

Map of World Changes

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Zapatistas

The Zapatista movement is the response of the indigenous population in Chiapas in Mexico to the neoliberal globalisation of the mid-nineties. When NAFTA (the North American Free Trade Agreement between Canada, the USA and Mexico) came into force, it became much easier for the multinationals to shut the Mayan farmers out of the market and further to destroy their economy and culture. The Zapatista Army of National Liberation (EZLN in Spanish) declared war on the Mexican government and raised an armed guerrilla insurrection, taking control of several cities for a short time. The key objectives of the revolt were control of the land, direct political representation, improvement of the population's standard of living and the right to protect their land and culture.

The poorly-armed rebel group composed mainly of the indigenous Indian population used the Internet as a tactical medium, transmitting messages about their struggle and their goals to the whole of the world. They soon gained the support of various NGOs and international activists. The movement was rapidly transformed from a guerrilla rebel group into a social movement. They brought in their own (free) school and healthcare systems, and direct democracy decision making at local and commune level. Producers are organised into collectives, and the profit is divided out within the community.

Still not acknowledged by the official government, the EZLN is working on its "different campaign", the objective of which is to develop a political platform to unite the Indians with other working people and peasants, leftist groups and the civil sector throughout Mexico, the Americas and the rest of the world.

Marinaleda

Although the history of the fight of the Spanish peasants for their land goes back several centuries, the struggle of the local population for what is today Marinaleda started in 1977, two years after the death of the Falangist dictator Francisco Franco. That year, the Syndicate of Agricultural Workers (*Sindicato de Obreros del Campo*) was founded; a year later, under the slogan *The Land to Those who Work It*, they started occupying the estates in the hands of the big landowners.

At the 1979 local elections the Collective of Labour Unity (*Colectivo de Unidad de los Trabajadores*) won, and Juan Manuel Sánchez Gordillo became mayor, a position he still holds. Then began an all-encompassing movement for the development of a libertarian community began, one based on the fight for cultivable land; a start was made on a policy of full employment, equal wages, the universal franchise and the ability to discharge elected officials much more easily.

After the long-lasting occupation of the estate of El Humosoclose to Marinaleda in 1991 it was expropriated and put into the hands of the local community. Since then the El Humoso estate has been the centre of the local economy, in the olive groves and fields full of chilli, beans and artichokes of which most of the 2,600 inhabitants of Marinaleda work.

Marinaleda is a town in which unemployment and poverty have practically been eradicated, while solidarity, freedom and equality are values accepted in the whole of the local community..

Occupation of the factories in Argentina

The movement for the revival of the factories in Argentina was started between 1997 and 2001 by way of response to the profound economic and political crisis during which many jobs were lost, bankruptcies and liquidations announced, and in which the general privatisation and de-industrialisation led to an unemployment rate of 25%. The result was universal popular discontent, and the expression *They all have to go or Que se vayan todos* became the slogan of mass protests.

A start was made on the organisation of quarterly plenums at which coordinated actions were agreed on and mutual help was given. Many failed firms were revived when the workers entered the abandoned plants and started to produce independently. In spite of the obsolescent technology, the inadequate development infrastructure, the lack of any demand, acts of sabotage by the previous owners, police crackdowns and long trials in the courts, the workers did take control of their jobs and made operations possible once again. Among the key factors in the taking of control was the support of the local community and of independent initiatives. In return, a health centre was built, and surplus products were shared with families who could not afford them, creating a kind of local alternative economy. Instead of production for profit, they produced for the good of society, and wages were the same for all the jobs.

It has been estimated that about 190 factories were revived during the movement, and that about 15,000 workers were involved. Among the best known examples today of this fight is the ceramic tile factory Zanon, later called FaSinPat or Fabrica Sin Patronos – Factory with no

Bosses – which after 11 years of struggle and litigation at last belonged legally to its working people.

Although many factories proved not to be viable because they were neglected and in ruins, and the workers had no capital to invest, the examples from Argentina are still an inspiration to others, for it was proven that the economy could be managed by operations for the good of society.

