance practices in the interests of cultural preservation was clearly a conscious *choice* made by individuals and groups within indigenous society. How would this decision be interpreted according to Liberal, Marxist, and indigenist conceptions of rationality?

Liberal rationality operates along a cost/benefit continuum in which individuals weigh the potential risks and rewards for every action they undertake. From this perspective, a liberal would most likely argue that individuals within indigenous society saw the benefits of cultural preservation as being greater than the risks of breaking the law in defiance of *indigenismo*. This outcome could either be attributed to placing such a high value on cultural distinctiveness as to take any risk, or to a perception of enforcement and oversight being weak and ineffectual. Most likely, the calculation to engage in this type of resistance was a combination of the two. This liberal interpretation provides a solid basis for analysis, but falls short in two important ways. First, there was no readily apparent economic benefit for those who resisted. Indigenous households and communities who resisted saw little material improvement by the end of the corporatist period, and in fact many had slipped deeper into poverty (Kirkwood 2000). Second, resistance in everyday life was carried out by *groups* of individuals working towards a common goal. Individuals resisted in the interest attaining a collective benefit, not a personal reward. This problem leads to the value of Marxist interpretations of human behavior and rationality.

Marxism asserts that self-aware groups or classes of individuals will act rationally to advance their own collective interests. This type of behavior was evident through indigenous resistance

to *indigenismo* though not to the extent as resistance in the 1980s and 1990s. Through resistance in everyday life, the indigenous peoples of corporatist Chiapas defined their collective goals and interests in opposition to those of the dominant regime. Whereas the collective interests of the PRI were national modernization and homogenization, those of the Mayans were cultural preservation and distinctiveness. This collective action in the name of collective interest would most likely be supported by a Marxist interpretation of corporatist era resistance. However, Marxism also falls short of fully explaining resistance to *indigenismo*. Because everyday resistance did not advance the economic interests of its participants, Marxist rationality cannot fully explain this process. Those who resisted *indigenismo* acted in the interest of protecting collective identity. One should not assume that they did not desire economic improvement, only that the principal value in everyday resistance was indigenous identity (Solano 2007). According to Marxism, true identity is an immutable product of social class; it cannot be changed other than through revolutionary action. The perceived fragility of indigenous identity expressed during the corporatist period would thus be difficult to explain according to the principles of Marxism. Only indigenist rationality is capable of explaining the value placed on identity through resistance to *indigenismo*.

Indigenist rationality asserts that the indigenous way of life consists two interconnected components: cultural distinctiveness and natural ecosystem. Human (indigenous) societies are produced through the ecological contexts from which they emerged, and the cultural identity of each society is directly linked to its parent ecosystem. Consequently, indigenous life is not possible without *both* of these components. The process which maintains the connection between indigenous peoples and their ecosystems is ecological rationality, and is deeply

embedded within the indigenous cultural system. The corporatist *ejido* system did not directly

threaten the ecological component of the indigenous way of life, as indigenous peoples largely

remained stewards of their own lands. However, the cultural distinctiveness which embodies

ecological rationality was threatened by the modernization program inherent in *indigenismo*. In

many ways, resistance to *indigenismo* was merely a continuation of the practice of ecological

rationality. The rituals, languages, and customs practiced covertly throughout the corporatist

period embodied the spirit of ecological rationality. Had these elements of indigenous social life

been eradicated by *indigenismo*, the ontological essence of ecological rationality would have

been lost as well. However, as a self-contained ontological project, indigenist ecological

rationality cannot explain the process through which resistance to *indigenismo* was decided

upon. This form of rationality describes the relationship between human and environment, not

human and human. However, it does help explain why cultural preservation was valued so highly

by those who resisted. The conclusion to resist can be mostly explained through liberal and

Marxist conceptions of rationality, but only indigenism can explain the *importance* of resistance.

According to liberalism and Marxism, the rational calculation values materialist processes;

indigenist rationality values something much different.

4.2 Liberalization and the Indigenous Awakening: 1982-1993

The corporatist system remained relatively static throughout most of the 20th Century.

External economic conditions provided stability for the Mexican corporatist redistributional

system, but never provided the surplus needed to effectively enforce *indigenismo*. However, the

global economic decline of the 1970s, most notably the collapse of energy prices, destabilized

the flow of revenue into the state corporatist system. By the beginning of the 1980s, the global

economic crisis had devastated Mexico's urban industrial sector. As energy prices declined, the corporatist redistributional model became increasingly unstable. And as profits from the industrial sectors diminished, agricultural subsidies began to disappear. The federal government was confronted by both striking workers in the cities and disgruntled peasants in the countryside. Rather than relinquish its hold on power, the PRI attempted to reinvent itself. It discarded the collectivist notions of corporatism and adopted the free market ideology of global capitalism. In 1982 the state sought a loan from the IMF and accepted its contingent structural adjustment program. Trade barriers such as tariffs were abrogated, tax rates were lowered, and spending on social and economic programs was sharply curtailed. To the outside world, these were the most visible reforms carried out by the PRI. However, the internal structure of Mexican society was also reshaped through the process of liberalization. The corporatist interest mediation system was dismantled in accordance with structural adjustment. However, the transcommunity social networks created by the corporatist state did not disappear with the rise of the liberal regime. In fact, these networks instead became the primary sites of indigenous organization and dissent within the new liberal system (Yashar 1999).

The corporatist interest mediation system brought together indigenous peoples from disparate geographic regions across Chiapas. Because political and social interests within Mayan society are represented at the community level, and, because such communities are largely independent from one another, intra-Mayan social networking was very limited before the corporatist era (Yashar 1999; Nash 2001b). Just as the process of urbanization brought workers together in 19th Century Europe to create class consciousness, corporatist organizations brought together indigenous peoples to create ethnic consciousness. As the corporatist system receded during the

1980s, the indigenous social networks remained. Yashar (1999, 56) refers to these as "transcommunity networks" and cites them as the foundation of new indigenous resistance movements. The most prominent organization to form as a result of this new political structuring was the Independent Front of Indian Peoples (FIPI). FIPI sought to create a permanent protected status for the indigenous peoples of Mexico, and represented a diverse array of Indian communities. Members of FIPI hoped that the withdrawal of the corporatist regime would foster a national political climate in which ethnic autonomy could be peacefully and legally negotiated. The professed goals of FIPI were as follows (from Solano 2007, 156):

1. To fight for the recognition and full exercise of the ethnic rights of indigenous peoples.

2. Recognition of the legal statutes of distinct ethnic groups.

3. Recuperation of ethnic territories.

4. The right to indigenous autonomy.

5. Official recognition of Indian languages.

6. The right to Indigenous education.

7. The strengthening of Indian culture and identity.

8. Political representation.

9. Freedom of organization for Indian peoples.

In the wake of the founding of FIPI in 1987, hundreds of new *Indianista* organizations emerged in southern Mexico. FIPI became the umbrella organization through which many smaller groups networked and communicated. The national transition from corporatism to

Liberalism made possible and exacerbated the formation of such groups in two important ways. First, the removal of state supervision of rural agrarian collectives and the repeal of *indigenismo* increased the agency of individuals, groups, and communities. Overt collective political action became possible in the liberal state where it had been denied in the corporatist state (Solano 2007). Second, liberal policies in the 1980s did little to slow Mexico's economic decline, particularly in the rural sectors. Economic conditions actually worsened in many areas, providing the newly-autonomous indigenous political networks with a highly visible grievance against the state. This combination of purpose and agency contributed greatly to the proliferation of indigenous movements in southern Mexico throughout the late 1980s (Solano 2007).

