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**The Zapatista Rebellion and Mexican Reluctance to Repress a
Dissident Group**

A thesis
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of the requirements for the degree
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Abstract:

Mexican dirty wars, the disappearances of thousands, the 1968 Tlatelolco Massacre, the 1971 Corpus Christi Massacre, genocidal plans, kidnappings, tortures and mass graves: Mexico has a long and well-documented history of how it deals with those who rebel, speak out or protest against the government. The Zapatistas are a group in the state of Chiapas who decided to speak out in defiance. However the fate they received was less harsh than those who had gone before them, or since. Why?

On January 1st 1994, 3,000 Mayan Indian farmers including men, women and children became guerrillas and came down from the mountains in Chiapas and declared war on the Mexican government. They took several municipalities in Chiapas and barricaded themselves in there. The government responded by sending in the military, taking back the municipalities and trying to restore order. Twelve days later, the fighting stopped and a ceasefire was called. Why were the Zapatistas, poor indigenous farmers from the most southern state in Mexico, not brutally repressed like similar groups before them?

This paper is a plausibility probe case study analysis of the Zapatistas, exploring potential hypotheses as to what caused the government's treatment of them to differ from treatment afforded to other rebellions in Mexico. The Zapatista case appears to be a unique one in the Mexican context. This paper looks at the causes from different and interlinking angles. "Liberation technology", political culture, historical timing and the political situation in Mexico, are all explored. The findings show that each aspect had its own crucial role to play, but that there was a

definitive role for communication and technology in explaining the relatively benign treatment of the Zapatistas.

Communication and “liberation technology” allowed the Zapatistas to highlight their struggle and create a discourse that they were able to control. Mexico also has had a complex political relationship and history with the United States of America, and this appears to have had a significant impact on the treatment of the Zapatista during this period. Mexican political culture is strong and complex and has also played a defining role in the history of the Zapatistas.

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List of Acronyms:

CIA	Central Intelligence Agency (United States)
CNDH	National Human Rights Commission (Comisión Nacional de los Derechos Humanos) of Mexico
DFS	Federal Security Directorate (Dirección Federal de Seguridad) of Mexico
EZLN	Zapatista Army of National Liberation (Ejército Zapatista de Liberación Nacional)
ICT	Information and communication technology
LIC	Low intensity conflict
NAFTA	North American Free Trade Agreement
OPDDIC	Organization for Indigenous and Campesino Defence
PAN	National Action Party (Partido Acción Nacional) of Mexico
PPP	Puebla-Panama Plan, a Mexican regional economic development initiative
PRI	Institutional Revolutionary Party (Partido Revolucionario Institucional) of Mexico

Map of Mexican States:



Source: Wikimedia Commons (2015)

Background Chapter:

What causes some rebellions in Mexico to be suppressed and not others? Specifically, why has the Mexican army unexpectedly and continually exercised restraint towards a rebel group, the Zapatista Army of National Liberation (EZLN), known as the Zapatistas? Why did the Zapatistas survive the Mexican government's limited attempts to suppress them, and why are they still relevant in today's world? Mexican authorities in the past and during the time of the Zapatistas uprising (at the beginning in 1994) were very direct and brutal in their suppression of any group that rose up or demonstrated against the government. Nevertheless, the Zapatistas with significant leadership of a masked philosophy professor, Subcomandante Marcos, was not crushed.

The Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) has ruled Mexico for much of the past century. Many dissident groups were silenced during the period of PRI domination in Mexico. Some were active before the Zapatistas, including the Party of the Poor (*Partido de los Pobres*), which waged warfare against the Mexican government from 1967-1974. Faced with massive repression in their state of Guerrero, most of their leaders and key members were killed by the Mexican authorities (Bornemann, 2007). The Peoples' Guerrilla Group (*Grupo Popular Guerrillero*) was another group which rose up and was brutally repressed by Mexican authorities in 1965 (Guzman, 2003). The Popular Revolutionary Army (*Ejercito Popular Revolucionario*) were a group that came about after the Zapatistas, in 1996, and while they are still active today, they have faced brutal and sustained repression. There were reports that in 2008, for example, that 21 members

of this group had gone missing or been kidnapped (Zosimo, 2008). Other protest groups have suffered similar repression. (Doyle, 2009; Khasnabish, 2010)

The following hypotheses represent possible insights into the apparently unique situation of Mexico's reluctance to fully suppress the Zapatista rebellion.

Hypotheses:

H1: The Zapatistas and Subcomandante Marcos' use of the internet and media had a significant impact on their ability to survive the repression of the Mexican authorities.

The Zapatistas' use of the internet and media was thought to have had a significant impact on why they were able to survive the repression of the Mexican authorities. At the time when the Zapatistas came out of the jungle and took the major towns in Chiapas in 1994, the internet was in its infancy. Its power and capabilities were relatively unknown and there was no real way to suppress or control messages that were sent out through it, unlike the sophisticated Internet repression techniques used today, such as China's Great Firewall (Borme & Ye, 1997; Roberts, 2018). The Zapatistas represented a blank canvas, one without any interference from the authorities. The Zapatistas were apparently able to survive because they could send out communications from Chiapas to anywhere in the world. The global village was aware of the Zapatistas and what was happening to them. Authorities were not able to commit the atrocities to other groups they had in the past. The global community were aware of them, effectively creating pressure on the Mexican authorities and influencing the decisions that the authorities made.

H2: The internet presence of Subcomandante Marcos had a significant effect on the exercise of restraint by the Mexican authorities.

Another possible reason why the Zapatistas were able to survive the Mexican authorities may have been due to their most visible spokesman, Subcomandante Marcos. He appears to have been the key to the Mexican authorities' unwillingness to suppress the Zapatistas. He was an effective figurehead, intelligent, well-spoken and able to captivate audiences. Had the support that the Zapatistas received from the global community been less enthusiastic, or non-existent, repression might have been more likely. Marcos captured an audience through the internet which gave him a platform to argue that the Zapatistas were a movement which was worth supporting (Khasnabish, 2010). This appears to have given the Zapatistas legitimacy and visibility in the West, and showed that they weren't just another guerrilla group taking up arms. This point appears to have been a crucial one as regards the treatment of the Zapatistas. Marcos' leadership and apparent decision-making¹ to declare unilaterally a cease fire agreement with the Mexican authorities in the violent struggle, and instead to establish a peaceful and diplomatic front, seems to have been another key in the Zapatistas' survival. If this decision had not been made, the end might have been very different.

H3: The historical period of the Zapatista rebellion is a crucial causal factor in the restraint exercised by the Mexican authorities.

The specific historical period appears to have been crucial to the Zapatistas' survival. They rebelled in 1994 as the world was taking on a new political look. The Zapatistas appeared when people in the West were

¹ It is not clear that Marcos was the sole decision maker. He denied that he was. (Khasnabish, 2010)

looking for something new to support; communism had been effectively defeated. Marcos' and the Zapatistas' idea of the Fourth World War², a war against globalisation, neo-liberal agendas and North Atlantic Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) was something that was already gaining attention across the globe. This links to the hypothesis that the support of outside influences was crucial to the Zapatistas survival. If the Zapatistas had come down from the hills before there was already support building for their cause that cause may have been drowned out by other noise that was occurring at the time. The timing may have also saved the Zapatistas from the full force of the Mexican authorities; the 'Dirty Wars'³ were over. The United States was not as involved in suppressing the left as had been during the Cold War (Rabe, 2015). The Zapatistas' timing, then, may have saved them on two accounts.

H4: The Mexican Government has shown a lack of interest in Chiapas.

The state of Chiapas had never featured prominently in the context of the Mexican political landscape. Chiapas is the southern most of the Mexican states, featuring near the bottom on most of socio-economic indicators in Mexico. Chiapas was the forgotten state in Mexico and its indigenous people there are rightly called the "forgotten people of Mexico" (Vidal, 2018). The government was not even aware at what was occurring in Chiapas, and of the growth in the Zapatistas' numbers before the rebellion

² Marcos referred to the Cold War as the Third World War, so the war in which they are currently waging is the "Fourth World War." (Khasnabish, 2010)

³ Dirty Wars refers to the Mexican theatre of the Cold War, an internal conflict between the Mexican PRI-ruled government, backed by the US, and left-wing student and guerrilla groups in the 1960s and 1970s under the presidencies of Gustavo Díaz Ordaz, Luis Echeverría and José López Portillo (Doyle, 2003).

commenced. The Mexican government's long lack of interest in Chiapas related to the low interest in spending too much time or resources in suppressing the rebellion there.

H₅: The Zapatistas' use of masks triggered a cultural sensitivity that appears to have affected the Mexican Government and military.

Mexico has very strong cultural beliefs, apparent particularly in its many festivals, religious celebrations and day-to-day life. Mayans, the predominant indigenous group in Chiapas, express themselves and their beliefs through rituals involving masks. As Octavio Paz emphasized, a key part of Mexican culture is the use of masks, and a fascination with death, and with the dead (Paz, 1961). The Zapatistas' use of masks in their uniforms and their public dialogues may have struck a cultural weakness in Mexico's government and army, and led to a more benign response

H₆: The Salinas and Zedillo governments did not want international condemnation from the repression of another group.

The government of president Carlos Salinas de Gortari had plans set in place for the reshaping of Mexico by the end of his term in office. This focused heavily on NAFTA and dealings with the International community. The Salinas administration did not want international condemnation stemming from a brutal repression to hinder their chances of concluding NAFTA or any other international relationships.

Ernesto Zedillo Ponce de León's administration, which followed the Salinas government, faced pressures and international criticism after a severe crisis in the Mexican currency, the so-called "peso crisis". With the bailout that Mexico received from the United States, there was the added

pressure placed on Mexico's human rights record. The Zedillo administration did not want international condemnation based on brutal repression at this point, and thus faced building pressures to solve the Zapatistas problem peacefully.

H7: The Zapatistas were treated differently because of Mexico's preferential treatment of elites.

Mexico has a vast history of corruption and preferential treatment of elites, especially when compared to the poor and indigenous. The Zapatistas were essentially led by Subcomandante Marcos, who has been tied to a family with connections to the PRI party, and with a background that would class him as an elite. There are many reports that this is, in fact, the case, and Marcos has never denied it. Marcos' heritage, and Mexico's lengthy history of preferential treatment of elites could have been a determining factor in the overall treatment of the Zapatistas. There is no evidence to suggest that other groups rebelling against the government were led by members of the elite. This stark point of difference as to the Zapatistas compared to other groups is significant.

H8: The Zapatistas were a low priority for the Mexican Governments following the 1994 uprising.

Since January 1, 1994, the publicity surrounding the Zapatista movement has been superseded by more important events in the Mexican and global context. Since that initial uprising in 1994, when the Zapatistas gained their prominence, there have been different presidents and governments that have all had more pressing issues to contend with than the Zapatistas. Salinas and Zedillo initially had the Zapatistas higher in their priorities; there were bigger issues that faced their governments. When Fox,

Calderon and Pena Nieto were in power, they faced perhaps what is Mexico's biggest issue in years, the Drug War, and this took priority over the Zapatistas. The Zapatistas thus increasingly took a back seat.

