Deep Currents Rising:
Some notes on the global challenge to capitalism

Despite neo-conservative illusions of a hegemonic Pax Americana, the persistent efforts of supranational state institutions such as the IMF and the WTO to impose neo-liberal policies throughout the world and the US government's efforts to use its post-9/11 "war on terrorism" to leverage the power of capital against all opponents, the basic institutional structures of modern capitalist society continue to be challenged on all levels by diverse currents of grassroots struggle. In their increasingly common rejection of business priorities these struggles recall Marxist notions of class warfare. Yet the common opposition to capitalism is not accompanied by the old notion of a unified alternative project of socialism. On the contrary, such a vision is steadily being displaced by a proliferation of distinct projects and a common understanding that there is no need for universal rules. In response to these struggles, the threatened global order is responding in various ways, sometimes by military and paramilitary force, sometimes by co-optation aimed at reintegrating the antagonistic forces. The problem for us is finding ever new ways to defeat these responses and continue to build new worlds. To find those new ways, we need to understand the character of the currents of struggle now in motion. Among such diverse currents conceptual approaches have naturally differed. In the notes that follow I evaluate a few of those concepts and offer some new ones.

1. Global Challenge and Theoretical Innovations

There can no longer be any doubt that proliferating interconnections among diverse, geographically dispersed, grassroots social struggles – e.g., those of waged workers (often precariously waged), indigenous peoples, human rights advocates, ethnic and cultural minorities, environmentalists, women, students, immigrants – are resulting in a deepening and broadening threat to the contemporary capitalist social order. On the one hand, it is the very proliferation, intensity and interlinkages of struggles attacking one or another dimension of capitalist domination that is so striking – virtually all types of existing social relationships of control are being challenged. On the other hand, one of the most important and widely recognized dimensions of increased collaboration is its global or transnational character. Those involved in local and national struggles who have fought local and national battles, are quite consciously seeking and finding ways to connect up with those struggling elsewhere and to make their efforts complementary and visible. This has taken at least three main forms: first, increasingly effective transnational mobilization in support of particular struggles in specific locations, e.g., support for the Zapatista rebellion, second, global convergences of thousands of protestors besieging various supranational state institutions and their meetings, e.g., those of the World Trade Organization, the International Monetary Fund and World Bank and the G8, and third, coordinated, simultaneous actions in diverse locations with a common purpose, e.g., the June 18, 1999 "global ambush of capitalism."

One dimension of this multi-pronged, increasingly global attack on capitalist hegemony has been the effort to grasp theoretically what is new about this situation. This project has occupied both

those involved in or sympathetic to the attacks and those threatened by them and desperate for counter-strategies. New metaphors and concepts about social conflict are born with insights flowing from the recognition of new situations that don't seem to fit existing theories. One kind of new situation involves hitherto unknown or unrecognized phenomena; another occurs when some known, but previously secondary phenomena have taken on a new importance and have become progressively more central in the challenging of existing institutional structures and mechanisms of control. The genesis of new theoretical approaches then results from efforts to imaginatively resolve apparent contradictions between existing theory and these new perceptions and insights in order to inform strategy and tactics for dealing with the new situations. In recent years there has been a veritable scramble to grasp the nature of the dizzying array of new disjunctures, connections, contradictions and complementarities that make up the current proliferation of interconnected challenges to global capital.

2. Transnational networks and social netwars

Perhaps the most common new theoretical approach has been to interpret the pattern of interconnections among proliferating struggles in terms of "networks." Among those challenging capitalist domination neither what is now called "networking" nor the concept of networks are entirely new. The entire history of challenges to capital has been replete with the efforts of its opponents to break out of their isolation and form mutually beneficial linkages with others in similar situations. This is true of early resistance to its primitive accumulation and true of the rise and development of trades unions, political parties and other organizational forms against its ongoing efforts to accumulate people as workers and labor power. As a general rule the wider and deeper the linkages, the more successful struggles have been, the greater the isolation, the more likely defeat.

As for thinking about such linkages in terms of "networks", some roots of today's common use of the concept by activists can be found in Italy in the 1960s where the Marxist sociologist Romano Alquati in his studies of workers conflicts with the Italian auto giant FIAT meshed the Marxist analysis of class composition with that of networks, at the factory, national and international levels.[1]

Other sociologists and then political scientists took the concept of networks over from mathematical graph theory to analyze a wide variety of social relationships. These have included individual behavior, small group interactions, organizational behavior and social movements - most recently transnational movements.[2] Of these, the last two would seem to have the most salience here. Organizational theorists and observers have traced the emergence within

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[1] See the collection of Alquati's studies: *Sulla FIAT*, Milano: Feltrineli, 1975. Although this work has never been translated, a synopsis of its ideas on networks has circulated widely and influenced many. See: http://libcom.org/library/network-of-struggles-italy-romano-alquati

[2] A useful overview of the development of network theory, from mathematics to sociology, can be found in the introduction to J. Clyde Mitchell, *Social Networks in Urban Situations: Analyses of Personal Relationships in Central African Towns*, Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1969, pp. 1-50. An adaptation of this approach to the understanding of social struggles was made in Italy by the Marxist sociologist Romano Alquati in his studies of workers conflicts with the Italian auto giant FIAT. Alquati meshed the Marxist analysis of class composition with the sociological one of networks, at factory, national and international levels. See: Romano Alquati, *Sulla FIAT*, Milano: Feltrineli, 1975.

businesses and to some degree the state sector, of network forms of organization that appear distinct from more traditional hierarchies and market systems.[3] Recent applications of network analysis to transnational social struggles have drawn on past sociological studies of local networks, on organizational studies and on empirical work on particular network-based campaigns to knit together a synthetic view of "those relevant actors working internationally on an issue, who are bound together by shared values, a common discourse and dense exchanges of information and services."[4]

Similar work has been done by national security analysts, who have examined the implications of the emergence of network forms of organization for the United States Department of Defense. One early study was that of Pentagon analyst Charles Swett who focused in on the role of the Internet.[5] The most perceptive and influential work has been done by RAND's David Ronfeldt and his co-authors. Drawing on studies of the changing organization of business and the state, such as that of Walter Powell, they have taken over the juxtaposition of networks to markets and hierarchies and argued that a wide variety of contemporary social conflicts have been evolving networked organizations capable of unleashing "transnational social netwars." On the one hand, they were among the first to identify such structures in terrorist organizations, e.g., Al Qaeda, - a recognition that has since become increasingly commonplace. On the other hand, they also pointed to emerging transnational networks of "information age activism" based on associations among non-governmental organizations (NGOs) concerned with modern and postmodern issues such as the environment, human rights, immigration, indigenous peoples and freedom in cyberspace.[6]

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[3] An influential moment of this literature is Walter W. Powell, "Neither Market nor Hierarchy: Network Forms of Organization," *Research in Organizational Behavior*, 12 (1990), pp. 295-336.

[4] Of particular relevance here are: Manuel Castells, *The Power of Identity*, Vol. II of his *The Informational Society: Economy, Society and Culture*, London: Blackwell, 1997, Margaret E. Keck and Kathryn Sikkink, *Activists Beyond Borders: Advocacy Networks in International Politics*, Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1998, Martha McCaughey and Michael D. Ayers, *Cyberactivism: Online Activism in Theory and Practice*, New York: Routledge, 2003, Wim van de Donk, Brian D. Loader, Paul G. Nihon and Dierter Rucht, *Cyberprotest: New Media, citizens and social movements*, New York: Routledge, 2004, Sidney Tarrow, *The New Transnational Activism*, New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005 and Clifford Bob, *The Marketing of Rebellion: Insurgents, Media and International Activism*, New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005. See also the earlier work by Cathryn Thorup, "The Politics of Free Trade and the Dynamics of Cross-border Coalitions in U.S.-Mexican Relations," *Columbia Journal Of World Business*, Vol. XXVI, No. 11, Summer 1991, pp. 12-26 and (with David Ronfeldt) *North America[cut:n] in the Era of Citizen Networks: State, Society, and Security*, RAND, 1993. Not surprisingly Thorup went on to work for both the United States Agency for International Development and the National Security Council on building relationships with NGO's.

[5] Charles Swett, "Strategic Assessment: The Internet", July 17, 1995.

[6] The RAND researchers are by no means alone among policy makers in being concerned about the growing power of such networks. Reviewing the Keck and Sikkink book on transnational advocacy networks for the elite journal *Foreign Affairs*, Francis Fukuyama warned: "Like Stalin, one might ask 'how many divisions do transnational networks have?' The answer is that they have information, greatly abetted by modem communications technology, and thus the ability to set agendas for nation-states and transnational organizations like the World Bank, Shell Oil Corporation, or Nestle." Francis Fukuyama, Review of *Activists Beyond Borders: Advocacy Networks in International Politics*, in *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 77, no. 4, July-August 1998, p. 123.

3. The Zapatista Rebellion

In much of this recent work, a primary reference point for the study of transnational networks has been the rebellion waged by Zapatista communities in Chiapas, Mexico since the beginning of 1994 and the activities of its supporters around the world. That rebellion – organized by a culturally and linguistically diverse array of collaborating, indigenous communities – was the latest in a long history of struggles by such people to defend themselves from recurrent efforts to separate them from their land and their means of production.[7] Those efforts date back to the Spanish Conquest but have never been entirely successful.[8] In some periods, such as the Mexican Revolution that began in 1910, such enclosure has been partially reversed and reforms have restored some previously stolen lands. More recently, neo-liberal government policies have increasingly threatened surviving communities by closing legal options for reversing enclosure while facilitating its extension.[9] These deepening threats helped set the Zapatista rebellion in motion.

The first activist analysis of the communicational dimension of that rebellion noted that the "most striking thing about the sequence of events set in motion on January 1, 1994 has been the speed with which news of the struggle circulated and the rapidity of the mobilization of support which resulted."[10] It went on to note how modern computer communications, through the Internet and the Association for Progressive Communications networks, made it possible for the Zapatistas to get their message out despite governmental spin control and censorship. Mailing lists and conferences also facilitated discussions and debate among concerned observers that led to the organization of protest and support activities in over forty countries around the world. The Zapatista rebellion, the analysis concluded, was not only built on local indigenous networks but through much wider networks was able to catalyze the weaving of a global "electronic fabric of struggle."