The indigenous renaissance of the late 1980s began to generate a local collective awareness of the continuation of colonial relations under the Liberal state. By the early 1990s this perspective led local indigenous groups to focus on the quincentenary of Columbus' discovery of the Americas. Indigenous communicative networks which had emerged in the late 1980s became the site of a heated dialogue about how to approach the event. Although ethnicity, cultural distinctiveness, and material concerns were all regularly invoked by groups such as FIPI, the quincentenary debate brought the issue of *colonialism* to the forefront of regional indigenous political discourse. The quincentenary offered a broader context through which to examine the concerns and grievances of Indian peoples in Chiapas. However, local debate over possible courses of action was subsumed by a larger international conversation about colonialism and indigenous rights in early 1992, when Indians from across the Americas organized and carried out the Continental Campaign of 500 Years of Indigenous, Black, and Popular Resistance. Chiapas became a locus of the Campaign, resulting in widespread regional demonstrations and

the destruction of statues of European colonizers (Benjamin 1995). The political discourse preceding the Campaign and the revolutionary fervor that followed had a profound impact on indigenous society in Chiapas. Mayan communities were energized and radicalized by the events of 1992 (Solano 2007). The Campaign marks the point at which indigenous resistance was transformed from a local, reactive practice to a regional, pro-active movement. Social networks which had emerged during the 1980s became the vessels of radical dissent in the 1990s. Although only a fraction of the members of organizations such as FIPI actively participated in the armed uprising of 1994, they established the vital support network which made possible the Zapatista rebellion.

The formation of indigenous collective identity in the late 1980s and early 1990s provides an opportunity to make paradigmatic comparisons of citizenship within the continuum of resistance in Chiapas. Assumptions about citizenship are largely rooted through the self-conception of social subjects. The ways in which individuals and groups view themselves in relation to others forms the basis of citizenship claims. Citizenship claims are based on assumptions about human behavior and rationality implicit in each paradigm. Citizenship is the means of preserving and institutionalizing the values and norms which are considered universal (or at least far-reaching). For example, Liberalism proposes that that citizenship for individuals protects each person's rights to life, liberty, property, etc. Marxism asserts that such individual rights allow for some (the bourgeoisie) to exploit others (the proletariat), who have no recourse through the invocation of individual citizenship claims. The proletariat must therefore abrogate the individual "rights" of the capitalist class in the interest of advancing their own collective rights to economic justice. Finally, indigenists believe that the right to ethnic distinctiveness, partly defined through an

ecological relationship to place, must be preserved in order to protect indigenous communities and lands from colonial/capitalist exploitation.

The indigenist citizenship framework shares the Marxist critique of the limits of individual rights but differs from Marxism in several important ways. Most notably, indigenism does not seek to replace the citizenship regime of Liberalism only to oppose the universalizing tendencies of the Liberal framework. The indigenist regime may exist *simultaneously* within a Liberal system, and in fact cannot exist otherwise. Indigenist ethnic citizenship is predicated on the idea of difference and distinctiveness. A homogenizing and universalizing indigenist regime would thus be self-contradictory. The indigenist citizenship framework therefore exhibits a twofold dynamic. First, it limits the rights of individuals and groups *outside* of the established indigenist collective from acting *within*. Because the indigenist paradigm recognizes the natural environment as part of the social world, this would prevent individuals and groups from expropriating resources from indigenous lands. It would also limit the rights of external individuals and groups to influence the cultural configuration of indigenous society. State *indigenismo* is an obvious example of this process, but indirect or less explicit forms of cultural erosion are also possible. For example, attempts by Marxist-inspired political movements such as the Sandanistas to "proletarianize" and incorporate indigenous communities as worker-citizens would also be rejected by the indigenist citizenship regime.

The second component of the indigenist citizenship regime relates to the definition and structure of the regime itself. Whereas the first component places limits on individual and collective rights, the second explicitly defines, in positive terms the configuration of the citizenship network *within* indigenous society. It defines the boundaries, both cultural and

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geographical, which must be recognized in accordance with the limitations discussed previously. This definition of the collective is critical to the recognition of indigenous rights. Definition and measurement of who or what qualifies for citizenship rights under Liberalism and Marxism is somewhat straightforward. The (Liberal) individual is a relatively simple unit of analysis, and even the (Marxist) proletariat may be conceptualized without difficulty. However, the indigenist collective must be explicitly defined (from within) in order to invoke citizenship claims. The basis of indigenist citizenship concerns a relationship between the indigenous community and its natural environment- in other words, the functional essence of ecological rationality. However, the indigenist citizenship model also applies to the social relationship between the indigenous collective and external individuals and groups. From here I will conduct my analysis of competing paradigmatic theories of citizenship.

The Mexican neoliberal transition from 1982-1994 provides a solid opportunity for comparing paradigmatic assumptions about citizenship. On the one hand, national citizenship in Mexico was redefined during this period. During the corporatist period, citizens were defined from above as either workers or peasants. This mandate established a predetermined role for each individual, which was mainly oriented around the macro economic growth and development of Mexico. However, liberalization abolished these official roles and rebranded every Mexican as an individual actor- both political and economic. On the other hand, the indigenous awakening resulting from the repeal of authoritarian corporatist oversight led to the widespread renewal of indigenous social, cultural, and political identity. This process renewed identification with sociocultural heritage led to a framework of organized demands and ultimately provided the support necessary for the success of the Zapatista uprising. How would

each paradigm assess the reconfiguration of citizenship and identity during this period? In order

to answer this question, I will explore the ways in which indigenous communities in Chiapas

self-identified according to the various axioms of citizenship. Liberalism would predict that they

identify *most strongly* as individual citizens of the Mexican state; Marxism would predict that

they identify *most strongly* as an exploited socioeconomic class; and Indigenism would predict

that they identify *most strongly* as ethnic groupings tied to a specified geographic bioregion.

The narrative of the indigenous awakening in Chiapas discussed previously demonstrates how

collective identity became the principal vehicle for political action in the late 1980s and early

1990s. The elimination of corporatist social controls allowed for the indigenous peoples of

Chiapas to exercise individual liberties as they best saw fit. The emergence of ethnic

consciousness and regional indigenous mobilization during this period indicates that Liberal and

Marxist conceptions of citizenship are most likely insufficient at fully explaining the trajectory of

indigenous politics during this period. However, Liberal and Marxist citizenship models do

provide insight into the processes contributing to the development of this emergent collective

consciousness. Marxism, in particular, highlights the underlying processes which contributed to

the formation of collective identity.