Cooperativism

A co-operative is a form of the combination of labour and capital in a socially owned firm that is a legally registered organisation carrying out commercial and society activities. The key principles of socially owned enterprises are socially responsible business operations (the objective of a successful business operation is to serve the public interest of the community, in which it works through increasing employment, employing the socially excluded and supporting local development), economic democracy (a co-op is often owned or directly controlled by its employees and/or members and they share in the profit that they create by their work in the firm), direct democracy (the employees in and/or members make the decisions about the business activities of the firm and the distribution of the profit on the "one person – one vote" principle and sustainable development) (the encouragement of the use of renewable energy sources and the even distribution of resources).

According to figures from 2011, one out of three citizens of the EU is a member of a co-op, and co-ops in the world at large provide 20% more jobs than all the multinationals combined.

One of the interesting and important world examples of working class cooperativism is the cooperative corporation of Mondragon in the Basque country of Spain. Mondragon is a huge industrial, technological, scientific and investment complex owned by its own employ-

ees, employing more than 100,000 workers that in the 60 years of its existence has not fired a single worker. The huge resources of the cooperative are invested in its retirement and healthcare funds that also pay for investments in the re-training of employees who have lost their work in one of the firms in Mondragon and started to work in another.

The influence of cooperatives on the world's economy is huge, and we can say that they are one of the buffers of the negative consequences of the capitalist system. But although co-ops contribute to increasing living standards and employment of the cooperative members and to their communities they are not of themselves capable of providing a comprehensive solution for social and economic problems.

Piquetero Movement

Piquetero is a neologism in the Spanish of Argentina, and it signifies a member of the political group whose methods of political activity are founded on the *piquete*, or picket, the blockading or demonstration at some important place. Today the concept of *piquetero* is linked with the Movement of Unemployed Workers, i.e. the Piquetero movement of Argentina and the actions of blocking important road junctions, but the term has expanded to all those who use similar methods outside the Hispanophone area.

From the beginnings of the recession in 1997 to 2001, there was a complete economic collapse in Argentina; depending on the location, the percentage of unemployed came to between 30 and 80%, and most of the households dipped below the poverty line. Such conditions created the potential for a mass organisation of the working class, and in 1997 there were the first big demonstrations, which, because of the absence of any reaction from the government, turned into direct actions in which the roads were blocked and government

buildings occupied. The movement of unemployed working people grew and soon its organisational structure took on stronger forms of functioning, but varied with respect to the ideology and the objectives relevant to the particular regional base.

With powerful pressures, the movement made sure that thousands of workers had the minimal wage, food supplements and other government benefits. The general public supported their actions, but today support has been reduced considerably because of reinforced oppressive measures by the state, and the movement is now facing numerous challenges.

Spanish Revolution

The Spanish Revolution broke out as a response of Spanish workers and farmers to the military coup that on July 17, 1936, was carried out by conservative generals with the support of the monarchist and fascist political organisations, who championed an absolute monarchy, direct influence of the Catholic Church on political affairs and the preservation of private property. Led by the FAI and CNT, anarchical and anarcho-syndicalist movements, respectively, workers and peasants managed to quell the conservative insurrection in half of the land. Taking part in the revolution as well as the anarchist organisations was the left wing of the socialist union the UGT, but the revolution was the most successful in the traditionally anarcho-syndicalist regions (Catalonia, Andalusia, Levante, Aragon)

Inspired by years of libertarian propaganda, and in possession of rich experience of direct action, the masses began to take over the farms and the land. Several million people organised into about 2000 agrarian collectives took part in the collectivisation of the land. They had at their disposal about two thirds of the cultivable land in the Republican zone. The collectives were governed democratically, at regular meetings open for all members of the collectives. About three thou-

Impressum

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 CO-AUTHORS: group Direct
 Democracy in School and
 Andreja Kulunčić

CO-AUTHORS OF TEXTS: Bruna Nedoklan, Feriz Alija, Karlo Babić, Igor Bezinović, Ljubomir Grgurević, Juraj Katalenac, Davor Kristijan, Nikola Ptić, Hrvoje Radovanović

MAP EDITOR: Bruna Nedoklan
 PROOFREADING: Dijana Čurković

DESIGN: Dejan Dragosavac Ruta

PRODUCTION: Martina Kontošić/
 MAPA

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Porto Alerge

For decades the million-strong Brazilian city of Porto Alegre was the centre of an independent and self-organised popular movement. In 1988, municipal power was taken over by the Working Class Party. In the following years, under grass-roots pressure, Porto Alegre saw the introduction of participatory management of the budget, an approach that spread to more than three hundred cities worldwide.