Subsequent studies at the U.S. Defense Department and at RAND also focused on the networked character of the rebellion and of its supporters as well as the role of computer communications in the mobilization of that support.[11] The lesson they drew was the need for the U.S. government to

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[7] Such separation was analyzed by Marx as an essential moment in the creation of a "working" class dependent on the labor market for survival under the rubric of "primitive accumulation" – a variation of Adam Smith's term for the same process: "original accumulation."

[8] The recurrent capitalist efforts to impose and maintain such separation, sometimes blocked and sometimes reversed by resistance, has resulted in a debate over the transitory or permanent character of primitive accumulation. For more on this see the papers in this volume by de Angelis, Zarembka and Bonefeld.

[9] The prime example of recent years was the gutting of Article 27 of the Mexican Constitution that protected indigenous and peasant *ejidal* (communal) lands, and hence communities, from privatization. This was intended to set the stage for the final enclosure of the Mexican countryside and was executed by the Salinas government as a gift to multinational corporations to help get the North American Free Trade Agreement enacted.

[10] Harry Cleaver, "The Chiapas Uprising and the Future of Class Struggle in the New World Order," *Riff-Raff: attraverso la produzione sociale* (Padova, Italy), marzo 1994, pp. 133-145. This early essay has been followed by a series of others most of which are available on the web at URL: http://www.eco.utexas.edu/faculty/Cleaver/hmchtmlpapers.html

[11] John Arquilla and David Ronfeldt, *The Advent of Netwar*, Santa Monica: RAND, 1996, p. 73. David Ronfeldt and Armando Martínez, "A Comment on the Zapatista 'Netwar'" in John Arquilla and David Ronfeldt, *In Athena's Camp: Preparing for Conflict in the Information Age*, Santa Monica: RAND, 1997, p. 371. David Ronfeldt, John Arquilla, Graham Fuller and Melissa Fuller, *The Zapatista "Social Netwar" in Mexico*, RAND Publication MR-994-A, 1998, (henceforth referred to as Ronfeldt et al.).

develop its own "networks" – both military and civil - to counter those of their opponents. In 1998, as a part of their study of the development of transnational human rights networks, Keck and Sikkink reported on how: "the [Mexican] government could no longer control information as it had in 1968. . . . The press and domestic and international NGOs monitored the conflict closely, and electronic mail became one of the main mechanisms through which the EZLN communicated with the world."[12]

More recently network analysis has been applied empirically in some detail to understand the international struggles connected to the Zapatistas. From hyperlink analysis designed to identify the structures of Zapatista support networks, to more extensive efforts both to discover the nature of, and relationships within the transnational Zapatista support network and to explore the connections with, and impact on, other networks of counter-globalization, we find a variety of sympathetic efforts being elaborated to understand this ever-growing set of experiences.[13]

4. From Static Networks to the Dynamics of Struggle: Swarming

One problem with the application of the concept of "network" to social struggles has been the tendency to think about "networks" in static terms. Even when the noun "network" is turned into a verb – "networking" – it just means "building networks" or "operating through a network" with no specification of the dynamics involved. Recognizing patterns of connectivity is not enough; the key thing is how they work dynamically. Capitalist strategists need to know how networks function to threaten them so that they can develop countermeasures – to block, crush or absorb the threats. Those building opposition to capitalist domination need to understand how networks are established, strengthened and can be used for mobilization and attack, but they also need to understand how and to what degree networks constitute viable approaches to the organization of post-capitalist social relations.

Following up their earlier advice of devising state networks to counter oppositional networks, David Ronfeldt and his primary co-author John Arquilla have also argued for the adaptation by such state networks of one method they have identified as being used by such opponents: "swarming", defined as "a deliberately structured, coordinated, strategic way to strike from all directions, by means of a sustainable pulsing of force." Some examples that they cite are from historical military experience but others are from anti-capitalist social struggle, e.g., Mikhail Bakunin's proposal of "general strikes" and the rapid mobilization of support networks in response to Mexican government moves against the Zapatistas. The concept is also, obviously, evocative of the periodic convergence of thousands from diverse struggles who have gathered to besiege various capitalist institutions. In their essay devoted to this subject, Ronfeldt and Arquilla juxtapose swarming to other types of military tactics, e.g., melee, manoeuvre and

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[12] Keck and Sikkink, op. Cit., p. 115.

[13] See, for example, Maria Garrido and Alexander Halavais, "Mapping Networks of Support for the Zapatista Movement: Applying Social-Networks Analysis to Study Contemporary Social Movements," in Martha McCaughey and Michael D. Ayers, *Cyberactivism: Online Activism in Theory and Practice*, New York: Routledge, 2003 or the broader and more detailed study by Thomas Olesen, *International Zapatismo: The Construction of Solidarity in the Age of Globalization*, New York: Zed, 2005.

massing, and propose "battleswarming" as a successor to current U.S. military doctrines such as LandAir Battle.[14]

The concept of "swarming" has subsequently been appropriated by some activists for their own purposes. One example, hactivists – whose coordinated "ping" attacks on targeted websites were one example of swarming for Ronfeldt and Arquilla – quickly adopted their adversaries' conceptualization for their own purposes; "digital Zapatismo" became "InfoSwarm Systems."[15]

The responses to such actions on the part of those involved in various social struggles have often been highly critical. One criticism has been that the hacktivists have chosen bad targets and have done so because they are neither connected to, nor did they consult with, the particular struggle their actions were aimed at supporting. A second criticism has been that the use of such tactics could open movements to the charge of violating their own rules of free speech and set them up for being attacked in the same way.[16] A third objection has revolved around the difficulty in demonstrating that such actions are not the rogue actions of a few individuals but do indeed involve thousands of people and are thus politically significant. Although the ping engines can generate information about the numbers and addresses of those who logged into a site and used it, there remain the questions of circulating that information, making it believable and gaining legitimacy for such actions.[17]

When this tactic was used by U.S. activists to attack Mexican government and financial websites, there was protest from within Mexico by activists who had not been consulted and who felt placed at risk by these actions. When it was used within the U.S. to attack newspapers about coverage of the Mumia case, it was severely attacked by lawyers defending Mumia as counterproductive. As a result of such criticisms, no social movement that I know of has generalized the use of this tactic.[18]

Another adaptation of "swarming" explores the dynamics of real-time mobilization during protests and demonstrations in the streets. An essay written by the activist group "Why War?" recognizes and adapts the work of Ronfeldt and Arquilla to their own purposes:

> "Swarming, for the purposes of protesting, can be thought of as the technique of quickly massing a large number of individuals from all directions onto a single position in order to attain a specific goal. There are roughly four different phases in a successful swarm: locate the target, converge, attack, disperse. For these

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[14] See John Arquilla and David Ronfeldt, *Swarming & the Future of Conflict*, Rand: National Defense Research Institute, 2000, p. vii.

[15] See: Ricardo Dominguez, Stefan Wray, Brett Beestal and Osea, "SWARM: An ECD Project for ARS Electronica Festival '98" at <http://www.thing.net/~rdom/ecd/swarm.html>.

[16] The September 1998 counterattack by the Pentagon's Defense Information Systems Agency has demonstrated precisely the kind of dangers feared. See report by computer security writer Winn Schwartau, "Cyber-civil disobedience," *Network World*, January 11, 1999. For more on the debate see the archives of the Chiapas95 listserv beginning in May 1998 (http://www.eco.utexas.edu/faculty/Cleaver/chiapas95.html).

[17] See my intervention into the debate on the net in the Chiapas95 archives: "H. Cleaver, A Contribution to the Discussion of ECD," May 1 (1998).

[18] Such methods have been used from time to time, especially in Italy where "netstrikes" have been called in support of local struggles and international ones, e.g. against Turkish government and business sites in support of Kurdish Rebels in Turkey whose leader had recently been seized.

four phases to work correctly they must be synchronized between a diversity of seemingly disconnected individuals. Therefore, there must be a layer of instantaneous communication between these individuals."[19]

The essay also offers detailed analysis about how swarming can be facilitated by protestors using portable communication devices such as cell-phones and text-messaging. This adaptation of flash mobs analyzes possible police counter-measures and discusses some concrete cases.[20]

5. The Dynamics of Struggle: Rhizomes

As an alternative to "networks" and "networking", the theoretical work of Michel Foucault, Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari offered a quite different set of metaphorical and conceptual approaches for analyzing the dynamics of struggle. Leaving behind some traditional orthodox Marxist frameworks, such as structuralism, dialectics and a preoccupation with the overall war between capitalists and workers, they elaborated a number of new concepts to explore and illuminate the micro-politics of individual psychology, class power and interconnected social conflicts. For my purposes here, the most salient of their ideas – because the most widely taken up by others – are the ones associated with the metaphor of the *rhizome*: a subterranean system of horizontal roots and above ground stems.[21] Deleuze and Guattari juxtaposed this to more familiar form of trees. Obviously, both trees and rhizomes grow, they propagate dynamically; the difference lies in the pattern of growth. Trees grow vertically with their branches radiating from the central trunk; rhizomes propagate horizontally elaborating tuberous root systems in all directions – from which new sprouts arise. (These botanical examples provide the core of their metaphor in *Thousand Plateaus*, although they also called rats and their burrows rhizomes.) Through the metaphor of the rhizome they explored the characteristics they argued could be found in horizontally linked human interactions: connectivity, heterogeneity, multiplicity and rupture.

Closely related to the metaphor of rhizome are two other concepts they elaborated: deterritorialization and nomadism. Like "rhizome" both obviously evoke not only space (as does "network") but movement through space. Whereas capital has tended to impose specific "territorializations" – fixing people in particular positions where they can be controlled as workers, the struggles of those people, elaborated rhizomatically, tend to rupture that fixing by finding or creating new spaces for autonomous activity. Thus deterritorialization is an autonomous prison-break and nomadism is another way of thinking about such autonomous movement. [22] Just as traditional nomads, e.g., the Roma of Europe or the herders of the Sahel, have escaped the control of centralized Powers, whether kings, emperors, or national governments, so do modern workers sometimes escape specific institutions and mechanisms of capitalist control, e.g., school drop-outs, precarious workers, trans-sexuals and immigrants.

