UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

Santa Barbara

Bread and Roses: Participatory Governance in Mexico and Venezuela

A Thesis submitted in partial satisfaction of the

requirements for the degree Master of Arts

in Global and International Studies

by

Emelin Jane Gasparrini

Committee in charge:

Professor Jan Nederveen Pieterse, Chair

Professor Esther Lezra

Professor Paul Amar

Professor William I. Robinson

September 2015

The thesis of Emelin Jane Gasparrini is approved.

Esther Lezra

Paul Amar

William I. Robinson

Jan Nederveen Pieterse, Committee Chair

May 2015

Abstract

Bread and Roses: Participatory Governance in Mexico and Venezuela

by

Emelin Jane Gasparrini

This project is about discovering how some groups are working to build participatory governance as an alternative to the established processes that produce their marginalization. Governance refers to the decision-making processes at work in a given aggregate of people or territory, along with the more material outcomes of those processes, and affects social, political, economic, and cultural spheres. Therefore, changing governance has the potential to create comprehensive, systemic changes within those aggregates of people or territory, particularly for those who have been excluded from the benefits or even protection of existing processes.

With this in mind, this project seeks to explore participatory governance as one possible avenue for systemic change. The following questions guide this exploration: What is participatory governance? Can it be an effective way for marginalized peoples to create alternative systems and structures to the ones that currently oppress them? By considering two living cases of participatory governance, in Mexico and Venezuela, this paper argues that participatory governance processes better serve the immediate needs of marginalized peoples and also empower them to create alternative, emancipatory systems by changing the priorities of governance through collective decision making. These questions are explored

through the writings of those who are directly impacted by the participatory processes investigated in this piece, from both Mexico and Venezuela, as well as those who may have a different kind of stake in this debate, as outside observers, and sometimes as activists in their own contexts.

Following this more theoretical exploration are two in-depth case studies of living participatory governance processes: in Zapatista communities in Chiapas, a Mexican state on the border with Guatemala; and in Chavista-governed Venezuela, where twenty-first century socialism has become the official guiding governance policy. These chapters articulate the governance structures in each of the respective national contexts, and explore the products of these governance processes surrounding education, health, and equitable development, since our measure of effective governance is often tied to the collective goods it is able to provide rather than simple sets of rules and regulations.

Exploring these reformulations will ideally provide insight into alternative approaches to global governance processes currently overrun by certain exclusive and unsustainable mechanisms and hegemonies. Seeking alternatives is important because we live on a planet with finite resources, a growing population with disparate levels of consumption, and a changing climate. Conflict over arable land, clean water, and other valuable resources only promises to increase in the future, as communities face desertification or soil collapse, sea level rise, and regional conflict. Decreased conflict and increased equitability seem unlikely within the current world structure, so seeking alternative forms of governance, ways of living together, and resource management, takes on a new urgency. We must not wait until it is too late.

Table of Contents

Introduction

Yes, it is bread we fight for – but we fight for roses, too!
… No more the drudge and idler—ten that toil where one reposes,
But a sharing of life's glories: Bread and roses! Bread and roses!

– Bread and Roses, James Oppenheim, 1911

This project is about discovering how some groups are working to build participatory governance as an alternative to the established processes that produce their marginalization. In the popular imaginary, perhaps most especially in Western nations, certain forms of governance are perceived to be universally acceptable, but the resistance posed by some groups to these processes illustrates both the complicated nature of our evolving world and the misleading conception of Enlightenment universality. Exploring these reformulations will ideally provide insight into alternative approaches to global governance processes currently overrun by certain exclusive and unsustainable mechanisms and hegemonies.

Seeking alternatives is important because we live on a planet with finite resources, a growing population with disparate levels of consumption, and a changing climate. Conflict over arable land, clean water, and other valuable resources only promises to increase in the future, as communities face desertification or soil collapse, sea level rise, and regional conflict. For the many of the world's marginalized populations, particularly indigenous populations, increased and intensified processes of globalization have not generated higher levels of development but instead have led to stagnating or increased levels of poverty,[1] leaving them increasingly vulnerable to exogenous forces, both natural and man made.

Indeed, the group that is coming to be called the global precariat continues to

[1] Hall and Patrinos 2012, 1

expand.[2] According to the 2014 UN Human Development Report, "more than 2.2 billion people are either near or living in multidimensional poverty… At the same time, nearly 80 percent of the global population lack comprehensive social protection. About 12 percent (842 million) suffer from chronic hunger, and nearly half of all workers—more than 1.5 billion—are in informal or precarious employment."[3] These are huge numbers of people who are simply left out of the beneficial global processes, for whom seemingly small challenges become huge obstacles due to a lack of support and resources, or who are actively exploited to produce the benefits so many others enjoy. The report goes on to emphasize the constraints poverty places on peoples' ability to make choices that enable them to lead "lives they value," looking beyond sustenance and shelter to a more qualitative assessment of what living can and should mean. Despite rapid increases in technology, medical treatments, and production, many people in the world are living precarious lives[4] as their needs or desires are ignored or overrun by current global forms conducting business, extracting resources, and assigning rights. Decreased conflict and increased equitability seem unlikely within the current world structure, so seeking alternative forms of governance, ways of living together, and resource management, takes on a new urgency. We must not wait until it is too late.

A Case for Governance

One avenue we can and should use to seek those alternatives is governance. Governance refers to the decision-making processes at work in a given aggregate of people

[2] The precariat describes a group of people facing chronic economic instability, largely due to temporary or highly insecure working conditions. For more information, see Guy Standing's, *The Precariat; The New Dangerous Class*

[3] UNDP, "United Nations Development Report Summary 2014," 2. Multidimensional poverty is defined as acute deprivation reflected in at least 33% of indicators of health, education, and standard of living.

[4] See Judith Butler's *Precarious Lives: The Powers of Mourning and Violence*

or territory, along with the more material outcomes of those processes, and affects social, political, economic, and cultural spheres. Therefore, changing governance has the potential to create comprehensive, systemic changes within those aggregates of people or territory, particularly for those who have been excluded from the benefits or even protection of existing processes.

Poverty is often a dual factor in groups or individuals marginalization. As William I. Robinson argues in *Latin America and Global Capitalism*, poverty, and the threat thereof, "forces people to make certain decisions and take certain actions, such that apparently 'free' choices are made by groups that have in fact been coerced by structures, and by other groups that control those structures."[5] Poverty, as a form of marginalization, thus also entails exclusion from the processes that could produce structural and systemic change that would lessen or even prevent that marginalization, which perpetuates, and often increases, exclusion and want on global scales. A change in the way we govern ourselves, then, can change the way we prioritize our resources in relation to our needs, and therefore change the way we relate to, and value, one another.

With this in mind, this project seeks to explore participatory governance as one possible avenue for systemic change. The following questions guide this exploration: What is participatory governance? Can it be an effective way for marginalized peoples to create alternative systems and structures to the ones that currently oppress them? By considering two living cases of participatory governance, in Mexico and Venezuela, this paper argues that participatory governance processes better serve the immediate needs of marginalized peoples and also empower them to create alternative, emancipatory systems by changing the priorities of governance through collective decision making.

[5] W. Robinson, 277

What Lies Ahead

The remainder of this thesis is divided into four parts. The first chapter explores participatory governance as a theoretical concept, and seeks to provide answers to the following questions: What is participatory governance, and in what ways is it different from representative governance? What do those differences mean for those who have been historically marginalized in their socio-national context? And, finally, why should we be exploring alternative forms of governance, like those presented in this project? These questions are explored through the writings of those who are directly impacted by the participatory processes investigated in this piece, from both Mexico and Venezuela, as well as those who may have a different kind of stake in this debate, as outside observers, and sometimes as activists in their own contexts. As things like rapidly evolving technology and changing ecosystems knit our world closer together, finding and assessing new or different ways of living together and governing ourselves become increasingly urgent. Our existing mechanisms are failing a great many people on a global scale – it does not seem unreasonable that we continue to seek a better way forward.

Following this more theoretical exploration are two in-depth case studies of living participatory governance processes: in Zapatista communities in Chiapas, a Mexican state on the border with Guatemala; and in Chavista-governed Venezuela, where twenty-first century socialism has become the official guiding governance policy. These chapters articulate the governance structures in each of the respective national contexts, and explore the products of these governance processes surrounding education, health, and equitable development, since

our measure of effective governance is often tied to the collective goods it is able to provide rather than simple sets of rules and regulations.

Each case study represents a different incarnation of participatory power. In Mexico, these processes are being implemented from below, as Zapatista communities step back from the Mexican state and work collectively to design a system that better serves their material needs and respects their cultural histories. These kinds of participatory processes are also called organic, as they are considered to arise endogenously from communities with little or no outside influence, clearly invoking the 'natural' connotations of the descriptor. Conversely, the governance processes in Venezuela are being implemented from above, through legal reforms at the state level. This top-down generation of participatory governance produces a dialectical power relationship, as local communities are empowered to direct some of their own decision making processes while working more directly with the Venezuelan central government to fulfill other needs, largely through social programs known as Missions.

While these case studies were selected to illustrate two, seemingly very different, methods of implementing participatory governance processes, the aim here is not to make a value judgment about which of these directional forces is preferable to the other, or to set them up as opposites. Indeed, such a conclusion would be directly in contradiction with one of the most central ideas of participatory governance, which holds that one-size-fits-all universalizing structures often fail to meet the needs of many of those they seek to govern, and that what works for one community or group of people may not work for another. This does not preclude the possibility of examining participatory projects as they arise in the material world, and assessing whether they do truly offer better avenues of involvement,

improved material conditions, and emancipated communities, as many claim to do. But it does require the observer to acknowledge the agency of those they seek to observe, and allow for a diversity of outcomes that may not align with hegemonic norms of what governance is supposed to look like, be, and do. And, finally, the author will conclude by exploring some of the similarities between the participatory processes in Mexico and Venezuela, and conclusions that can be drawn about participatory processes given these examples, along with some possibilities for future research.

Participation and Governance

"Anarchists insisted that it wasn't just that the ends do not justify the means…but that you will never achieve the ends at all unless the means are themselves a model for the new world you wish to create."[6] *– David Graeber*

What can be done to empower those living in poverty to lead a life they value, let alone make their way out of poverty, if those who own the wealth also pull the strings of power? One answer may be found at the most local level – that of the community – in participatory processes, particularly those focused on governance. In contrast to theories of social change that emphasize sweeping, sometimes cataclysmic methods of change, Raúl Ornelas argues that the community, the local level, should instead be the space of emancipatory or transformative change. "In effect, building community ties or defending existing communities is a constituent project of the transformative subject; the community is the space and the vehicle of the emancipatory project…to overcome the separations that characterize social life under capitalism."[7] By offering a greater ability to affect and engage in the processes by which decisions are made and resources allocated at the community level in real ways, beyond the perfunctory involvement offered by the ballot box, participatory governance projects can empower communities to emancipate themselves from histories of marginalization and poverty by creating institutions that produce systemic change.

Broadly speaking, the term governance itself refers to processes of rule- and decision-making within a given aggregate of people or territory. Thomas Risse's definition of governance, from his edited volume *Governance Without a State*, is even more specific, describing it as "*institutionalized modes of social coordination to produce and implement*

[6] Graeber 2013, 190
[7] Ornelas, 150

collectively binding rules, or to provide collective goods."[8] Thus, governance refers to both processes of rule- and decision-making and the products of those processes. This is different from government, which refers to the bodies that practice governance, though the two terms are sometimes used interchangeably. For example, a state's transition from dictatorship to representative democracy represents a shift both in government – with the addition of some form of governing body of representatives – and governance – from processes emanating from a single decision maker to those of a larger deliberative body.

It is the products of governance that are often the means by which individuals engage with, understand, and measure the merits of that governance in the material world. It is also those products of governance – what Risse refers to as collective goods – that indicate a person or community's relative level of inclusion or become the barriers that marginalized groups encounter as they navigate and interpret their own social context within that system of governance. Therefore the presence or absence of services like schools and clinics, or government institutions like law enforcement and courts, becomes material evidence of a community or group's comparative inclusion within or exclusion from the larger state or national context.