The emphasis on collective consciousness, mobilization, and action during this period

partially invalidates the Liberal prediction of isolated individuals pursuing their own interests

independently. However, Liberalism does help to explain the processes through which

individuals chose to act collectively through the medium of indigenous ethnic identity. The

economic crisis of the 1980s was particularly devastating to the rural agricultural sector in

southern Mexico. This financial turmoil, combined with the repeal of federal subsidies and

social programs, led to widespread economic hardship among the indigenous peoples of Chiapas. It is likely that, through the cost/benefit calculation of Liberal rationality, individuals within indigenous communities viewed collective mobilization as the most reasonable means of confronting their declining economic circumstances. And, unlike during the corporatist period, this form of political activity was no longer prohibited. The Liberal citizenship regime afforded the agency necessary for individuals to act in accordance with their own best interests- to a reasonable degree. Organized demands for *indigenist* citizenship were made possible by taking advantage of the individual autonomy granted by *Liberal* citizenship.

Whereas liberalism helps explain the individual processes leading to indigenous mobilization, Marxism provides insight into the formation of collective identity itself. The Marxist literature, particularly the *Communist Manifesto* (Marx & Engels 1848,), explains the emergence of collective worker/proletarian identity in Europe during the mid- 19th century. Marxism asserts that, as individual workers are forced into ever-closer proximity to one another (both in the workplace and in neighborhoods/ living quarters), they become aware of their common circumstance. On the one hand, this produces a sense of "us" which creates a common bond among workers similar to that of a bourgeois family. On the other hand this leads to a conception of "them," the capitalist class. Workers begin to view the ownership class as a common enemy, and, as capitalism expands and the ranks of workers swell, this dichotomy reaches a critical mass. This process is precisely what transpired in Chiapas during the 20th century, though the forms of identity differed greatly from those of early industrial Europe.

During the corporatist period, the PRI established communal agricultural centers across Chiapas known as *ejidos*. The *ejidos* acted as hubs for the corporatist interest-mediation system,

incorporating isolated farming communities across the region. The *ejido* system established a communicative network through which agricultural production could be coordinated. However, the *ejido* system produced an unintended consequence which accelerated the development of collective indigenous consciousness. Whereas indigenous communities had been previously isolated from one another, the *ejido* network allowed for widespread inter-community communication (Yashar 1999). This network may have been used to coordinate everyday resistance practices under corporatism, although there is no direct evidence supporting this speculation. However, it did provide a means of indigenous communication where none existed before. This communicative network remained in place even after the decline and fall of state corporatism.

As newly "liberated" individual citizen-actors, the indigenous peoples of Chiapas maintained this inter-community network into the 1980s and 1990s. Through doing so, they discovered a common circumstance mirroring that of 19th Century European workers. Indigenous communities across Chiapas had maintained their traditional culture and lifestyle in spite of *indigenismo* and now faced an unsettling economic future. This shared cultural and economic circumstance created a sense of "us" similar to the proletarian sentiment described in Marxism. And as the *ejidos* were privatized (through the repeal of Article 27) and external actors began speculating on the material wealth of Chiapas, a new sense of "them" began to emerge. The 500 Years celebration conceptualized "them" in even more explicit terms: the colonial authority of the state and transnational corporations. This undesirable "other" sought to exploit the lands and peoples of Chiapas by unjustly expropriating their resources and destroying their culture. Although the framing of conflict differs greatly from that of Marxism, the overall narrative and

adversarial relations are highly similar.

Although Marxism helps explain the social-psychological process of collective identity formation and mobilization, it fails to account for the form and configuration of resistance networks in Chiapas. Why were the grievances and demands of groups such as FIPI framed through indigenous ethnic identity? Marxism would expect the oppressed indigenous peoples of Chiapas to join with other oppressed groups in Mexico to increase their capacity for effecting widespread political reform. However, as previously described[14], the nature of collective identity and the framing of grievances and demands were both produced through the prism of ethnicity. Furthermore, this articulation of ethnic identity was firmly connected to ecological/geographical place. Ethnicity, as self-defined by the indigenous peoples of Chiapas during the 1980s awakening, was a function of both social group and environment (Solano 2007). Neither Marxism or liberalism can account for the distinctive characteristics of indigenous mobilization during this period.

According to the indigenist literature, citizenship exhibits a threefold dynamic. The first relates to the interaction between individuals living within a given social grouping. These values are similar to those found in Liberalism, in that individuals enjoy a certain degree of personal freedom and autonomy. However, unlike Liberalism, indigenism does not prescribe universal standards of liberty which must be applied uniformly. Each social group makes this determination independently with regards to its own norms and customs. The second dynamic regards the relationship between a human social grouping and its natural environment. The collective actions of the community must be weighed in accordance with its impact on the surrounding ecological equilibrium. Furthermore, the environment within which a social

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14 See pp 71-73 of this work.

grouping exists acts on the human community, shaping its culture and customs. This process creates a delicate bond between human community and place, which may be destroyed if the culture changes or if the community is dispersed or relocated. Finally, indigenist citizenship formulates a relationship between different human social groupings. The cultural and ecological distinctiveness of each social grouping must be respected by all others. If this boundary is not respected freely, then it must be deliberately established, through force if necessary. For the purpose of this comparison, the latter two dynamics of indigenist citizenship will be most strongly emphasized (particularly the third).

The human groupings described in the indigenist literature are difficult to conceptualize, analyze, and measure because they are inherently *self-defined*. The most common recent historical example of a self-defined human grouping is the nation (Anderson 1983). Nationalism has been the impetus for hundreds- if not thousands- of political conflicts during the past two centuries. However, indigenism differs from nationalism in a most fundamental way: national liberation inevitably ends in the creation of an independent *state*. According to indigenism, the state is ultimately the source of oppression for natural human groupings, and therefore incapable of liberating indigenous peoples from colonial oppression. If one indigenous group successfully established its own state, it is likely that such a group would (inadvertently) subjugate other indigenous groups (Churchill 2003a). The nation-state often attempts to impose its own form of identity upon all peoples living within its geographic boundaries, regardless of ethnicity or cultural difference (Anderson 1983). The nation-state is therefore not an adequate means of defining the boundaries which exist between different social groupings. However, the indigenous awakening of the 1980s and 1990s illustrates indigenist conceptions of inter-group

citizenship dynamics in action- first through the self-definition of indigenous identity, and then through the conceptualization of the cultural boundary with the "other."

The indigenous awakening in Chiapas led to widespread primary self-identification with indigenous ethnicity. This form of identification established the necessary internal coherency for the "imagination" (Anderson 1983) of "us." Thus, the internal boundary of an indigenist social grouping was realized. This discovery of a common heritage and circumstance led to the realization of common grievances as well. First, the economic impoverishment resulting from liberalization fomented widespread discontent. And following the 500 Years celebration, regional anger over centuries of colonial injustice assumed a prominent role within the indigenous political consciousness. These grievances led to the conceptualization of an external "other," from whom "we" needed protection. The determination of an appropriate boundary became the focal point of indigenous discourse during this period, culminating first in FIPI's manifesto of political demands (pp 72 of this work) and ultimately in the Zapatista uprising. Neither of these two avenues of dissent advocated secession or the creation of an independent state. The demands of FIPI and the Zapatistas (Marcos 1995) were instead articulated around the institutionalization of ethnic boundaries designed to protect the social, economic, and cultural integrity of indigenous society. Thus, the Mayan indigenous peoples of Chiapas were the collective *candidate* for indigenist citizenship, and their political goals and demands were the means of securing the *protections* of indigenist citizenship.