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[19] See: "Swarming and the Future of Protesting," at: http://www.why-war.com/features/read.php?id=4#part4
[20] For a brief history of flash mob protests of various kinds see: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Flash_mob
[21] "Rhizome" in Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism & Schizophrenia*, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987, pp. 3-25
[22] As Deleuze and Guattari's analysis makes clear, capital can also intentionally deterritorialize, i.e., uproot people from one location to fix them in another as a method of achieving and managing exploitation or displace its fixed capital with the aim of exploiting people in other locations. The slave trade, the recurrent use of immigrant labor, runaway shops and outsourcing are obvious examples on an international scale.

This dynamic metaphor and these concepts of the kinds of dynamism involved have been taken up by those involved in such struggles and used for thinking about and organizing their own activity, both locally and internationally.[23] Rhizomatic self-organization and "rhizomatic" thought have quite explicitly challenged older conceptions of organization, e.g., the welfare state or Leninist party, and the associated kinds of thinking that accompanied and justified those kinds of social organization. Acolytes of those older kinds of thinking, not surprisingly have condemned these newer approaches.[24]

If we compare and contrast Deleuze and Guattari's concepts of the dynamics of rhizomes with Ronfeldt and Arquilla's concepts of the dynamics of networks we can see how the latter reflect and pertain mainly to moments of attack, while those of the former provide much more insight into the dynamics of political recomposition that not only make attack possible but possibly establish organizational points of departure for alternatives to capitalism. These differences undoubtedly flow from the different locations of the authors amidst contemporary social struggles. Whereas Deleuze and Guattari's concepts were enunciated by men who were trying to think from within opposition to capitalist ways of organizing the world, Rondfeldt and Arquilla's work for the Pentagon has situated them most firmly within the defense of the current order.

6. The Dynamics of Struggle: Currents

Every metaphor, like every analogy, has its limits. Even with the analysis of swarming we can see how the concept of networks used by both the theoreticians of "netwar" and some of their opponents grasps only part of the reality of those loosely connected, yet restless, actors and sets of actors who share a common, creative opposition to contemporary capitalism and sometimes seek to go beyond it. What is missing is the sense of ceaseless, fluid motion among those antagonistic actors who make up that opposition in which "organizing" may not take the form of "organizations" but rather of an ebb and flow of contact at myriad points that only sometimes results in massed or simultaneous attack.

On the other hand, Deleuze and Guattari's fecund metaphor of "rhizome" does evoke ceaseless growth in various directions, albeit a slow and subterranean kind. But despite its horizontal propagation and connectiveness, the plant rhizome is a fixed form (and the restlessness of rats is obviously quite limited.) The iris rhizome in flowerbeds or the cattail rhizome in ponds do propagate themselves in all directions and send up shoots from old and new nodes, year after year. But the shoots with their leaf structures, flowers or heavy heads of pollen, are always the same. So here too restlessness exists only at the margins as a given structure reproduces itself. Indeed, the truth is that many of Deleuze and Guattari most creative insights escape their own metaphor. The deterritorialization of the plant rhizome is obviously very limited, as are the metamorphoses of which the rhizome is capable. The insight into nomadism definitely evokes a

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[23] See, for example, Rolando Perez, *On An(archy) and Schizoanalysis*, Brooklyn: Autonomedia, 1990 or the webpage of the Rhizome Collective of East Austin, Texas at: http://www.rhizomecollective.org/. One example of the direct application of this kind of thinking to a particular series of struggles is: Andre Gattolin and Thierry Lefebvre, "Stopub: analyse provisoire d'un rhizome activiste," *Multitudes 16*, Printemps 2004.

[24] A good example of such clashes are two articles in the journal *Multitudes* by Richard Barbrook who attacks the work of Deleuze and Guattari and Bifo who defends it: Richard Barbrook, "Le cyber-commnisme, ou le dépassement du capitalisme dans le cyberspace" and Bifo (Franco Berardi), "Techo-nomadisme et pensée rhizomatique," *Multitudes 5*, Mai 2001.

degree of mobility far beyond its possibilities. These important concepts are quite separable from the metaphor of the rhizome.

An alternative metaphor for thinking about the ceaseless movement that forms the political life and historical trajectory of those resisting and sometimes escaping the institutions of capitalism, is that of water, of the hydrosphere, especially of ever restless ocean currents. Currents are masses in motion, not just masses of homogeneous water but of whole ecologies of differentiated water molecules and the myriad forms of life that thrive and perish amidst them – floating or swimming with the flow or struggling across or against it. Everything thing is in motion, nothing is stable, deterritorialization is virtually constant, there is no "safe haven", no "secure foundation" other than familiarity with the ever rushing, ever changing flow.[25] Yet nomadic whales sing and dolphins play as they traverse thousands of miles of ocean.

In some places these flowing ecologies move faster, in others more slowly, in some places they are warmer, in others colder, in some places they run deep, in others on the surface. The most visible currents - those that run on the surface of the ocean - are warmer, while the deeper currents are colder. Ocean waters also differ in both salinity and in the array of life that populates them. But precisely because they are in constant motion all these things change. Sometimes deeper and colder nutrient-rich water rises in an upwelling that brings it to the surface where its molecular components warm up and grow more agitated. On the other hand, when ocean water enters polar regions it gets colder, becomes saltier, denser and either freezes or sinks. When water does freeze, it crystallizes into rigidity, but mostly it melts again, undoing one molecular form to return to a process of dynamic self-organizing that refuses crystallization yet whose currents, of varying directions and power, can be observed and tracked. When currents connect in the ocean they sometimes interact to form giant eddies: "gyres" or circular movements that pile up water in "mounds" whose surfaces rise above that of the nearby ocean. Or, more dramatically still, crosscurrents may interact to form killer "rogue waves", mini-tsunami's capable of destroying and sinking huge ships.[26]

Finally, the movement of ocean currents are affected not only by the makeup (temperature, salinity, density, nutrient load) of different masses of water but by the topology of the ocean's floor, gravity and also, especially for surface currents, by sun, wind and the coriolis force.[27] In other words, currents move according to the nature of the water that composes them, but that movement is shaped by surrounding forces.

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[25] We can also add, with Werner Bonefeld, that everything is uncertain. See: Werner Bonefeld, "Notes on Movement and Uncertainty," in D. Harvie, K. Milburn, B. Trott and D. Watts (eds) *Shut Them Down! The G8, Gleneagles 2005 and the Movement of Movements*, New York: Autonomedia, 2005, pp. 265-272.
[26] See the analysis by the Department of Mathematics at the University of Bergen, Norway: http://www.math.uio.no/~karstent/waves/index_en.html or, for a dramatic account, the program on the subject produced by the History Channel.
[27] The physical configuration of seafloor topology obviously affects currents, sometimes channeling them, sometimes deflecting them. Earth's gravity affects all water but pulls denser water toward the bottom of the ocean. Lunar gravity causes tides. The sun's rays warm surface waters - more in some areas than others – and indirectly, and to an ever lesser degree the deeper waters beneath them. Wind pushes surface water through friction. Wind blown surface water in turn affects water below it, also through friction; its differential impact according to depth produces the Eckman Transport Spiral that helps form gyres and mounds of water in the ocean. It also contributes to upwellings of deep water where the wind blows offshore and downwellings where it blows onshore. The coriolus effect is a deflection of wind patterns caused by the earth's rotation.

All of these characteristics are evocative of the behavior of those forces in opposition to capitalism. Like ocean currents, social struggles have both their internal dynamics – shaped by the class composition and imaginations of the people involved – and they are shaped by the forces that surround them: capitalist institutions that constrain them or other struggles that may counter or reinforce them. They are fluid, often changing and only momentarily forming those solidified moments we call "organizations" – sometimes small, like patches of ice, sometimes quite large, like icebergs. However, such moments are constantly eroded by the shifting currents surrounding them so that they are repeatedly melted back into the flow itself. There is, of course, a certain kind of power in rigidity – frozen seas block ships and an iceberg sank the Titanic – but recognizing the inevitably transitory character of organizations necessarily must broaden our attention to the flows out of which they have crystallized and to which they must sooner or later return.

Some currents of opposition are quite visible, on the surface as it were, sometimes steady, sometimes turbulent. When they connect reinforcing each other the social equivalent of rogue waves and gyres are the swirling turbulence of public struggle: short term upheavals such as massive protests, e.g., the Battle of Seattle against the World Trade Organization, or the heady, intense days of the Zapatista intercontinental encounters, or more protracted, widespread upheavals such as insurgencies.

But, it is worth remembering that oppositional movements on the surface of society are like the surface currents of the oceans – they only involve a small percentage of the total mass.[28] Most currents of opposition run deep, below surface appearances, but like deep waters that are rich in salt and nutrients they can be rich in social connections, anger and creativity.[29] When such deep currents surface in surprising, massive upwellings of social struggle they can nourish wider conflict and change the world. Such were the world shaking eruptions in the 20th Century of the Mexican, Russian, Chinese, Cuban and Hungarian Revolutions; such too were sudden appearances of Solidarity in Poland in 1980, the Zapatistas in 1994 and, perhaps, the Oaxaca

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[28] In the case of the oceans the surface currents are only 10% of the total ocean water mass. As a result wind only affects, directly and indirectly, some 20% of the mass.