Participation may seem an obvious answer to exclusion, but the radical, progressive, potential of participatory governance is greater than a simple matter of antonyms. Mark Bevir's *Key Concepts in Governance* defines participatory democracy in this way:

> "Participatory democracy is a form of government in which the citizens themselves have the opportunity to make decisions about public policy… like it's close relative, direct democracy, [it] seeks to promote a form of self-determination or self-rule in which *individuals actively make the decisions that determine how they are to be governed*. It gives citizens a central role in the making of particular decisions through, for example, public discussion,

[8] Risse, 9. Emphasis in original text

negotiation, and voting."[9]

David Graeber nicely expresses the spirit of this clear definition in his book *The Democracy Project*, in which he outlines the origins of the Occupy Wall Street movement and makes a case for participatory democratic processes as a tool for social change. Graeber states that the main principle of direct democracy "is that everyone *affected* by a project of action should have a say in how it is conducted."[10] This concept is echoed by María Elena León and Juan Berríos Ortigoza in their article in Venezuelan journal *Cuestiones Politicas* (Political Questions), when they argue that participatory democracy "results in the necessity of privileging the performance of the organized people – before that of public functionaries – in the operation of collective necessities, conceiving direct intervention…as an ideal form of exercising popular sovereignty."[11] Though consulting affected parties and privileging collective needs are not the same thing, this paper will argue that, in the cases addressed in Mexico and Venezuela, the two are deeply interrelated and often manifest concurrently in participatory governance practices. The concept of asking those affected by a policy or program for their input is a simple one, but compared to many contemporary manifestations of representative democratic government, where everyday participation is encouraged in the market through consumption rather than the political sphere, it has the potential to produce vast changes in both the process and structure of governance from the bottom up. "Citizen participation, from this perspective, sets out to change the processes of exclusion and inclusion so that individuals and groups acknowledge their rights and resources."[12]

Therein lies the greatest difference between participatory and representative

[9] Bevir, 145. My emphasis.
[10] Graeber 2013, 230. Emphasis in original text.
[11] León and Berríos Ortigoza, 114. My translation.
[12] Triviño Salazar, 5

democracy. Unlike participatory democracy, where "citizens play an active role in the decision making process," in a representative democracy "the citizens…exercise their popular sovereignty through legitimately elected representatives."[13] Most importantly, elected representatives are given much more discretion in a representative democracy, and are generally held accountable to their constituents through transparency and periodic elections. This is not necessarily the case in participatory governance projects, where representatives are often held directly responsible to their communities and can be removed for not authentically representing their communities at any time.[14] Governing through representation does allow citizens to focus their time in other endeavors, but it also restricts most political participation to elections rather than to decision-making processes that can have measurable affects on daily life. Thus, participatory democracy entails greater time commitments than representative democracy, but proponents of participatory processes argue that they lead "to more effective policies in that [they] promote trust, understanding, and consensus."[15]

Francisco Javier Gómez Carpinteiro powerfully captures the potential danger contained within the separation between a constituency and a representative government as he writes about the Zapatista Other Campaign.[16] "While the jargon of structured public opinion [through a solely electoral political system] promotes harmony, tolerance, and respect, at the same time it prescribes the existence of forms of life based on exploitation and subjugation through an individual who governs himself but hands over his mandate to other citizens."[17] Here, Carpinteiro touches upon a common critique of representative governance,

[13] Bevir, 179
[14] Marcos 2007, Chiapas: the Thirteenth Stele
[15] Bevir, 146
[16] The Other Campaign (La Otra Campaña) was a 2006 political program intended to connect the Zapatistas to other social movements in Mexico.
[17] Carpinteiro, 144

which is that it can shelter and perpetuate structures or processes that produce marginalization, inequality, and discrimination. Indeed, in both cases addressed in this paper, the failure of representative governance not only to serve but also to protect marginalized groups from violence or discrimination is cited as a motivating factor in their efforts to establish alternative participatory governance processes.

As is evident in the Zapatista communities in Mexico and Communal Councils in Venezuela that will be addressed in later chapters of this analysis, where these participatory structures have been implemented, either organically or through top-down state programs, the focus and purpose of governance has expanded or evolved to better accommodate those communities' material needs. Graeber cites the creation of two institutions at every Occupy camp – the kitchen and the library[18] – which align with some of the first priorities of those self-governing communities – health and education. Both of these areas suggest that one of the functions of governance is not just to help us live together by outlining accepted forms of interaction, but to live *well* together, and that a certain measure of wellness – perhaps as opposed to the constraints of poverty – is required to produce truly inclusive and emancipated societies.

Perhaps the best-known case of participatory governance takes place in Porto Alegre, Brazil, where participatory processes have been in place since 1989 when the Partido dos Trabalhadores (Worker's Party) won control of the local government.[19] Through structured assembly mechanisms, community members design and oversee the municipal budget.

> "[Participatory budgeting] in Brazil is a yearlong decision-making process through which citizens exercise voice and vote—They negotiate among themselves and with government officials in annual or bi-annual meetings over the allocation of new capital investment spending on public

[18] Graeber 2013, 241
[19] Veltmeyer, 76

work projects, such as health care clinics, schools, and street paving."[20]

Thousands of community members are involved in this process that affects "10% to 100% of all capital spending and upward of 15% of the overall [municipal] budget."[21] Indeed, according to Gianpaolo Baiocchi, by the year 2000 more than 20,000 people were participating in the first annual budget meeting, and that 40-60 people would participate in the weekly or semiweekly meetings in each district,[22] a strong indication that participation was linked to tangible benefits in terms of the collective goods produced by that system of governance.

In that regard, Michael Touchton and Brian Wampler argue that the participatory budgeting process in Brazil more broadly has generated positive changes in health in the short term – using infant mortality rates and health spending levels as indicators. However, they also make a larger argument, that participatory governance processes like participatory budgeting are "associated with a broader, structural set of changes; new patterns of governance, state–society relations, and empowerment are initiated, thus producing more durable change."[23] While the short term benefits, like improved levels of health, are vitally important, it is the structural and systemic changes that are produced by participatory governance processes that best embody their radical and progressive potential.

Empowerment to Emancipation

Vasuda Chhotray and Gerry Stoker argue that "participatory governance is fundamentally about transformative power. It is about opening up decision-making

[20] Touchton and Wampler, 1447
[21] Touchton and Wampler, 1447
[22] Baiocchi, 58
[23] Touchton and Wampler, 1444

processes conventionally dominated by hierarchical and top-down state structures to new social actors."[24] This opening up of decision-making processes is the embodiment of the emancipatory power of participatory governance, and the means by which it has the potential to foster long-term, systemic and structural changes in a society. In writing about Venezuela, Juan Carlos Triviño Salazar argues, "Locating participation under radical democracy implies creating the necessary tools so traditionally marginalized groups can be beneficiaries of new social practices that break the patterns that perpetuate political and economic exclusion."[25] By empowering individuals to change the processes of rule- and decision-making under which their communities operate, participatory governance can provide space for poor or marginalized communities to emancipate themselves from grinding and cyclical poverty. "Therefore, transformation [of governance] should be understood as the change of those political practices that perpetuate the social and economic exclusion of groups traditionally marginalized by the State and elites."[26]

Empowerment may seem like a self-defining term, but clarity of meaning underscores the radical potential of participatory processes. Interestingly, empowerment is not only a focus of more grassroots or potentially radical forces, like the Occupy movement, but is also cited as a vital issue area by both the United Nations and the World Bank in their efforts toward poverty reduction. However, the outcomes of empowerment differ between the various actors. For example, the World Bank has offered both institutional and interpretive definitions of empowerment. It states that "empowerment is the expansion of assets and capabilities of poor people to participate in, negotiate with, influence, control, and hold accountable institutions that affect their lives," as well as "the expansion of freedom of

[24] Chhotray and Stoker, 179
[25] Triviño Salazar, 7
[26] Triviño Salazar, 5

choice and action."[27] Both of these definitions indicate that poverty represents both a lack of choice and the inability to make changes to the structures and systems that produce that lack, and that empowerment is posited as a way to build the capacity to do so.

However, the words used to describe how people interact with those institutions – participate, negotiate, influence, control, hold accountable – all suggest leaving those institutions intact and simply changing the way people are able to interact with them. This is an important divergence from a more radical interpretation of empowerment, one that leads to emancipation, which also provides for the construction of new and different types of institutions. From the perspective of a transnational institution like the World Bank, empowerment helps those living in poverty gain better access or integrate into existing systems of governance and capital. This kind of thinking is illustrated through programs that give micro-loans to individuals to start very small businesses. There are clear benefits to these types of loans that should not be discounted, not the least of which is that they often enable recipients to better sustain themselves and their families in very real and immediate ways.[28] However, they also fail to make changes to the systems that produce the need for micro-loans in the first place. Instead, they integrate recipients into existing systems by providing them better, or initial, access to mechanisms already in place.

A more radical interpretation is reflected in Gary Craig's definition of empowerment, in relation to community development, which he describes "as the *creation* of sustainable structures, processes, and mechanisms, over which local communities have an increased degree of control, and from which they have a measurable impact on public and social policy

[27] World Bank, 11
[28] See Muhammad Yunus' *Banker to the Poor* for a detailed account of Grameen Bank's microcredit programs in Bangladesh

affecting those communities."[29] Craig's definition leaves space for new mechanisms and processes that are under greater control by those who are affected by them. From the more radical perspective, therefore, empowerment becomes the tool by which those living in poverty are enabled to work against those structures that prevent them from making choices that could benefit them in both material and intangible ways, and to build structures that enable them to make those choices. Eduviges E. Morales Villalobos, writing in the Venezuelan journal *Cuestiones Politicas*, highlights these centrifugal outcomes of participatory processes when he argues, "it is necessary to endow the citizenry with means of influence over public administration that in addition to allowing an equilibrium of power ensures the strengthening and democratization of public management."[30] Opening up avenues for participation, in areas of public management or decision-making, therefore, improves that public management and creates additional opportunities for participation in those same processes. This conception of intensifying or expanding empowerment is also reflected in Jan Nederveen Pieterse's assertion that "The exercise of power evokes resistance, resistance grows into empowerment, empowerment becomes emancipation, and emancipation changes the rules of power."[31] Thus, empowerment is a necessary step towards emancipation.

A more radical interpretation of empowerment might argue that micro-loans are only partially empowering, given that their goal is only to integrate individuals into existing market systems and not to change those systems themselves, and that therefore they will not lead to emancipatory change. However, like the definition offered by the World Bank, we also see the relationship between greater choice and ability contained within the notion of

[29] Craig, 127. My emphasis.
[30] Morales Villalobos, 99. My translation.
[31] Nederveen Pieterse, 298-99

empowerment. While Craig does not mention poverty explicitly, community development implies a lack or need that begs to be addressed. Poverty surely represents such a need. It would seem, then, that the concept of empowerment is an accepted tool to be used against poverty, even if, surely, the intentions of its use are interpreted differently – for integration into existing processes or for the creation of new and more inclusive processes.

The emphases placed on education and health in the case studies are also indicators of a community seeking to further empower itself by making long-term investments in its members in ways existing or previous governance processes had been unable or unwilling to do. The 2014 UN Human Development Report outlines the myriad ways those living in, or at risk of, poverty can endure long-term consequences for lacking certain early indicators, creating the potential for lingering poverty on both the individual and community level. "Poverty in old age is more often chronic, since the lack of economic opportunities and security during earlier life accumulates into vulnerability in old age. The cumulative disadvantages during younger life also imply the transfer of poverty from one generation to another."[32] Enabling improved levels of health and education provide immediate as well as long-term benefits for individuals and communities by intervening in existing conditions of poverty and working against the continuation thereof, decreasing the "cumulative disadvantages" that perpetuate seemingly endemic poverty.

Governance projects that encourage and offer education and health also communicate a certain level of value about a community or group of individuals in a society by making investments in their wellbeing and ability to access, use, and produce knowledge in their own ways and for their own, self-articulated, benefit. The fact that communities practicing participatory governance often seek to establish new or expanded projects to improve health

[32] UNDP, "United Nations Development Report Summary 2014," 5

or deepen education illustrates the failure of existing or previous governance practices to acknowledge the inherent value of those communities, as well as the fact that the communities were able to retain and articulate a sense of their own value and worthiness in opposition to societal signifiers.

Finding Alternatives

In addition to working to create more inclusive and just societies, participatory governance processes and the projects they produce stand as proof positive that it is possible to create better – or even simply different – systems of governance and ways of living well together. Indeed, Héctor Díaz-Polanco, writing about Zapatista governance in the Mexican journal *El Cotidiano*, argues that the general political climate *is* receptive to systemic changes. "Unity in diversity, tolerance of difference, vision of the whole, political alliances that go beyond the current agreements between small factions, common concrete actions, seem to be some [key issues] of the moment."[33] This openness is vitally important in today's increasingly interconnected and globalizing world. But in the face of global uncertainty regarding issues such as global climate change to economic rollercoasters to violent and seemingly entrenched civil conflict there is still adherence to current forms of governance, even when they are acknowledged to produce those outcomes or, at the very least, perpetuate existing inequalities. Yet it is because these systems of governance produce precarity, marginalization, and violence for most of the world's population that alternative forms of governance must be sought out and evaluated, and new systems and structures built in place of the old.

One reason that current forms of governance continue to hold sway is because of

[33] Díaz-Polanco, 45. My translation. Díaz-Polanco also argued that the Zapatista system of governance should be actively spread throughout Mexico.

neutralizing ideologies. Neutralizing ideologies come in many shapes and colors, from Margaret Thatcher's insistence that 'there is no alternative' to neoliberal capitalism,[34] to the fetishization of work – specifically, ill-defined 'hard work' – that is the root of the notions of economic and social mobility.[35] Furthermore, as William I. Robinson argues, "This culture of global capitalism glorifies policing and militarization, constructs all those who resist, or even question the logic of the dominant order as incomprehensible, even crazed, *Others*."[36] These lines of thought actively work against contradictory ideas by seeking to negate the validity of their critiques of current structures of governance or domination and to decrease individuals' abilities to imagine those alternative ideas in the first place.

