

Overview: I am going to talk about the political model of globalization, which is a limited form of democracy, called polyarchy, which is promoted by the U.S. and other agents of neo-liberal globalization as a way to facilitate this economic model. Then I will briefly discuss a political party, the Workers Party (PT), in Brazil and a social movement, the Zapatistas, in Mexico and their practice of democracy, which is more meaningful and participatory compared to polyarchy.

1. In the 1980's U.S. foreign policy shifted from supporting dictatorships to promoting polyarchy.
  - a. Polyarchy is "a system in which a small group actually rules and mass participation is confined to leadership choice in elections carefully managed by competing elites"
2. The logic behind the shift is twofold:
  - a. Authoritarian dictators could not manage 'social intercourse' associated with globalization
    - With increased interdependence between countries, unpredictability of relying on a dictator became more dangerous to smooth functioning of global economy.
  - b. Second problem: social movements against dictators that threatened social order and conflicted with neo-liberalism
3. Polyarchy provided a model to solve these problems:
  - a. because the government would be in elite hands whose interests coincided with elites in developed world, neo-liberalism would function well.
  - b. polyarchy also provided a channel, albeit limited, to institutional power to popular forces, which allows for governments to absorb more impact by being more flexible.
4. However the deeper reasoning is best expressed through Antonio Gramsci's theoretical model of hegemony.
  - a. Basically the Gramscian concept of hegemony is a relation between classes where one dominant group exercises leadership over other subordinate groups through a mixture of consent and coercion. Hegemony is achieved when subordinate groups internalize the social logic of the system of domination, thereby reproducing the prevailing social order.
    - Individuals self govern themselves with dominant social logic, therefore not coming into conflict political society.
  - b. So dictatorships do not provide this same element of social control because they are based solely on coercion and polyarchy provides a much greater possibility for this type of control.
5. The way the U.S foreign policy functions is through a new governmental organization, the National Endowment for Democracy (NED), and the Agency for International Development (AID) penetrate popular movements by supporting, funding, training and organizing civil society organizations and political parties headed by local elites

whose interests are linked to global capitalist accumulation. Many elite groups were also demanding democratization, so U.S. policy was to organize and support these groups to help them come to power in polyarchic elections.

## Workers Party

1. PT came out of mass-based movements that came out of military dictatorship during 1970's
  - a. Many small organizations formed by migrants who came to big cities from the North East and who were on their own to receive basic needs
  - b. With help from progressive wing of Catholic church the migrants began to work together to get needs met.
    - created a sense of solidarity and self reliance and allowed them to build their own identity by organizing themselves
2. This spread into labor unions which were often controlled by political parties and used for those parties purposes.
3. "New Unionism" emerged that wanted an autonomous union movement, Lula was an important leader of this movement and was a founder of the Workers Party.
  - a. PT founded because of larger structural issues that union victories wouldn't solve alone
4. Lula quotes (embodiment of the foundation of which PT was founded).
5. The PT is an open party with no predetermined ideological positions, except for a vague adherence to socialism.
  - a. Its open in the sense that whoever joins influences the party itself, so is constantly shifting and fluid.
6. There are two mechanisms for internal democracy within the party:
  - a. "pre-conventions:" meetings at every level to insure view points are taken in account at national convention
  - b. "party nucleus:" which tries to maximize participation by allowing ordinary members express their opinions and have a say in how party should be run which also leads to greater political awareness.
7. Within the party structure exist groups organized around specific issues, women's groups, gay rights groups etc. However not all groups feel that the party is addressing issues. Gay rights and womens groups feel like their is discrimination within the party itself.
8. Once policies within the national convention are agreed upon, these policies must be followed by members elected to office.

## Zapatistas

Zapatistas emerged on Jan. 1 1994, as an armed indigenous uprising in Chiapas, this date symbolically coincided with the day NAFTA came into effect.

Shortly after the Zapatistas retreated back into the jungles and have since engaged civil society as the means for gaining recognition and their receiving their demands.

Two important central features to Zapatista ideology and structure: Autonomy and Democratic Space.

Autonomy is essentially a way to protect cultural dignity and identity as indigenous, which is marginalized by the Mexican state.

Democratic space is essentially a way to create a space where autonomy can be asserted and respected.

Basically there demands are to not take state power but to create democratic space within Mexico where groups can assert their autonomy.

The power structure of the Zapatistas also reflects the notions of a more participatory democracy.

1. The hierarchy of power is an inverted version of classical power structures.
  1. The general assemblies of the EZLN communities govern the Clandestine Committee of Indigenous Revolution, which is a civilian leadership that is elected democratically by the popular assemblies as representatives of the community. Each region and ethnic group have their own Clandestine Committee.
  2. And they govern sub-comandante Marcos, who is the spokesperson and leader of the military. (who a lot of the media think of as the leader)
2. This concept of rule is called leading by obeying and it stems from ancient Mayan practices of leadership.
3. And is exemplified when Marcos says “The Clandestine Committee cannot decide which path the organization is going to follow until every campesino is consulted.”