4.3 The Radicalization of Indigenous Resistance: 1994-2001

On January 1, 1994 the EZLN launched a military rebellion in Chiapas, seizing the regional urban centers within hours. Approximately 2000 indigenous soldiers participated in the initial

uprising, though more would join later as the rebellion gained momentum. The EZLN was not initially affiliated with indigenous political groups such as FIPI, which had emerged during the 1980s. It began as a Marxist guerrilla movement opposed to Mexican liberalization, but gradually acquired an indigenous identity throughout the 1980s and 1990s. In the aftermath of the rebellion, the EZLN had shed most of its Marxist sentiments, and viewed itself as a wholly indigenous liberation army (Trejo & Jones 1998). It is therefore important to note that the EZLN was not a direct product of the decades-long tradition of indigenous resistance in Chiapas. It was initially administered by Marxist intellectuals, such as Marcos, as a type of neo-Guevarist people's army. Its ideological transformation resulted from the influence of the ethnically-conscious political environment of Chiapas in the early 1990s. The primary goals of the EZLN did not change as a result of this new identity, however, as they were already quite similar to those of FIPI and other indigenous groups. The main difference between the EZLN and FIPI was its willingness to employ violence and foment revolutionary sentiments in order to achieve their goals.

The EZLN was not trained or equipped to wage a conventional war against the national military. The arrival of 10,000 army troops to the area following the rebellion dispersed the EZLN into the surrounding jungle. The cities of Chiapas were largely retaken with a minimum of force. The EZLN was clearly unable to take and hold ground or engage in any sort of direct confrontation with the Army. However, the EZLN was highly effective as a mobile guerrilla force, using their topographical knowledge to ambush and harass state forces. The ensuing military stalemate led to the negotiation of a cease fire within ten days of the uprising. Whereas neither side seemed likely to achieve military victory, social and political circumstances had a

dramatic effect on the conflict. The political environment which took shape in the wake of the rebellion significantly bolstered the position of the EZLN. As the Zapatistas took up arms against the state, hundreds of indigenous communities in Chiapas declared allegiance to the insurgent forces. The EZLN cultivated an environment of cooperation and mutual support among their noncombatant indigenous peers. The indigenous communities of Chiapas provided the Zapatistas with material support (food, shelter, medicine, etc.) as well as political capital to be leveraged against the state. Rather than a cadre of 2000 poorly-armed insurgents, the state was now confronted with a general uprising consisting of hundreds of thousands of individuals (Benjamin 2000; Washbrook 2007).

The political pressure resulting from widespread support for the EZLN ultimately forced the state into negotiations with representatives of the Zapatistas. This event led to the drafting of the *San Andres Accords* in late 1995, an agreement which would largely institutionalize the indigenous ethnic citizenship regime first articulated by FIPI in the late 1980s. The *Accords* established regional autonomy for the indigenous communities of Chiapas, but not independence from the Mexican state. Indigenous lands were to be protected from development and exploitation by outside commercial interests, and the state was obligated to provide humanitarian aid and social services to the area. Legal protection of indigenous language, culture, and identity was established, and indigenous peoples were guaranteed greater access to the national political process. The precedent set by the *Accords* would have drastically reconfigured power relations between colonized peoples in the Western Hemisphere and the states under which they are subordinated. However, this precedent was never realized, as the Mexican congressional authority refused to implement all but the most minor provisions. As the implementation of the

Accords in February 1996 failed to produce meaningful change for the indigenous peoples of Chiapas, the EZLN withdrew from further deliberations and resumed their militant position towards the Mexican state (Benjamin 2000; Washbrook 2007)

Conflict between the EZLN and Mexican military resumed sporadically throughout the remainder of the 1990's. The state attempted to retake by force much of the Chiapan countryside which had fallen under the influence of the Zapatistas following the breakdown of negotiations in early 1996. However, widespread support of the EZLN made maintaining control over these territories nearly impossible without resorting to direct occupation. In 1997 the state adopted an alternative approach, providing aid and social services to the indigenous communities of Chiapas. The goal was to erode support of the EZLN by attempting to portray a positive image of the state to disaffected Mayans. This attempt to co-op the Zapatistas' civilian support network ultimately failed, and the EZLN continued to wage a cold war against the state. Through its guerrilla campaign, the EZLN disrupted nearly all federal authority over Chiapas, as well as the stability needed for the operational effectiveness of transnational firms. Most significantly, this disruptive effect created a zone of unofficial autonomy- as opposed to the official autonomy granted by the *Accords,* in which the indigenous communities of Chiapas could pursue development on their own terms (Washbrook 2007).

The situation in Chiapas remained relatively static throughout the late 1990s. However, in 2000 the PRI, the principal target of indigenous resistance since the 1930s, was defeated through the democratic process. The incoming president, Vincente Fox, pledged to address the adversarial relationship between the state and indigenous peoples of Chiapas by resurrecting critical provisions of the *San Andres Accords*. In the Summer of 2001, the EZLN organized a

peaceful march on the capitol city in support of this new resolution. However, the provisions were again rejected by the Senate, which cited concerns over the erosion of Mexican territorial sovereignty. Again, the EZLN withdrew from official channels of mediation and resumed its role in sustaining unofficial autonomy in Chiapas (Washbrook 2007).

The Zapatista rebellion and subsequent chain of events reflect two critical imperatives for paradigmatic consideration. First, this episode represents an externalization of the indigenous social and political discourse which began in the 1980s. The manifest goals and interests of organizations such as FIPI, formed through a self-contained internal discourse, were projected onto the national, and global, political consciousness. The constitution of a viable indigenist citizenship regime was incumbent on the external projection of indigenous influence such as this. Second, the evolution of indigenous resistance in Chiapas reveals a fundamental disagreement over the relationship between human society and the natural environment within which it exists. The role of nature in the social world is a contested normative ontology with implications stretching back to the initial moment of contact between European explorers and North and South American indigenous societies. This critical singularity in time is the genealogical imperative to which Indigenism ascribes all of the problems resulting from colonialism (Churchill 2003a). Although this may be valid from a normative standpoint, it oversimplifies the layered ontology which more closely resembles a dynamic process than a singular causal event. Thus, a more prescriptive formula for genealogical consideration would instead acknowledge the role of first contact as catalyst to a dynamic process of exploitation and domination. This process, and the response of indigenism, should therefore provide a more rich and compelling opportunity for paradigmatic consideration than the normative framework

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constructed around first contact alone.

The process by which colonial society reorganized and subordinated indigenous society extends from two important, and contested, ontological imperatives. The first concerns the way in which human society perceives its relationship with the natural world. This normative function extends from the dominant sociocultural expression of rationality. The second relates to the ways in which human societies structure and organize themselves institutionally, both within and between one another. In the interest of establishing a valid description of this process, it must be unambiguously recognized as being both dynamic and relative. For example, attitudes toward nature are not fixed; they change and fluctuate over time. The emergent environmental movement in Western societies provides recent evidence of this flexibility. Also, the perception of a society's self-conception are relative to one's own macro-social standpoint. During the corporatist period in Mexico, the state viewed Mayan indigenous society as a fully subordinated substrata of national society, organized as an indiscreet component of the regional agricultural peasantry. However, as demonstrated earlier in this chapter, Mayan society continued to define itself according to traditional sociocultural norms, not as a functional corporatist collective. What, then, can a fully developed exploration of this process reveal for the purposes of paradigmatic consideration?