John Holloway writes, "The loss of hope for a more human society is not the result of people being blind to the horrors of capitalism, it is just that there does not seem to be anywhere else to go, any otherness to turn to."[37] For those not actively, or violently, or overtly, oppressed, then, hegemony can become the background – normalized, routinized, and accepted – rather than an active force to be struggled against. Robinson and Holloway capture the sense that structural change, or even interrogating the nature of the dominant structure, is painted as impossible or crazy, undermining those forces that could threaten those structures, and therefore "[the] demands, grievances and aspirations of the popular classes tend to become neutralized less through direct repression than through ideological mechanisms."[38]

However, "[visible] alternatives shatter the sense of inevitability, that the system

[34] Graeber, 2011, 5
[35] Graeber 2013, 285
[36] W. Robinson, 23. Emphasis in original text.
[37] Holloway, 9
[38] W. Robinson, 275

must, necessarily, be patched together in the same form."[39] Participatory forms of governance offer forms of empowerment meant to break the constraints of poverty imposed on people by structures of power, domination, and hegemony and create new structures that are more just and inclusive. By offering real-world alternatives to current processes held in sway by global capitalism, participatory governance also gives the lie to undermining ideologies that insist that the systems in place are the only ones available to us, and that those who seek new ways of living together are unrealistic or insane, or those who fail to thrive are somehow personally at fault for their own destitution. Participatory processes illustrate the Zapatista notion that another world *is* possible, and that we may indeed be able to dismantle the power hierarchies and their associated governance processes that produce poverty and marginalization.

The chapters that follow will present case studies of two such alternatives, those of the Zapatista communities in the southern Mexican state of Chiapas and the Communal Councils formed under a national law in Venezuela. These two cases represent different directional possibilities in the formation of participatory governance, along a spectrum of possible forms of alternative participatory governance processes: through organic community processes from below and through state initiated legal reform from above, though the practice of governance is not quite so simple in terms of power relations and flows. Zapatista governance entails some aspects that could be classified as centralizing, despite its bottom-up governance practices, and Venezuelan governance shifts some power away from the state through decentralizing programs. The ultimate goal is not to identify one formational direction as better or more correct than the other, or to place them in opposition to each other, but to illustrate the range of possibilities available for implementation of participatory

[39] Graeber 2011, 38

governance. The expansion of governance options further undercuts neutralizing hegemonic ideologies that insist on the inefficiency and therefore improbability of increasing levels of participation outside the ballot box.

Zapatista Governance

Terms and Acronyms:

EZLN	Ejército Zapatista de Liberación Nacional, or Zapatista Army of National Liberation
Caracol(es)	Spanish word meaning 'shell(s);' regional Zapatista hubs of administration and governance, locations of Juntas de Buen Gobierno
JBG	Juntas de Buen Gobierno, or Good Governance Councils, regional Zapatista governance bodies
MAREZ	Municipio Autónomo Rebeldes Zapatistas, or Rebel Zapatista Autonomous Municipalities
Zapatista	Descriptor used to indicate affiliation with the EZLN and correlative civilian communities

Chiapas Rebelde

"In our dreams we have seen another world, an honest world, a world decidedly more fair than the one in which we now live." - *Subcomandante Insurgente Marcos*[40]

Most accounts of the Zapatista movement start with its dramatic uprising on the first day of 1994 in the southern Mexican state of Chiapas. As the sun rose over seven occupied municipal seats and towns,[41] and the cameras turned in their direction, the Ejército Zapatista de Liberación Nacional (EZLN), along with the largely indigenous communities they represent, were transported from their marginalized position within their own national context to the forefront of radical global imaginations. The details of the movement's history have been relayed by many, most notably by Gloria Muñoz Ramírez in *The Fire and the Word* and George A. Collier and Elizabeth Lowery Quaratiello in *¡Basta! Land and the Zapatista Rebellion in Chiapas*. For the purposes intended here, suffice it to say that more than twenty years of struggle and resistance has witnessed those same marginalized

[40] Marcos 2001, 18. Now known as Subcomandante Galeano after the May 31, 2014 paramilitary attack on the Caracol La Realidad. For purposes of clarity in this analysis, I will refer to him as Marcos.
[41] de la Luz Inclán, 1316

communities defining and building their own systems of autonomous participatory governance.

The processes of creating autonomous communities began in December 1994, with a communiqué from the EZLN announcing the organization of autonomous municipalities in rebellion,[42] known by their Spanish acronym MAREZ. Far from a simple military declaration of territorial authority, the articulation of these autonomous areas was the beginning of what would become one of the Zapatistas' most profound contribution to the empowerment of their communities and to anti-capitalist activists and movements on a global scale. In 2003, after nearly a decade of serving the needs of their own communities, often in partnership with international civil society and nongovernmental organizations, the Zapatistas announced a restructuring of their internal governance processes and the creation five Caracoles – regional community spaces and administrative centers. The Caracoles would house the Juntas de Buen Gobierno (JBG; Good Governance Councils, in Spanish), regional governing bodies that oversee programs relating to health and education, mitigate problems relating to "land, work, and trade,"[43] administer justice, and liaise with civil society and nongovernmental organizations.

This chapter consists of four main parts: first, an outline of the structure of the JBG to articulate the participatory nature of the process, followed by three sections addressing some of the collective goods produced by Zapatista governance in the areas of education, health, and equitable distribution of outside resources. In the failure of the Mexican state to provide those kinds of collective goods, we see Zapatista communities working collectively through the JBG structure to build the services they need to live well together and to work against the

[42] EZLN, communiqué 19 December 1994
[43] Marcos, 2005, 234

long-standing poverty and marginalization they suffered at the hands of a disinterested and hostile national government.

Juntas and Caracoles

The structure of the Juntas de Buen Gobierno is built upon the MAREZ originally organized in December 1994, acting as the third tier of governance within and among Zapatista communities. At the most local level are the community assemblies, which in many cases are practices and structures that pre-date the Zapatista movement entirely. In *Chiapas, the Thirteenth Stele*, a communiqué formally announcing the restructuring of their self-governance practices and creation of both the Caracoles and JBG, Zapatista spokesman Subcomandante Marcos states, "This 'form' of self-governance (of which I am giving just the sketchiest summary) is not an invention or contribution of the EZLN. It comes from further back in time. When the EZLN was born, it had already been operating for a good while, although only at the level of each community."[44] By building on previously existing community practices, the creation of the MAREZ in 1994 was an impulse designed to foster self-governance and coordination between Zapatista communities in slightly larger regional aggregates and outside of the military hierarchy of the EZLN itself.

Thus, the Autonomous Municipal Councils and MAREZ are the first regional level of governance, uniting various townships and communities – and their respective assemblies – within a single participatory body. According to *The Thirteenth Stele*, each Autonomous Council operates procedurally in its own way. The MAREZ are tasked with overseeing many processes traditionally undertaken by municipal governments: "the administration of justice; community health; education; housing; land; work; food; trade; information and

[44] Marcos, 2005, 229-230

culture; local traffic."[45] Importantly, service on the Council of the MAREZ is unremunerated and rotating, offering opportunities for involvement on a variety of levels for a large number of community members. Indeed, positions of authority are sometimes assigned to those who are seen as failing to actively participate in the collective project of governance. "[For] example, when someone misses a lot of the community assemblies, they might be punished by being given a position such as municipal agent or ejidal commissioner."[46]

By their own admission in *The Thirteenth Stele*, self-governance through the MAREZ was an imperfect process. By 2003, though much had been accomplished without the assistance of the Mexican State, particularly in the areas of education and health, the development of Zapatista communities was uneven. Those communities that were most easily accessible, or that had greater name recognition within civil society, were receiving more attention and outside support than communities that were further removed, both physically and in terms of notoriety.

Furthermore, the assistance from civil society or other outside groups was not always the most beneficial to the communities overall needs. *The Thirteenth Stele* recounts well meaning but ultimately unhelpful donations and projects from a variety of groups seeking to support the movement and individuals within it: a single pink stiletto heel, computers so outdated they were nonfunctional, expired medications, a library for a community in need of drinking water, and a course on herbs for a community that needed a school.[47] Thus the JBG were created, in part, in order to work to rectify these imbalances, and channel the efforts of international civil society into genuinely beneficial projects.

[45] "Caracoles y Juntas de Buen Goberino," My translation.
[46] Marcos, 2005, 229. An *ejido* is a plot of communally held land.
[47] Ibid, 211-212

In addition to addressing imbalances and acting as a filter between national and international civil society groups and organizations, the JBG also serve to

> mediate in conflicts that arise among autonomous townships and between autonomous townships and municipal governments; to attend to complaints against the Autonomous Councils for human rights violations, protests and grievances; to monitor projects and community tasks in the MAREZ and to promote support for community projects; to monitor compliance with the laws; to attend to and guide national and international civil society to visit the communities, carry out productive projects and install peace camps; and…to promote and approve the participation of compañeros and compañeras in activities or events outside the rebel communities.[48]

As with the MAREZ, the JBG fulfills both coordination and oversight roles between smaller regional aggregates of governance, holding municipalities and communities accountable to each other and their collective projects.

Each Caracol and its accompanying JBG acts as a regional hub for its surrounding municipalities. There are five Caracoles, predominately located in the eastern regions of the state: the Caracol of La Realidad, containing the autonomous municipalities General Emiliano Zapata, San Pedro de Michoacán, Libertad de los Pueblos Maya, and Tierra y Libertad; the Caracol of Morelia, containing the autonomous municipalities of 17 de Noviembre, Primero de Enero, Ernesto Ché Guevara, Olga Isabel, Lucio Cabañas, Miguel Hidalgo, and Vicente Guerrero[49]; the Caracol of La Garrucha, containing the autonomous municipalities of Francisco Gómez, San Manuel, Francisco Villa, and Ricardo Flores Magón; the Caracol of Roberto Barrios, containing the autonomous municipalities of Vicente Guerrero, Del Trabajo, La Montaña, San José en Rebeldía, La Paz, Benito Juárez, and

[48] Muñoz Ramírez, 267

[49] There is some discrepancy between sources for the autonomous municipalities contained within the Morelia Caracol. Those listed here are from the 2008 edition of Gloria Muñoz Ramírez's *The Fire and the Word*, whereas the online sources for Enlace Civil, an organization based in San Crisóbal de Las Casas to act as an additional filter between Zapatista communities and civil society, only list the municipalities of Comandanta Ramona, Lucio Cabañas, and 17 de Noviembre but is undated.

Francisco Villa; and the Caracol of Oventik, containing the autonomous municipalities of San Andrés Sacamch'en de los Pobres, San Juan de la Libertad, San Pedro Polhó, Santa Catarina, Magdalena de la Paz, 16 de Febrero, and San Juan Apóstol Cancuc. Overall, Zapatista governance includes a reputed 1,110 rural villages and some 200,000 people.[50]

Service in the JBG is also rotating and unremunerated, and each Autonomous Council sends one or two delegates to serve a designated amount of time before returning to their home communities.[51] The one remunerative exception is occasional assistance with transportation costs to and from home communities for serving members. "In the region of La Garrucha, for example, a pool of leaders is elected by the communities making up each of the four autonomous municipalities, serving on standby for a period of three years. During that time they take turns serving a ten-day shift on the junta."[52] Rotating service on the JBG requires greater numbers of people to participate in the practice of governance, while presenting obstacles to individuals using entrenched positions of authority towards personal gain and allowing for participants to continue to seek their own livelihoods in their communities.

Furthermore, participation in Zapatista governance extends beyond the community or Autonomous Councils and JBG. A message from the JBG of the Caracol La Garrucha on the fifth anniversary of the formation of the Caracoles also mentions a "Council of Education, education coordinators, Council of Health, health coordinators, Commission of Honor and Justice, Land Commission, community safety officers in each town, autonomous agents in each town, (and) representatives from different collective works in each town" as "structures

[50] Chatterton and Ryan, 120; Zibechi 2012, 132
[51] "Resistance and Autonomy," SIPAZ
[52] Stahler-Sholk 2010, 284

that autonomous municipalities within our Zapatista territory should contain."[53] This message also states that individuals are elected to those positions by a majority vote in the municipal assembly. Thus, the Autonomous Councils and JBG work in concert with smaller groups with narrower focuses pertaining to projects and issues important to the survival and development of Zapatista communities.

All Zapatista governance, from the community level upwards, is guided by the principle they call 'mandar obedeciendo,' or to lead by obeying. To lead by obeying is the heart of Zapatista governance philosophy, and appears in their communiqués as early as March 1, 1994, in a missive entitled *In Our Dreams We Have Seen Another World*. In this short, poetic piece Subcomandante Marcos describes a world in which "there was no need for armies; peace, justice and liberty were so common that no one talked about them as far-off concepts… And in this world there was reason and goodwill in the government, and the leaders were clear-thinking people; they ruled by obeying."[54] Articulating in principle one motivation for their original rebellion, to lead by obeying places the needs and desires of the community at the center of governance practice. This stands in contrast to some incarnations of liberal representative democracy – including that of the larger Mexican State – where the primary form of mass political participation is through elections and subsequent protest, but where daily participation in the process of governance is limited to a comparative few.

Placing collective needs in positions of high priority is evident in the emphasis on education, health, and increased development parity between communities within the functions of the MAREZ and JBG. "The idea of creating organizations to be used as tools to achieve certain objectives and values, and to ensure that autonomy and the motto mandar

[53] EZLN, Celebración del 5º Aniversario de las JBG, n.p.
[54] Marcos, 2001, 18

obedeciendo ("to lead by obeying!") do not remain in the sphere of abstract concepts and incoherent words, is one of the most important contributions of the caracoles."[55]

Zapatista Education

The importance of education in development is reflected beyond the Zapatista context by the inclusion of universal primary school education in the Millennium Development Goals and the funding of education programs by a host of international organizations, both governmental and private. Despite being resource rich, Chiapas ranks last nationally for average number of years spent in school.[56] According to a 2013 report by the Instituto Nacional de Estadística y Geografía (INEGI), residents of Chiapas age 15 and older complete an average of 6.7 years of study between the primary and secondary levels and 84% of the state's population are literate. However, this brief report also reveals a drastic disparity between municipalities. Tuxtla Gutiérrez, seat of the state capitol and the most populous municipality in Chiapas, reports an average level of education of 10 years of schooling, or tenth grade, and 94% of the population able to read and write. On the other hand, Mitonic, a small municipality in the mountains north of San Cristóbal de Las Casas, reported 3.2 average years of schooling and 52.2% of the population able to read and write. Thus, educational disparities are vast between rural and urban communities, leaving communities further away from urban areas less likely to have access to, and the support to take advantage of, educational opportunities when they are available.