Background to the Revolt:

On January 1, 1994, in the southeast corner of Mexico, in the state of Chiapas, an army of indigenous Mayan peasants calling themselves the Zapatista Army of National Liberation rose up and declared war against the Mexican government and its 500 years of “colonialism, imperialism, genocide, racism and decades of neoliberal capitalism” (Dellacioppa, 2011; Cleaver, 1998; Khasnabish, 2008). The Zapatistas released the ‘First Declaration from the Lacandon Jungle’ (Khasnabish, 2008). This declaration coincided with the signing of NAFTA and demands to end structural violence against the indigenous people of Chiapas and a number of specific reforms to labour, education, healthcare, land, democracy, independence and liberty. The Zapatistas sought an end to neoliberal economic reforms, including NAFTA, which they saw as increasingly jeopardizing the livelihoods of landless and land-poor peasants throughout Mexico by privatizing natural resources and state-run services, lowering the social wage and opening the market to foreign trade (Callahan, 2004).

The Zapatistas started their war by taking over towns and villages across Chiapas. The Mexican Army responded by sending in a reported 30,000-40,000 troops to take back the towns from the estimated 3,000 Zapatistas. The fighting lasted twelve days and ended up with hundreds of casualties. The conflict came to a ceasefire, with both the government and the Zapatistas agreeing to negotiations (Washbrook, 2007). This was

unexpected, because there have been few examples of such a rapid move to negotiations by the Mexican authorities. But what is even more puzzling, and what is the main focus of this work, is why even after the talks broke down and tensions began to rise, did the Mexican authorities exercise restraint when dealing with the Zapatistas. They had not done this sort of thing before (Solar, 2014; Callahan, 2004). The Zapatistas were made up of indigenous people, subsistence farmers and peasants. This was the same or similar group of people who had made up the Popular Revolutionary Army, the Party of the Poor, and the Peoples' Guerrilla Group, all three of which were brutally dealt with by the Mexican authorities. So why were the Zapatistas different? They were never dealt with in the same way as all the other groups in Mexico. Why did the Mexican authorities exercise restraint regarding the Zapatistas?

The Mexican authorities have a long history of political repression, one that dates back to the early days of Mexico's formation as a state (Trevizo, 2014; Weintraub, Osorio & Schubiger, 2017). Throughout Mexico, during the time of the Institutional Revolutionary Party's (PRI) first unbroken rule 1929-2000 (Daniels-Kolin, 2015), especially during the Cold War period, there were several small rural and urban guerrilla movements that identified themselves with Marxist-Leninist groups that were specifically following *foco* theory⁴. Along with these guerrilla groups, there were also movements and protests against the PRI by students and working class members of Mexican society (Botz, 2014).

⁴ *Foco* is the theory of revolution by way of Guerrilla Warfare, Its central principle is that vanguardism by cadres of small, fast-moving paramilitary groups can provide a focus (in Spanish, *foco*) for popular discontent against a sitting regime (Childs, 1995).

From the 1960s-1980s, Mexico was also part of the Latin American 'Dirty Wars' (Hayden, 2002; Brands, 2010). This was the Mexican theatre of the Cold War, in which there was an internal conflict between the PRI government, which was backed by the United States, versus the Left Wing student and guerrilla groups. During this 'war', government forces carried out political repression, including disappearances estimated at around 1,200 people, systematic torture and probable extra-legal executions (Doyle, 2003; Karl, 2014; Brands, 2010). The war was characterised by a backlash against active student's movements. Most notably among these was the 1968 Tlatelolco Massacre, estimated to have killed hundreds of students. The military and police surrounded and opened fire on around 10,000 students who had gathered peacefully to protest the 1968 Olympics in Mexico City. Not only did the authorities kill the students inside the plaza but there are reports that they continued through the night and into the neighbouring areas, killing and tortured people in these areas (Borden, 2005; Doyle, 2003).

Another significant example of this repression, is the Corpus Christi Massacre, in which there was a massacre of students in 1971 by a group of para military trained by the CIA, while the Mexican police stood by and watched the students being gunned down in the street (Doyle, 2003).

Even after 1994, when the Zapatistas came to prominence there has still been numerous massacres and political repression within Mexico. The Mexican authorities even engaged in a 1997 massacre dubbed the Acteal Massacre, in which 45 people ranging genders and ages from Acteal

Chiapas (where the Zapatistas have strong following) were massacred with the intention of ending Zapatista sympathy within the area (Doyle, 2009).

In another southern state of Mexico, Guerrero, there had been a number of uprisings. It has been revealed that Mexican authorities carried out a “genocidal plan” of kidnapping, torturing and killing hundreds of suspected subversives in the 1970s. In the towns, soldiers rounded up all the men and boys, executed some on the spot and detained the others, and then used violence, including rape, to drive the rest of the people away, according to the report. Most of those detained, suffered torture, including beatings, electric shock and being forced to drink gasoline. These military installations that were created in the areas were operated like “concentration camps” (Thompson, 2006). According to a Mexican prosecutor’s report:

With this operation, a state policy was established in which all the authorities connected to the army -- the president, ministers of state, and the presidential guard, commanders of the military regions in Guerrero, and officers and troops in their command -- participated in the violations of human rights with the justification of pursuing a bad fugitive."

The report concludes that, “Such an open counter guerrilla strategy could not have been possible without the explicit consent and approval of the president” (Thompson, 2006).

These actions took place in a state near to Chiapas, where the Zapatistas came from which was roughly 500kms away. These actions were directed and executed by the PRI government, which was also in power

when the Zapatistas rose to prominence and for the years following that. With obvious precedents set by the Mexican authorities on how to deal with anyone who didn't agree with them, why did they not crush the Zapatistas so that nobody would have ever heard of them again? They did it to every other groups or person who defied them. So why were the Zapatistas a special case?

The Zapatistas have continued their efforts with the Mexican government up until today. The Zapatistas' have evolved their methods when dealing with different political parties that have been in power. They launched 'The Other Campaign' in 2006 as an alternative political process to the presidential campaign, and while, constantly facing attacks from paramilitary groups in Chiapas and political stalemates in Mexico City. However, in 2018, the Zapatistas have continued their ever evolving state, and have put forward a political candidate to represent them. Maria de Jesus Patricio Martinez was selected as the Zapatistas representative in the general election of 2018, even after the Zapatistas had vowed to never venture into the presidential politics (Lafuente, 2017).

Politics as Communication:

Politics-as-communication is a lens for addressing the perplexing question as to why it was, that the Mexican government did not repress the Zapatistas. For G.R. Boynton, politics is "conversations flowing through institutionalized channels punctuated by the vote" (Denton & Kuypes, 2008, p.4). Communication is the vehicle for political thought, debate and action. David Easton, in a 'system perspective' of politics and human behaviour, demonstrates the role of communication in politics (Denton & Kuypes,

2008). Our political systems process a multitude of inputs from our social environment which become outputs of political structures, values and actions. Communication channels these inputs, structures the outputs, and provides feedback from political systems to the environment, according to Dan Nimmo and David Swanson (Denton & Kuypes, 2008).

In summary, we do not advance a notion of politics that exists apart from how it is comprehended. Rather, political communication is a basis for politics. Robert Denton and Jim Kuypes (2008) argued that there are general characteristics of political communication that exist, which include four elements:

- short term orientation,
- specific objectives,
- primarily mediated, and, above all,
- audience centred.

Politics is based on communication. The central significance of mass media and its role in communication is especially crucial in this regard. As Denton and Kuypes (2008) argued, political communication is largely mediated communication; the mass media both allows for this mediated communication to occur, and for unfiltered discourse, and this may be why it was that the Zapatistas were able to survive.

The use of politics-as-communication through Subcomandante Marcos, his communications, writings and the internet offering critical insight into the Mexican government's reluctance to use dominant force against the Zapatistas. Something that relates very closely and what I believe will help me understand the impact and significance of Marcos and his work, is according to Mishra (2016), Aristotle's model of

communication. Aristotle developed a linear model of communication for oral communication. The model is mainly focused on the speaker and the speech, and is broadly divided into five primary elements. Speaker, Speech, Occasion, Audience and Effect. Aristotle also mentioned three critical elements of a good communicator. These elements are related and reinforce each other and are closely related to the five primary elements, which Aristotle mentioned regarding the speaker and their speech. They are Ethos, Pathos and Logos. Ethos is the characteristic which makes one credible in front of the audience (Mishra, 2016). Marcos was effective at this; he was one of 'the people' (or at least portrayed himself as one). He was not tainted as a politician, and was able to survive the Mexican authorities' attempts to discredit him by 'revealing his true identity'⁵. Marcos also excelled in Pathos, that is: if what is said to the audience matters to them, it will connect with them, and then increase the speaker's credibility. Marcos spoke of a struggle/cause that was gaining momentum across the globe. Logos is logic, and that people will believe you if they understand what you are speaking about. As mentioned, Marcos spoke about a cause that people wanted to believe in so the words were logical to them. Therefore, people had no questions about becoming involved in the cause.

Methodology: Flyvbjerg and Case Studies:

This paper is a case study analysis of the Zapatistas, exploring hypotheses on what caused the government's treatment of them to be different from other rebellions in Mexico. Case studies are a common

⁵ The Mexican government alleges Marcos to be one 'Rafael Sebastián Guillén Vicente', born 27 June 1957 in Tampico, Tamaulipas to Spanish immigrants. (Márquez & Marcos, 2001).

research method in social science, used to develop an in-depth examination of a specific phenomenon (Babbie, 2004, 293). Flyvbjerg (2006) investigated the five misunderstandings often perceived when looking at case studies as a method of research. He argued that if people merely operate at a theoretical level, they remain at the beginner's level of viewing the world. Flyvbjerg added that "case knowledge is central to human learning." (Flyvbjerg, 2006, p.222-223) Researchers who wish to develop, need to use context dependent examples in their work. He argued that "case studies are particularly well suited to producing context dependent knowledge... as learning in the social sciences is possible." (Flyvbjerg, 2006, p.224) "The dense case study is more useful for the practitioner and more interesting for social theory than either factual "findings" or the high level generalizations of theory" (Flyvbjerg, 2006, p.238). For the reasons that Flyvbjerg argued about case studies, I have chosen to use the Zapatistas as a case study to investigate why some rebellions are suppressed and not others.

Why have the Mexican authorities' exercised restraint as regards to the Zapatistas? There has not been any other open rebellion in Mexico that has received the same treatment. The Mexican government has established a benchmark on how to deal with anybody who speaks out, or poses a threat to their authority. Yet, they did not follow this when dealing with the Zapatistas. There is also the element of the Internet, which was in its infancy at the time, and the significant role that it played with the Zapatistas, as well as the role communication plays in the domain of politics. These elements alone, make this question a very rich and insightful one to look examine.