First and foremost, this process provides a non-linear frame of reference for the conceptual deconstruction of colonial relations. It provides a means of analyzing the fluctuating ontological exchange/contestation between indigenous society and colonial society. This, in turn, allows for the development of a framework external to the excessive normative pressures of other forms of analysis. How, then, can the ontology of colonialism be understood as a paradigmatic tool of

understanding? Two separate and distinct ontological processes (mentioned previously) can be extracted from the broader process of colonial relations. These processes relate to society's view toward nature and the relations of societies both between and within one another. Each of these functional qualities of colonialism will be analyzed and deconstructed individually in the following sections on nature and development.

The case of indigenous resistance in Chiapas represents a coherent effort to contest and rearticulate the developmental norms of political economy. In many ways, the developmental goals of the Liberal Mexican regime were not so different from those of the corporatist regime. Both sought to construct a modern industrial Mexico capable of establishing itself as a power within the global capitalist system. The means of achieving this goal differed substantially, however, and under Liberalism the norms of modernization and capitalist development penetrated much deeper into indigenous society than its predecessor. Although the rebellion itself was largely a rejection Liberal norms, Liberal theory can still contribute to better understanding this case. Marxism, too, offers insight into the developmental struggle reflected by the conflict. However, Liberal and Marxist paradigms fall short in two important ways. First, Liberal and Marxist claims of universality limit their effectiveness, both normatively and empirically. The linear stages of development embedded in each paradigm fail to account for alternative developmental norms. The normative implication is that societies which pursue developmental strategies outside the linear stages of modernization may be deficient in rationality. They simply do not know what is "good for themselves" and are unable to recognize the appropriate developmental paradigm. From an empirical standpoint, if development is measured only in terms of a linear scale, then alternative modes may be mischaracterized at best

and entirely overlooked at worst. Indigenism helps to compensate for this shortcoming, as it conceptualizes development as a highly relative process. Indigenist developmental norms are open-ended, portraying development as a self-defined concept. These norms are thus not inherently anti-capitalist or anti-modern, only anti-essentialist and anti-universalist.

The second problem deriving from Liberal and Marxist conceptions of development regards the role of the natural world in relation to human enterprise. Liberal and Marxist theories of modernization characterize development as a process of increasing a people's technological capacity to more efficiently utilize nature as a commodity. In this regard, Liberalism and Marxism disagree only on the social relations resulting from the use of these productive technologies. Indigenism, however, suggests a very different role for the natural world as it relates to human development. As a quasi-social being in the indigenist citizenship regime, nature does not exist merely as a commodity to be consumed in the course of human development. One should not assume that all natural environments must be left pristine at the expense of human survival. Indigenist norms regarding nature are more concerned with the social *attitude* toward the environment than imposing rigid guidelines about what is and is not acceptable. In many ways, the indigenist attitude toward nature reflects the Marxist attitude towards workers. Under capitalism, the bourgeoisie values only the labor power of the worker which makes him a profit. He does not value the intrinsic quality which makes each worker special and unique. Marxism seeks to reconfigure this problematic attitude by destroying the bourgeoisie through revolution (Marx & Engels 1848). Indigenism, in contrast, seeks only the expulsion of colonial agents from indigenous society, not their total destruction (Churchill 2003b). Indigenism also reinforces the importance of place in the constitution of indigenous

citizenship and developmental capacity. An indigenous society originating in the Lacondon

Rainforest of Central America could not function according to the principles of indigenism if it

were suddenly transplanted to the Alaskan tundra. Indigenism thus ascribes to nature two

important norms to be carefully observed: one relating to the overall attitude towards nature

(commodified object versus social subject), the other relating to the physical location of

indigenous society within nature (indigenous society's way of life is produced through a specific

bioregional context).

What, then, does Liberalism reveal about development and indigenous society, as viewed

through the prism of the case of Chiapas? Liberal axioms about human behavior suggest that

people will use their individual rationality to determine the costs and benefits of different courses

of action in response to various situations. In this case, the EZLN and its indigenous

sympathizers most likely perceived a great risk in *not* opposing the course of political events

unfolding throughout the 1980s and 1990s. The developmental capacity of numerous societies

had been stalled throughout recent history as external actors expropriated their lands and natural

resources via colonialism/imperialism. The privatization and redistribution of land in Chiapas

(resulting from the reform of Article 27) left the rural indigenous population without access to

the agricultural spaces which had guaranteed their livelihood for centuries. And the

implementation of NAFTA threatened to flood the country with cheap, subsidized grain from the

United States. Indigenous farmers could not sell their products at competitive prices because the

Mexican government discontinued farm subsidies via liberalization in the 1980's. Furthermore,

contracts to exploit the abundant natural resources of Chiapas were awarded to powerful

multinational firms who did not employ local workers (Collier 1994). Thus, the benefits of

resource development would not accrue to local communities. Confronted with this evidence, the EZLN and its supporters determined that the benefits (repealing NAFTA and returning control of Chiapas' land and resources to local communities) justified the costs of armed rebellion (Nash 2001a).

This Liberal narrative- framed through the rubric of individual rationality and development-closely mirrors the dominant view of the Zapatista uprising (see Benjamin 2000). Primary source evidence from the Zapatistas themselves provides some support to this interpretation (Manifesto 1994; Marcos 1995). However, Liberal developmental theory asserts that rationality will compel society along a conscious journey through the stages of development towards modernity. Therefore, Liberalism would predict that the principal goal of armed rebellion would be to secure a stronger position from which to advance through the stages of development. The language employed in Zapatista texts and communiques contradicts this position (Manifesto 1994; Marcos 1995; Nash 2001a; Nash 2001b). Although the Zapatista Manifesto explicitly demands the return of land and natural resources to the control of Chiapas' indigenous peoples to aid in their development, it gives no indication as to how those resources will be utilized. The open-ended nature of early Zapatista and indigenous demands might seem to hamper any attempt at paradigmatic comparison. However, the post-rebellion actions of Chiapas' indigenous population provide valuable insights into the embedded norms of development in this narrative. These actions should demonstrate how indigenism provides a more powerful assessment and fills in the gaps left by other paradigms. Before evaluating this evidence, I will explore the strengths and weaknesses of Marxist developmental theory as it applies to the case of the Zapatista uprising.

In several important ways, Marxist developmental theory is just as inflexible as Liberal developmental theory. The principal disagreement between these paradigms is in measuring the endpoint of development. Although Liberalism postulates modern consumer society as the endpoint of development, Marxism asserts that communism must follow this stage in the interests of ending exploitation and class conflict (Marx & Engels 1848). Due to this parallel structure of development norms between Marxism and Liberalism, everything mentioned previously about Liberal developmental theory applies equally to Marxism. However, Marxism does offer important insights regarding the role of revolution in the developmental process. Although the goals of Marxist and indigenist revolution may differ considerably, the revolutionary process itself shares some important similarities.