Immediately after the uprising, many of the few teachers working in Zapatista communities left or were expelled from their positions. The creation of Zapatista forms of education was therefore a practical necessity due to the lack of educational opportunities in

[55] González Casanova, 81
[56] INEGI, 14

their predominately rural communities as well as a function of the movement's desire for education that empowered and practically benefitted their communities. "The Zapatista communities, in rejecting the bilingual government teachers, chose to sacrifice the meager educational resources on offer in order to open up new possibilities of community control and relevant curriculum emphasizing such things as agriculture and indigenous culture."[57]

Thus Zapatista education does not simply mimic mainstream or government supported education, but instead is entirely community generated and supervised. "Literacy manuals and textbooks are created by 'education committees' and promoters, accompanied by 'civil societies' who know about those subjects."[58] Along with creating their own curriculum, a process that is "supervised by an education committee elected by the local assembly,"[59] the Zapatistas have established primary schools and a secondary school that also trains education promoters. This includes setting the location for the school, gathering the materials for construction, collectively building the school, ensuring that it is sufficiently furnished and equipped for students, and selecting people to be education promoters in community assembly.[60]

The promoters are unpaid but supported materially by the communities in which they live. Gabriel Maldonado, of the Ricardo Flores Magón autonomous municipality El Camino del Futuro describes the "remuneration" of promoters as follows:

> [We] are participating in a resistance movement, and we serve voluntarily, as it does not bring us any profits. We draw no salaries…If it's time to plant, then the people plant the promoter's bean field and then harvest it,

[57] Stahler-Sholk 2007, 61
[58] Marcos, 2005, 232. Zapatistas use the term promoters for all their education and awareness-based programs for education, health, and agriculture, rather than the traditional title of teacher for some of those roles.
[59] Baronnet, 116
[60] Baronnet, 116

give the promoter a portion for his sustenance, and sell the rest, giving that money back to the promoter to cover the necessary expenses.[61]

Directly contributing to the material support of the education promoter in their community is an avenue for indirect participation in the Zapatista education system, in addition to the more direct ways like serving as an education promoter, aiding in the construction of a school, or holding a position on an education committee.

The Zapatista education system provides, on average, more educational centers than the government provides in the region,[62] and therefore greater educational and participatory opportunities for their own communities. According to Raúl Zibechi, "there are about 300 schools and 1,000 educational 'promoters' that make up the Zapatista Rebel Autonomous Education System,"[63] which includes the secondary school in the Caracol of Oventik.

While further exact figures are difficult to find, and would be a useful topic of future research, the longevity of the Zapatista educational project speaks, at least in part, to its success in the context of the communities involved. Because there are few true absolute territorial boundaries between Zapatista and non-Zapatista communities – in fact, most communities are mixed to varying degrees – Zapatista programs operate sometimes side-by-side with similar government programs. For example, in the Caracol of Oventik there are government run primary and secondary schools in competition with those run by the Zapatistas, and so the residents of Oventik and its immediately surrounding communities are able to choose the educational system they want to take advantage of.[64] Thus, the continuation and success of the Zapatista educational programs there are indicative of the

[61] Baronnet, 116
[62] Muñoz Ramírez, 311
[63] Zibechi 2012, 132
[64] Personal observation, July 2014

community's desire and prioritization of those programs, reflected in the monitory role of the JBG and the opportunities for community participation in the education system through curriculum creation, school construction, and providing for and supervising promoters. It should also be noted that Oventik, being the location of one of the JBG and an easily accessible distance from the city of San Cristóbal de Las Casas along a reasonably well maintained road, has considerably better access to services than other communities, where those kinds of options don't exist or are considerably more limited.

Zapatista Health

Health is another focus of MAREZ and JBG governance. Drawing on reports from INEGI, the UN Special Rapporteur for the Right to Food, and the Ministry of Health in Chiapas, International Service for Peace (SIPAZ) – an organization dedicated to violence prevention and peace building in Chiapas, Oaxaca, and Guerrero – paints a grim picture of overall health in the state. As of 2010, "57 percent of the population still could not gain access to health care services" because they lived too far from the nearest hospital or there were simply not enough doctors, citing only one doctor for every thousand inhabitants for the state.[65] Sixty municipalities are affected by severe malnutrition, and even as late as 2008, one in four deaths of children under five was the result of preventable diarrheal or respiratory diseases.[66] Considering that many Zapatista communities are remote or not easily accessible, it is not surprising that health programs and clinics are an important aspect of Zapatista governance.

Indeed, health issues are specifically referenced in several of the early communiqués issued after the 1994 uprising, indicating health's importance even to the movement's initial

[65] SIPAZ, "Facts about Chiapas – Health," np
[66] SIPAZ, "Facts about Chiapas – Health," np

impulse. In January 6, 1994 communiqué entitled "Dying in Order to Live," Subcomandante Marcos states that "more than 150,000 indigenous [people] have died of curable diseases. The federal, state, and municipal governments…limit themselves to giving us charity every time elections toll around…That is why we think no, no more; enough dying this useless death; it is better to fight for change."[67] Less than two weeks later, on January 18, 1994, Marcos listed the various illnesses that contributed to those "'natural' deaths of 'natural causes' like measles, whooping cough, breakbone fever, cholera, typhus, mononucleosis, tetanus, pneumonia, malaria and other lovely gastrointestinal and pulmonary diseases."[68] These diseases, many easily preventable and others easily treatable, are clear examples of both the Mexican government's failure – through incompetence or malice – to provide health-related collective goods, as well as the importance of health services as part of Zapatista governance.

As in the educational program, health services are coordinated by committees composed of community members working in concert with civil society organizations under the watchful eye of the JBG and MAREZ autonomous councils. "There are regional clinics in Oventik and La Garrucha, and in the community of San José del Río, in the region of La Realidad, they have a hospital [with] their own operating room, thanks to the solidarity and support of doctors coming from Comitán."[69] According to a case study on Zapatista health systems for the Health Systems Knowledge Network, a WHO appointed network from 2005-2007, the Zapatista health system encompasses "about 200 community health houses, 25 autonomous regional clinics, some of which have been operating for 10 years, and a central

[67] Marcos, 2001, 17
[68] Marcos, 2001, 39
[69] SIPAZ, "In Focus," 4

clinic."[70] The presence of hospitals, clinics, and community health promoters significantly increase the availability of health care, especially in more isolated communities. Furthermore, like the schools, the physical spaces of the health services – clinics, hospitals, and pharmacies – are collectively constructed and maintained by the communities themselves.

Participation in the health system is extended into the community assemblies as well. In the aforementioned case study on Zapatista health systems, J.H. Cuevas reports, "it is community assemblies which name both promoters and health committees. In turn, in local committees name representatives to the Municipal Health Coordination [Committee] and from there to the Caracol."[71] Committee members and promoters who fail to serve the needs of their communities, can also be removed from their post by the assemblies, which provides an additional layer of community supervision and accountability.[72] Involvement in the selection process and supervision of health promoters and committee members is therefore another avenue for community participation within the Zapatista health system, beyond working in one of the clinics or as a health promoter.

Most importantly, Zapatista health services are offered free of charge for Zapatistas, and at low-cost to non-Zapatistas, with varying charges for medicines depending on their availability.[73] The health services offered follow in both allopathic and indigenous traditions, and health promoters offer "courses and workshops on topics ranging from reproductive health to basic sanitary practices, like teaching the importance of boiling drinking water and personal and domestic hygiene"[74] in addition to treatment of illness and injury. Indeed, if the secondary students in Oventik are at all representative of the broader Zapatista community,

[70] Cuevas, 9. My translation.
[71] Cuevas, 7. My translation.
[72] Cuevas, 7. My translation
[73] SIPAZ, "In Focus," 4
[74] Zibechi 2012, 135

post-meal crowds around the water tanks of students brushing their teeth, along with toothbrushes and toothpaste for sale in the small store in the school compound, indicate general knowledge of the importance of oral hygiene.[75]

Preventive health practices are not only practical for communities that might not otherwise have easy access to medical services, but also empower the communities to treat those who require medical attention in their own indigenous languages, removing potential barriers of understanding and information. Approximately 1.2 million people speak an indigenous language out of a total state population of just under 4.8 million, according to the 2013 INEGI report referenced above, which is one reason why non-Zapatista community members seek out care in Zapatista health programs, in addition to citing respectful treatment by caregivers there.[76]

Equitable Distribution

A final, vital, function of the JBG is to work towards greater parity of collective goods and development between the various MAREZ, and communities thereof. In addition to oversight of educational and health programs, the JBG also acts as the liaison between Zapatista communities and civil society groups and organizations seeking to enact projects in those communities. As described above, some of the projects enacted by civil society, while well-intended, failed to account for the actual needs of the community and were sometimes even counterproductive, leaving communities with discarded items they simply didn't need.

[75] Personal observation, July 2014
[76] SIPAZ, "In Focus," 4

Therefore, despite its placement in this analysis, the JBG's distributive function with regards to outside projects or donations was the first regulation they collectively enacted.[77]

More than a simple matter of mismatched needs and intentions, however, was the unequal distribution of these projects between Zapatista communities. "The most well known autonomous municipalities… or those closer at hand… have received more projects and more support. The same thing has taken place with the communities. The most well known and those along the highway receive more attention from 'civil societies.'"[78]

The role of the JBG includes approving the location and planning of civil society generated projects in order to determine their necessity, and it also requires that some funds from those projects be diverted towards projects in less accessible or well-known communities to be able to meet their needs. This is known as a "brother tax," described in *The Thirteenth Stele*:

> The Good Government Junta shall decide, after evaluating the circumstances of the communities, where that help [from national and international civil society] most needs to be directed. The Good Government Junta will impose the "brother tax," which is 10% of the total cost of the project, on all projects. In other words, if a community, municipality or collective receives economic support for a project, it must give the 10% to the Good Government Junta, so that it can earmark it for another community which is not receiving help. The objective is to balance somewhat the economic development of the communities in resistance. Leftovers, charity and the imposition of projects shall, of course, not be accepted.[79]

The "brother tax," then, serves a dual function. Symbolically and procedurally, the "brother tax" is a reassertion of the autonomy of the JBG and the wider Zapatista governance project. Duncan Earle and Jeanne Simonelli describe the way their interactions with Zapatista communities shifted with the development of the JBG, as they sought to develop a

[77] EZLN, Chiapas, the Thirteenth Stele; Part Six: A Good Government, np
[78] Marcos, 2005, 228
[79] EZLN, Chiapas, the Thirteenth Stele; Part Six: A Good Government, np

partnership between their respective universities and a MAREZ. "As the Zapatistas encourage prospective partners to 'disencumber' their generosity, to donate in accordance with Zapatista priorities and coordinate their efforts within a bigger plan, they are asking them to give up control."[80]

Due to the participatory nature of the JBG, gatekeeping provides avenues for community members to exert greater control over the types of outside projects that are able to take place in their communities. No project or donation can come into a community without the approval of the JBG; because participation in the JBG is contingent upon upholding the desires of the community, approval from the JBG is, by extension, approval from the communities they represent. This is an inversion of the previous relationships between Zapatista communities and outside civil society groups seeking to provide assistance. Reclaiming control over which projects can be allowed into communities, and redistributing some of the benefits of aid between communities, places the JBG in greater control of overall Zapatista community development.

The second function is distributive, since the "brother tax" is a governance mechanism designed to work towards a more equitable allocation of outside support and the collective goods that support can provide. The unequal resources and attention received by some Zapatista communities was in contradiction to an important guiding *dicho*, or saying, of the movement: '*para todos todo, nada por nosotros*,' or, 'everything for everyone, nothing for ourselves.' Thus, the distributive and regulatory function of the JBG ensures its continued adherence to some of the movement's primary ideals.

[80] Earle and Simonelli, 124

Conclusion

Zapatista governance represents many ideals of participatory governance, even as they acknowledge that it is still a work in progress: decisions are made by consulting the people who would be affected by them, and participants who fail to represent the wishes of their communities in the regional bodies are removed from their positions; the products of governance are built specifically to serve the needs of the communities; and, through their governing bodies, participants are able to exert some control over the outside projects that enter their communities and ensure some measures of equitable distribution of resources and development.

Indeed, in the face of hegemonic ideologies insisting upon the irrelevance of finding new ways or seeking new goals, the Zapatistas and their governance processes are an immensely powerful example of the existence and viability of alternative forms of participatory governance in real time. "Maybe they are, in effect, just a few buildings, and it's been nothing but the effect of shadow and light which the dawn is extending across the communities where the "caracoles" are being drawn, which made me think it was a new world that was being built."[81] But it is those "few buildings," built with the hands of many Zapatistas that show the world the possibilities contained in participatory governance.