Harry Eckstein (2009), saw case studies as more than a method of producing anecdotes. He argued that “sometimes we simply have to keep our eyes open and look carefully at individual cases, not in the hope of proving anything, but rather in the hope of learning something.” (Eckstein, 2009) Predictive theories and universals cannot be found in the study of human affairs. Concrete, context dependent knowledge is, therefore more valuable than the vain search for prevalent theories and universals. In the study of human affairs, there appears to exist only context dependent knowledge, which rules out the possibility for social science to emulate natural science in developing epistemic theory which is explaining and predictive (Eckstein, 2009). Testing hypothesis relates directly to the question of generalizability and in turn, relates to the question of case selection. Atypical or extreme cases often reveal more information, because they activate more actors and more basic mechanisms in the situation studied. Case studies “are valuable at all stages of theory building, but most valuable where the candidate theories are tested” (Eckstein, 2009, p.80).

Karl Popper describes a term Falsifiability, when if just one observation does not fit within a given proposition, then the proposition is regarded as false and needs revision or rejection. Popper’s famous example was the all swans are white example. Where there was a claim that all swans are white. However, since there had been observed to be black swans, that claim could no longer be true (Popper, 1959, p.4). The observation of the black swan falsifies the statement made about the White Swans and becomes significant, as there now becomes more investigation into the black and white swans and further theory building. Falsifiability in case studies

becomes important, as something that appears to be white on second look, can actually be black and lead to a more significant and deeper understanding on the subject, according to Popper that statements that are not falsifiable are unscientific and you can not claim to truly know (Thomas, 2017; Popper, 1959).

This thesis is going to use the Plausibility Probes model of case studies, in which the fundamental question leads to the probing of the plausibility of hypotheses. Allowing attempts to determine whether the hypotheses posed have the validity to be considered for further testing. This model is used as an illustrative case study, in the way different hypotheses are examined and developing the theoretical argument in a way that will allow for further examination if the testing is considered.

The Mexican Military crushed and repressed everyone who stood against them, but the Zapatistas. Why were they so different?

Literature Review:

In his work, *Liberation Technology: Social Media and the Struggle for Democracy*, Larry Diamond looks into the potential that the internet, blogosphere, social media and the ever growing access that people have to these tools through mobile phones. Diamond argued that

These electronic tools have provided new, breathtakingly dynamic and radically de centralized means for people and organisations to communicate and co-operate with one another for political and civic ends. (Diamond, 2012, p.9)

Diamond repeatedly refers to these as “liberation technology”. Diamond’s work is particularly helpful in this thesis; it is a major focus in both the hypotheses and questions. The Zapatistas used the Internet, blogosphere and social media in their struggle with the Mexican authorities. This allowed the Zapatistas to be constant presence in the lives of western communities. The Mexican authorities were then forced to exercise restraint against the Zapatistas. Diamond’s work provides a strong base for exploring the question (Diamond & Plattner, 2012).

In his work, *Zapatismo Beyond Borders: New Imaginations of Political Possibility*, Khasnabish (2008) examined the Zapatistas’ movement across the regional and national boundaries of Chiapas, and how this movement influenced communities across North America. He also examined how the spread of Zapatismo produced new imaginations within North America on how the left could succeed. Grassroots organisations created a model and a rallying call for members of the anti-globalisation movement.

These are all very important factors and useful in the work, as they touch on the proposed hypothesis and will help address the fundamental question: Why did the Mexican authorities show restraint against the Zapatistas? Khasnabish refers to ‘The Northern Struggles’ and ‘Northern Histories’, discussing in detail how the Zapatistas struck a chord with North American activists. His writing includes many interviews of Zapatistas, activists and scholars which will prove invaluable in examining the question, helping

gain a better insight into the effectiveness the Zapatista had in North America. Khasnabish also focuses on the role of Subcomandante Marcos in the Zapatistas cause. The arguments and information that Khasnabish provides in this book, encapsulates a large part of how the fundamental question is addressed (Khasnabish, 2008).

This Bridge Called Zapatismo (Dellacioppa, 2011) examines the impact that the Zapatistas' political discourse and practice had on movements in Mexico, the United States and beyond. She argued that the political practices the Zapatistas have used in their struggle created waves in grassroots organisations across the globe, particularly in the United States. Dellacioppa also seeks to understand the appeal of the Zapatistas among activist communities in Mexico and North America. She discusses the Zapatistas' impact on Mexican politics and the global justice movement, as well as the Zapatistas' use of the internet as a tool. These will be useful in the exploration of the question.

However, what Dellacioppa focuses on, and what will hold the most importance for this work, is the diffusion of the Zapatistas' information. She refers to Zapatistas' ideas and political practices, and how they were read and rearticulated by communities the world over. Dellacioppa argued that the Zapatistas paved a new way for activists. This point is useful in answering the proposed hypothesis, as the historical timing of the Zapatistas rebellion was a crucial factor in their survival. This book provides arguments, scholarship and references that help to articulate this (Dellacioppa, 2011).

In his work, *The Secret Society*, Simmel (1906) argued that the secret inspires confidence in its members, and with this comes the protection of invisibility. This invisibility goes on to provide protection to both the members involved and their actions. Simmel argued that if human interaction is “conditioned by the capacity to speak, it is shaped by the capacity to be silent.” (Simmel, 1908, p.340) It can control the very essence of social relations through the ratio of knowledge to ignorance. The article does go on to talk in depth about secrets and the social context that they create and the impact that they can have. For use in this thesis, Simmel’s argument that secrets provide visibility and protection is a very useful and relevant one, and supports other literature that has been used on political communication and liberation. Did the PRI lose the power and invisibility of secrets when the Zapatistas were speaking out? Is this why the Zapatistas were treated differently? Simmel’s argument opens a useful and thought provoking avenue to explore within this thesis (Simmel, 1906).

In this work *The Labyrinth of Solitude*, Paz (1961) develops the idea and the argument Mexican identity is surrounded by a profound feeling of solitude. Paz observes that this feeling of solitude is responsible for many of the rituals across Mexico and behind the deep psyche of both Mexican man and woman. For the purpose of this thesis, focus is placed mostly on the chapter regarding Mexican Masks, which examines the behaviour of Mexicans and the use of and meaning of masks in their culture. This is helpful regarding the idea that Mexican culture has affected the treatment of the Zapatistas, and questions if the use of masks and the hiding of their

identity played a significant role in why it was that the Zapatistas were treated by the Mexican authorities in the way that they were (Paz, 1961).

Chapter 1:

Authoritarian Mexico:

Tovar (2013) argued that Mexico was an authoritarian state until 2000 when the country experienced its first real change in power. An analysis of authoritarian regimes can be used in a comparative analysis according to Susan Kaufman Purcell (1973), and is characterised by three main features:

1. Limited political pluralism
2. Low subject mobilization of the population
3. The predominance of patrimonial ruler ship on the part of a single leader or small group (Purcell, 1973, p.30).

In the Mexican context, these features are very evident. The most visible groups in the regime are organized around labour, agrarian and middle class interests. All of these groups are members of, and part of the tri sector of the PRI, the party of the regime. These groups are significantly tied to, and dependent on the backing of the regime. Low subject mobilization is a situation that occurs when political participants possess more ‘subject’ like tendencies than ‘participant’. Citizens are mobilized on a temporary basis, in a show of support for the decisions of the elite and the regime (Purcell, 1973; Seligson, 1984; Benton, 2016). All other times, participation is not encouraged. Mexico is a good example of this, especially in elections, with voter turnout well below the global average often dipping into the low 50% of all those eligible to vote (Solijonov, 2016, p.38). The subject nature of participants also extends into Congress, with little incentive for congress members to speak out or defy the dominant rhetoric, as they need the ‘party’

to further their political aspirations. Legislative projects sent to the Chamber of Deputies by the executive branch often received unanimous approval (Purcell, 1973, p.34). Mexico has developed a society that is based on interconnecting chains of vertical patron client relationships. The government had replaced the old Caudillos, Jefes Politicos, and Caciques that had dominated across Latin America, turning these groups into representatives that now do the government's work in the regions (Benton, 2016). The Zapatistas were a group who mobilized against an authoritarian regime in Mexico, so why were they not treated the same way as the others who rose up against the regime in Mexico?

Secrets Provide Protection:

Secrets provide protection. Exposure of secrets, both those truly unknown and those aspects of privacy that are conventionally respected or denied recognition, lead to a loss of the autonomy and esteem of the person or groups whose secret has been revealed (Simmel, 1906). The Zapatistas benefited from the PRI's loss of secrecy. In the past, dealings with those who rose up against them, the PRI were able to repress with the cover of secrecy. With the international community only finding out after the fact. Secrecy provided the PRI with the protection to act as they wished. Secrets provide authoritarian regimes with power and protection. Mexico is firmly an authoritarian regime that benefited from secrecy and the protection that it provided (Benton, 2016). Barros (2016) argued that authoritarian power simultaneously generates motives for autocrats to hide high level politics from the glare of publicity. Was the Zapatista's ability to gain attention from the right areas, the reason why they were treated differently? The PRI were

not able to have the protection and hide their politics from the public, so they changed their method?

Digital communication is transforming elections, political debate, civic advocacy, philanthropy and the structure of the mass media. The political arena, in today's world, is now faster paced and more decentralised than it has ever been. It has become more open to commentary and competition, as well as more open to new voices and social entrepreneurs. Larry Diamond says that, with the arrival and growing use of the internet, blogosphere and social media, authoritarian regimes have been exposed and challenged. Diamond argued, that this technology is liberating as it can “empower individuals, facilitate independent communication and mobilization and strengthen an emergent society” (Krieg, 2017, p.108; Diamond, 2012)

Liberation Technology:

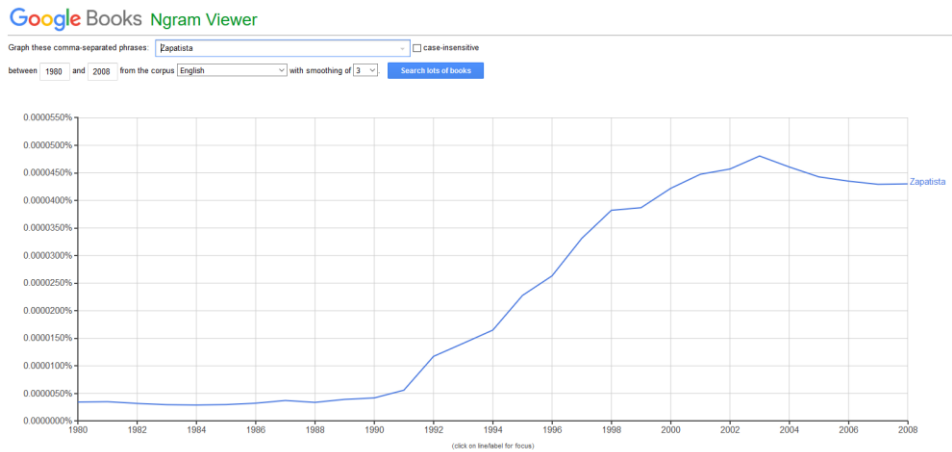
“Liberation technology” is any form of information and communication technology (ICT) that can expand political, social and economic freedom (Diamond, 2012). In this contemporary era, the development of technology has made communication readily available through the internet. People are able to access it through mobile phones, through apps for social media such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and Snapchat. The internet's decentralized character and ability to reach large numbers of people very quickly, is well suited to grassroots organizations (Khasnabish, 2010; Diamond, 2012). This is in sharp contrast to radio and television, where messages can be very limited in their range, time frames and who is controlling the information. Diamond also comments, that