Although the initial episode of the Zapatista rebellion was confined to a limited set of actors, the EZLN guerrilla force and the Mexican military, it quickly escalated into a wide scale regional event. The indigenous support network, which provided the EZLN with much of its political capital, became closely integrated into the political process which shaped post-rebellion Chiapas. In many ways, the EZLN merely acted as the external voice of the people it came to represent. The actions and motives of the EZLN and its supporters became integrated to an extent that defies many modern social movements. What does Marxism reveal about the processes which led to this outcome?

Marx originally predicted that, through the emergence of class consciousness, workers around the world would rise up in revolution and liberate themselves from bourgeois oppression (Marx and Engels 1848). Although there have been numerous labor movements and workers' revolutions since the *Communist Manifesto* was first written, very few achieved the critical mass

necessary to transform society. The most prominent exceptions to this trend were found in the

Soviet Union, Cuba, Korea, and Vietnam. However, none of these revolutions occurred as a

result of widespread class consciousness. Instead, they were all fomented by a professional

revolutionary vanguard, more akin to Leninism than to Marxism. In many ways the Zapatista

uprising mirrored these successful examples of revolution. Ethnic consciousness, resulting from

the 1980s and 1990s indigenous awakening in Chiapas, was necessary, but not sufficient, to

stimulate revolutionary sentiments. However, the EZLN- as an independent, professional

revolutionary cadre, acted as a vanguard force for the liberation of Chiapas' indigenous peoples.

The Zapatista example provided the necessary stimulus to generate revolutionary attitudes and

support amongst the civilian population.

   Revolution is among the elements of Marxism which most distinguish it from Liberalism. It

is the point at which human social development achieves critical momentum. The open-ended

nature of indigenist development norms would not characterize revolution in such absolute

terms, but it is nonetheless an important juncture along the path of indigenist growth. The

proximity of revolution to the endpoint of development in Marxist theory exaggerates its

importance. Because indigenism postulates no such endpoint, revolution can be a powerful

developmental tool, but is not the penultimate expression of social progress. In fact, revolution

may not even be necessary in the indigenist pursuit of development. The social relation between

the colonized (indigenous society) and the colonizer (the state) may be addressed through non-

violent means if possible. However, the social relation between the bourgeoisie and proletariat is

not so flexible. The proletarian worker depends on his relationship to the owner to ensure his

basic survival. If he were to unilaterally withdraw from this social relationship, he would most

likely die. Therefore, he is left with no other choice than to submit to either continued

exploitation or revolutionary action. Because no such dependency exists between indigenous

society and the state, indigenous society *can* unilaterally withdraw from this social relation.

Revolution is only necessary when the state would oppose such action. Although it is unlikely

that the state would willingly allow for indigenous secession, it is nonetheless possible, whereas

the worker has no such recourse.

   Although the analytical power of Marxism falls short due to its universalist claims about

linear development, its theory of revolution is well-suited to the case of the Zapatista rebellion.

According to Marxism, revolution is the fulcrum of development upon which society pivots from

capitalism to communism (Marx & Engels 1848). Marxist revolution should thus not be viewed

as a transition from one mode of development to another. Capitalist development is merely a

discrete component of a broader mode of development. Conversely, indigenist revolution *is* a

mechanism for fundamentally changing modes of development. It is a means of separating

indigenous society from capitalist/colonial society in order to pursue alternative developmental

values. However, the Zapatista uprising may not be characterized as a revolution in the

dominant narrative due to its limited scope. The impacted group was relatively small, and the

implications for regional geopolitics were limited (since the indigenous peoples of Chiapas did

not seek statehood, international boundaries were not affected). However, the qualitative

substance of Zapatista and indigenist demands were explicitly revolutionary. Indigenous

demands (particularly in the later stages of the rebellion) reflected a desire to redefine

development for the native peoples of Chiapas. Indigenist analysis of the case will reveal an

evolution of demands and preferences, showing how the revolutionary momentum of the

Zapatista uprising was increasingly framed through competing developmental norms.

Indigenist norms of development are distinct from those of Marxism and Liberalism in that indigenism fundamentally rejects any claims to universality. Whereas Liberalism and Marxism impose a prescribed formula for development for all peoples, indigenism emphasizes the universal *relativity* and intrinsic *difference* of development norms. Each distinct social group expresses an intrinsic right to determine its own norms of development and to develop according to its own imperative. Furthermore, the universal claims of other paradigms often obstruct the natural development of societies indigenous or otherwise. Indigenist development is characterized by a two-stage process. First, externally imposed development norms must be challenged where necessary. A people cannot develop according to its own norms if another developmental paradigm is dominant. Following liberation from external norms, a society must determine its own course of development based on its material, cultural, and sociopolitical needs. No universal formula exists to guide a people through its development although it may borrow from other developmental paradigms if necessary.

The Zapatista rebellion provides clear evidence of the first component of the indigenist developmental critique. As stated previously, explicit resistance, culminating in revolution, was absent during the corporatist period because of the generalized local autonomy exercised by indigenous societies. Although these groups were no doubt dominated by the corporatist state in a macro-political sense, their cultural norms of development were never fully displaced by the corporatist regime. In fact, the interest mediation and resource redistribution systems established under corporatism largely insulated indigenous groups from expanding international market forces throughout the bulk of the 20th century. Thus the scope and penetration of non-native

development norms was fairly weak during this period. However, liberalization in the 1980s rescinded this protective bubble, exposing indigenous societies to the totalizing influence of market logic. The incumbent norms of development in the growth economic system were suddenly forced upon indigenous communities with little warning. Without the redistributive processes of state corporatism, the "free" marketplace was presented as the sole alternative to economic collapse.

The vulnerable position of Mayans in Chiapas- resulting from centuries of colonial exploitation, gave them little hope with regards to their future economic prospects. The centrally managed system of corporatist relations assigned specific economic roles to each region of the country. Heavy industrial operations were concentrated in the urban, highly developed core, whereas the peripheral regions were dominated by agricultural production. The investments made by the corporatist regime were thus unevenly distributed, providing services and infrastructure to the core although securing only the most basic provisions for the periphery. The corporatist regime's policy of functional differentiation thus indirectly privileged certain regions over others during the process of liberalization. The urban industrial core experienced greater prosperity and an expanding middle class, whereas the agrarian peripheries (populated primarily by indigenous communities) faced stagnation and decline (Yashar 1999). This fundamental economic disparity, demarcated by geography and ethnicity, has been well-documented as the basis for the indigenous grievances communicated by the Zapatistas and their supporters (Solano 2007). At this point a convergence of theories of development must be acknowledged. The desire for the means to a reasonable livelihood is embedded within Marxist, Liberal, and Indigenist assumptions about development. The basic needs of a people must be satisfied before

the pursuit of higher aspirations of development. Therefore, all three paradigms would lend

support to the economic grievances of the Zapatistas. However, the strategies for securing a

basic level of economic stability differ greatly. Marxism and Indigenism both explicitly

acknowledge the role of revolution in development. Although Liberalism does not ascribe a

universal significance to revolution, its view of rationality provides implicit support to this

notion. If the economic benefits of rebelling against state authority outweigh the perceived costs,

then revolution could be considered a rational instrument.