The concept of the participatory budget of Porto Alegre included elements of representative and also of direct democracy. Debates about the management of part of the city budget took place in the local community, and the results of their decisions were positive for the development of the community itself. For example, by 2004, 99.5% of the inhabitants of Porto Alegre were connected to mains water, and the number of children attending school was tripled.

It has to be pointed out that in this process decisions are made about only a smaller part of the budgetary money meant for development and public services, particularly after a conservative coalition came to power in 2004.

A participatory budget is a definite advance in the fight against passivity and encourages participation and debate, although it still does not constitute a break with the traditional models of parliamentary democracy.

Protests in Greece

The biggest protests in the history of contemporary Greece were sparked off by the murder of the 15-year-old schoolboy Alexandros Grigoropoulos in 2008 in the neighbourhood of Exarchiae in Athens. The protests spread throughout Greece and even beyond the city (to some seventy cities), taking the form of three-week long street protests, clashes with the police, the destruction of private and public property, a blockade of the universities and so on. The police responsible for the mur-

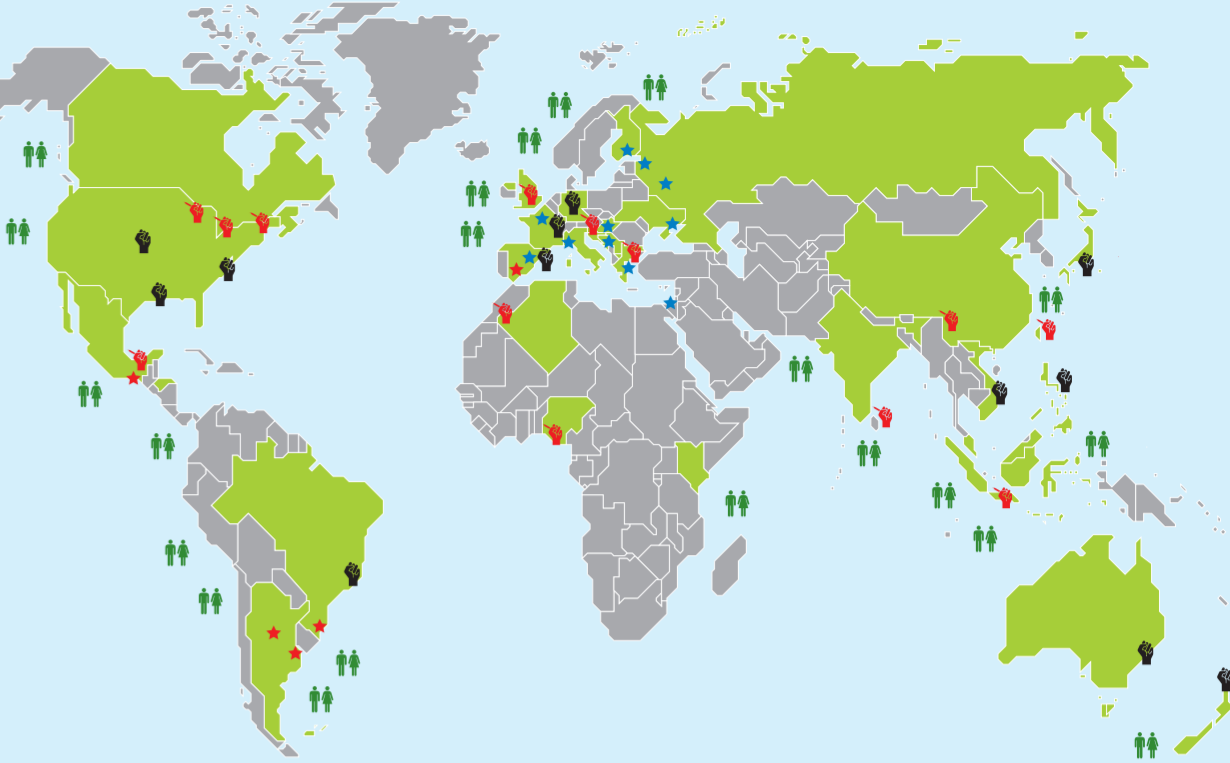
der were found guilty two years after the protests, but there were deeper causes for the revolts: the huge unemployment (among the young in particular), the high indebtedness and poverty of the citizens. As many as 60% of the protestors stated in one questionnaire that they thought themselves part of a broader wave of social changes.