[81] EZLN, Chiapas, the Thirteenth Stele; Part Six: A Good Government, np

Chavista Governance

Terms and Acronyms:

BA	Barrio Adentro, or Inside the Neighborhood, a social program that provides community health care[82]
Chavista	Adjective describing a person, policy, organization, or strain of thought that is (or perceived to be) supportive of, in alignment with, Hugo Chavez, his supporters, or political philosophy
CCs	Consejos Comunales, or Communal Councils
Puntofijismo	Political system based on the Punto Fijo Pact of 1958, in which the three major political parties established a power sharing system that effectively excluded oppositional groups from political power[83]

El Estado Comunal

"However, the point in relation to the present context is that in the communal type exchange relation the primacy goes to the self-determination and corresponding organization of the *activities* themselves in which the individuals engage, in accordance with their needs as active human beings." - *István Mészáros*[84]

Unlike the organic, bottom-up formation of participatory forms of governance in Chiapas, in Venezuela participatory governance projects are being designed and implemented from above by the Chavista state. The Bolivarian Revolution has generated no small amount of opposition, both within Venezuela and from other nation-states, and the future of the socially progressive processes fostered by the state are uncertain in the wake of the March 2013 death of President Hugo Chávez, opposition-enflamed protests in the spring of 2014, increased sanctions by the United States in early 2015, and continued economic volatility at the time of writing. However, the participatory structures outlined in the 1999 Constitution of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela and reinforced by the 2006 Law of Communal Councils embody a crucial shift from the previous political system, puntofijismo

[82] This translation is commonly used in English-language literature about BA, but Esther Lezra notes that a better translation is "Into the Neighborhood," which is both more accurate and more reflective of the intention of the program. The common translation has been used here, to remain in keeping with existing literature.
[83] Wilpert 2011, 102
[84] Quoted in Azzellini 2014, 222-223. Emphasis in source.

or the Punto Fijo system, which institutionalized corruption and the exclusion of large sectors of the population from the political process, towards an inclusive and responsive political process with an engaged and supported populace.

Venezuela has a long history of social movements and activism, described engagingly by George Ciccariello-Maher in *We Created Chávez: A People's History of the Venezuelan Revolution*. Seeking to direct historical investigations away from the figure of Chávez, Ciccariello-Maher argues that Chávez' election in 1998 and return from an attempted coup in 2002 was made possible by that history of social movements, a conclusion that is borne out by simple logic as well as the electoral support he received "from nearly all classes of society, but especially from the disenchanted middle class, which had been slowly slipping into poverty for the previous 20 years, and from the country's poor."[85] Thus, political restructuring and creation of a new constitution was broadly popular, and not the personal project of a single political actor.

Importantly, these participatory reforms illustrate how the Venezuelan government is taking the opposite tack of many states in relation to social movements. Raúl Zibechi argues, in his foreward to *Until the Rulers Obey: Voices from Latin American Social Movements*, that "the most serious problem with the state policies [in response to social movements] is that they tend to dissolve the self-organization of those from below. In this way they impede the consolidation of the autonomy of popular subjects built up in unfavorable circumstances over decades."[86] The legal reforms and subsequent programs instituted in Venezuela over the last fifteen years instead illustrate an intentional fostering of self-organization from below and a partial redistribution of power from above.

[85] Wilpert 2007, 18
[86] Zibechi 2014, *xiv*

This chapter consists of five main parts: first, an overview of the constitutional reforms that opened a place for participatory governance in Venezuela, outline of the structure of the CCs to articulate the participatory nature of the process, followed by three sections addressing some of the collective goods produced or expanded by Chavista governance in the areas of education, health, and community development.

Constitutional Reforms

The creation of the 1999 Constitution reformed and redefined the entire political process, by "adding two branches of government, introducing popular referenda, strengthening the presidency in some respects, and introducing local public planning councils,"[87] which would become the first incarnation of participatory governance in the country. Gregory Wilpert, in *Changing Venezuela by Taking Power: The History and Policies of the Chávez Government*, also details a long list of progressive rights and practices enshrined in the constitution, from specific recognition of women's, indigenous, and environmental rights to the placement of international rights treaties on equal footing with the constitution itself.[88] While constitutional reforms do not produce immediate social transformation, explicit inclusion in these documents provides at least notional inclusion in the national imaginary and potential legal grounds to seek protections or redress of grievances under the law.

Article 62 of the 1999 Constitution articulates the participatory nature of Venezuelan governance:

[87] Wilpert 2007, 30
[88] Wilpert 2007, 32

> The participation of the people in the formation, execution, and control of public administration is the necessary means for achieving the involvement that ensures their full development, both individual and collective. It is the obligation of the State and the duty of society to facilitate the generation of the most favorable conditions for putting this into practice.[89]

Stemming from a historical experience of exploitative and exclusionary representative democracy under puntofijismo, the "Bolivarians' implicit underlying theory is that in a participatory society individuals can represent themselves more completely when they are both personally and collectively involved in building a society that is an organic whole rather than simply an aggregate of atomized spectators."[90] Participatory processes, then, work against the potential for apathy and exclusion within liberal representative democratic governance, particularly those associated with previous incarnations thereof in Venezuela.

While Article 62 provides for the creation of participatory power that has the potential to act against that of the state, the institutionalization of participatory democratic principles through the constitution in some respects represents a hybrid of directional power 'from above' (generated by the state) and 'from below' (generated by the people). Unlike Chiapas, where Zapatista governance is intentionally separate from that of the Mexican state, this "double-motion from below and from above, [exists] at the intersection of the tense relationship with the state as both an instance of popular power…and an inherent danger to that very same power."[91] This potential conflict of interest, however, has not prevented the state from fostering participatory power, as is evident by its encouragement of processes like referenda, social oversight, and various types of citizen assemblies like the Communal Councils (CCs).

[89] Quoted by Wilpert 2011, 99
[90] Ponniah, 284
[91] Ciccariello-Maher, 241

Communal Councils

Though the 1999 Constitution laid the foundation for more radical participatory governance processes, and some were implemented shortly thereafter, it was not until 2005 that the CCs came into their present form, building off earlier forms of citizen assemblies like barrio assemblies formed after the 1989 citizen uprising known as the Caracazo[92] and municipal level Local Public Planning Councils.[93] The CCs – smaller, locally focused groupings – "potentially represent the most far-reaching transformation of Venezuelan political life on the day-to-day level,"[94] and embody Chávez' increasing radicalization in response to the opposition party destabilization tactics, including the 2002 attempted coup and 2003 oil lockout. According to Matt Wilde, in his PhD dissertation in Anthropology at The London School of Economics and Political Science:

> Their guiding philosophy is that popular, localised participation in the planning, implementation and maintenance of community development projects provides the key to moving away from both representative politics and clientelist resource distribution, both of which were discredited by the inequality and exclusion that came to define puntofijismo.[95]

Because they are essentially neighborhood councils elected by citizen assembly, CCs provide the opportunity for individuals to participate in the planning, oversight, and execution of community development projects that are funded and supported by the state. As stated in the Law of Communal Councils, the CCs "enable the organized 'people' to directly exercise the management of public policy and projects oriented toward responding to the necessities and aspirations of communities involved in the construction of a society of

[92] Wilpert 2011, 108. Caracazo is the term for a popular uprising in response to dramatically increased poverty and instability created by International Monetary Fund restructuring plan, sparked by an overnight doubling of the cost of gasoline – and therefore bus ticket prices. For additional information see "First Interlude. The Caracazo" in Cicariello-Maher's *We Created Chávez*.

[93] For greater details concerning the extent of participatory processes stemming from the 1999 Constitution, see chapter 2 of Wilpert's *Changing Venezuela by Taking Power*, "Governance Policy."

[94] Wilpert 2011, 106

[95] Wilde, 187

equality and social justice."[96] By this definition, an equal and just society is dependent upon the participation of Venezuelans in governance, right down to the community level.

In an interview with Susan Spronk and Jeffrey R. Webber, Rosangela Orozco, a communal activist in the Caracas barrio 23 de Enero[97] described the nature of participation:

> Each one contributes a little to the community and all benefit from what they have built. We are all part of this community, and we each take from it equally depending on what we need, which in turn, depends on our conditions. Everyone who is part of this commune has to be a worker bee to make sure that the commune has really good services, tranquility, it stays clean, it is maintained, we have quality education, recreation, communal spaces. And we also say that we all benefit from the honey that this revolution produces – the benefits that come from the missions, the collective work…we all provide these benefits collectively.[98]

Personal observations of 23 de Enero support the sense of community Orozco describes. It was one of the few neighborhoods in Caracas where people were using public space for reasons other than commerce or transportation. Families were sitting out on their stoops, conversing with neighbors, and children were playing freely in the small playground that seemed to be a center of the community.[99] This was in stark contrast to the neighborhood I lived in, Sabana Grande, which was ostensibly higher class – established "working class" as opposed to an originally "informal" barrio – but in which the malls were considered to be the safe public space, and where a series of locks separated you from your neighbors within the building, and several more locks stood between your doorstep and the street below. Informal though the observation may be, that sense of tranquility, cleanliness, and community were tangibly present in 23 de Enero, lending force to Orozco's argument that participation was the source of those facets of her community.

---

[96] Motta, 36
[97] 23 de Enero translates to January 23, which refers to the date former dictator Marcos Perez Jimenez fled the country before the establishment of puntofijismo
[98] Ross and Rein, 189
[99] Personal observation, Caracas, August 2014

The Law of Communal Councils was first passed in 2006 and reformed in 2009. Housed under and supervised by the Ministry for the Commune, CCs are organized, with the aid of the Presidential Committee of Popular Participation, by citizen assemblies "of 150 to 400 families that share a common history and geography"[100] in urban areas, or a minimum of 20 families in rural areas or 10 families in indigenous communities, and any community member over the age of 15 can participate. The assembly is a participatory body, in which community issues can be discussed, potential approaches debated, and decisions made through a variety of mechanisms, from consensus-building to majority vote. The decisions made through and within the CCs are legally binding, providing force and legitimacy to what could otherwise have been a symbolic structure and tangible significance to the outcomes of CC governance.

Through discussion and debate, these assemblies set the territorial boundaries the CC will cover; receive, vote on, approve, and enact public works project proposals; and establish a variety of specialized committees, discussed in more detail below. Each of these working committees focuses on an identified community need or fills a CC administrative function, such as the "administration and finance unit[s] and an independent comptroller unit… [and] an independent electoral unit."[101] From those working groups, the assembly elects communal council spokespersons, known by the Spanish term voceros or voceras, who make up the central work committee, and are elected to two-year terms with no term limits.[102] All of these committees, whether they be topically focused or fulfill an administrative function, "compose the executive body of the consejo comunal."[103] Thus, each CC is comprised of a citizen

[100] Wilpert 2011, 109
[101] Wilpert 2011, 109
[102] Motta, 37
[103] Harrison-Conwill, 170

assembly, an executive body of administrative or topic-focused committees, and a central work committee of elected spokespersons.

The initial cycle of CC project work is described in detail by Juan Carlos Triviño Salazar, in his working paper for the International Institute of Social Studies, and is worth relating at length, as it provides a clear overview of the broader cycle of needs assessment and project planning:

> When the citizens' assembly has finally elected the spokespeople the communal cycle starts. This cycle refers to the steps followed in order to address the needs of the community. The first step is making a communal diagnosis which is meant to identify the community's most urgent needs. After being completed, the citizens' assembly proceeds to make a communal plan. This is the action plan which should guide the execution of the actions that will tackle those things that are considered a priority. When the plan is ready, the citizens' assembly agrees on a budget to execute it. Finally, the communal cycle is closed by the completion and control of the projects approved by the community through the social control unit.[104]

This also illustrates how involved the community assembly is in the planning and decision-making processes within the CC. Though specialized committees are also important working bodies, it is the assembly that makes the final decisions.

The specialized committees "take responsibility for concerns regarding health, education, security, and other issues,"[105] and therefore act as links between CCs and state level social programs, several of which require the formation of citizen committees to assist in program implementation. In addition to opening avenues to established, funded programs to CCs and their communities, these links expand participatory practices into additional government areas and governance structures beyond the CC, which will be explored in greater detail in further sections. Many of these citizen committees pre-date the CCs, but

[104] Triviño Salazar, 15
[105] Ibid

have been incorporated into its structure. The health committee, for example, was a preexisting entity under the state-run Barrio Adentro program that now operates under the umbrella of the CC. Because each CC committee sends a vocera/o to participate in the work committee, existing citizen committees are also assured representation there and therefore can also participate in the wider governance process of the community. It also implies that those who have been working in the communities bring that experience with them to the work committee and build local bodies of knowledge about the community itself, as well as organizing strategies and skills. Rosangela Orozco acknowledges, "Of course, it is not perfect, but today at least we are organized. There are many projects that allow us to improve our material conditions such as the Missions, but the foundation of this process is popular participation… Socialism is not something that you only read about, it is something that you have to practice."[106]

Marina Sitrin and Dario Azzellini report that approximately 5,000 CCs had been formed by the time the Law was first passed, indicating a widespread initial interest in the participatory process.[107] By early 2007 that number had jumped to about 20,000[108] and a 2013 census placed the number even higher, at 40,035.[109] The continued expansion of CCs into additional communities speaks to the relevance of these forms of governance, as well as the function of the CCs as an avenue to participation and increased access to collective goods for previously excluded or marginalized groups. Kirk A. Hawkins, in his analysis of the AmericasBarometer survey from 2006-2007, affirms "that Bolivarian associations are

[106] Ross and Rien, 188-190
[107] Sitrin and Azzellini, 219
[108] Ellner 2008, 128
[109] Sitrin and Azzellini, 219

mobilizing new Venezuelans, particularly sectors of the population, such as women and the poor, that have traditionally been excluded from politics."[110]

CCs receive their funding and initial support directly from the state. This direct connection to the state, as opposed to working through the municipality, is intended to work around the pre-existing governance structures that are potentially threatened by the establishment of participatory power. According to Dario Azzellini, "the state's initiative and the support work of state institutions have proven essential to the dissemination of the community councils. It has made it possible to reach many communities that otherwise would have had little or no access to the resources which enable them to start the process of self-organization toward self-administration."[111] Indeed, "the creation of community councils was partly a reaction to the inefficiency of the state bureaucracy, particularly at the municipal level."[112] Though the state's involvement in the participatory processes has not been without tension – given the power redistribution represented and embodied by the CCs – the large number of CCs formed since 2006 indicate that that tension has not proven an obstacle to their formation and expansion.