If all three paradigms acknowledge the legitimacy of the grievances and revolutionary

comportment of the Zapatistas leading up to the rebellion, the post-rebellion narrative provides

an opportunity for evaluating their *contrast*. Each paradigm ascribes a highly specified program

of development for "free" peoples. The problem with this case is the limited time scale within

which it is confined. Can a coherent ontology of development be reasonably articulated within

the span of two decades? After all, Marxist and Liberal developmental epistemologies evolved

over several centuries. At this juncture it is important to recognize that conscious, coherent

ideologies are often absent from collective social action. Not every member of a labor union or

labor party contextualizes his actions from the grand theoretical perspective of Marx. Likewise,

not every business owner portrays herself as an agent of liberal values championing the free

market for its virtuous embodiment of personal liberty. It is thus necessary to recognize the

distinction between implicit tendencies and explicit ideologies, and avoid projecting our

theoretical perspectives onto the cases we choose to investigate. Although it may be

unreasonable to assume that the Mayans of Chiapas have thus far articulated a coherent theory of

development, it is reasonable to emphasize those tendencies which have thus far found

expression.

In order to explore the implications for development derived from indigenism, it is necessary to explore competing views of the *natural world* expressed through each paradigm. To a large extent, assumptions about nature underpin assumptions about development. Therefore, an analysis of the ways in which post-revolutionary Mayans conceptualized their relationship with nature should provide a richer understanding of their evolving norms of development. To this end, I have selected a self-contained episode within the broader revolutionary narrative for analysis: the Maya International Cooperative Biodiversity Group (ICBG). The Maya ICBG was among the few examples of cooperation and mutual trust between indigenous groups and the state/private firms in the wake of Zapatista uprising. Although the failure and ultimate collapse of the project have been extensively theorized (Global Exchange 2001, RAFI 2001, Safrin 2004), I am instead interested in its origins. Why did these Mayan communities, many of which were strong supporters of the Zapatistas, seek such compromise in the midst of deeply entrenched revolutionary sentiments? The Indigenist perspective on nature and development should reveal the tendencies at play which led to the creation of this unlikely alliance.

4.4 Excursus on Nature and the Maya ICBG: 1998-2001

The Maya ICBG was envisioned as a vanguard project in the formulation of global pharmaceutical bioprospecting initiatives. Bioprospecting refers to the search for organic compounds within nature that may be patented by private firms in the interest of developing new pharmaceutical products (Moran, King, & Carlson 2001). Because the majority of the world's biological diversity exists within tropical jungle regions, they are considered to be rich repositories of potential pharmaceutical agents. However, it is logistically unfeasible to conduct

"blind" surveys of tropical forests, collecting samples of every plant and animal species one encounters. Instead, bioprospecting teams, sponsored by governments and private firms, have sought to appropriate the traditional knowledge of medicinal plant and animal species from native indigenous communities. This practice greatly reduces the amount of field research necessary to locate and secure potential pharmaceutical agents. Samples collected by bioprospectors are then transferred to high-tech research facilities so that the underlying genetic sequences may be isolated and patented in accordance with international intellectual property law. Any pharmaceutical products derived from such patents provide monopoly rights to the owner for a specified period of time. In exchange for their traditional knowledge of medicinal plants and animals, indigenous communities are usually provided with a compensation package that includes up-front payments, as well as guaranteed royalties for any successfully-developed prescription drugs (Global Exchange 2001, Safrin 2004).

Starting in the late 1990's, this type of bioprospecting initiative came under heavy criticism by progressive advocacy groups and academics for exploiting indigenous peoples for their traditional knowledge. It was discovered that private firms and government agencies were wrongfully withholding royalty payments and other forms of compensation from their indigenous partners. It quickly became obvious that the structure of this type of bioprospecting initiative was fundamentally flawed from the outset. Government agencies and private firms enjoyed full access to the legal regime of international intellectual property law, whereas their indigenous partners lacked access to even the most basic legal services. Therefore, the remuneration of payments and royalties to indigenous communities was largely contingent upon the good faith of bioprospectors. The increasing visibility of "biopiracy" generated widespread

criticism which ultimately led to the cancellation of numerous projects associated with bioprospecting (Moran, King, & Carlson 2001, Safrin 2004).

In 1998, one such project was formulated between a partnership of Molecular Nature Ltd (a Welsh biotechnology corporation), the University of Georgia, the Mexican Southern Frontier College (ECOSUR), and 46 Mayan communities in the highland jungle region of Chiapas (Global Exchange 2001). The Maya ICBG was envisioned as a means of promoting sustainable development for participating indigenous communities. However the high-profile campaign of the Zapatistas attracted broad international scrutiny to the project. The Council of Indigenous Traditional Doctors and Midwives from Chiapas (COMPITCH), a coalition of traditional medicine organizations, generated grassroots opposition to the ICBG, and they were quickly joined by numerous progressive watchdog and NGO agencies abroad. The growing intensity of resistance to the ICBG led to its cancellation by the Mexican government in 2001. At issue were concerns over "irregularities regarding just distribution of benefits, the procedures for obtaining PIC [prior informed consent], and community representation and participation (Global Exchange 2001, 5). A great deal of reflection by both scholars (Safrin 2004), and advocacy groups (RAFI 2001) has been made regarding the collapse of the Maya ICBG. However, there has been little recognition of the process surrounding the *origins* of the ICBG. Why did indigenous communities who were highly skeptical of the state and private firms, many of which gave explicit support to the Zapatistas, agree to such a partnership in the first place?

The comparative paradigmatic framework for analyzing assumptions about nature and development should provide some insight into the genesis of the Maya ICBG. As demonstrated previously, indigenous resistance to the Liberal citizenship regime and development norms was

rooted in a fundamental disagreement over the relationship between society and the natural world. The problem with assessing indigenous attitudes towards these concepts in this case is the overall negative sentiment attributed to indigenous resistance. Localized indigenous resistance in the 1980s and regional indigenous resistance in the 1990s are predominantly framed in the negative, as a rejection of Liberal values with no real sense of what to put in their place (Benjamin 2000). Zapatista demands for land, autonomy, and social services only hint at the possibility of a different life world. There is little to distinguish these demands from the myriad subaltern manifestos which emerged from the Third World in the latter half of the 20th century. What distinguishes the indigenist liberation perspective from that of the decolonizing Third World are incumbent attitudes towards nature and development. As Third World nations liberated themselves from colonial rule, they sought to imitate Western modes of development (Churchill 2003c). The indigenist perspective should thus reveal some important distinctions between the indigenous resistance program in Chiapas and subaltern nationalist movements in the Third World.

   Liberalism and Marxism both conceptualize society's relationship to nature from the standpoint of the commodity. For Liberalism, human agency is a function of one's ability to apprehend and exchange discrete elements of the natural world. From hence derives the notion of property, or personal ownership of clearly delineated, non-human, matter (Friedman 1962). Marxism expands upon this basic conception of property, analyzing the distinctive social relations which coalesce around the commodity and influence the structure of society. While Marxism challenges the normative imperative of Liberalism, it does not challenge the underlying view of the commodity which distinguishes humanity from the natural world (Marx 1952).