“liberation technology” is a two way or even multiway form of communication. A user of these forms of technology, can instantly reach thousands of followers. The recipients of these messages are also able to, with ease, respond or reply to the original message, something that was not available with former types of communication. Users of “liberation technology” are not just passive recipients, but often become journalists, commentators and organisers. (Diamond, 2012)

“Liberation Technology” also lends itself towards accountability technology, as it provides effective and powerful tools for transparency and monitoring. How is a state going to effectively suppress or crush a group, when the global community knows what is happening and there is documented evidence of it occurring? NAFTA opened up channels politically and economically for Salinas and Mexico, however it also opened up channels socially and politically for the Zapatistas (Khasnabish, 2010). With the added attention that Mexico was now generating from North America, especially the United States, it also drew the attention of those who had a specific interest in the human rights record of Mexico. This attention manifested itself into the United States Congress in the form of debates, letters and petitions and the steady rise of mentions the Zapatistas, EZLN and Subcomdante Marcos received post their 1994 uprising. This is easily seen in Figures 1, 2, 3 and 4 there is a distinct rise in the percentage of mentions all of which coincide with 1994 uprising. The exposure that Mexico was receiving caught the attention of the international media, who were becoming more interested by the day at the activity that was beginning at a ground level around Chiapas. This interest in Chiapas meant there were

now outside eyes with the ability to disseminate their messages quickly and vastly, who were seeing and documenting what was occurring in Chiapas first hand.

Figure 1: Google Ngram Search Result for Zapatista



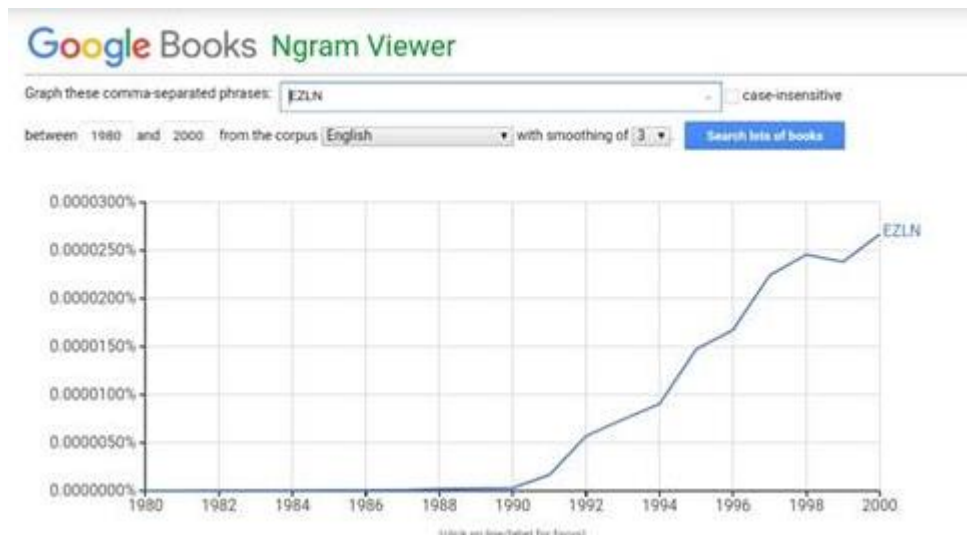
(Google Ngram Viewer, 2018a).

Figure 2: Google Ngram Search Result for Chiapas



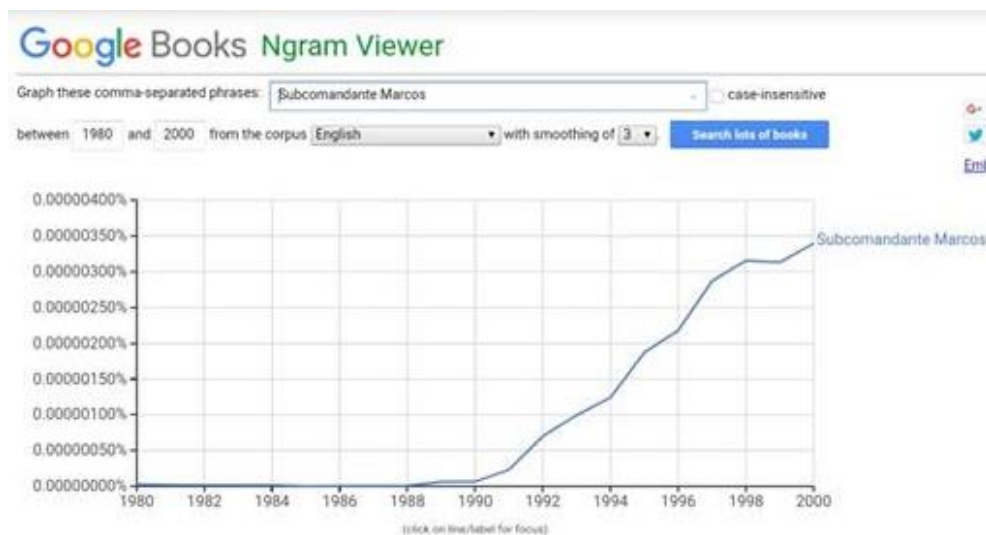
(Google Ngram Viewer, 2018b).

Figure 3: Google Ngram Search Result for EZLN



(Google Ngram Viewer, 2018c).

Figure 4: Google Ngram Search Result for Subcomandante Marcos



(Google Ngram Viewer, 2018d).

Voices of support for the Zapatistas were enabled and accentuated by “Liberation Technology”. Due to this growing medium, there started to become a growing discourse across the Western Hemisphere. Growing numbers of grassroots organisations in the United States and Canada joined in, and the internet played its part for the organisations rapidly sharing information (Khasnabish, 2010). Due to the nature of the medium in question, the anonymity and speed in which it could be used, there was vast

and immediate mobilization of support for the Zapatistas that crossed all types of social and class boundaries, which had previously been a roadblock. This global mobilization, and support for the Zapatistas was not only directed at Mexican Embassies, but also towards local governments and representatives of government across the Western Hemisphere (Ronfeldt, Arquilla, Fuller, & Fuller, 1999). Due to the medium in use, the communication that first started the swell of support, quickly enabled mobilization in a physical way. This only strengthened the Zapatista's position. Representatives from these mobilized groups were sent to Chiapas to help limit the government repression by providing critical scrutiny, documenting actions and providing public denouncement of the Mexican government's actions (Cleaver, 2005).

In the initial part of the uprising, the Mexican government tried to restrict and suppress the Zapatistas and isolate them from any support. The government adapted the tactic of ideological control of the mass media, trying to both limit and disrupt the news of the uprising and the Zapatista's cause (Doyle, 2009). Attempts were also made to portray the movement as a threat to the political integrity of Mexico, linking them to having external support from Nicaragua, Guatemala, El Salvador and even Argentina's Rebel and Guerrilla forces, though without proof. The state controlled the vast majority of news media in Mexico during this time, including print, television and radio (Doyle, 2004). The attempts failed, firstly because of the written communiques that Subcomandante Marcos wrote and the interviews by independent journalists that had gathered in Chiapas. This was

followed by more detailed reports from observers, which began to circulate around the world.

The use of the internet by the Zapatista's supporters, as a model of communication, meant that they were able to circumvent the blockade that the Mexican government were trying to establish instantly spreading the message to anyone who wanted to listen. As Adrienne Russell (2005) argued, the Zapatistas benefitted from the independence that "Liberation Technology" provided. The Zapatista and their supporters had the ability to create the rhetoric and myth that surrounds them, and to shift the power from the hands of the Mexican elite, controlling the way the discourse was spread (Russell, 2005). This became a strategy of resistance for the Zapatista's, they were able to control the discourse about the situation as it was fluidly changing around them. This also provided the means for rapid dissemination of information that could provide challenges against the nation state. Previously, the only challenges that the nation state largely faced was either from other States or from 'above', that being from supranational institutions like United Nations and World Bank (Sinclair, 2004). The Zapatista's supporters and their use of the Internet provided a challenge from 'below' that being, one from advocacy groups, small non-government organisations and for widespread political mobilization from a grassroots level. As well as creating challenges and pressures from other nation states which were also political and economic allies with Mexico. The Mexican government could effectively control what was being said on television, radio or written in the papers, but they couldn't censor the thousands of independent voices that started to speak on the events

unfolding in Chiapas. Nor could they control the mounting international condemnation or pressures that were starting to grow. The groups supporting the Zapatistas used traditional models that were already in existence for use in solidarity aid and material aid, moulding them into channels that effectively became the nervous system that reached across nations that disseminated information on the Zapatistas and Chiapas uprising. The Zapatistas benefiting greatly from this communication, playing no direct role in the proliferation of communication on the internet. This was the efforts of others that wanted to create support for the Zapatista's movement. Shultz (1998) argued that the global interactive communication had enabled the Zapatistas to link up with individuals, groups and organizations being crucial to the Zapatistas relevance and position against the Mexican authorities.

“Liberation Technology” allows for mobilization, be it digitally or physically. One of the most direct and powerful effects that “liberation technology” has. It enables the facilitations of fast, large scale, popular movements (Diamond, 2012). Though in the case of the Zapatistas, this movement occurred across North American and Western Europe, not in Chiapas. It was an effective tool, as the pressure was still placed on the Mexican Authorities. Since the Zapatistas use of “liberation technology” for this purpose, we have seen numerous examples of “Liberation Technology” mobilizing people for change. These included the 2004 Orange Revolution in Ukraine which toppled their government, the 2005 Cedar Revolution in Lebanon, the 2007 Venezuelan student protests, the Occupy Wall Street movement, and the Arab Spring (Diamond, 2016).

With the inclusion of “liberation technology” into the modus operandi of the Zapatistas, it allowed them to become involved in the internal and international circulation of information. The indigenous rebellion in Chiapas was now easily and quickly disseminated globally. The internet provided the means for information to be spread through pre-existing circuits that had already been established (Cleaver, 1998). These circuits had been established in an effort to block NAFTA and protect Latin American and Indigenous rights. These networks were primarily located at an international level, and within the computer-rich North American and Western European countries. New reports on radio and television were also complemented by first hand reports on the internet. These were provided by observers who had flooded into Chiapas once they heard what was occurring. Analytical commentators were also able to voice their opinions quicker and with greater ease with the use of cyberspace (Cleaver, 1998). Debates were facilitated, due to the internet and the ever growing grassroots reports, and were quickly complemented by the creation of specialized lists, conferences and web pages devoted specifically to the Zapatistas and their struggle in Chiapas.