Groups of CCs can also join together to form communes, to coordinate larger projects and further balance the power of traditional municipal governments. "Participating councils themselves determine the geographical reach of their communes. Communes can develop medium- and long-term projects of greater scope, while decisions continue to be made in the assemblies of the communal councils."[113] While Steve Ellner argues that the CCs and

[110] Hawkins, 55
[111] Azzellini, 230
[112] Ellner 2009, 13
[113] Sitrin and Azzellini, 220

Communes are currently "not in a position to supplant municipal government,"[114] they do certainly threaten the power of municipalities by taking over some of their functions, like community planning, and directly connecting organized communities to the state, through the social missions for education and health, and community development planning and funding.

Chavista Education

Due to a long economic downturn under puntofijismo and economic restructuring, Venezuelan education was in a poor state when Chávez was first elected and the constitution reformed. As a result of the overall economic decline, "the middle-class could no longer afford private health care and private education…[and so] gradually took over the country's public education and health system."[115] Registration fees for public schools and increasing privatization of education became major barriers to education for many, and "even with a steadily increasing population, the number of students attending public schools stayed almost exactly the same, at 5.5 million between 1992 and 1998."[116] Furthermore, state spending on education declined to less that 2% GNP in 1999, leading to the school infrastructure disintegration, cancelled courses, and a lack of both resources and adequately trained teachers.[117]

Consequently, education was an important focus of the 1999 Constitution and the early Chávez administration. "Article 103 [of the constitution] states that everyone has the right to a full, high-quality, ongoing education under conditions and circumstances of equality, subject only to such limitations as derive from the person's own aptitudes, vocation

[114] Ellner 2009, 13
[115] Wilpert 2007, 106-107
[116] Wilpert 2007, 120
[117] Shah, 77n4

and aspirations."[118] The educational reforms enacted under the newly reformed constitution were sweeping and have dramatically opened up Venezuela's educational system to those who had been previously excluded. Programs implemented after the reformation of the constitution provide free education for every age group from pre-school through university at the undergraduate level, along with social missions Robinson and Ríbas that aim to reduce illiteracy and provide education to adults who were unable to complete their own, respectively.

Assessing the first ten years of Chávez's leadership, Mark Weisbrot, Rebecca Ray, and Luis Sandoval found that "Net enrollment at the basic (grades 1-9) level has risen from 85 percent to 93.6 percent, and secondary enrollment has risen even more, from one-fifth to over one-third of the population…The largest gains have been seen in higher education: from the 1999-2000 school year to 2006-2007, enrollment increased by 86 percent."[119] Those percent increases represent hundreds of thousands of children who were able to enter and remain in school, and future generations who are not inhibited by a lack of education.

While the widespread educational reforms are impressive and all worth examination in detail, it is the social missions that perhaps best express the empowering force behind Chavista reforms and movements. Mission Robinson, which initially focused on reducing illiteracy and then expanded to include education up to the sixth grade level, has been a particular success, resulting in a 90% reduction in Venezuela's illiteracy rate, amounting to 1.2 million people gaining literacy a mere two years after its implementation.[120] Following Mission Robinson is Mission Ríbas, which allows adults to attain the equivalent of a high

[118] López de D'Amico, et. al., 92-93
[119] Weisbrot, et. al., 13
[120] Gibbs, 274

school education, and Mission Sucre, which "is essentially a preparation, insertion, and scholarship program for a university education."[121]

The education committee within a CC then becomes the link between their community and the state-generated education programs and education-oriented social missions. In the case of Missions Robinson and Ríbas, the state and the community coordinate to ensure each Mission has the appropriate materials and a facilitator. Classes are taught through VHS tapes, and "the facilitator serves as the bridge between the video and the students… The classes are held in…any available rooms ranging from classrooms to living rooms. The only requirements [are] that they have a roof, an electrical connection for the television and VCR, a place to put the chalkboard and seats for the students."[122] These two Missions are similar in their community involvement, but the variety of educational missions indicates a similar variety of ways the education committee on a CC can increase their community's overall level of education. However, this is an avenue for additional research, as specific data is limited regarding how the education committees interact with other Missions, especially as the level of educational attainment increases.

By providing the materials, location, and facilitator, the education committee helps the social mission enter their community, ensuring access to education than had often historically been denied. Sara Julia Kozameh reinforces this in her description of mission participants in Caracas, as "generally a homogenous group: older people who were previously excluded from the educational system and who had to abandon their studies at a young age due to economic hardship…It is also important to mention that the majority of

[121] Wilpert 2007, 130
[122] Kozameh, 72

participants in the educational missions that I interviewed were women."[123] The educational committee therefore serves as a vital link between their communities and the state-led social programs that can provide tangible benefits and rectify historical marginalization from both collective goods and society at large. Again, Kozameh describes the connection between access to services like education and the ability to fully participate in civic life.

> [It] was evident that the educational missions had opened up a space for dialogue about politics in neighborhoods where marginalization had long kept people out of tune with political, social and economic issues. I was told repeatedly…that just a few years earlier nobody spoke about politics, and that nobody participated in discussions or debates.[124]

In this description, the impact of education is clearly felt beyond the benefits of literacy and basic education, and illustrate how the reforms back up the official rhetoric that, for the evolving Venezuelan state, "education is not seen as separate from other spheres of life; it is seen to be a critical element in efforts to create direct, participatory democracy."[125] As the education committees within the CCs are broadly tasked with attending to the educational needs of the community, this can include working with any number of the state educational programs or social missions to fulfill those needs, reinforcing and deepening the overall participatory nature of the Bolivarian project.

Chavista Health

The Barrio Adentro (BA, Spanish for Inside the Neighborhood) Health Mission is one of the Chavista reforms that pre-dates the CCs but has since been folded into its structure. Health services in Venezuela were sparse or hard to access for many Venezuelans in the

[123] Kozameh, 105
[124] Kozameh, 115
[125] Gibbs, 274

years before Chávez was elected and the constitution reformed. Steadily increasing poverty and extreme poverty under puntofijismo coupled with neoliberal structural adjustment programs that pushed for the privatization of many health care services in the late 1980s and early 1990s significantly narrowed the health service options available for many Venezuelans.

The defunding of public health services was striking. "Public investment in health, which had been 13.3 percent of the national budget in 1970, fell to 9.3 percent in 1990 and 7.89 percent in 1996, representing only 1.73 percent of the gross domestic product."[126] Underfunded and overcrowded, "the response capacity of the health care network was critically insufficient"[127] during the 1990s, with long waiting lists for many types of care as well as supply shortages. The lack of accessible health care was mirrored in stagnant life expectancy and infant mortality rates throughout the decade.[128]

It is not surprising, then, that health would be a consideration in the creation of the 1999 Constitution, which "enshrines health as a fundamental human right that the state is obligated to guarantee,"[129] and bars future privatization of public health services. Reporting on the first ten years of the Chávez administration, Mark Weisbrot, Rebecca Ray, and Luis Sandoval write, "In 1998 there were 417 emergency rooms, 74 rehab centers and 1,628 primary care centers compared to 721 emergency rooms, 445 rehab centers and 8,621 primary care centers (including the 6,500 neighborhood clinics, usually in poor neighborhoods) by February 2007."[130] This represents a huge increase in the availability of healthcare for all Venezuelans, but especially those who previously were unable to access health services.

---

[126] Alvarado, et. al., 9
[127] Alvarado, et. al., 11
[128] Wilpert 2007, 132
[129] Muntaner, et. al., 231
[130] Weisbrot et. al., 12

The neighborhood clinics mentioned above are a project of BA, which was only one of the health reforms enacted based on the parameters of the new constitution, but was by far the most expansive in terms of providing previously excluded Venezuelans access to health. Piloted in April 2003 with 50 Cuban physicians, and officially incorporated into the Chavista government that September, BA has been credited with "the materialization of the right to health care for millions of Venezuelans."[131] BA provides medical services free of cost to all, and all of the Cuban doctors who participate must "be specialized in comprehensive general medicine, a residency program that lasts three and a half years and includes internal medicine, pediatrics, obstetrics, and preventive medicine."[132]

Originally working out of donated rooms in community members' homes, since August 2004 the program has grown to include the construction of clinics in the communities where the program had been operating and, as of 2011, "20,000 Cuban health workers and a growing number of Venezuelan health professionals make up the human resources in Barrio Adentro."[133] A 2009 survey covering both urban and rural areas found that "51.3% of respondents mentioned that a Barrio Adentro facility was located within a walking distance of 5 minutes"[134] from their home. While that does indicate a continuing need at the time of the survey, as the remaining respondents may also have been far from other types of health care facilities, it does show a significant amount of accessibility of the BA clinics.

Along with providing greater access to health services, BA has relied on community participation from its inception, even before the institution of the CCs as a participatory

[131] Castro, 81
[132] Castro, 80
[133] Muntaner, et. al., 233
[134] Muntaner, er. al., 234

governance structure.[135] From those first families who accepted doctors into their homes, a community must now have a health committee in order to be eligible for BA. Though they pre-date the CCs, those committees now function under its umbrella to better coordinate with other participatory governance processes. According to a Pan American Health Organization report, health committees have 11 members, on average, who are elected through the community assembly. "Their mandate is to identify the priority health problems in the community…and decide on the main actions that the community should take to address them. They are also responsible for making arrangements to support the work of their particular popular medical dispensary and comprehensive diagnostic center."[136] Health committees "help draft health policies, plans, projects and programs, as well as carry out and evaluate the mission's management,"[137] and they are also tasked with coordinating with the other committees on the CCs to address those issues.[138] But they also work closely with the health care workers that staff the BA clinics.

> The health committees created by the communities are supported in each locality by teams consisting of a physician, a social worker, and a nurse who are responsible for a program of work in *health promotion and the prevention of priority health problems*. The health committees prepare proposals for health interventions, which, once approved, are funded by the state government.[139]

Therefore, in a community that suffers disproportionately from water-borne illnesses, the health committee, supported by the medical staff where necessary, can work within the larger CC structure to develop a plan for the community to gain access to clean drinking water, as

[135] Hawkins, 36
[136] Alvarado, 35
[137] Castro, 80
[138] Alvarado, 35
[139] Alvarado, 35. My emphasis.

well as run educational outreach about effectively treating unclean water, contributing to overall community health as well as development.

Community Planning

Another function CCs fill is to allow participants to direct the physical development of their own communities. This is also, perhaps, the function that most threatens existing governance structures and those who benefit from them. While this threat is partly symbolic, by shifting some of the power to make decisions about the physical space and infrastructure of these communities, it is also inherently financial. In the first year of the CCs alone, "a total of $1.5 billion was turned over to these councils for their projects [from the state]…This represents a significant redirection of state funds, away from governors and mayors and towards the communal councils."[140] Though Steve Ellner argues that the CCs are not yet positioned to supplant preexisting representative governance structures, it would seem that their mere existence presents the opportunity for power struggles, at least at the municipal level.

Despite the potential for conflict with other power structures, CCs are well positioned to provide material benefits to their communities.[141] Like the varied possibilities surrounding education, the potential contained within the CCs to impact the physical space of and services for their communities is broad and dependent upon the needs and desires of the community members themselves. Thus projects are influenced by geographical location as well as access to existing infrastructure, which is often tightly linked to class. A rural CC may organize a project to build or improve a road or bus service that connects them to larger

[140] Wilpert 2011, 110
[141] Wilde 2015, 3

cities,[142] where a middle class urban CC may organize the creation or rehabilitation of a neighborhood park.

In fact, in order to receive funding as a CC, the citizen's assembly must hold a census and propose three development projects to the state funding organization. As Wilde observed during his fieldwork in Valencia, the CC in his neighborhood proposed a day center "for the community's elderly residents, repairs to the houses of some of the poorest families in the community, and a plan to fill in the dirty and polluted canal that marked the border between El Camoruco and its neighbouring barrio."[143] In carrying out projects like these, CCs often employ community members, bringing in technicians or specialists for guidance. This provides employment and skill set development for participants, and ensures that the community can benefit in as many ways as possible from these projects.

CCs can also join together to enact projects, as communes or simply in concert, which can enable a larger aggregate of community development projects. In that same Valencia community, four CCs joined together to start a bus service. This bus service "offered cheaper fares to the city centre than the private [bus] operators and provided work for drivers and collectors… A strict agreement was made between the four CCs to ensure that [the] profits would be used for the whole community, with the committee being required to keep records of the takings so the four CCs could then decide on how the money would be used."[144] This kind of project illustrates the kinds of benefits the CCs can have on a community – the new bus service employed residents of the area providing some long-term employment and it facilitated cheaper transportation for community members who needed to reach the city center, either for work, CC business, or personal reasons.