Instead, Marxism seeks merely to rearticulate the social relations currently structured around the commodity (Marx & Engels 1849). The Marxist and Liberal perspectives thus underscore subaltern resistance movements that seek to redefine the social relationship between colonizer, colonized, and the commodity. Under colonialism, the colonizing group establishes a dominant position over both the colonized and the commodity. The colonized are dominated precisely because they are denied ownership of their "own" land and resources. Subaltern nationalist movements thus seek to reassert dominance over their "own" commodities by expelling the colonizer. This idea is the critical distinction which demarcates Indigenist resistance from subaltern resistance. While each seeks to expel colonial authority from "their own" territories, indigenist revolutionaries do not share the subaltern view of the commodity (Churchill 2003a; Churchill 2003c).

How then might the Indigenist perspective highlight these distinctions? The case of the Maya ICBG provides a compelling example of post-revolutionary indigenous attitudes regarding nature and development. The decision by 46 distinct indigenous communities in Chiapas to participate in the project and pursue a coherent development strategy indicates an attempt to transcend the boundary between revolutionary and post-revolutionary society. It is the point at which destruction of the old is eclipsed by creation of the new. Why then did the first coordinated post-revolutionary development initiative take on this form? Why was bioprospecting viewed favorably by indigenous communities, whereas the development of the region's wealth of natural resources was widely opposed? This line of inquiry inevitably leads back to competing conceptions of the commodity found in Marxism, Liberalism, and Indigenism. The Indigenist literature asserts a fundamental rejection of the dominant attitude necessary to accept the Western

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view of the commodity (Churchill 2003a, Churchill 2003b). The literature suggests that to take more than one needs to survive from the natural environment ultimately leads to a disharmony between nature and society. Thus the act of commodification itself is inherently violent. From a Liberal or Marxist perspective, the act of commodification could be likened to forcibly removing an arm, leg, or internal organ from a person. There are times when violence upon the body is necessary, but this is not the norm. Bioprospecting offers a means of bypassing this violence upon nature while at the same time contributing to the development of indigenous society.

The *a priori* imperative of bioprospecting is the conservation and preservation of the Earth's endangered biodiversity. Because of the significant potential for drug development, pharmaceutical companies have a strong vested interest in protecting those areas with the richest biodiversity. The logic is rather straightforward, if undocumented plant and animal species are destroyed by deforestation and human encroachment, their potential for prescription drug development is utterly lost. Thus bioprospectors encourage behavior which preserves the natural environment in all of its diversity. While the underlying economic motivations of bioprospectors may contrast with the cultural/spiritual motivations of indigenous communities, the overall goals are broadly similar. Bioprospecting expeditions are primarily tasked with gathering information and knowledge. The physical samples collected by bioprospectors are minimally intrusive to the respective ecosystems with a much smaller footprint than mineral extraction or agricultural cultivation. Thus the commodity which is demarcated and exchanged between indigenous communities and bioprospectors is the *knowledge* of medicinal organisms, not the organisms themselves. This "disembodied" commodity is apprehended and exchanged without the violence upon nature which is inherent to the embodied commodity. This concept suggests the possibility

of a developmental regime which represents and upholds Indigenist attitudes toward nature.

Although Liberal views of the embodied commodity do not align with those of Indigenism, Liberalism nonetheless would acknowledge the indigenous recognition of value in their traditional knowledge. Acting upon this recognition was thus inherently rational. Conversely, Marxism would acknowledge the indigenous recognition of exploitation which accompanied the ICBG. As the project unfolded, it became apparent to many of the participating communities that the ICBG may not be in their best interests. There were considerable loopholes in the revenue-sharing agreements which disproportionately favored the non-indigenous partners in the ICBG. Furthermore, questions over the ownership of traditional knowledge arose which suggested that the "violence of the commodity" had not been averted. The commodification and sale of indigenous traditional knowledge was viewed by many as an affront to indigenous culture, as this form of knowledge had always been recognized as a collective good. No individual or community held an ownership claim to something which belonged to all Mayans. In the wake of this growing criticism both within and external to indigenous society, the project was canceled by the Mexican state in late 2001. Although the Maya ICBG was ultimately viewed as a failure, and another misguided attempt to exploit the indigenous peoples of Chiapas, its value as an instructive episode should not be underestimated. The Maya ICBG offers a glimpse into the post-revolutionary Indigenist universe which recognizes the possibility of alternative developmental paradigms. Thus the indigenist perspective may be used to imagine other alternatives which respect the fundamental balance between the needs of human beings and those of the natural world.

Chapter 5: Conclusion

The case presented herein provides only a snapshot of the broader discourse on indigenous rights and globalization. Nevertheless it should prove instructive for several reasons. First, the Chiapan narrative provides a coherent historical account of the process of colonization, subjugation, and struggle for liberation between indigenous society and state and market forces. The degree to which many non-Mayan indigenous societies have been fractured by colonization is perhaps too extensive to create an equally rich historical record. Second, the discourse of resistance which emerged from Chiapas is perhaps the broadest and most accessible of its kind. The effectiveness with which this discourse was translated to a Western audience established a common frame of reference for intellectuals outside of indigenous society. The first step to resolving the problems described in this account is to create a space for understanding between indigenous and non-indigenous peoples. Finally, this discourse is ongoing and may be enriched by a shared recognition of the indigenist perspective.

The research presented in this project contributes to the broader discourse of indigenous/globalization studies in the following ways. First, a richer understanding of the Zapatista rebellion through the development and application of the indigenist paradigm. This perspective offers insights which, as was demonstrated in Chapter 4, provide a more compelling assessment of the socio-political context that created and sustained the Zapatista movement. The social, cultural, and political nuances recognized herein by the Indigenist perspective have gone unnoticed by Western (IE Marxist and liberal) perspectives. Second, the comparative framework established in Chapter 2 provides a robust, though perhaps limited, means to chart and navigate the myriad underlying assumptions which inform our scholarly paradigms. Finally,

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the main contribution of this work is found in the detailed exploration of the Indigenist paradigm in Chapter 3. This framework offers a means for Western scholars to access indigenous society to propose, rather than impose, informed solutions. This approach is made possible in the recognition of the paradigmatic biases which, implicitly or explicitly, underscore our scholarly pursuits. Furthermore, the indigenous/globalization discourse is not limited to the case of Chiapas. The utility of the Indigenist perspective extends far beyond the confines of Mayan society. From Bolivia to Guatemala to the Philippines, indigenous/globalization struggles may be better understood by deploying the Indigenist perspective.

Despite these advantages, there are some limitations to the research presented in this work. From an empirical standpoint, the primary limitation herein is the exclusive reliance on secondhand sources and accounts. The ability to consult indigenous intellectuals and conduct firsthand research within indigenous society would undoubtedly strengthen the claims presented herein. Rather than a handicap, this should be recognized as an opportunity for future research in indigenous studies. From a normative standpoint, this work cannot escape the ontological paradox which it seeks to resolve. The existence of this research as a Western academic project inherently privileges Western norms of knowledge production. In order for indigenous knowledge to be validated by Western scholars, it must be translated into the Western "scientific" form. However, this approach becomes less problematic if one adopts a perspective of "normative pragmatism" rather than "normative idealism." If the net result is to bridge the ontological and epistemological divide between indigenous and non-indigenous societies, then the need for some normative compromise must be acknowledged. Western social inquiry may not fundamentally resolve the problems resulting from centuries of colonial displacement, but

may start us on the road to understanding nonetheless.

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