Government is Communication:

Karl Deutsch (1963), in his work *The Nerves of Government*, argued that government is communication, or at the very least, that government may be most profitably studied as though it were communication. Deutsch develops some very important aspects of his communication theory. The inflow or outflow of information or news from one end to another, or vice versa, is not automatic. There is a specific role of human beings, which is

the steering and co-ordinating role (Deutsch, 1963, p.182). In any political system, there are many channels that information must travel through, before it reaches its final destination. Deutsch develops the argument further, by stating that the meaning and context of the information undergoing change is inevitable. In political systems, news and information can be lost or take new or changed forms (Deutsch, 1963, p.254).

Deutsch's argument is very relevant in the Zapatistas context. The voices of the indigenous people in Mexico have either been passively ignored, changed, or silenced for most of the past 500 years. For several decades prior to the 1994 uprising, locals in Chiapas largely confined themselves to legally recognised vehicles of protest, such as demonstrations and petitions (Khasnabish, 2010). The Mexican government responded to these actions with limited patronage, creating local instruments of power and endless bureaucratic delays. The Mexican government employed the aspects of communication that Deutsch described above. It created different ways of being able to change, steer and co-ordinate what was being communicated by the Zapatistas and other indigenous groups during this period. It is easy to control what is being said, as it is happening, through lines of communication.

Something that Deutsch does discuss towards the end of his work, is that there are many vehicles which carry information. Some of these are: political parties, interest groups and pressure groups. The groups, parties and organisations enjoy freedom, as they can work between the people and the government, while still maintaining their relationship with both (Deutsch, 1963). What Deutsch discusses here becomes particularly relevant

as the Zapatistas struggle facilitated a new line of communication, which included interest groups and organisations from North America and Western Europe. This placed pressure upon the Mexican government to act or react to the attention and condemnation they were receiving. "Liberation Technology" was crucial to this occurring (Khasnabish, 2010). "No field of study has more important implications for our lives in contemporary society than that which looks systematically at the process of human communication" (Defleur, Kearney& Plax, 1993, p.6-7).

Cleaver, argued that the evolving computer networks supporting the Zapatista's movement provided the backbone for increasingly global opposition to the dominant neo-liberal economic politics of the period. The same neo-liberal economic politics that Salinas' was implementing in Mexico in the years leading to the Zapatista's uprising in 1994, that both Salinas and Zedillo continued to implement post uprising (Cleaver, 1998). The Zapatista's supporters made it their strategy to exploit new communication technologies to create global relationships. The movement encompasses a process for social change, one that is concerned as much with social equality, freedom and decision making, as it is with economic opportunity and human rights. The diversification and evolving discourse of the Zapatista's struggle allowed them to remain relevant and gain support from different avenues of society during the initial phases of the uprising. The Zapatistas became an icon of social resistance and an example for social change that spoke to those who felt part of, or wanted to do something for, all the underrepresented and exploited groups around the

world. Subcomandante Marcos' numerous communications reflect this. (Khasnabish, 2010).

Khasnabish argued that the communications by Subcomandante Marcos allowed the Zapatista's struggle to manifest itself across Northern America and Europe, where their support bases would be the strongest (Khasnabish, 2008, 2010). As Shirley and Khasnabish both argued, Marcos used his political propaganda, storytelling and poetry to charm and fascinate Mexicans and subsequently the rest of the world. His communiqués kept the media attention focused on Chiapas, long after the initial shots of the rebellion had fallen quiet. He drafted communiqués, giving interviews and crafting fables, to keep the Zapatistas in constant relevance in news cycles (Shirley, 2001; Khasnabish, 2008). Marcos also sent letters of solidarity to other groups around the world engaging in similar struggles, to create relationships with other grassroots organizations.

Marcos developed into a celebrity figure due to this constant attention and soon, dolls completed with his ski mask, poncho and bandolier, appeared for sale on the streets throughout Mexico. Marcos developed a cult following like that of Guevara or Marx. The media coined the phenomenon 'Marcosmania' and it led to the vast coverage that Chiapas and the Zapatistas enjoyed during this time. Phillip Russell conducted a study backing this point up, showing in the Mexican newspaper *Proceso* that Zapatista/Chiapas had 7,371 pages dedicated to them while the looming Mexican Election only had 34 pages dedicated to it (Shirley, 2001).

The Zapatistas communications allowed for an open, multicultural dialogue, and the formation of international alliances to support them. The cross national solidarity that had been facilitated by the use of the internet, strengthened the Zapatistas. The social network that was created, deepened itself into the fabric of the Zapatista's cause. It was a decentralized struggle that allowed and promoted interaction between different groups across the social networks online. This enabled vast and instant integration, which other forms of media would have not been able to facilitate. The intent of this form of communication allowed the grassroots level to promote and control the discourse and connections that are being created, effectively bypassing the nation state level and their modes of control and censorship.

Cleaver (1998) continued and argued, that there were three specific ways in which the Zapatistas achieved their vast following. Firstly, their struggle as an indigenous group seeking to create an alternative space, culturally, linguistically and ethnically. Cleaver adds, that this in itself had been a successful mode of building networks around the world for other groups. Secondly, the environment networks were a strong and well-resourced one, and the Zapatistas cause and use of the environmental game, allowed them to garner the support from this vast network. Finally, there was the human rights/women's rights aspect that the Zapatistas were fighting for. Again, this was another very well supported, resourced and vast network that supported the Zapatistas cause (Cleaver, 1998).

Mark Shultz (1998) argued that the Zapatista's social network was one of the key elements for the vast international support. Shultz says, that the social network's capacity had made the Zapatistas less dependent on the

internal military organization, which they initially used in their uprising and more dependent on the support from the global community (Schultz, 1998). Shultz continued, that the globalised interactive communication enabled the Zapatistas to linkup with diverse groups and organizations, particularly from the western hemisphere which had organized on behalf of the Zapatista's cause (Schultz, 1998). This support had become crucial, as it bolstered the Zapatista's position against the Mexican government. The Zapatista's insurgency can be thought of, and seen as, a new type of transnational, social movement, emerging to counter globally defined threats and the shrinking of national political space (Schultz, 1998).

Conclusion:

Mexico is an authoritarian regime, as with these types of regimes they do not want the focus on their actions. Particularly, with regards to repression, like that of the Zapatistas in 1994. Secrets provide protection for these regimes and the ability to act autonomously and in incognito is crucial for them. "Liberation technology" allowed the Zapatistas to circumvent the incognito mode of the Mexican government, it provided the Zapatistas the ability to create and control their own voices and discourse about the situation. Allowing their messages to be spread through the correct channels and avoid being silenced by the Mexican authorities. Communication plays a defining role in government and politics. Lack of communication, and the ability to control your own has a decisive role in the Zapatistas rebellion and the subsequent treatment they received.

Chapter 2:

Chiapas as a State:

Chiapas is the most backward state in Mexico (Tavanti, 2003, p.45), and this perhaps explains why the Mexican government did not pay attention to a rebellion taking place there. The State of Chiapas borders the country of Guatemala and was originally part of that country until 1824, when it joined Mexico. This foundation of the state has mentally affected the people in Chiapas, making them feel that the state is not really part of Mexico (Collier, Farias, Perez & White, 2000). Chiapas is the poorest state in Mexico, with the lowest GDP per capita in Mexico, barely reaching 40% of the National Medium. The state has the lowest growth rate 0.2% in GDP in Mexico, leading to the ever growing income gap separation from the rest of Mexico. Chiapas also has the highest rate of poverty at 74.7%, and extreme poverty at 46.7% in Mexico (Levy, Hausmann, Angel, Santos, & Flores, 2016). Chiapas has become the forgotten state along Mexico's forgotten southern border. The border is awash with unlawful activities: principally migration and drug trafficking. The municipal government lacks the control mechanisms and municipal administration to protect the natural environment from pollution and degradation and the citizens from the degrading of society (Alba, González, Ramírez, & Castillo, 2003; Eche, 2013). The Mexican government has showed a lack of interest in Chiapas, so why would it show interest in a group rising up in Chiapas?

Paramilitary Groups:

The period the Zapatistas have been active in Chiapas has been characterised by the privatization of violence and the ever increasing role it is having in Mexican life. The privatization of violence and counterinsurgency operations in Chiapas and the rise of paramilitary violence is showing the weakness of Mexican Central Government and the subsequent contradictions of effective authority (Olney, 2006; Mazzei, 2007; León, 2011; Romero, 1998). The emergence and rise of paramilitary groups can be traced back to the government reforms of Miguel de la Madrid and Salinas in the early 1990s (León, 2011; Olney, 2006). These reforms created a shared vulnerability among the national hardliners and local elites associated with the PRI in Chiapas. The feelings that existed in Chiapas among these groups compounded in 1994 when Salinas responded to the Zapatistas crisis with a policy of negotiation instead of the desired full repression (Mazzei, 2007; León, 2011).

Seen simply as appeasement to the rebels, Salinas's stance on this fuelled tensions in Chiapas among the local elite and hardliners and led to the rallying of paramilitary groups in the region (Doyle, 2004; Mazzei, 2007). Of the nine active paramilitary groups in the region that the CIA have identified, eight have identifiable ties to the PRI and the ninth group is made up directly of PRI militants (Doyle, 2004). This identification with the PRI allowed the party to enact methods they wanted to use against the Zapatistas, but were not able to politically. The paramilitary groups allowed the PRI to use a faceless branch of their power in Chiapas (Doyle, 2004; León, 2011). There is a long history in Chiapas about using interest groups

to protect the way of life and interests of the elites. This was the case with the Zapatistas and the Chiapas elite's use of paramilitary groups. There is a tradition of circumventing political institutions with a form of grassroots organised violence, such as the White Guards and Mapaches (Mazzei, 2007). Along with the ill feeling towards Salinas's negotiation policy, there was a feeling of abandonment among the Chiapas elite on the government's behalf. "The lack of government support in the face of the invasions obliged us to act" (Mazzei, 2007,p.60; León, 2011; Olney, 2006). The land holders and ranchers in Chiapas were funding and recruiting the paramilitary groups. Chiapas's elite structure is similar to many around the world, where the political elite are more often than not the economic and social elite (León, 2011; Romero, 1998; Mazzei, 2007). These people often interchange hats, or wear multiple hats at the same time. The PRI in Chiapas had the most to lose as they were economically impacted due to the uprising and wanted the social status quo to remain the same. Chiapas has a long history of interest groups becoming involved in the preservation of the elite's lifestyle and not a history of military intervention in the region.

Zedillo's presidency faced similar political pressures to Salinas's, with Zedillo responding in similar ways to that of his predecessor. However, Doyle, in her article released in the National Security Archives, as well as by the US Department of Defense and Defense Intelligence Agency cables, suggested that there was involvement by both Zedillo and Salinas in their support of paramilitary groups and their actions against the Zapatistas (Doyle, 2004; Watch, 1997). *La Jornada* have released several reports which describe of authorised presidential support for the paramilitary

groups: “by mid-1994 the Mexican Army had presidential authorization to establish Military teams responsible for promoting armed groups in the troubled areas of Chiapas. Assisting personal resisting the EZLN” (Brooks, 2006; Lopez-Gonzalez, 2008). Both *La Jornada* and Doyle argued that these cables directly contradict the official statements put forward by the PRI Presidents (Doyle, 2004; Stewart, 2012). This military support was clearly designed to strengthen the paramilitary groups and provoke conflict against the Zapatistas and their supporters (Gilbreth & Otero, 2001; Johnston, 2000; Berger, 2001), and thus created a social conflict in which the military had sufficient legitimacy to use force (Gilbreth & Otero, 2001; Johnston, 2000; Berger, 2001). *La Jornada* described Zedillo’s plans for confronting the Zapatistas with the use of paramilitary groups. By the time that the PRI had lost power in the 2000 elections it was impossible to remove the paramilitary groups from Chiapas: they were firmly in place (Bellinghausen, 2007; Marroquin, 2013; Stewart, 2012).