[29] This is akin to Karl Marx's "old mole" – a proletariat whose subterranean struggles periodically erupt onto the surface of society bringing revolution – or Sergio Bologna's "tribe of moles" in Italy of the 1970s or his more recent metaphor of invisible "termites" eating away wooden beams from within in ways that are free of mediation and can bring about the ultimate collapse of a whole structure. See Sergio Bologna, "The Tribe of Moles: Class Composition and the Party System in Italy," in *Working Class Autonomy and the Crisis*. London: Red Notes and CSE, 1979, pp. 67-91 and in *Semiotext(e)* Vol. III, No. 3, 1980, pp. 36-61. Originally in *Primo Maggio*, No. 8, Spring 1977, pp. 3-18 and "An Interview with Toni Negri" by Giuseppe Cocco and Maurizio Lazzarato, translated from the French journal *Multitudes*, No. 7, December 2001) by Thomas Seay and Hydrarchist, on the web at:<http://www.nettime.org/Lists-Archives/nettime-bold-0202/msg00006.html>. Hardt and Negri, (more or less following Deleuze, who more or less follows Foucault, on the crisis of the "society of discipline" leading to the "society of control") have argued that the "old mole" is being replaced by a "snake" because all of today's struggles take place on the surface of "superficial, imperial landscapes." While it is true enough that all the "environments of enclosure", and hence of discipline, have been thrown into crisis by struggle, it is not at all obvious that all struggles are clearly visible "on the surface". Unfortunately, we rarely see or understand the underlying turbulence that gives rise to those clearly visible struggles that we can not help but recognize. See: Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri, "Marx's Mole is Dead!" Eurozine, February 13, 2002 and Gilles Deleuze, "Postscript on the Society of Control" (1990) both available on the web at:
http://www.eurozine.com/articles/2002-02-13-hardtnegri-en.html
and http://www.nadir.org/nadir/archiv/netzkritik/societyofcontrol.html

City Commune of 2006.[30] In every case the biggest mystery and the hardest thing to explain have been what was going on in those invisible, deep, but rich currents of struggle that made possible and led to their sudden, explosive and world changing upwelling. Thus the importance of the various kinds of study that have sought to understand these largely invisible forces, e.g., analyses of everyday life, of the "weapons of the weak", of class composition, of certain aspects of popular culture.[31]

It has always been easier to identify the outside forces shaping social struggles - the social equivalents of seafloor topology, gravity, wind and solar energy – than their internal dynamics. Just as undersea landslides and earthquakes can cause abrupt changes in seafloor topology and trigger tsunamis, so social analysts often look for events that trigger social upheavals, e.g., the Mexican government attack on communal lands and the imposition of NAFTA that convinced the Zapatistas that they had to act quickly or see their lands privatized and their communities dispersed. Marxists, in particular, have often devoted far more time to analyzing the "laws of motion" of capitalist development and its consequences for workers than they have the internal, self-organization of the working class.[32] They have more readily seen and understood how capitalist imposed patterns of development, exploitation and institutional structures have confined and shaped the development of social struggles than they have grasped the internal relationships of those struggles. When those relationships have frozen into overt organizations, e.g., political parties, labor unions, NGOs, guerrilla groups, they have become the focus of intense research. Unfortunately, the molecular dynamics of the flows that have gestated self-organization but have only occasionally resulted in visible organizations have remained, all too often, largely out of sight and unanalyzed.

Many have also tended to think in terms of a one-sided causality between changes in capitalist institutions, policies and actions and working-class reactions rather than seeing how the self-activity of workers may bring about those changes. Within the framework of my oceanographic metaphor, for example, capitalist policy changes, e.g., attacks on peasant land holdings, may be seen as the result of persistent resistance to enclosure and success at reversing it - just as undersea landslides may be triggered by the erosion caused by turbulent ocean currents. Or, just as hurricanes are intensified by warming ocean water, so too is capitalist desperation and murderous flailing about often the result of their loss of control due to suddenly visible, rapidly circulating struggles.

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[30] At this writing the popular occupation of Oaxaca City has now shut down the governments of both city and state and substituted its own self-organization for longer than the Paris Commune of 1871.

[31] Well-known among such studies are those of Michel Foucault, Pierre Bordieu, Michel de Certeau, James Scott, Romano Alquati, and John Fiske. Included here must also be the work of those historians who have unearthed the hitherto buried histories of everyday struggle out of which impossible-to-ignore insurrectionary uprisings have emerged, e.g., Christopher Hill, Edward Thompson, Peter Linebaugh, Marcus Rediker, Silvia Federici and contributors to "subaltern studies".

[32] This way of thinking has involved a clear-cut dichotomy between capital and the working class such that the dynamics of the former, including its crises, could be theorized independently of the activity of the latter. Fortunately, in recent years this approach has been progressively superseded by an understanding of capital as class relationship that allows us to see how the struggles of workers have shaped, and sometimes ruptured "capitalist" development bringing crisis, threatening its very existence and elaborating possible alternatives.

Such invisible, deep currents - the inevitable consequence of alienation and exploitation throughout the history of capitalism - have been a source of endless frustration to those who would harness the power of those flows, whether the institutions of Western capitalism or the Leninist party. Power would harness power, but power lies in the flow itself, in the broad, deep and partly invisible currents that traverse society. Imagine the challenge to these would-be dictators or managers, standing in the middle of a world of swirling, powerful social currents, trying to manage the flows. It is easy to see how the frustration of early capitalists who had very little grasp of the flowing, living ecologies they sought to dominate would often drive them to desperate, violent efforts. It is also easy to see how later capitalist policy makers, although more experienced, have often been at a loss as to any other way to handle those ecologies and have resorted, over and over again, to force – thus the cruel brutality of much of capitalist history.

7. Harnessing flows

But, over time, the more perceptive of capitalist policy makers have fostered and financed the development of an array of "social sciences" whose primary purpose has been to identify and analyze the social currents that have given rise to overt attacks on business' domination of society. In many Western countries, such as the United States, anthropologists, sociologists, political scientists, psychologists and economists have all been drawn, by ideology or financial reward, into the study of such threats, either potential or actual, with a view towards providing policy makers with both understanding of the struggles that threaten and strategies for coping.[33]

As a result, in its more genial moments capital, like engineers who have designed devices to harness the power of ocean waves, currents, tides and even salinity gradients, has understood enough to design institutions to harness antagonistic social flows without trying to simply dam or crush them. One example of such harnessing can be found in the Keynesian period when workers' struggles were used to stimulate capitalist investment, productivity growth and accumulation. By shaping worker-formed unions into institutions that would not only negotiate but impose contracts on workers, capital was able, at least to a degree, to convert struggles over wages and working conditions into motor forces of its own development.[34]

Much earlier Marx captured such harnessing in his adaptation of Quesnay's metaphor of circulation to sketch the "circuits of capital."[35] While those circuits – whether of money, commodity or productive capital – represent flows of capital, at the heart of the flows is the living labor of workers. The various moments of the circuits and their interconnections constitute

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[33] The failure of Soviet-style regimes to use social scientists in this way – as opposed to using them for mere ideological justification of policies – was one reason for the ignorant and ultimately self-defeating brutality of the state's response to all forms of struggle. The brutality drove the currents of resistance deep below the surface where, out of sight and out of the state's mind, they circulated, interacted and gradually gained the strength to surface and overthrow the regime.

[34] The classic texts that most clearly articulated this analysis were: Mario Tronti, *Operai e capitale*, Torino: Einaudi, 1966 and Antonio Negri, "John M. Keynes and the Capitalist Theory of the State in 1929," in Toni Negri, *Revolution Retrieved: Selected Writings on Marx, Keynes, Capitalist Crisis and New Social Subjects, 1967-83*, London: Red Notes, 1987. Originally published in *Contropiano,* 1968. A much elaborated analysis along these lines is Massimo de Angelis, *Keynesianism, Social Conflict and Political Economy*, London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2000.

[35] Quenay's "circulation" was essentially a biological metaphor adapted from Harvey's analysis of the flow of blood in the human body.

the general framework through which capital organizes or manages life as living labor. The metaphor returned, in a small way, in mainstream macroeconomics' portrayal of the circular character of economic relationships and its sharp distinction between flows and stocks. In both cases social relationships are conceptualized as flows, but they are harnessed flows, like rivers or ocean tides diverted into hydroelectric plants to drive turbines.

Such harnessing and the constraints it imposes, quite unsurprisingly, are endlessly resisted by the restlessness of a humanity that has so many, many different ideas about interesting forms of self-organization. From shop-floor to street, from rice paddies to mountain forests people have organized and reorganized to escape this harnessing. As a result, some contemporary Marxists have not only recognized the autonomous power involved in this resisting and these efforts to escape but have analyzed how such struggles "circulate" from sector to sector of the working class, rupturing capitalist circulation in the process – thus taking over and using the metaphor of "circulation" for their own purposes.[36]

In line with this metaphor we can think about the conflicts described above not so much in terms of wars between set pieces (chess, go, military confrontations) or wars between classes for Power (Leninist revolution versus the capitalist state), but rather in terms of the vast imagination and capability of self-organization of a multiplicity of struggles straining against capitalist rules that bind, limit and distort.[37] There is a kind of class war here that involves increasingly resistance to the unity of global capitalism. But the resistance flows not from an increasingly unified class seeking a new unified hegemony, but rather from myriad currents seeking the freedom of the open seas where they can re-craft their own movement and their interactions with each other free of a single set of constraining capitalist rules.

Given the diversity of approaches to thinking about the emergence around the world and connections across borders of such a wide variety of social struggles that have increasingly challenged capitalism, there have also been a variety of approaches to the characterization of the subjectivities involved in those struggles.

8. Civil Society?

Ever since East European dissidents resurrected the concept of "civil society" as a way of talking about social initiatives that escaped the control of Soviet-style states, the use of the term has proliferated across the political spectrum. From Left to Right, from opponents of capitalism to its defenders, the concept has been deployed, as it has in the past, in a variety of ways. "International civil society", "transnational civil society" and "global civil society" have all been evoked to characterize the kind of widespread challenges to contemporary capitalist policy I have been discussing. But when we examine what people mean by these terms we find the same

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[36] Such analysis of the "circulation of struggles" was a factor in my coming to rethink the Zapatista and counter-globalization "networks' in terms of currents.