[142] Wilde 2013, 152
[143] Wilde 2013, 196
[144] Wilde 2013, 195

Conclusion

Participatory governance processes in Venezuela, while not without conflict, have had measurable impacts on the social fabric of the country by empowering many groups who had previously been excluded from political participation to take some measures of control over their communities. Programs like the CCs and social missions, crucially, represent a significant shift away from previous forms of governance that were largely based on exclusion. As Ellner argues, "[i]nvolvement in [CC] activities has had a pronounced formative influence on the unincorporated sectors of the population, which for the most part have had no previous experience of direct input into decision making of this nature."[145] Venezuela stands as an example that participatory processes can be fostered through more centralized programs, even as they illustrate the potential for conflict or power struggles in that case.

As the country continues to experience economic volatility, extreme political polarization, and high levels of violence in the wake of Chávez's death and mobilizations against his successor Nicolás Maduro, these processes face an uncertain future. However, considering the unprecedented nature of popular organizing facilitated by these practices[146] it is not unreasonable to envision a different role for previously marginalized or excluded Venezuelans in the future of the country's governance and politics than had been provided to them before the 1999 constitutional reforms. A return to puntofijismo, or some approximation thereof, seems unlikely.

[145] Ellner 2013, 73
[146] Lander, 4

Conclusion

"In a sense, what we need to do is impossible. These experiences are so well rooted in local spaces and cultures that any attempt to reduce them to a single, global discourse is both impossible and preposterous. But they have in common something that goes beyond both modernity and postmodernity. What is happening defines a general reaction against a pathological social condition that has reached a world scale and is increasingly unbearable."[147] – *Gustavo Esteva, Salvatore Babones, and Philipp Babcicky*

Similarities

Participatory governance processes represent real avenues for marginalized peoples to empower themselves to build emancipatory alternative governance structures. Though there is no one-size-fits-all model for what these participatory structures should look like, there are some similarities from which generalizations can be drawn, without going so far as to be reductionist. These similarities, which are interrelated, highlight the potential that participatory governance holds for those who seek alternative forms of governance, or who are marginalized under current systems.

The first, and perhaps most obvious, similarity is that by offering people real opportunities for increased participation in the governing of their communities, there are commensurate increases in a community's ability to direct it's own affairs. These are meaningful mechanisms, not simply ceremonial or token processes that mask the actual processes of governance. Community members can voice their concerns and opinions, collectively identify needs in their community that need to be addressed, and work together – with or without outside assistance – to find ways to meet those needs. For many marginalized communities, this can mean the difference between having a clinic in your neighborhood as opposed to several miles away or a school that teaches in your first

[147] Esteva et. al., 100

language. One could probably even make an argument about how the prioritization of projects and processes that provide real benefits to communities is also a more prudent and effective use of public funds, where they are available, but would be the focus of a different paper.

Second, these participatory governance processes also serve to redistribute power, though in a variety of potential ways. Regardless of the involvement or disengagement with the state, these processes do shift at least some power to communities by providing them with the ability to make decisions that affect their immediate contexts. By re-centering some of the decision-making power in the community, or by communities claiming it for themselves, established governments lose some of their ability to direct, successfully or no, political, social, and economic relations at all levels of society. While this process is not without conflict, for peoples or communities that have historically been marginalized, even a small shift in decision-making and resource-distributing power can open up processes and collective goods that had previously been barred from them, either legally or practically.

For example, for the communities included in this study, the ability to dramatically increase their own access to education – either by establishing their own educational system, as in Mexico, or by being able to tap into state programs that sought to redress historic gaps in educational access, as in Venezuela – makes fundamental changes in their community's ability to challenge established power structures. This is not to say that education is the cure all for exploitative or persecutorial social relations, but even simple literacy can dramatically change a community's ability to invoke their human rights and claim space in the wider social imaginary.

This redistribution of power, then, leads to the third similarity. By creating new priorities of governance through these power shifts, participatory governance is able to produce new systems and structures to meet these new, potentially emancipatory, priorities. The cases included here represent different kinds of potentially emancipatory systems. In Zapatista communities in Mexico, participatory governance means that all voices in a community have the potential to be heard. This is generally empowering for all community members who participate, given their historic marginalization and persecution by the Mexican state, but also produces additional avenues of empowerment for women, who were even less able to participate in public community life.[148] The conscious attempt to make gender relations and roles more equitable is represented in their 1993 Women's Revolutionary Law, and in the women's collectives in some caracoles and communities. Through the sales of artisanal craftwork, Zapatista women are able to collectively support their communities through traditional forms of art, turning traditional "women's work" into an important expression of their cultural heritage that is equally valuable to other forms of work.

In Venezuela, the emancipatory possibilities contained within participatory governance processes are embodied by the potential for marginalized or impoverished communities to hold elected bodies accountable to the decisions made in their community assemblies. While this would offer a much longer time frame for creating new systems – either by changing the priorities of the existing governance processes or by continuing to create greater aggregations of communal governance and achieving a partial withering away of the state in it's current form – in the short term it holds established governance institutions

[148] See Hilary Klein's *Compañeras: Zapatista Women's Stories* (Seven Stories Press, 2015) for an in-depth assessment of Zapatista feminism

more accountable to the communities they purportedly represent. Thus the systemic change is perhaps most pronounced to the observer when projected onto a larger scale.

Potential Obstacles

These possible changes, however, do not preclude the potential for problems surrounding participatory governance. These processes are not immune to existing incarnations of hegemony or discrimination, as evident in the Zapatista's need to explicitly foster gender equality within the movement or power struggles between CCs and municipal governments that may lose structural power as well as the influence of individuals who previously benefitted from that structure. Thus, while participatory governance processes have the potential to transform the priorities of governance as well as social structures, it is important to remember that they do not exist in a vacuum, and have the potential to reproduce existing inequalities even as they seek to ameliorate others.

Participatory processes are also still vulnerable to external fluctuations and events. The political and economic instability in Venezuela, in particular, raises questions about the long-term stability of the greater Bolivarian project there, of which the CCs are only one component. This has been thrown into stark relief since the death of Hugo Chávez, the election of Nicolás Maduro, and large-scale protests, scarcities of basic goods, and monetary inflation that have continued to plague his administration. Considering the CCs very close ties with the state, their continued existence may be reliant, at least officially, on the continuation of that state in a similar form. However, it is not totally out of bounds to posit that the organizational function of the CCs could survive, albeit perhaps with certain different goals, without the support of the Venezuelan state. Venezuela does have a history of

community organizing for non-governance purposes;[149] so continued community cooperation is not completely implausible.

It is also possible, however, that without the financial support of the state for local development projects or access to large scale social programs like the Missions, the CCs would lose their appeal to those who contribute a great deal of time and energy to their construction and continuation. Therefore, the close tie to the Chavista national project has the potential to undercut the long-term viability of the participatory governance processes that project seeks to inculcate in the Venezuelan socio-political arena.

The close tie to the state also raises potential concerns about cooptation, which Matt Wilde explored in his dissertation.[150] CC membership and participation is open to anyone over the age of 15 in the CC's area associated, so de facto cooptation by government agents or supporters is always a possibility, as would be cooptation by oppositional political parties. However, barring a reversal of national policy at the state level, or excessive infiltration by actors with specific political goals, the CC structure seems positioned to continue its expansion into ever-larger aggregates of Venezuelan governance,[151] though not without power struggles with existing representative governance structures.

Given the Zapatista's explicit rejection of official ties to the Mexican state, the viability of their governance project faces different potential obstacles. First and foremost is the very real physical danger they face in the hands of the Mexican military and paramilitary groups. Though Zapatista communities are numerous, they also frequently share their immediate community space with non-Zapatista groups and individuals, and the separation of the EZLN's military function from the governance of the JBG means that not every Zapatista

[149] Ciccariello-Maher
[150] Wilde 2013; Guillén de Romero, et. al.
[151] Azzellini

community is necessarily protected by armed, trained individuals.[152] Continued attacks on Zapatista communities illustrate the level of insecurity they face simply by existing, and physical danger is a real concern when considering the longevity of their governance project.[153]

A second potential obstacle is the relationship between Zapatista communities and civil society organizations. While the JBG are a tool to manage that relationship and guide it to better serving Zapatista needs, those openings are potential avenues for political disruption or sabotage. And, in many ways, the Zapatistas are dependent upon an international audience, as well as a Mexican audience, to act as witness to their struggle and a barrier of sorts between their communities and those who see them as an obstacle to resources and certain specific notions of progress. This potentially complicated relationship with outside civil society and its commensurate organizations has so far been a largely positive force in favor of the Zapatistas, but that does not preclude changes to that relationship in the future.

Tentative Utopia

It is important to draw attention to the fact that, in both cases examined here, when marginalized people have the ability to make decisions that directly affect their contexts, they prioritize projects and processes that invest in their communities through education, health, and increased equity of resource distribution. This suggests that participatory processes

[152] This is hardly surprising since the goal of the Zapatista movement is to live peacefully in their communities according to their own traditions, not to conquer surrounding communities or engage in active warfare with the Mexican state.

[153] An attack on the Caracol La Realidad in May 2014 by a paramilitary group killed the community's teacher and left the school and clinic demolished.

produce governance outcomes that are more just, more equitable, than current hegemonic governance structures, which frequently privilege few at the expense of many.[154] Addressing collective needs would seem to be a natural outcome of processes where every member of the community has the right to raise concerns in the same forum where decisions about rule making or resource allocation are made; unlike representative forms of government where elected officials adhere to their constituent's desires in the ideal but are also permitted, and in some instances even expected, to make decisions that contradict that mandate if they believe it is in their constituent's best interest.

The participatory nature of these processes also has the capacity to change social relations, by reorienting priorities towards the community. As expressed by Venezuelan activist Rosangela Orozco, cited in chapter three, the community was prioritized because every member of the CC was able to reap the benefits of their collective work. "Everyone who is part of this commune has to be a worker bee to make sure that the commune has really good services, tranquility, it stays clean, it is maintained, we have quality education, recreation, communal spaces."[155] By emphasizing the needs of the many over the needs of the few, participatory governance processes encourage people to work together to meet collective goals.

This is notably different from the individualism inherent in representative governance, where each person casts their vote for personal reasons, and hopes that more people agree than disagree with them, without needing to do much more than try to encourage others to vote as they do or at all. In places where the pursuit of individual desires has the potential to impede the ability of a community to meet its needs or function in ways it deems to be more

[154] Gilens and Page
[155] Ross and Rein, 189

healthy or equitable, the emphasis on the collective that seems to be inherent to participatory governance could produce significant changes in social relations as well as social structure.

As evident by the social changes enacted through these participatory processes, at the time of writing, both projects have created strong foundations upon which to build in the future, to weather obstacles tied to both internal and external changes, and to induce critical self-assessment in response to those changes. In both cases, individuals and communities participate in the governance processes voluntarily, indicating that those who are involved are so because they support the overall goals of each process. While that is not sufficient to guarantee long-term success, it places each project on a firmer footing by engaging primarily with those who are committed to fulfilling those goals and ensuring the continuation of the programs.

The changes in social relations produced by each of these participatory processes also work to sustain them in the long term. Therefore, even given the potential problems or obstacles mentioned previously, these participatory processes continue to generate the conditions under which they can be perpetuated. This is partially reflected in the length of time these processes have been in place. At the time of writing, the Zapatistas have been practicing self-governance for over twenty years as a movement, not to mention the existing and traditional practices they built upon to do so. In Venezuela, the CCs have been thriving and increasing for nearly a decade. Neither of these measures would have been possible without individuals and communities seeing the both immediate material and emancipatory socio-political benefits of perpetuating, and modifying when necessary, these processes.

Therefore, barring major external upheavals or internal collapse of support, participatory governance processes in Mexico and Venezuela are both well positioned to

continue to empower marginalized communities and to enable them to build, and even expand, equitable, emancipatory, counterhegemonic governance systems and structures of their own making. These participatory processes are materially and symbolically important examples that alternative forms governance are viable pathways forward in a rapidly globalizing world. They are also examples that deserve serious consideration as we seek to find better, more just, and more equitable ways of living together as our world grows ever closer. Another world is, indeed, possible.

Research Possibilities

The scope of this project is relatively small by necessity, but there are many possibilities for future research for this line of inquiry into participatory governance processes. Looking at participatory projects in additional areas of the globe would perhaps provide an expanded picture of what participatory governance looks like when implemented in the material world. Are there significant differences in outcomes at different levels or scales? What are the factors that best support participatory processes? Are there obstacles they face across geography, aggregation, or culture? What happens to communities as they transition to participatory governance from other forms or systems? Research of greater scale and depth could also better identify and explore the problems that arise in participatory governance projects more generally, particularly concerning their relationship, or lack thereof, with already existing national governments or even international actors.

Bibliography

Almeyra, Guillermo. "EZLN: Política Y Poder Desde Los Movimientos Sociales." *El Cotidiano*, Issue 137, 2006, pp 38–43.

Alvarado, Carlos, et. al. "Mission Barrio Adentro: the Right to Health and Social Inclusion in Venezuela." *Pan American Health Organization*. Caracas, Venezuela: 2006.