During the PAN presidencies of Fox and Calderon there was a decrease in the PRI-supported paramilitary groups in Chiapas, although, as Lydersen (2002) reported, the groups were as strong as ever with increased funding and support of the Military in the War on Drugs finding its way to the paramilitary groups. Ruben Moreno says the links between the paramilitary groups and the government were not as obvious as they had been during the PRI presidencies (cited in Lydersen, 2002). The paramilitary groups benefitted from government impunity. Both PAN Presidents had significant economic development plans for the region. Subsequent military spending and presence increased and the paramilitary

group's activity and presence had also increased. Calderon's use of the military was greater than that of Fox's, and in fact greater than in any period in Mexico's recent history. Neither of the PAN Presidents had specific policies for the Zapatistas or even for insuring peace, and were more focused on the economic capability of the region and peace and stability through the use of the military (Mendez, 2007; Bellinghausen, 2007; Marroquin, 2013; Stewart, 2012).

Low Intensity Conflict:

The paramilitary groups and the Mexican military engaged in Low Intensity Conflict (LIC), in which state and non-state actors fought in a localised conflict that was below the intensity of a conventional war. It involved the use of force applied selectively and with restraint to enforce or intimidate (Blank, 1990; Chaudhury, Goel, & Singh, 2006; Searle, 2006; Brandolini, 2002). LICs are limited politico-military struggles geared to achieve political, social, economic or psychological objectives (Chaudhury, Goel, & Singh, 2006; Searle, 2006). LICs are often characterised by limitations of tactics and levels of force. They are often protracted and end up involving the military diplomatic and economic pressures through terrorism. (Luevano, Lombera & Reygadas, 1995; Rebón, 2001) LICs and militancy often have their roots in regions where people are governed by an insensitive, unresponsive and/or corrupt administration (Chaudhury, Goel, & Singh, 2006). They see the use of militancy as a way of protecting their families and way of life.

In conventional warfare the enemy is clearly defined and aggression is channelled unequivocally in their direction. Goals and ambitions are

clearly defined and there is strong organisation. LICs, on the other hand, often have a lack of overall organisation. The use of selective force and sporadic aggression. Goals are loosely defined, if at all (Goel, 1998, Kinross, 2007). The Zapatistas included a political and military strategy, placing a greater emphasis on political efforts to win hearts and minds, not engaging in direct conflict. The Mexican Military also did not engage in conventional conflict. With their training from United States in counter intelligence (Doyle, 2003,2004), the Mexican Military engaged in LIC and employed other such tactics to combat the Zapatistas. The conflict between the two groups never reached a conventional warfare level, so the violent repression that had occurred in the past was unlikely to occur (Rich, 1997; Shirley, 2001; Gott, 1970; Harvey, 1998; Movksitis, 1996).

Readiness for the Rebellion:

An aspect that has largely been overlooked, is the lack of preparedness of the PRI towards the Zapatistas. This may be a defining factor in why the PRI took the actions that they did. When the Zapatistas came into the public eye on January 1st 1994, the Mexican government was forced to scramble to identify the insurgents. The Salinas administration was completely caught off guard. Official sources initially tried to downplay what was occurring in Chiapas, deflecting it to being the work of external influences trying to destabilize Mexico. The government also blamed Central American guerrillas, drug cartels and even the Catholic Church. Even when the uprising became apparent, there were still official sources attempting to suppress the news. (Doyle, 2004, 2009)

Patrocinio Gonzalez Garrido, the interior minister and former governor of Chiapas, initially dismissed the accounts of armed rebels in the four towns that the EZLN captured as insignificant. It was only once the military barracks in Rancho Nuevo came under attack that there was any response by the government (Doyle, 2004; Khasnabish, 2010). This in itself is significant as it shows the level of interest in what was happening in Chiapas. Mexican political leaders blundered by underestimating the size and threat of the Zapatistas and by ignoring the warning signs that had been apparent in the region for some time. A public statement was released by an opposition congressman, that the army and the interior minister had information about an armed movement in Chiapas (Khasnabish, 2010; Watch, 1997). In March 1993, there were bodies of two junior officers found hacked to pieces and buried in a shallow pit in the Chiapas region. This was followed by firefights between military and groups of armed men. A Colonel from the 31st Military Zone (the one operating in Chiapas) reported that his unit had been conducting reconnaissance missions throughout the area in search of insurgent training camps. There had also been numerous rumours of guerrillas roaming the countryside. Despite all this, there was still a steady stream of denials from government officials (Doyle, 2004, 2009).

As events in Chiapas throughout January 1994 developed, it was apparent that the government had been following a specific agenda in attempting to cover up the Zapatistas presence. The Mexican government did not want anything to impede the upcoming NAFTA vote by the United States congress on NAFTA. NAFTA was key to Salinas's and Zedillo's

revolutionary economic reforms and Mexico could not risk drawing attention to potentially destabilizing developments in Chiapas. The government were not wanting to acknowledge or engage in Chiapas during this time due to the weight the NAFTA vote had on their economic plans (Doyle, 2004, p.1; Khasnabish, 2008; Dellacioppa, 2011).

Salinas and the Military:

Though the armed forces have been aware of the guerrillas' existence in Chiapas, they feel that they have been prevented from eradicating them. Eradication efforts would have entailed military operations that may have proven politically suicidal for the government. (Doyle, 2004)

This feeling was represented in the work of their intelligence apparatus who gathered inadequate information and strategies on the Zapatistas (Wagner & Shultz, 1995). The Chiapas uprising also created a unique situation which may have led to the way the Zapatistas were handled. The army was caught in a political hurricane. There had been reports, relayed by US officials who were in Chiapas during the initial period of the uprising, stating that Mexican army officials had been voicing displeasure at the ineffectiveness and poorly planned political strategy that they were being asked to employ. General Miguel Angel Godinez Bravdo, commander of the 31st Military Zone and of the operations in Chiapas, invited reporters for an interview during the early stages of the rebellion. The General stated that the best way to deal with the Zapatistas would be to wipe them out completely. He later retracted, and said he was misquoted and that he fully supports the government's plan of action (Doyle, 2004).

There were other areas that showed indicators of discontent among the ranks of the military. This included the appointment of the new peace commissioner, Camacho Solis who called for the cease-fire and asked for the military to withdraw from its positions across Chiapas (Wagner & Shultz, 1995; Doyle, 2004, 2009).

The military had always been looked upon as untouchable. There had always been the golden rule of journalism, that anything was open to criticism except the President, the Virgin de Guadalupe and the Army (Lawson, 2002, p.49). On the few occasions that the army was subject to criticism, the president spoke out in their defence. However, the term of Salinas brought about the end of this mystical status with Chiapas acting as a sort of watershed moment (Wagner & Shultz, 1995). The irregular relationship between Salinas and the military started off with a very questionable victory in the election by Salinas, the army leader's organised a parade on the day of the inauguration. Salinas also called on the military to apprehend a well-armed labour leader, the nation's leading drug trafficker and used pre-emptive measures to prevent a violent strike at a copper mine in Northern Mexico. After using the military to get his presidency off to a solid start, Salinas fell silent on his defence of the military in the latter part of his tenure (Doyle, 2009; Wagner & Shultz, 1995).

The criticisms and then lack of a presidential defence started to flow from 1989. There were reports of officials being involved in high level narcotics trafficking, with the president remaining silent and offering no defence of those involved. In November 1991, soldiers killed seven federal agents in Veracruz. Instead of letting an in-house investigation take place,

Salinas ordered the National Commission of Human Rights (CNDH) to investigate. As a result five officers were imprisoned. In September 1992, the Ministry of Public Education distributed textbooks to public schools describing soldiers opening fire on innocent, unarmed students during the 1968 Tlatelolco massacre. Army leaders took exception and the books were removed. However, Salinas never denied the content of truth of the books, which angered army officials (Doyle,2004; 2009, p.1).

The year 1993, saw the public attacks accelerated and the army was now defending itself more than ever. It appeared that the democratization process that Mexico was experiencing had taken the army as its Vietnam. The army's deteriorating relations with the Catholic Church in Chiapas started to receive considerable attention, with the majority of people siding with Bishop Ruiz. (Ruiz had stopped the army from searching Indian villages and accused army officials in collaborating with the former Governor Garrids to jail two priests) (Wagner & Shultz, 1995). Some accused the army in playing a role in the assignation of Cardinal Juan Jesus Oisadas Ocamop. Others used the incident to criticize what they perceived as the army's ineffectiveness in the national anti-narcotics campaign. 1993 also saw the 25th anniversary of the 1968 Tlatelolco massacre. Many groups during this time lobbied for the release of classified documents relating to the affair, this was a case of opening new wounds for the army. A commission de la Verdad (Truth Commission) comprised of prominent citizens and intellectuals (many of whom were students in 1968), was set up to investigate the events that unfolded at Tlatelolco. When the report was delivered in December 1993, the army again had to defend itself from

accusations of complying with the killings, with no word or support from Salinas (Wagner & Shultz, 1995; Doyle, 2004, p.1).

This period leading into the Zapatistas uprising is highly significant and may have played a major role in why the Zapatistas were handled the way they were. There was a significant breakdown in the relationship between the military and the President that had been developing for some time and had reached its peak during the end of 1993 (Doyle, 2009, p.1). Was the President unwilling to use the army to suppress the Zapatistas because they could no longer work efficiently together? Would the army have even been willing to obey the orders of the president?

Guerrero vs Chiapas:

Guerrero is much like Chiapas a poor southern state, with a large indigenous population and a similar colonial period history. Guerrero has had significant political and military repression from the Mexican authorities, though has never received the grace or treatment that the Zapatistas have received. Guerrero has a long history of the repression and it is still continuing. They had the similar problem of elite hired military groups like that of Chiapas, but the people of Guerrero didn't have the attention, focus or coverage that the people of Chiapas received. Some have argued that the difference between Guerrero and Chiapas and the difference in outcomes is the length and intensity of the military presence in the state (McAdam, McCarthy, & Zald, 1996). Chiapas was a relatively new military occupation when the Zapatistas were involved. While Guerrero on the other hand had already had long periods of military occupation of the state. The argument continues that the international and domestic communities were

not fazed by what was occurring in Guerrero as there had been occupation and repression for such a long time previously. In comparison to the Zapatistas and the Chiapas rebellion receiving plenty of attention from domestic and international audiences the world over (McAdam, McCarthy, & Zald, 1996; Mazzei, 2007; Miró, 2003). Guerrero never had the economic potential or draw that Chiapas was seen as. Having the exposure of the events in the international and domestic media severely damaged the reputation of the Mexican Army and Government. There was significant international condemnation and pressures placed on the Mexican authorities for these actions. The same international and domestic markets were significantly silent with the daily terror and disappearances in Guerrero (Watt & Zepeda, 2012; Solar, 2014; Solano & Gunderson, 2010). As it had been such a long occupation, the actions were no longer seen as relevant or glamorous as those that was occurring in Chiapas, which was something new.