[37] In one line of contemporary Marxist thought this imagination and capability is conceptualized in terms of "a general intellect" (a concept plucked from "the fragment on machines" in Marx's 1857 *Grundrisse*) and is manifest not only in the increasingly central role of mental labor, but in its tendencies to autonomy. See, for example, Paolo Vierno, "Notes on the General Intellect," in S. Makdisi, C. Casarino and R. E., Karl, *Marxism Beyond Marxism*, New York: Routledge, 1996 and Paolo Vierno, *A Grammar of the Multitude: For an analysis of contemporary forms of life*, New York: Semiotext(e), 2004.

varied meanings as when the concept of "civil society" has been applied to local social structures in the past.[38]

Many have tended to reduce the meaning of "civil society" to formal NGOs.[39] This reduction has been more or less severe, largely depending on the interests of those using the words. For many state agencies, either national or supranational, the term NGO is used so broadly as to include the private business sector. For others the term refers only to non-governmental and non-business organizations. In this case, however, there is often a failure to distinguish between NGOs that are obviously integral parts of capitalism such as the Rockefeller and Ford Foundations from grassroots organizations opposed to it. Conceptualizing "civil society" only in the form of NGOs is a reductionism not surprising in a society where political Power is usually vested in formal institutions. It is not, however, satisfactory. Oppositional NGOs should be seen as only particular organizational crystallizations of a much more general and fluid social struggles. Indeed, partly in reaction to the growth and behavior of some transnational NGOs, various critiques have emerged along with a quite conscious search for alternative ways of organizing. One such critique has been of an observed tendency for NGOs to become bureaucratic and self-preserving institutions, increasingly operating above and independently from their supporters. This critique parallels similar ones that have been directed at traditional labor unions and political parties by the Zapatistas who have been unusually successful in articulating these critiques in ways that have resonated widely among those who have become disenchanted with such organizations.

A second critique has been that such NGOs have cut deals with the state and with business in ways that have betrayed the purposes for which the organizations were formed. One example has been the willingness of some big environmental organizations to collaborate with the World Bank or the World Trade Organization – thus lending legitimacy to those institutions whose policies have generally been ecologically destructive. Here again, parallels can be drawn with the behavior of "business" unions and political parties.

These critiques have effectively recast the notion of "civil society" in a narrower sense. "Civil society" has become, for the Zapatistas and many others, a term applied *only* to those moments and struggles within society that resist subordination to capitalist institutions and, in many cases, fight for alternative ways of organizing society.

Unfortunately, both historically and in the contemporary world the concept of "civil society" has been given so many different meanings as to render its meaning opaque. When you have to go into a long discourse to explain the particular meaning of your use of a term - as opposed to the way many others use the term - it's usually a good time to seek a different vocabulary. Although

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[38] There are any number of books outlining and analyzing the history of the concept of "civil society" and that history is much too long to recapulate in his essay. See, for example, John Ehrenberg, *Civil Society: The Critical History of an Idea*, New York: New York University Press, 1999.

[39] See, for example, Howard Frederick, "Computer Networks and the "Emergence of Global Civil Society," in Linda M. Harasim (ed.) *Global Networks: Computers and International Communication*, Cambridge: MIT Press, 1993.

what interests me here is most closely approximated by the last definition of "civil society" given above, I prefer to eschew the use of the term altogether to avoid misunderstanding.[40]

9. Social Movements?

Conceptualizing widespread but interconnected challenges to existing institutions in terms of "social movements", rather than just unusual "collective behaviors", grew out of the experience of the "civil rights", "black power", "counter-cultural", student, women's and other "movements" of late 1950s and 1960s. Those of us engaged in struggle thought of ourselves as being part of a "movement" and so did those many who analyzed us from within or from without, whether sympathetically or critically. The very term "movement" not only evoked struggle for change, but also the absence of any center, of any hierarchical organizational structures that could command the widespread, frequent protests and related actions. Cohesion in movements has often been thought to derive from common goals and shared collective identities.[41]

The identification of separate organizing by separate movements, e.g., black power groups organizing separately from civil rights groups, women organizing themselves autonomously from men, led many to speak of "new" social movements – as distinct from the traditional labor movement – and sometimes to skeptical characterizations of these movements as being balkanized, essentially reformist efforts that ultimately posted no real threat to "the system" as a whole, however much this or that aspect of it was being contested. Whether enthusiastic or skeptical, the number of academic researchers, especially in sociology, focused on "new social movements" multiplied rapidly and churned out a huge body of work, first articles and then collections of those articles. Books with titles such as *Social Movements and Culture* or *Cultural Politics and Social Movements* began to appear in the mid-1990s.[42] Political scientists and historians joined in and a variety of approaches have been offered to explain patterns of movement development and behavior. Among the most influential have been those of "political process" and "resource mobilization" where the former emphasizes changes in the larger political situation that opens up or closes down opportunities for movement formation and action and the latter focuses on how movement activity is shaped by all the resources available, including political, economic and communicational ones.[43]

As recognition has grown of how struggles for particular changes have been flowing together into collaborations whose impact is already larger than the sum of the individual influences,

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[40] For a different critique of the common evocation of "civil society" as the prime agent of anti-globalization movements see Werner Bonefeld, "Anti-globalization and the Critique of Socialism," *Critique*, Vol. 34, No. 1, April 2006, pp. 39-59.

[41] See Alberto Melluci, "The Process of Collective Identity," in Hank Johnston and Bert Klandermans, eds., *Social Movements and Culture*, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1995. See also: Alberto Melucci, *Challenging Codes: Collective Action in the Information Age*, Cambridge (UK): Cambridge University Press, 1996.

[42] Ibid., and Marcy Darnovsky, et. al., eds. *Cultural Politics and Social Movements* Chicago:Temple University Press, 1995. Similar titles are: Leo d'Anjou, *Social Movements and Cultural Change: The First Abolition Campaign Revisited*, New York: Aldine, 1996, Rick Fantasia, *Cultures of Solidarity: Consciousness, Action and Contemporary Workers*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989.

[43] For a sketch of the variety of approaches see: Doug McAdam, et. al., (eds) *Comparative Perspectives on Social Movements: Political Opportunities, Mobilizing Structures and Cultural Framings*, Cambridge (UK): Cambridge University Press, 1996.

many have come to speak of a "movement of movements" and optimistically, for the first time in quite a while, to declare that "another world is possible" or "other worlds are possible."[44]

As one might expect both the commonplace use of the term "movement" to characterize these struggles as well as the academic "social movement" literature on them have been critiqued in various ways. One example is the paper by the Leeds May Day Group in this volume that sees this characterization as too restrictive because it highlights the actions of activists while ignoring much more widespread actions on the part of "people who do not consider themselves 'activists' or 'political' but who nevertheless have to struggle against oppression and exploitation in their everyday lives—people who, just like us, are struggling for new ways of living."

More generally, because these "new" social movements have been identified as falling outside the labor movement, they have also been identified as falling outside the Marxian concept of class struggle. While this has permitted such "post-Marxist" approaches to successfully create an accepted space for their work within an overwhelmingly anti-Marxist academic establishment, it has done so only by defining "class struggle" very narrowly and marginalizing it as one kind of conflict among others. As with the broader space of "post-modern" studies – which has executed a similar strategy – the overly simplified characterization and abandonment of Marxist thought has often led to an identity politics blind to, and thus vulnerable to, the threat of a common enemy.

10. Working Class?

Although the "post-Marxist" and "post-modernist" characterizations of Marxian thought has rung true among those who have identified Marxism with its orthodox varieties – e.g., Leninist, Maoist, Trotskyist – it has rung quite false among those familiar with less orthodox and more adaptive varieties of Marxist thought. Whereas orthodox Marxists have tended to react to the struggles of those outside the waged industrial proletariat – and there have been such throughout the history of capitalism – by demanding that they get a waged job, join the working class and *its* struggles, other Marxists, long ago, saw the political and theoretical flaws in such a response. On the one hand, critical theorists of the Frankfurt School and those who followed them, recognized and analyzed how capitalist mechanisms of domination had been extended to the sphere of culture and everyday life – even if they were not always able to either recognize or analyze the struggles against those mechanisms. On the other hand, first Marxist feminists and then others began to recognize how "the" working class has always included the unwaged as well as the waged and how varied struggles have been among both. As a result, for many Marxists the concepts of working class and working class struggle have been so widened beyond its orthodox association with waged factory labor as to encompass all of those struggles that have threatened the rules and institutions of capitalist domination throughout society and frequently sought to go beyond them. Beyond Marx's "collective worker" at the point of production, they saw a collective worker acting in both spheres of the "social factory": production and reproduction.[45]

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[44] For example: Tom Mertes (ed), *A Movement of Movements: Is Another World Possible?* New York: Verso, 2004, Susan George, *Another World is Possible IF…*, New York: Verso, 2004 and D. Harvie, K. Milburn, B. Trott and D. Watts (eds) *Shut Them Down!* op.cit.

[45] For one very brief sketch of the international development of such non-orthodox Marxisms see the introduction to Harry Cleaver, *Reading Capital Politically*, London: AK Press and AntiTheses, 2000, on the web at:

One name for this collective worker was bestowed by Italian Marxists Romano Alquati and Antonio Negri: the "social" or "socialized" worker.[46]

Such a broadened concept of working class has made possible Marxist analyses of the wide variety of social struggles around the world that have challenged capitalism in ever more interconnected ways. Such analyses have employed Marxist analytical and political categories, e.g., value, exploitation, alienation, class struggle, but have elaborated and adapted them in ways that take account of the breath and variety of the struggles among both waged and unwaged. Among the first examples of such analyses were those of class conflicts of the Fordist or Keynesian period in which the factory model had been extended to, and hence contested, throughout society. In other words both deskilled industrial workers and others outside industry - but whose lives were shaped in ways designed to feed into (schools), or support (nuclear families), or manage the reserve army of (the welfare state, foreign aid, neocolonialism) industry – were organized as effectively as Keynesian planners could manage as one great social factory. The result, of course, was the inevitable, equally thorough appearance of class struggle against such shaping and all of its miserably constrained conditions of life.