Azzellini, Dario. "The Communal System as Venezuela's Transition to Socialism" in *Communism in the 21st Century, Volume 2: Whither Communism? The Challenges of the Past and the Present*. Shannon Brincat, ed. Santa Barbara, Denver, Oxford: Praeger, 2014.

Baiocchi, Gianpaolo. "Emergent Public Spheres: Talking Politics in Participatory Governance." *American Sociological Review*, 2003 Vol. 68, No. 1, pp 52–74.

Baronnet, Bruno. "Rebel Youth and Zapatista Autonomous Education." Trans. Mariana Ortega Breña. *Latin American Perspectives*, Issue 161, Vol. 35, No. 4, July 2008, pp 112–124.

Bevir, Mark. *Key Concepts in Governance*. Los Angeles, London, New Delhi, Singapore, Washington, DC: SAGE Publications, 2009.

Butler, Judith. *Precarious Lives: The Power of Mouring and Violence.* New York, London: Verso, 2004.

Carpinteiro, Francisco Javier Gómez. "The Subject's Tracks the Other Campaign, Self-Knowledge, and Subjectivity in the Liberal Democratic Cycle." Trans. Margot Olavarria. *Latin American Perspectives*, Issue 192, Vol. 40, No. 5, September 2013, pp 138–152.

Castro, Arachu. "Barrio Adentro: a Look at the Origins of a Social Mission." *ReVista: Harvard Review of Latin America,* Fall 2008, pp 78–81.

Chaguaceda, Armando, Edgar Córdova Jaimes, and María Elena León Álvarez. "Los Desafíos De La Política Comunitaria en Venezuela." *Espiral*, Vol. 20, No. 57, May/August 2013, pp. 95–128.

Chatterton, Paul and Ryan Ramor. "¡Ya Basta! The Zapatista struggle for autonomy revisited." *City*, Vol. 12, No. 1, April 2008, pp. 115-125.

Chhotray, Vasudha and Gerry Stoker. *Governance Theory and Practice: A Cross-Disciplinary Approach*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009.

Ciccariello-Maher, George. *We Created Chávez: A People's History of the Venezuelan Revolution*. Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2013.

Collier, George with Elizabeth, Lowery Quaratiello. *Basta! Land and the Zapatista Rebellion in Chiapas*. Third edition. Oakland, CA: Food First Books, 2005. Print.

Craig, Gary. "Towards the Measurement of Empowerment: The Evaluation of Community Development." *Community Development Society Journal*, 2002, Vol. 33, No. 1, pp 124-146.

Cuevas, J.H. "Salud y Autonomía: el caso de Chiapas." *Health Systems Knowledge Network*. Ottawa, Canada: WHO Commission on the Social Determinants of Health, March 2007, pp 1-13.

de La Luz Inclán, María. "From the ¡Ya Basta! to the Caracoles: Zapatista Mobilization under Transitional Conditions." *American Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 113, No. 5 March 2008, pp. 1316-1350.

Díaz-Polanco, Héctor. "Caracoles: La Autonomía Regional Zapatista." *El Cotidiano*, Issue 137, 2006, pp 44–51.

Earle, Duncan, and Jeanne Simonelli. "The Zapatistas and Global Civil Society: Renegotiating the Relationship." *European Review of Latin America and Caribbean Studies*, 2004, Vol. 76, pp. 119–125.

Ellner, Steve. *Rethinking Venezuelan Politics: Class, Conflict, and the Chávez Phenomenon*. Boulder and London: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2008.
----- "A New Model with Rough Edges Venezuela's: Community Councils." *NACLA Report on the Americas*, May/June 2009, pp. 11–14.

Enlace Civil. "Caracoles y Juntas de Buen Gobierno." *Enlace Civil*. Enlace Civil, n.d. Web. 30 May 2014.

Ejército Zapatista de Liberación Nacional (EZLN).
----- "Celebración del 5º Aniversario de las JBG." 11 August 2008. Via enlacezapatista.ezln.org.mx. Web. 29 January 2015
-----"Chiapas, the Thirteenth Stele; Part Six: A Good Government." July 2003. Via flag.blackened.net. Web. 2 May 2015
----- Communiqué dated 19 December 1994. Via palabra.elzn.org. Web. 29 January 2015

Esteva, Gustavo, Salvatore Babones, and Philipp Babcicky. *The Future of Development: A Radical Manifesto*. Chicago: Policy Press, 2013.

Estrada Saavedra, Marco. "¿Autonomía O Hegemonía? Un Análisis De La Junta De Buen Gobierno Hacia La Esperanza en Las Cañadas Tojolabales De La Selva Lacandona." *El Cotidiano*, Issue 137, 2006, pp 52–61.

Gibbs, Terry. "Business as Unusual: What the Chávez Era Tells Us About Democracy Under Globalisation." *Third World Quarterly*, Vol. 27, No. 2, 2006, 265–279.

Gilens, Martin and Benjamin I. Page. "Testing Theories of American Politics: Elites, Interest Groups, and Average Citizens." *Perspectives on Politics*, September 2014, Vol. 12, No. 3, pp 564-581.

González Casanova, Pablo. "The Zapatista "caracoles": Networks of resistance and autonomy." *Socialism and Democracy*, Vol.19, No. 3, November 2005, pp.79–92.

Graeber, David. *Revolutions in Reverse: Essays on Politics, Violence, Art, and Imagination*. Brooklyn: Autonomedia, 2011.

----- *The Democracy Project: A History, A Crisis, A Movement.* New York: Spiegel and Grau, 2013.

Guillén de Romero, Jacqueline, Eduviges E Morales Villalobos, and Mairely Hernández León. "Noción Constitucional De Democracia en El Devenir De Los Consejos Comunales." *Cuestiones Politicas* Vol. 29, No. 50, January-June 2013, pp 136–155.

Hardt, Michael, and Alvaro Reyes. "'New Ways of Doing': the Construction of Another World in Latin America: an Interview with Raul Zibechi." *South Atlantic Quarterly*, Vol. 111, No. 1, Winter 2012, pp 165–191.

Harrison-Conwill, Giles. "The Race Toward Caraqueño Citizenship: Negotiating Race, Class, and Participatory Democracy." *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, Vol. 637, September 2011, pp. 165–183.

Hall, Gillette H. and Harry Anthony Patrinos. "Introduction" in *Indigenous Peoples, Poverty, and Development* edited by Gillette H. Hall and Harry Anthony Patrinos, 1-16. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012

Hawkins, Kirk A. "Who Mobilizes?" *Latin American Politics and Society*, Vol. 52, No. 3 September 2010, pp. 31–66.

Holloway, John. *Change the World without Taking Power*. New York: Pluto Press, 2010.

Instituto Nacional de Estadística y Geografía (INEGI). *Conociendo Chiapas*. Aguascalienties: INEGI, 2013.

Kozameh, Sara Julia. "The Misiones Bolivarianas: A Study of Participatory Democracy in Venezuela." MA Thesis. University of California, San Diego. 2008.

Lander, Edgardo. "Venezuela: Terminal Crisis of the Rentier Petro-State Model?" *Transnational Institute*. N.p., October 2, 2014. Web. Accessed 26 January 2015.

León, María Elena, and Juan Berríos Ortigoza. "Consejos Comunales: Instancias De Participación O Poder Originario?." *Cuestiones Politicas*, Vol. 28, No. 48, January-June 2012, pp. 113–140.

López de D'Amico, Rosa, Maritza Loreto, and Orlando Mendoza. "Venezuela and Education Transformation for the Development of the People." *Schooling for Sustainable Development in South America*. M L de Amorim Soares and L Petarnella, eds. Dordrecht: Springer Netherlands, 2011. 87–102.

Marcos, Subcomandante. *Our Word is Our Weapon: Selected Writings*, Juana Ponce de León, ed. New York, Sydney, Toronto, Paris: Seven Stories Press, 2001. Print.
----- *The Speed of Dreams*. San Francisco: City Lights Press, 2005. Print

Morales Villalobos, Eduviges E. "Los Consejos Comunales en El Diseño Constitucional De La Democracia Participativa en Venezuela." *Cuestiones Politicas* Vol. 24, No. 40, January-June 2008, pp 91–128.

Motta, Sara C. "Populism's Achilles' Heel: Popular Democracy beyond the Liberal State and the Market Economy in Venezuela." *Latin American Perspectives*, Issue 176, Vol. 38 No. 1, January 2011, pp 28-46.

Muntaner, Carles, Haejoo Chung, Qamar Mahmood, and Francisco Armada. "History Is Not Over: The Bolivarian Revolution, "Barrio Adentro," and Health Care in Venezuela." in *The Revolution in Venezuela; Social and Political Change under Chávez*. Thomas Ponniah and Jonathan Eastwood, ed. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2011.

Muñoz Ramirez, Gloria. *The Fire & The Word; A History of the Zapatista Movement*. San Francisco: City Lights Press, 2008. Print.

Nederveen Pieterse, Jan. "Between Emancipation and Regulation: the Pillars of Modernity." *European Journal of Social Theory*, 2001, Vol. 4, No .3, pp 297–300.

Ornelas, Raúl. "Counterhegemonies and Emancipations: Notes for a Debate." *South Atlantic Quarterly*, Vol. 111, No. 1, Winter, 2012, pp 145–164.

Ponniah, Thomas. "Conclusion: The Conceptual Revolution in Venezuela" in *The Revolution in Venezuela; Social and Political Change under Chávez*. Thomas Ponniah and Jonathan Eastwood, ed. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2011. Print.

Risse, Thomas. "Governance in Areas of Limited Statehood: Introduction and Overview" in *Governance Without a State? Policies and Politics in Areas of Limited Statehood*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2011.

Robinson, William I. *Latin America and Global Capitalism*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2008.

Ross, Clifton, and Marcy Rein, ed. *Until the Rulers Obey: Voices form Latin American Social Movements*. Oakland: PM Press, 2014

Shah, Ritesh. "Community Participation in Schooling: Redefined in Bolivarian Venezuela?" *Logics of Socialist Education*. Ed. Tom G Griffiths and Zsuzsa Millei. Vol. 24. Dordrecht: Springer Netherlands, 2012.

SIPAZ. "ANALYSIS: Resistance and autonomy, the creation of the zapatista juntas of good government." *SIPAZ Report*, Vol. VIII, No. 2, August 2003. Web.
-----"Facts About Chiapas - Health." Via sipaz.org. Web. 2 May 2015.
-----"IN FOCUS : The Path of the Caracol Towards Autonomy." *SIPAZ Report*, Vol. X, No. 1, March 2005. Web.

Sitrin, Marina and Dario Azzellini. *They Can't Represent Us! Reinventing Democracy from Greece to Occupy*. London and New York: Verso Press, 2014.

Stahler-Sholk, Richard. "Resisting Neoliberal Homogenization: The Zapatista Autonomy Movement." *Latin American Perspectives*, Issue 153, Vol. 34 No. 2, March 2007, pp 48-63.
-----"The Zapatista Social Movement: Innovation and Sustainability." *Alternatives: Global, Local, Political*, July 2010 vol. 35 no. 3, 269-290. Web.

Standing, Guy. *The Precariat: The New Dangerous Class*. London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2011.

Touchton, Michael, and Brian Wampler. "Improving Social Well-Being Through New Democratic Institutions." *Comparative Political Studies*, 2014, Vol. 47, No. 1, pp 1442–1469.

Triviño Salazar, Juan Carlos. "The Promise of Transformation Through Participation: an Analysis of Communal Councils in Caracas, Venezuela." Working Paper #558 for the *International Institute of Social Studies,* April 2013, pp 1–26. Web.

United Nations Development Program. "Multidimensional Poverty Index." *UNDP Human Development Reports*, n.d. Web. http://hdr.undp.org/en/content/multidimensional-poverty-index-mpi Accessed 16 March 2015.
----- "United Nations Development Report Summary 2014." New York, NY: UNDP, 2014.

Veltmeyer, Henry. *On the Move: The Politics of Social Change in Latin America*. Ontario: Broadview Press, 2007.

Weisbrot, Mark, Rebecca Ray, and Luis Sandoval. "The Chávez Administration at 10 Years: the Economy and Social Indicators." *Center for Economic and Policy Research,* February 2009, pp 1–24.

Wilde, Matt. ""We Shall Overcome": Radical Populism, Political Morality and Participatory Democracy in a Venezuelan Barrio." Dissertation. The London School of Economics and Political Science. 2013.
----- "Participation and Polarization After Chávez." Fieldsights Hot Spots, *Cultural Anthropology Online*, Web, February 5, 2015. Accessed 17 February 2015.

Wilpert, Gregory. *Changing Venezuela by Taking Power: The History and Politics of the Chávez Government*. London, New York: Verso Press, 2007.
----- "Venezuela's Experiment in Participatory Democracy" in *The Revolution in Venezuela; Social and Political Change under Chávez*. Thomas Ponniah and Jonathan Eastwood, ed. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2011.

World Bank. "Empowerment and Poverty Reduction: A Sourcebook." http://go.worldbank.org/FD9HH8DH11. Web, May 2002. Accessed 18 March 2015.

Zibechi, Raúl. *Territories in Resistance: A Cartography of Latin American Social Movements*. Oakland: AK Press, 2012.
-----"Forward" in *Until the Rulers Obey: Voices from Latin American Social Movements*. Clifton Ross and Marcy Rein, ed. Oakland: PM Press, 2014.