In the following years, 2010 and 2011, there was a new wave of protests and general strikes caused by austerity measures and the rise in taxes, inflation, unemployment and the overall democratic deficit. Because of the grave economic situation in Greece, the social revolt is continuing, and the constant networking of people and workers to create a solitary economy is spreading to the rest of Greece and becoming recognised by the wider community.

Athenian Democracy

Athenian Democracy is the best known example in history of direct decision making, from which the actual word democracy is derived (*dēmos* 'people' + *krátein* 'to rule' < *krátos* 'strength, power') This form of rule flowered in the Athenian polis from 508 to 322 BC. During these 186 years, Athens knew numerous democratic reforms, and it was governed by the 20,000 to 40,000 citizens who had full rights (adult male Athenians), determining all matters concerning public life.

In order to restrict the political and economic power of individuals, reforms brought numerous novelties into democratic procedures, such as random election of strategoi by dice, increasing the power of the popular assembly (the ekklesia) and the simultaneous reduction of the power of the strategos, the restriction of officials' terms of office to one year, the rotation of functions. It is also interesting to note that in political life public was considered superior to private, and the word idiot meant someone who was not interested in politics or the public good.



The government of Athens at that time was subject to criticism by direct democracy, for only a minority was truly free and exercised political rights, but their examples of innovations in the democratic procedure are important in today's time when there is discussion of direct decision making.

Paris Commune

The Paris Commune (March, 1871-May, 1871) is held to be one of the most inspiring episodes of the working people's struggle and is considered the first historical example of a working class revolutionary seizure of power.

It happened after the French defeat in the Franco-Prussian War and the collapse of the Second Empire of Napoleon III (1852-1870), when the new government wanted to sign a treaty with Prussia. Uprisings and demonstrations were organised, and the workers refused to cooperate with Prussia (at that time the Prussians were besieging Paris) and demanded self-government, which was denied to Paris because of the fear of the government in Versailles of the very numerous and radical Parisian working class. The people organised themselves into the National Guard, organised local units for the defence of Paris, and the central committee of the insurrectionary National Guard took control in March 1871.

The newly established Commune brought in many changes aimed at improving the standard of living of the workers. For example, it permitted workers to take over firms if the owners abandoned them, allowing the owners the right to compensation; it postponed commercial debt liabilities and abolished interest on debts; it did away with the death penalty; it restored to the workers the tools for their work if they had had to pawn them. After a couple of unsuccessful attacks by the communards on Versailles, the regime's

army attacked Paris, destroyed the Commune with a final military defeat and massacre of about 30,000 communards in what was called the Bloody Week, on May 28, 1871. The Paris Commune is considered to be one of the most important events in the history of democracy, the working class movement, socialism and anarchism – a tragic and solemn memory, inspiration and lesson.

International Student Movement

The ISM or International Student Movement started in 2008, a global activist platform aimed at spurring public debate about the global perspective of education and at offering resistance to the ever

more blatant introduction of market laws into educational institutions, based on the processes of the privatisation and commercialisation of public education. Corporations and the private sector are increasingly involved in the work of educational institutions, dictating the objectives of the curriculum and encouraging those professions that pay off in the market (natural and technical sciences, for example) and putting the rest in a subordinate position (humanistic and social sciences). The direct consequences are the increase of tuition fees, which limits the access to education of those with the lowest socio-economic status, and pushes those who venture onto the educational path into debt bondage.