The point of departure for analyzing the complexities of such a multi-dimensional working class and its struggles was, naturally, Marx's own analysis of the way capital imposed a division of labor in production and the way it pitted some groups of workers against others, e.g., Irish against English or the unemployed and unwaged (the reserve army) against those with jobs and wages. But whereas Marx's focus was on the methods of capitalist control and exploitation, the need of those in struggle against such control demanded an inversion of perspective, from top-down to bottom-up. Just as Marx had studied everything he could find on division of labor, including theoretical essays by economists and engineers and factory inspector reports, so a new generation of Marxists in the post-WWII era undertook to study, sometimes in similar sources, sometimes at actual points of production (and later at the points of reproduction) the contemporary shape of class relationships.[47]

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http://www.eco.utexas.edu/facstaff/Cleaver/357krcp.html But also see the much more detailed account of the emergence of such recognition among Italian Marxists in Steve Wright, *Storming Heaven: Class Composition and Struggle in Italian Autonomist Marxism*, London: Pluto Press, 2002 as well as such detailed historical explorations of the long history of the role of the unwaged in working class struggle in studies such as: Peter Linebaugh, *The London Hanged*, London: Verso Press, 2003, Peter Linebaugh and Marcus Rediker, *The Many-headed Hydra: Sailors, Slaves, Commoners, and the Hidden History of the Revolutionary Atlantic*, Boston: Beacon Press, 2000, and Silvia Federici, *Caliban and the Witch: Women, the Body and Primitive Accumulation*, New York: Autonomedia, 2004.

[46] See: R. Alquati, N. Negri and A. Sormano, *Università di ceto medio e proletariato intellectuale*, Torino: Stampatori, 1976 and A. Negri, *Dall'Operaio Massa All'Operaio Sociale* (1979) and his "Archeologia e proggetto: L'operaio massa e l'operaio sociale" in *Macchina Tempo* (1982). This last is also available in English as "Acheology and Project: The Mass Worker and the Social Worker," in *Revolution Retrieved: Selected Writings of Toni Negri*, London: Red Notes, 1988.

[47] Among those who went into the factories to discover what was the actual state of the class composition of their times were the members of the Johnson-Forest Tendency in the United States, those of *Socialisme ou Barbarie* in France and associates of *Quaderni Rossi* in Italy (especially Romano Alquati). These interlinked efforts are described briefly in the introduction to Harry Cleaver, *Reading Capital Politically*, Ibid. For a more detailed discussion of Alquati and his work see Chapter 2 of Steve Wright, *Storming Heaven*, Ibid.

The result was the elaboration of a "workerist" analysis of "class composition" that looked at the division of labor explicitly in terms of the power relations between capital and workers and among the latter with a view to providing theoretical concepts for grasping changes in those relations brought on through workers' struggle. Thus workers' efforts to tip the scales of power in their favor were conceptualized as processes of "political recomposition" while capitalist attempts to thwart or reverse such efforts were seen to involve the imposition of new divisions in processes of class "decomposition." Similarly, attempts to theorize the ability of workers to take the initiative in the class war and to craft alternative non-capitalist relations among themselves led from the concept of workers' autonomy to that of self-valorization – an appropriation and inversion of a term Marx used to describe capitalist expanded reproduction.[48] Methodologically, these ideas implied taking workers struggles, in all their variety and interrelationships, as points of departure for understanding both particular organizational crystallizations, e.g., unions, political parties, NGOs, and capitalist strategies and tactics.

Applied to the international level such an analysis tended first, to recognize how supranational institutions such as the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank and the General Agreement on Trade and Tariffs were not merely vehicles of post-WWII U.S. imperial hegemony but were intended to manage a global Keynesian hierarchy of development and underdevelopment and therefore, second, to bypass traditional orthodox theories of imperialism to focus on the commonalties and interconnections among particular struggles. Thus, for example, while some viewed the anti-Vietnam war or anti-apartheid mobilizations in the United States as examples of anti-imperialist solidarity, others came to see them as interconnected moments of class struggle challenging a global capitalist order. Similarly, this approach led to an analysis of the crises of Keynesianism in the late 1960s and 1970s as political crises of that global order brought on by an international cycle of those interconnected class struggles.[49] In turn, "economic" crises since the 1980s must be understood in part as the product of capitalist counterattacks and in part as the result of continuing working class resistance. In other words, from this Marxist perspective the global drama of the last thirty years or so has not only been – in the words of Subcomandante Marcos – a "Fourth World War", but a class war between capitalists trying to wield neoliberal policies to regain control around the world and a diverse working class resisting those policies and fighting to build new worlds.[50]

11. Multitude?

The kind of analysis of class struggle sketched above was taken by some Marxists, mostly working in France and Italy, and crossed with concepts from some "post-modernist" thinkers such as Michel Foucault, Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari. The primary products of this melding that deal with conflict at the global level and are known in the English speaking world are the later works of Antonio Negri and especially his two books with Michael Hardt, *Empire*

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[48] On self-valorization see: Antonio Negri, *Marx Beyond Marx: Lessons on the Grundrisse*, New York: Autonomedia, 1992 and Harry Cleaver, "The Inversion of Class Perspective in Marxist Theory, from Valorization to Self-Valorization," in W. Bonefeld, R. Gunn and K. Psychopedis (eds) *Open Marxism*, Vol. II, London: Pluto Press, 1992.

[49] A now classic example of this kind of analysis is laid out in the two issues of the American journal *Zerowork* (1975 and 1977).

[50] Subcomandante Marcos, "The Fourth World War," November 20, 1999. Available on the web at: http://www.inmotionmagazine.com/auto/fourth.html

(2000) and *Multitude* (2004).[51] These works are the outcome of over twenty years of collective efforts to understand precisely the nature of the processes of "political recomposition" that brought on the crisis of Keynesianism and shaped capitalist efforts at "decomposition" in the years since. From a wide-ranging series of studies of diverse struggles, mostly in Europe, whose results have been published in several European journals, including *Futur Antérieur* and *Multitudes* in France and *Derive Approdi* in Italy, these writers elaborated a theory of the nature of contemporary class relationships that reformulated the concept of working class into that of "multitude" and that of capitalist sovereignty into "empire."

The concept of empire designates a new organization of command, beyond imperialist competition between national blocs of capital backed by nation states, in which, through both national governments and supranational state institutions capital has begun to act as a more unified whole at a global level. A ferocious debate has followed this thesis – one that is strongly reminiscent of that which followed Karl Kautksy's proposed theory of ultra-imperialism just before World War I – as it was attacked those who argued 1) national rivalries are still very much alive, 2) the United States government still dominates all "supranational" state institutions and 3) American imperialism is obviously rampant in the invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq and in neoconservative plans for a new Pax Americana.[52]

The concept of multitude for Negri and Hardt designates the new collective subject that overthrew Keynesianism and imposed a new organization on capitalism. Their concept of that new subject is clearly a variation on that of the collective worker in the social factory theorized more than a decade earlier. Historically, multitude designates a metamorphosis of what Alquati and Negri earlier had called the "socialized worker". The difference between the world of the social factory and the "socialized worker" and that of empire and multitude, would seem to lie in their perception that worker successes in rupturing and fleeing the social factory and capital's successes in adapting to those ruptures and checking that flight have resulted in a more thorough domination of every aspect of life. Their theorization of this supposedly new, thorough domination is based on two related concepts: biopower – a concept taken over from the work of Michel Foucault – and immaterial labor – a concept adapted from Jean-François Lyotard.

In a manner similar to the work of Deleuze and Guattari, Michel Foucault's research on capitalist domination shifted focus from macro-class forces to the micro-politics of control. His study of Bentham's proposal for the management of prisons via panopticon arrangements led to his investigations into how such control was spread throughout society, the bodies and brains of those living within it.[53] In the process he revealed hitherto invisible arrangements of power through which individual lives were subtly managed through induced forms of internalized control. In Hardt and Negri such bio-political arrangements are presented as thorough and complete; all of life, within formal work places, but also in the home and in the community have

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[51] Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri, *Empire*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2000 and Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri, *Multitude: War and Democracy in the Age of Empire*, New York: Penguin Press, 2004.
[52] Kautsky's classic essay is online at: http://www.marxists.org/archive/kautsky/1914/09/ultra-imp.htm One collection of articles critical of the "empire" thesis is: Gopal Balakrishnan, *Debating Empire*, New York: Verso Press, 2003.
[53] See: Michel Foucault, *Surveiller et punir: Naissance de la prison(1975) or Discipline and Punish: the birth of the prison*, New York: Pantheon Books, 1977; *Histoire de la sexualité, 1: la volonté de savoir*(1976) or *The History of Sexuality*, Volume I, New York: Pantheon, 1978. See also Gilles Deleuze, *Foucault*, Paris: Minuit, 1986.

become places of work for capital. "Power is thus expressed as a control that extends throughout the depths of the consciousnesses and bodies of the population – and at the same time across the entirety of social relations."[54] As a result, they argue, Marx's labor theory of value is no longer relevant because if it is no longer possible to differentiate between work and non-work, between work time and non-work time, then there is no way to measure "labor", and hence Marx's value.[55]

But what is the nature of this work to which all of life is reduced? While they recognize that older forms of work still abound – such as manual labor in fields or factories – they argue that the most important capitalist adaptation to the emergence of the multitude's subjectivity has been capital's ability to capture, organize and subordinate the increasingly important mental labor of generating information and managing communication flows and the affective labor through which personal and social relations are constructed and managed. Hardt, Negri and Maurizio Lazzarato call these kinds of work "immaterial labor".[56]

While this sounds like a more thorough variation on the vision of critical theorists who saw total capitalist domination as having spread not only through the sphere of production but through that of culture, Hardt and Negri insist that the "multitude" thus subsumed by capital is nevertheless a subject capable of revolt. The source of the power of the multitude to revolt, they argue, lies in its "constitutive power" – a formulation taken over from their, and Deleuze's, reading of Spinoza where they identify the power to create or constitute (*potentia, puissance, potenza, potencia*) being distinguished from the Power (*potestas, pouvoir, potere, poder*) to command.[57] The actual generation of information, communication and affect is, like more traditional forms of labor, the activity of the multitude. Thus, the bio-political Power of Empire is exercised against the bio-political constituent power of the multitude, but that bio-power – which can only be harnessed but not eliminated – not only breaks free from time to time, here or there, but has the potential to free itself from Power completely. Moreover, "freeing itself" means power destroying all of the mechanisms through which Power has constrained and harnessed it and achieving complete self-determination. And if Empire is world wide, so, necessarily is the multitude on which it is based.

How much of this analysis of multitude is really new? How much does it really differ from the earlier Marxist analyses of class struggle from which it drew? Let's examine some of the key concepts. First, what of (constituent) power vs. Power? While the two linked terms of this dichotomy may have originated in Spinoza, is it really that different from Marx's own dichotomy

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[54] *Empire*, op. cit., p. 24.