The Mexican authorities never faced the same pressures and condemnation from the media. Without an alternative voice commentating on events in the region, the authorities were free to carry out their operations in Guerrero with total impunity and control the discourse that was being created around the events (Watt & Zepeda, 2012; Solar, 2014). Another argument that is posed is that the Zapatistas insurgency was novel. Many people in Mexico responded to what occurred in Chiapas saying “here we go again, these rebels are part of the old Sandinista-Castorite-Marxist-Leninist legacy. Is this what we really need for Mexico?” (Fuentes, 1994, p.56). The Zapatistas provided the opposite, it was the first post-communist

rebellion in Latin America. A rebellion that links transnational and local Non-Government Agencies that represent civil society and their interests (Ronfeldt, Arquilla, Fuller, & Fuller, 1999; Fuentes, 1994).

Revolutions:

The treatment of the Zapatistas was different to other rebellions because they never posed that much of a threat to the Mexican government; they weren't a revolutionary force. To compound that, the Army was not in such a strong position as they had been in the past (Doyle, 2009).

Samuel P. Huntington provided a clear and concise definition of a revolution and is a benchmark for determining if the Zapatista movement was a revolution at all. He said:

A Revolution is a rapid, fundamental and violent domestic change in the dominant values and myths of society, in its political institutions, social structures, leadership and government activity and policies.
(quoted in Knight, 1990, p.313)

Huntington described in detail the distinction between revolution and other forms of uprisings. The probability of a revolution depends on many factors.

As a result of using Huntington's definition in comparison to what the Zapatistas wanted to achieve and what outcomes actually eventuated, it is clear that the Zapatistas was simply a rural uprising. The Zapatistas did have specific goals but they were not trying to change the "dominant values and myths of a society" (Knight, 1990, p.179-180). Rather, they were trying to change current policies in regard to indigenous peoples and rural farmer's rights to land. The Zapatistas did not try and change or overthrow the

leadership or government, if anything, wanted to work outside of these parameters and have control over their own populous. Something that Huntington's definition does not cover about revolution, but it very central to the Latin American context, is that the Zapatistas did not try and touch either of the two longest running institutions within Latin America, the Catholic Church and the Military. Any attempted or successful revolution that has occurred across history in this area, has featured a restructure or attempted restructure of one of these institutions, so it can hardly be classed as a revolution if neither of these are touched. The Zapatistas did not attempt any change these two institutions, so they didn't really show the intent that was needed to classify them as a revolutionary force.

The EZLN is comprised of mainly indigenous peasants and farmers, which meant they had difficulty in cutting the rural and urban divides and the stratification of social classes across Mexico (Dellacioppa, 2011). Within Mexico the Zapatistas had been unable to build a broad based, popular support in urban or rural areas outside of Chiapas during the initial period of their struggle. Theda Skocpol in *States and Social Revolutions* and Barrington Moore in *Social Origins of Dictatorships and Democracy* provide an excellent framework and analysis to use to analyse the Zapatistas situation and their revolution. Moore argued that

By themselves, the peasants have never been able to accomplish a revolution... the peasants have to have leaders from other classes. But leadership alone is not enough... for them (revolts) to succeed requires a somewhat unusual combination or circumstances that has only occurred in modern times... the upper classes have to display a

substantial degree of blindness before a revolutionary breakthrough becomes feasible (Moore, 1993, p.480).

Skocpol expanded on this point, by adding that while the peasantry play a central role in the revolution, the seizure of power is often carried out by “coalitions, alliances or conjunctures of struggles that cut across divides, between urban and rural areas, and among different social classes and ethnic groupings.” (Goodwin & Skocpol, 1989, p.492)

Using both Moore and Skocpol’s work, we can examine the Zapatistas. Skocpol argued that revolution tend to develop broadly based coalitions around pre-existing nationalists, populist or religious discourses (Skocpol, 1979, p.11). The Zapatista have described themselves as a nationalist movement, calling on all Mexicans to fight for democracy and control of land in which their hero Emilinao Zapata fought for (Dellacioppa, 2011). However, this support never eventuated. While the Zapatista have drawn state and even worldwide attention, they have been unable to provide the ideas, goals or services that would appeal to a broad range of the Mexican population. The Zapatista had managed to gain sympathizers however, more so than supporters. There have been numerous headlines across newspapers and websites about the number of those welcoming the Zapatista on their marches. But these sympathy groups didn’t translate into the mass support for the Zapatista that Skocpol or Moore suggest is necessary to launch a successful revolution (Moore, 1993, p.426 ; Skocpol, 1979, p.293). The Zapatista, and some of their goals, are specifically designed to help only the local Chiapas. Some of these goals are to guarantee indigenous rights to land which they believe they are obligated to

have. The Zapatista also want Mexico to withdraw from NAFTA because the indigenous people in Chiapas will feel the worst effects from the agreement. These goals, based upon Skocpol's theory, will not attract the broad based support which is needed for a successful revolution (Skocpol, 1979).

Skocpol's theory also raised the point that a strong regime will not leave many social groups outside of their patronage system, which in turn leaves very little room for a revolutionary group to build a broad based coalition (Skocpol, 1979, p.108). In her book, *Mexico in Crisis*, Judith Adler Hellman described this extensive and effective patronage system in depth. She effectively argued that co-optation, is a process in which individuals or groups are independent enough to threaten the dominance of a single group and are traded small concessions or favours in order to moderate demands to concede their challenge. Hellman argued that the PRI in Mexico has worked co-optation down to a fine art, and that it has paralyzed almost all potential opposition (Hellman, 1978). Relating this back to Skocpol's point, it would be extremely difficult for the Zapatista, who are located in a poor remote region of south-west Mexico to organize any other social groupings to form a coalition with. Skocpol however, did concede that revolutionary coalitions have the best chance for success while facing an exclusionary and repressive authoritarian regime (Skocpol, 1979, p.128). Booth and Seligson in *The Political Culture of Authoritarianism in Mexico: A Re-examination*, conclude that Mexico is a universally authoritarian system (Booth, & Seligson, 1984). Despite the arguments by Scott (1959) and Tucker (1957) that Mexico is a pluralist constitution democracy or democracy in the

making, Booth and Seligson (1984) argued that Mexico's system is largely characterised by an authoritarian regime and that it is even linked to the very core of national character and psyche of Mexico.

Goldstone (1991) argued that while in the Mexican context power is not concentrated in the hands of one dictator, it is concentrated in the hands of one very powerful political party the PRI. Mexico, in this context, is seen as having the perfect dictatorship (Goldstone, 1991; Curran & Park, 2000, p. 86). Mexico's system incorporates a large bureaucracy and multi-party based government. However, since the ruling party had had constant power since 1929 with only a 12 year break from 2000-2012, it had committed vast and transparent political corruption whenever elections occurred. Whether it be local or federal, the PRI had always managed to receive the votes that would secure their re-election. Despite obvious and documented cases of corruption, the PRI managed to keep the bourgeoisie and elite classes satisfied, and managed to co-opt many opposing parties unions and other groups (Goldstone, 1991). Goldstone continued to argue that Mexico is in no danger of a revolution. A revolution would only occur, if somehow the Mexican system developed vulnerabilities within their 'perfect dictatorship' (Llosa, 1991; Goldstone, 1991; Curran & Park, 2000). Goldstone added that a revolution would only occur if their vulnerabilities escalated simultaneously, and if the elites started to feel alienated or threatened by the corruption or by the power of the PRI (Goldstone, 1991; Curran & Park, 2000).

Conclusion:

Chiapas has been treated differently to most other states in Mexico for long periods of time. It is known as the most backward state in Mexico, forgotten along the southern border, one of the poorest, with significant birth trauma due to the foundation of the state. Chiapas is often only viewed for its resources and economic potential by the government. There is strong political power among the local elite in Chiapas and a long history of paramilitary presence and these paramilitary working on behalf of these elites interests. There is evidence which suggests that the Mexican government were never aware of the full extent of Zapatistas in the 1994 uprising or the lead in. The government nor the military were prepared for the Zapatistas, that their reluctance to fully engage in warfare with them was a sign of this. There also exists the idea that the Zapatistas never posed a threat to the Mexican government. The Zapatistas were not a revolutionary force, were not going to take over power or be able to gain a broad based supporters base. That they could not achieve much coming from Chiapas.

Chapter 3:

Mexican Administrations:

The administration of and goals set by Carlos Salinas, during the initial phase of the Zapatistas rebellion, were the reason why the Zapatistas were treated differently from all other open rebellions before them and subsequently.

Carlos Salinas came to power in the 1988 Mexican general elections, winning 50.7% of the vote, the lowest for a winning president since 1917 (Noel, 2015). The PRI faced significant opposition during this time from the political left, and from other parties on the right. The PRI also faced accusations of a fraudulent win in the election, and Salinas faced a great deal of public discontent in the early parts of his administration (Nohlen, 2005). During the 1980s, the PRI went through a series of events that significantly weakened their regime, especially a party split in 1987. Salinas didn't want this weakness to become accentuated. His key objective was to reconfigure the Mexican political economy and make Mexico a key player on the world stage (Blancarte, 1993). He stated in his inauguration speech

The modernization of Mexico is essential if we are to meet the demands of the 85 million Mexicans of today.... In brief, we need to modernize politics, the economy, and society. The modernization of Mexico is, moreover, an absolute imperative. This is the only way we will be able to affirm our sovereignty in a world undergoing profound transformation. (quoted in Vargas, 1998, p.432)

Salinas was desperate for his vision of Mexico to work out and was very aware of the process and fallout that could occur during the dual transitional change that he wanted to put in place. Citing the Soviet Union as a key example, Salinas said

When you are introducing strong economic reform, you must make sure that you build the political consensus around it. If you are at the same time introducing additional drastic political reform, you may end up with no reform at all. And we want to have reform, not a disintegrated country. (Clifton, 2000, p.18)

This statement introduced Salinas's intentions on how his government would operate and his view on the trade-offs between economic liberalization and political democratization. Salinas and his government knew that they needed strong political consensus and stability across Mexico, in order to achieve the goals that he wanted to achieve economically and politically (Clifton, 2000). How did this fit into the handling of Zapatistas?

Mexican Neo-Liberal Policies:

The Salinas administration's top priority was the economy. The administration expanded their economic model and decided to continue the neoliberal policies started by his predecessor, Miguel de la Madrid, for whom Salinas had served as Minister of the Budget and Planning (Khasnabish, 2008). Believing that the central government's excessive role in the economy was a leading factor in Mexico's decline, Salinas privatized and sold off assets that the previous administrations had been involved in.