The ISM thinks that education should be accessible to all (and necessarily, then, free) and the knowledge that is acquired through such education has to serve social and cultural advancement. ISM proclaimed November 5 the International Day of Action against the commercialisation of education. Since 2008 on this day protests have been held worldwide, including in Croatia. The global action

week in 2008 lasted from April 20 to April 29, uniting various groups and movements worldwide under the slogan *Reclaim your education*.

From the Croatian example of the student struggle we can state that student movements can incontestably occupy an important place among the agents of social changes, particularly if they manage to sustain their continuous political and organisation activism. Blockades and protests in Croatia halted the process of increasing tuition fees for a few years, caused furious arguments in the media, created a platform for the development of further progressive groups and affected many other student groups in Europe.

Occupy Movement

The Occupy Movement sprang up in 2011 in the USA, and spread around the world. It appeared as a response to austerity measures, to the huge differences in the distribution of wealth and incomes and to the global economic crisis that in 2011 was at the peak of its trend. As can be seen from the slogan "We are the 99%", the movement brought together the broad masses of society and can be considered a popular revolt. The goals that most of the protestors would agree on are the redistribution of wealth and much higher taxation for the richest.

The Occupy Movement functioned in a horizontal manner of organisation; all had the right to take part, and major decisions were made at general assemblies or plenums.

The biggest success of the movement was that millions of people got to know these new ways of organisation and that they attracted the attention of the mainstream media to their objectives.

By the end of 2011, the movement began to lose some of its influence, and today we can no longer speak of a homogeneous movement.

EXAMPLES OF CHANGE

★ FROM THE PAST
★ FROM THE PRESENT



Canada
1 of 3

USA
1 of 4

Zapatistas
1995 - ongoing, Chiapas, San Cristóbal de las Casas / Mexico

Honduras
1 of 3

Columbia
1 of 8

Bolivia
1 of 3

Paraguay
1 of 5

Piquetero Movement
1997 - ongoing, Buenos Aires, Neuquén, Salta, Cruzdel Eje / Argentina

Occupation of the factories, Argentina
2001 - ongoing, Buenos Aires, Neuquén / Argentina

Argentina
1 of 4

Uruguay
1 of 3

Finland
1 of 2

Norway
1 of 3

Finnish Civil War
January 27 - May 15, 1918, Tampere, Helsinki, Lahti / Finland

Makhnovism
1917 - 1921, Berdyansk, Donetsk, Zaporizhia, Ekaterinoslav (later Sicheslav and still later Dnipropetrovsk) / Ukraine

Russian Revolution
March - November 1917, Saint Petersburg (previously Petrograd), Moscow / Russia

Germany
1 of 4

France
1 of 3

Paris Commune
March - May, 1871, Paris / France

Italy
1 of 3

Biennio Rosso
1919 - 1920, Turin / Italy

Spanish Revolution
July 17, 1936 - April 1, 1939, Catalonia (Barcelona), Aragon (Zaragoza), Andalusia (Seville) and Levanta (Valencia) / Spain

Marinaleda
1977 - ongoing, Spain

Workers' self-management in Yugoslavia
1950 - 1990, Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, Macedonia, Montenegro / SFRY

Protests in Greece
2008 - 2012, Athens / Greece

Athenian Democracy
ca 500 BC - 322 BC, Athens / Greece

Kibbutzim
1909 - 1975, Degania Alef / North Israel

Kenya
1 of 5

Iran
1 of 3

Hungarian Revolution, 1956.
October 23 - November 10, 1956, Budapest, Hungary

Hungarian Soviet Republic
March 21 - August 6, 1919, Budapest / Hungary

India
1 of 4

Singapore
1 of 2

Indonesia
1 of 4

Japan
1 of 2

Malaysia
1 of 4

New Zealand
1 of 3

OCCUPY MOVEMENT
from October 15, 2011 - ongoing, worldwide distribution

INTERNATIONAL STUDENT MOVEMENT
from 2008 - ongoing, worldwide distribution

COOPERATIVISM
1761 - ongoing, worldwide distribution with more than a billion members of co-ops; more than one hundred million working men and women employed directly in cooperatives.