[55] Negri's attack on the "law of value" pre-dates *Empire* and goes back at least to his 1971 article on the "Crisis of the Planner State: Communism and Revolutionary Organization", available in English in: Toni Negri, *Revolution Retrieved: Selected Writings on Marx, Keynes, Capitalist Crisis & New Social Subjects*, 1967-1983, London: Red Notes, 1989.

[56] Maurizio Lazzarato "Immaterial Labour", (1996) in Paolo Virno and Michael Hardt, (eds) *Radical Thought in Italy*, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, pp. 132-146. Available on the web at: http://www.generation-online.org/c/fcimmateriallabour3.htm. See also: Maurizio Lazzarato and Toni Negri, "Travail immatériel et subjectivité," *Futur Antérieur* 6 : Été 1991.

[57] See: Antonio Negri, *The Savage Anomaly: The Power of Spinoza's Metaphysics and Politics*, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1991, Antonio Negri, *Il potere costituente*, Milan: Sugerco, 1992, Antonio Negri, *Insurgencies: Constituent Power and the Modern State*, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1994 and Antonio Negri, "Constituent Republic," in W. Bonefeld, *Revolutionary Writing: Common Sense Essays in Post-Political Politics*, New York: Autonomedia, 2003.

of living-labor and dead-labor? In Hardt and Negri's analysis it is power that is constitutive and Power that merely controls and manages. In Marx's analysis the living labor of the working class is the real life force within capitalist society and capital's ability to survive and expand depends entirely on its ability to control, subordinate and exploit that force. That subordination, in turn, had to be exercised, from the beginning, throughout society, starting with the expulsion of people from previous social relations (primitive accumulation) and then finding ways to continue to control the dislodged in factories, fields and communities. Although the array of skills and creative forces of living labor have evolved over time, including the communicative abilities essential to cooperation and collective work, these things have always been present. Applying Spinoza's term constituent power to living labor merely emphasizes its creative and productive character that was already highlighted by Marx. Hardt and Negri's location of the revolutionary potential of the multitude in its constituent power thus appears as a mere reformulation of Marx and many autonomist Marxists' grounding of the revolutionary potential of the working class in its own self-activity (only temporarily harnessed by capital as labor power).

Second, what of "immaterial labor", of kinds of work that can be characterized as productive of information, communication and affect? To begin with, the adjective "immaterial" here is clearly designed to differentiate this kind of mental work from manual labor that produces durable physical commodities; indeed the adjective is simply taken over from the idea of "immaterial goods" such as services and communication. However, there is really nothing immaterial about the various kinds of work that produces services, information and communication, so the adjective is confusing. Although the perspective is reversed (Hardt and Negri see immaterial labor as absolutely central to contemporary work) this distinction between material and immaterial labor reminds one of the Soviet distinction between real work that produced real physical commodities and other kinds of activity, not worth counting as value production, that produced services. The "immaterial" work of information production, processing and communication clearly involve considerable mental labor which is every bit as material as manual labor.

The same is true of "affective labor" – a term that highlights the emotional dimension of mental labor (as opposed to its rational component). Whether affective labor is understood as producing services (e.g., health care, entertainment) or social networks and community through direct, or indirect, human contact, it is every bit as material as any other kind of work. Nor is this kind of work new. To begin with Marx recognized, though analyzed far less than he might, the necessary work of producing and reproducing human life as labor power.[58] Hardt and Negri even admit that "affective labor" has been around for a long time, acknowledging how "Feminist analyses in particular have long recognized the social value of caring labor, kin work, nurturing, and maternal activities."[59] A recent, excellent example of such recognition and analysis by a Marxist feminist is the book *Caliban and the Witch* by Silvia Federici who has shown how, from the very first, capital sought to control not only production but the labor of reproduction.[60] What they do

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[58] See, for example, his analysis of simple reproduction in Chapter 23 of Volume I of *Capital*.

[59] A seminal text in the history of such recognition is Mariarosa Dalla Costa, *Women and the Subversion of the Community*, December 29, 1971, now available online at
http://www.eco.utexas.edu/facstaff/Cleaver/357kDallaCostaSubversion.html and
http://www.eco.utexas.edu/facstaff/Cleaver/357kDallaCostaSubversionTable.pdf

[60] Silvia Federici, *Caliban and the Witch*, op.cit.

claim is new is "the extent to which this affective immaterial labor is now directly productive of capital and the extent to which it has become generalized through wide sectors of the economy."[61] If "directly productive of capital" refers to the direct production of profitable commodities, then this corresponds to the growth of the service sector and certainly it has grown as a proportion of capitalist industry. If it means directly productive of capital understood as class relation then it has been true from the beginning. As to becoming generalized, clearly the work of reproduction has always been necessary in every sector even if its modalities have changed over time.

Third, what of the contention that capital has succeeded in so extending its bio-political control throughout all of life to the point where it is no longer possible to distinguish work from non-work or to measure either? Clearly the imposition of capitalism has always involved the imposition of the work of producing the commodity labor power as well as the work of producing other, profitable, commodities. The question is what was the basis for distinguishing these different kinds of work in the past and has that basis disappeared? Hardt and Negri argue that because communicative or affective activities in the sphere of reproduction have come to play a larger and larger role in the sphere of waged work, the distinction has been breaking down. However, in Marx's analysis any and all activities that produce labor power, i.e., the willingness and ability to work, have fed into what goes on in the sphere of production! What actually distinguished work in these two spheres was that one had to be paid for and one did not. Thus the acute capitalist preoccupation with measuring the time of work. Those who performed unwaged work had to be supported, of course, or the reproduction of labor power would falter and collapse, thus the family wage, charity and eventually welfare and unemployment insurance. Quite clearly this distinction between work that is directly paid for and work which is not still exists.

The classic "working day" discussed by Marx in chapter 10 of volume I of *Capital* is the waged working day, but it was by no means the entire working day. The rate of surplus value, or the rate of exploitation measured only the ratio of the work time that capital had to pay for over and beyond that required to reproduce labor power (in the aggregate, that required to produce goods and services consumed by workers) and ignored the work time in the sphere of reproduction. At the same time, neither was the entire time of waged workers actually spent working for capital, nor was the time spent by others, e.g., spouses or children, entirely filled with the work of reproducing labor power. Within the factory, Marx discussed the "pores" of non-work in the working day and the endless efforts of capitalists to eliminate them to avoid paying for non-work.[62] Although he never analyzed them, the same kind of "pores" of non-work have always existed in the home, school, community and so on.[63] The "pores" in his discussion were temporal ones – time momentarily freed from capitalist imposed work – but they must also be spatial ones

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[61] Michael Hardt, "Affective Labor" (n.d.) on the web at: http://makeworlds.org/node/60

[62] This discussion is in the discussion of the intensification of labor in Chapter 15 of Volume I of *Capital*. As has been often pointed out, it was partly against such pores – as well as in order to intensify work itself - that Frederick Taylor and Henry Ford reorganized work with stop watch and assembly line.

[63] Marx also failed to examine the flip side of capitalist "nibbling and cribbling" to lengthen the working day pointed out in Chapter 10 of Volume I of *Capital*. Pitted against such efforts, workers have also found innumerable ways to shorten their work time, not only at the beginning and at the end (showing up late, leaving early, taking long lunches) of a working day but in the middle, by carving out precisely those "pores" that have so preoccupied their bosses. They have done the same within the working week through fake sick leave and other forms of absenteeism.

as well; time spent not working has to take place somewhere, whether directly on the shop floor, at the water fountain, in a restroom or in specially appropriated spaces away from the workplace.

As the ability of workers to hammer down the time of waged work grew, the capitalist preoccupation with time outside that sphere grew apace, thus countless efforts to shape "leisure time" and "culture", i.e., to turn society into a social factory, to make sure that as much unwaged time as possible has been used to produce and reproduce labor power rather than being used for non- or anti-capitalist activities. Thus, too, multiplying efforts to measure how time is actually spent in various spheres of reproduction, e.g., homes, schools and communities.[64] Those efforts demonstrate a capitalist awareness of the importance of a continuing difference between work and non-work that disappears in the writings of Hardt and Negri.[65] This disappearance, although consistent with their emphasis on the thoroughness of capitalist bio-political control, is odd considering their contention that the multitude has the power to rupture that control through the exercise of its own bio-power. Does rupture actually occur? If so, then capitalist bio-political control is not omnipresent but full of "pores" blown open by struggle and what we need are detailed analyses of the methods of rupture and of the actual exercise of the multitude's bio-power to constitute new kinds of social relationships autonomously of capital. Many of the studies of actual struggles whose results have appeared in the journals mentioned above do provide useful information on such issues but, unfortunately, little of it makes its way into Hardt and Negri's books.

12. Conclusion

The array of concepts discussed above has included sketches of several different approaches: 1) to thinking about the interconnectedness of struggles in terms of networks, of the dynamics of struggles in terms of swarming, rhizomes or currents, and 2) to characterizing the subjectivities in motion in terms of civil society, social movements, the working class or multitude. What do I make of these? Let me answer briefly in terms of two criteria: first, their usefulness in understanding the spreading, interconnected struggles that are challenging capitalism around the world, and second, their usefulness in terms of helping us figure out how to do better.

The concepts of de-centered networks and rhizomes do provide attractive metaphors for the patterns of interconnectedness that can be identified in a wide variety of grassroots struggles. But while the people and organizations in networks or rhizomes may sometime converge or swarm to focus protest or disruption against some moment of capitalist domination, understanding how such networks or rhizomes have developed to the point where such behavior is possible leaves something to be desired. Similarly, it's one thing to point, as I have done here, to the fluidity of self-organization through the metaphor of currents of struggle, and quite another to identify exactly how such currents form, how they gather or lose strength, how they interact and how and

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[64] See the recent paper by Massimo de Angelis and David Harvie, "Cognitive Capitalism and the Rat Race: How Capital measures ideas and affects in UK Higher Education," (2006) available on the web at: http://www.geocities.com/immateriallabour/angelisharviepaper2006.html For another discussion of the "measuring" of various kinds of unwaged schoolwork see: Harry Cleaver, "Schoolwork and the Struggle Against It", (2006) available on the web at: http://www.eco.utexas.edu/facstaff/Cleaver/OnSchoolwork200606.pdf

[65] For a different, but useful, critique of Hardt and Negri's thesis of immeasurability see: George Caffentzis, "Immeasurable Value? An Essay on Marx's Legacy," *The Commoner,* No. 10, Spring-Summer 2005, available on the web at: http://www.commoner.org.uk/10caffentzis.pdf

why organizations sometimes crystallize into being or melt back again into the flow. The concept of civil society, in all of its permutations, is of no help here. The work of social movement theorists is helpful in identifying permissive or restrictive parameters of such growth but less so in revealing its internal dynamics. Those analyses of everyday life, of the weapons of the weak, and of certain aspects of popular culture mentioned above help us understand something of the social dynamics that gestate networks or rhizomes but generally have been unable to specify the actual processes of quickening that brings these to life. Again, some Marxist analyses of the general patterns of the capitalist organization of social life, like some of the restrictions on self organization identified by students of social movements, are helpful in understanding constraints on self-activity but not on understanding the dynamics of self-activity itself.

On the other hand, both the Marxist theory of political recomposition and the theory of multitude – which I see as a mutation or hybrid of class composition theory – provide concepts that focus our attention precisely on the character of self-activity involved in the genesis of networks, rhizomes or currents of struggle. Both theories, of the autonomous power of the working class (in production and reproduction) or the bio-power of the multitude throughout society, are formulated in ways intended to provide an understanding of how struggles shape and reshape themselves.

What is all too scarce, however, in the elaborations of all these theories are concrete analyses of *how* networks, rhizomes, currents or organizations have been formed, of their growth and of their effectiveness, strengths and weaknesses. In other words, far too much of the work done so far has focused on understanding the general character of these struggles and far too little on examining exactly how they have emerged, grown – and sometimes withered – in such ways as to permit drawing useful lessons from them about how to improve our abilities to bring about the changes we seek. The work that has been already done analyzing these struggles can, I think, be mined for material that can help us draw such lessons. But there is also a need to reorient our efforts away from crafting general theories and toward figuring out, on the one hand, what has worked, to what degree, why and how, and on the other hand, what has failed, to what degree, why and how.

For example, at the beginning of this essay I mentioned three main forms through which global connections among diverse struggles have been organized and surged upward into public view. One of those has been the physical convergences of thousands of protestors. Now, the massive convergence against the G8 that took place in Genoa in July 2001 arguably involved the greatest number of participants since such mobilizations first began. How exactly was that degree of mobilization achieved? Some of the approaches discussed above provide general suggestions about where to look to answer that question, but we need concrete answers. This is especially true because, as has been widely remarked, since Genoa there has been an apparent lessening in the participation and intensity of such mobilizations against capital's global policy makers. Protests have continued right up through the September 2006 meetings of the IMF and the World Bank in Singapore, but on a much smaller scale. What has happened? Some have attributed this to the events of September 11, 2001 and the subsequent actions of the Bush administration: the invasion and brutal occupation of two other countries and repression at home, e.g., blatant violations of civil rights, refusal to protect workers rights, attacks on environmental activists, and the not-so-secret CIA kidnappings and torture, all justified by the rhetoric of a "war on

terrorism". But such an appeal to a change in the political climate does not explain how any of this has changed the behavior of the forms of self-organization and mobilization that gave rise to such protests prior to this new capitalist offensive.

It seems more likely that the judgments of participants and sympathetic observers, based directly on the experiences of the mobilizations, that what has been gained through these actions has been limited enough to warrant redirecting one's efforts into finding or elaborating alternative forms of struggle. Certainly the sharing of experience, multiplication of contacts and increased collaboration that has occurred at each of these events has been almost universally judged positive, even exhilarating. Eventually, a few of the positive demands made by protestors at these convergences have born fruit, e.g., debt reduction, but clearly most have not been achieved despite the enormous resources, personal and collective, expended in these efforts. But has there been such a consensus over the results (if not the factors taken into account) of such cost-benefit calculations as to explain the reduced participation in such efforts? One approach to testing this hypothesis involves examining the ex-post discussions and evaluations of the experience at Genoa (and other such convergences). The few evaluations that I have read suggest that this is indeed the case, but real verification would require more extensive investigation than I have undertaken.

Two examples, on a smaller scale, of how and why shifts in the direction of struggle have taken place can be found in the reorientations of Zapatista struggle that occurred in the wake of their extremely well organized and extremely public, 3000 mile long March for Indigenous Dignity in 2001. The March took the form of a sizable caravan to Mexico City to demand from the Mexican congress the enactment into law of the San Andrés Accords on indigenous autonomy agreed to in 1996 but never implemented. This was understood by those in the Zapatista communities as a reformist demand but desired as a step that would facilitate further struggle. The caravan was a huge undertaking involving not only the movement of Zapatistas and the many supporters who accompanied them but also the organization of dozens of stops and encounters with thousands of people involved in local struggles along the way, and in Mexico City when they arrived – organizing undertaken not by the Zapatistas alone but by dozens of local groups. Despite these day-after-day displays of widespread public support the Mexican congress refused to pass a law or constitutional amendment that would implement the Accords. The Zapatistas returned to their communities in Chiapas.

The first shift in Zapatista struggle that occurred in the wake of these events was a turning inward and abandonment of any dialogue or negotiation with any wing of the Mexican government. From their point of view the March had been both a stunning success and an abject failure. The success lay in the mobilization of thousands of other people that demonstrated not only their continuing power of convocation and support for their demands but also extremely widespread opposition to Mexican government policies. The failure lay in the effort to leverage that support and opposition into sufficient pressure on Mexican politicians to achieve the long sought legalization of indigenous autonomy. The professional politicians in all three major parties, including the so-called leftist PRD, ignored the voices rising from the streets of Mexico and refused to recognize indigenous autonomy. In the discussions that ensued within the communities agreement was reached to abandon the struggle for the legalization of their autonomy and to proceed 1) with concrete projects that would strengthen their actual autonomy,

i.e., their ability to organize themselves autonomously from Mexican capital's plans for their assimilation and cultural genocide and 2) to protect themselves from future attacks.[66] Among the more striking of those projects was the organization of regional governments they call *caracoles* or "Good Government Councils" to coordinate activities among their various autonomous communities.[67]

The second shift in Zapatista struggle came after four years of the above kind of internal work. In the summer of 2005, they issued a "Red Alert", closed their communities to the outside world and engaged in intensive internal debate over strategies of struggle. The result was the issuance in June of the "Sixth Declaration of the Lacandona" that recounted what the Zapatistas had been doing, analyzed and condemned capitalism in general and neoliberal Mexican capitalism in particular and announced plans for a new outward-oriented offensive.[68] The reasons given for this new offensive are clear: the war with capital is global, what can be accomplished in isolation is too limited (even for struggles as well organized internally as that of the Zapatistas), so people must organize themselves across space and differences to win the war. As a step toward such organization, they proposed: a series of dialogues with others in struggle throughout Mexico. They also called for a series of meetings in August and September to discuss what others in struggle thought about this proposal for dialogue and if they approved, contributions as to how it could be achieved. Their idea for organizing such dialogues directly involved what they dubbed (during a year of presidential elections) an "Other Campaign" in which a handful of Zapatistas, led by their spokesperson Subcomandante Marcos would travel to community after community, wherever the people involved in local struggles would invite them to come, to listen, to learn from and to share experience. The meetings were held, organization began and the Other Campaign was launched in January 2006.

While an analysis of Zapatista communiqués clarify the reasons for these two shifts in strategies of struggle, it is also true that because the Zapatista communities have been besieged by police, military and paramilitary harassment and violence ever since 1994 the internal discussions that led to these shifts were closed to outsiders. As a result, those of us on the outside know more about the decisions made than we do about the processes through which they came to be made. The above brief account, moreover, provides few details on exactly how these strategies were, and are being, implemented. (A more detailed account can be found in Patrick Cunninghame's contribution to this volume.[69]) Nevertheless, it seems to me that the kinds of evaluations of

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[66] This protection took the form, primarily, of clearly separating the EZLN from community self-governance. The story of their worries about possible attack and the preparatory steps they took has now been told in Subcomandante Marcos, "The Zapatistas and the Other: The Pedestrians of History," (September 2006). See: http://enlacezapatista.ezln.org.mx/la-otra-campana/

[67] A fairly detailed description of these caracoles, why they were formed, how they operate, their successes and failures can be found in two series of communiqués issued by the Zapatistas in 2003 and 2004 and available on the web at: http://www.eco.utexas.edu/facstaff/Cleaver/aguascalientes.html and http://www.eco.utexas.edu/facstaff/Cleaver/leerunvideo.html

[68] The Sixth Declaration is available on the web at: http://www.eco.utexas.edu/facstaff/Cleaver/SixthDeclaration.html

[69] Patrick Cunninghame, "An/other Anti-capitalism in Mexico: the Sixth Declaration of the EZLN and the 'Other Campaign'". Thanks to both the Zapatistas and to journalists, the progress of the Other Campaign has been closely followed and reported. See the series of reports and articles available on the web at: http://www.eco.utexas.edu/facstaff/Cleaver/TheOtherCampaign.html and in the archives of Chiapas 95 at: http://www.eco.utexas.edu/~archive/chiapas95/

experience, discussion of lessons to be learned and possible new strategies based on those lessons that can be found in the Zapatista communiqués provide an approximation of the kind of concrete analysis that we need to complement the more theoretical conceptualizations sketched in most of this essay. At the same time, those theoretical approaches lead us to ask questions about these struggles whose answers are not found in those communiqués and therefore prompt us to further investigation.

In short, and to truly conclude, whatever inspiration and insights we may draw from general theories of the growing interconnectedness and global character of our challenges to world-wide capitalist domination, what we really need in order to advance our struggles is more concrete investigation of how we have achieved what we have, what limits we have encountered, what others have achieved and how, what limits they have encountered and what we can learn from each other through a multiplicity of dialogues about where we are and what to do next.

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