Although lacking a mandate and even legitimacy, Salinas was determined to push forward with a program of reforms. He believed that within a generation these reforms would place Mexico among the advanced, industrialized nations of the world (Coerver, 2004). The Salinas' government had set out, to establish a set of political and economic reforms that were going to change Mexico. The key that Salinas saw in securing both his personal and political future and Mexico's economic future was the NAFTA between the United States, Canada and Mexico. Salinas had chosen the way that he wanted to go, and his decision was to align and grow closer to the United States. The relationship with the USA was the linchpin to the economic plan and effectively would signal the success or failure of Salinas' reign (Villarreal, 2008).

Salinas's speech and stance on the need for strong political unity and economic reform, as well as his alignment with the United States during this period, created a unique relationship between the two states. Mexico experienced a sort of contradictory relationship with the United States, Human Rights groups, and those with Human Rights leanings in power based in the United States, condemned the political authoritarianism that was being employed at the time in Mexico, while successive US governments praised the economic model that Salinas was trying to employ. Mexico becoming economically integrated with the US was key to Salinas's economic plan (Rosenblum, 2000).

The new relationship which Salinas was opening up with the United States could be seen as a double edged sword for Mexico. It was bringing them the economic situation that Salinas wanted and moving them in the

direction that they wanted to go, but it was opening up Mexico and Salinas's administration to a new set of condemning eyes, which had a stronger and more powerful voice. The close association with the United States also constrained Salinas regime's manoeuvrability, making political repression and corruption much more costly (Steffan, 2007). In the United States Congress during January 1994 there was significant debate and concern raised by multiple members over the economic impact the Zapatista conflict was going to have on the United States and NAFTA, Mexico's political stability and the United States role in developing and aiding Mexico (Congress, 1994, p.5-10). In the late 1980s, Amnesty International found that Mexico was in the top two countries in the hemisphere with the worst human rights violations (Amnesty International, 1995). Human Rights Watch published a report titled *Human Rights in Mexico: A Policy of Impunity* in 1990 only days before Salinas was to meet President George H.W. Bush about NAFTA. There was increased heat being placed on Salinas's human rights record, and the relationship Mexico and the United States being discussed in United States during this time (Lutz, 1990). A series of petitions and letters were sent to the administration of Salinas during January 1994 expressing concern over the Zapatistas conflict, urging the Mexican administration to take a different approach and one in accordance with Mexican and International law (Congress, 1994, p. 145-147).

Salinas, in an effort to keep the United States on side, created the CNDH (National Commission of Human Rights) in 1990, a national

commission in charge of making human rights recommendations in Mexico (Lutz, 1990).

Presidency of Carlos Salinas de Gortari:

Salinas' presidency can be seen as one of two distinct periods, and they both revolve around the NAFTA deal. Salinas started his presidency with strong and bold moves. Initially jailing financial elites, one of whom was Joaquín Hernández Galicia head of the oil workers union and jailing officers of two of Mexico's leading stock exchanges on charges of security fraud (Doyle, 2004). Salinas then filed charges of electoral fraud against the PRI mayor of Hermosillo. He jailed the mastermind of the 1984 assassination of an investigative reporter. He recognised a PAN victory of Ernesto Ruffo to become state governor in 1988. Salinas also supported the heightened attacks on drug trafficking leading to the arrest of Felix Gallardo (Reding, 1989). These moves all created positive early views of Salinas from the international community. However, there still remained largely negative views from those within Mexico. The Mexican public believed they were seeing an elitist technocrat coming into power, by realigning the PRI with the private sector and the Mexican right attempting to re-establish the obsolete corporatist system from 1946 (Reding, 1989, p.686). The Mexican public, and increasingly the global community, began to see that Salinas "modernization" was bringing about an increase in the use of repression against the population. Salinas was elevating notorious human rights violators to high positions in intelligence and security across Mexico. In a show of his intentions, Salinas appointed Gutierrez, Javier Garcia Paniagua and Miguel Nazar Haro, who were all leaders of the DFS

(Dirección Federal de Seguridad), a Mexican intelligence agency, which was accused of illegal detentions, torture, assassinations and forced disappearances (Reding, 1989, p.708). At least 347 complaints were received by the United Nations which related to Mexican state crimes from 1960 to 1980 (Castellanos, 2011). He also appointed Fernando Gutierrez Barrios, who was in charge of the DFS during this time, to become the secretary of government, who would now be in charge of internal security and federal elections.

The second period in Salinas' administration is encapsulated in *Zapatista Thunder* by Lucy Conger. She argued that "the Zapatistas crisis exposed the lack of sensibility among Salinas inner circle of technocrats" (Conger, 1994, p.115). Salinas is quoted saying "we focused on the economic situation in general and lost sight of the social question." (Conger, 1994, p. 115) In the midst of the Zapatista crisis, Salinas attended an international financial meeting in Davos Switzerland seeking to reassure investors about the situation in Chiapas (Conger, 1994, p.115). During the time of the Zapatistas rebellion, Salinas undertook a vast cabinet reshuffle that epitomised the direction that he was willing to take, in order for his economic plans to take shape. Salinas accepted the resignations from the men he had only just appointed and appointed a new cabinet. Camacho Solis was named commissioner for Peace, Manuel Tello the Foreign Minister and Jorge Carpizo to be the interior ministers. (Doyle, 2004) Salinas also denied the CNDH (National Commission of Human Rights) access to Chiapas for security reasons. Arturo Sanchez argued that these appointments were a very good sign and a shift in Salinas's position. Carpizo was well known for

his sensitivity towards human rights and the plight of the indigenous, while Solis was recognized as a negotiator between violent political groups (Scott, 1994).

Presidency of Ernesto Zedillo Ponce de Leon:

There was an election in August 1994 that the PRI won PRI candidate Ernesto Zedillo was elected president. This occurred despite threats from the Zapatistas about the resumption of hostilities after a PRI victory, and the fact that Marco had been contacted by guerrilla groups across Mexico willing to take up arms if the PRI won. As Wagner and Shultz (1995) argued this shows that despite the corruption and systematic violence that the PRI had waged over their tenure, the Mexican people were not ready to risk the instability and unknown that happens with a change. In December 1994, Erenesto Zedillo took power in Mexico with the Chiapas conflict still hovering over the government, but slowly moving into the background (Dávila, 1995). The Zapatista were not as prominent in the Mexican minds as they were in early 1994 and were slowly being surrounded by the military in Chiapas. Zedillo came under increasing pressure to resolve the Zapatistas issue as it was becoming an ongoing stalemate. (Dávila, 1995)

In the early period of Zedillo's presidency, Mexico experienced the Peso Crisis or Tequila Crisis, which occurred due to the large scale reforms that Mexico had undertaken since the 1980s and throughout the 1990s (Schott, 2005). Mexico was seen by the global community as a risk, due to the political violence they had been experiencing. This led to the devaluation of the Mexican peso to compensate. Mexico needed foreign

investment and the assassination of a presidential candidate and the Chiapas uprisings were deterring investment in Mexico. Zedillo's administration was not in a very strong position politically and economically. The United States under President Clinton and the IMF (International Monetary Fund) attempted to bail out Mexico from the crisis to the tune of \$50 Billion USD (Edwards, 1998; Schott, 2005).

The Zapatistas were able to use this new leverage and bargain new peace talks and truces. During this time, Zedillo was under pressure to resolve the Zapatistas crisis in an efficient manner, as it was seen as a cancer on his presidency. Zedillo convinced himself that he needed to solve the issue by any means. Undertaking an offensive against the Zapatistas, Zedillo soon faced pressure from members of his own administration about the potential charges of human rights violations. President Clinton, US Congress and various other organizations weighed in with petitions and letters and convinced Zedillo to resolve the issue through negotiation, as Zedillo was in no position to ignore these different groups after the peso crisis and bailout. (Wagner & Shultz, 1995; Steffan, 2007; Congress, 2014, p.120).

Presidency of Vicente Fox Quesada:

The election of Vicente Fox of the PAN party in 2000 and the end of PRI rule created a great deal of hope and positivity about the Zapatistas rebellion, it has essentially weakened the Zapatistas movement. As a large factor that drew support for the Zapatistas cause was their rally against corruption in Mexico and PRI rule (Vadi, 2001). The Zapatistas represented a strong people's movement from the grassroots that was holding the

Mexican Government accountable for their actions. With the election of Fox and the end to the PRI, this need for a people's representation was lessened. Fox initially spoke of a new vision for Mexico, a new era and his vision of Mexico had surpassed the one that the Zapatistas had developed for the Mexican people. Fox's legitimacy in victory of the election also provided a strong case for his support as it was it afforded him trust from the public and surpassed the Zapatistas as the new vision of trust, justice and a voice of anti-corruption in Mexico. Days after taking office, Fox declared "We're saying goodbye to military logic and embracing political logic. The suffering of Mexican Indians is unacceptable. The need to change our policy toward these people is obvious." (quoted in Weiner, 2000) Immediately readdressed the issue of the San Andres accords, which had been largely ignored by the previous PRI leaders, claiming that he can solve the Zapatistas issue in fifteen minutes (Weiner, 2000; Klein, 2001; Lanier, 2000).

Vicente Fox faced pressures from the United States about the flow of people heading into the US and forcing the maquiladora sector south, also facing pressures from the US about the rising violence levels and the drug trade that is ever encroaching into the states. Fox also faced increasing violence and protest from disgruntled people who were bypassing the normal avenues of lobbying and resorting to direct action, across Mexico (Wise & Cyphe, 2007; Bacon, 2001).

Fox was pro-business and pro-free trade, and suggested opening up the NAFTA zone into an open market like that of the European Union economic zone and proposed the Plan Puebla Panama (PPP), essentially a

development plan that encompassed the southern states of Mexico and tied into the NAFTA and Central American Free Trade Agreements (Pereira, 2001; Call, 2007). *La Jornada* called the PPP is “a counter insurgency strategy with a friendlier face” (Lusigna, 2001). The Fox administration was beginning to develop with the help of the US a hearts and minds campaign to win over the people of Chiapas (Stenzel, 2006), Fox needed to end the militarization of the state of Chiapas among other southern states in Mexico to complete his ambitions. Oil and Gas Journal reported that “political disturbances are more important as an impediment to oil exploration in Chiapas than any other geological factor”. (Sanders, 2001) The direction of economic policy had a political mirroring to Fox’s policies, which were intent on turning Mexico into a modern economic nation that could compete on the global markets (Foreign Affairs, 2015). Fox was employing a securitization economic policy of Mexico known as the Merida Initiative and was fixated on improving and securing ties with the United States (Seelke & Finklea, 2017; Pastor & Wise, 2005). The neoliberal approach Fox took slowly lead towards social reforms, and opening of the media, economic, political and social spheres. There was never any policies enacted towards resolving the Chiapas situation nor the Zapatista requests. The only intent in Chiapas was to stop the potential for violence in the region as it was impacting economically for Fox (Foreign Affairs, 2015; Sanders, 2001).

Presidency of Felipe de Jesus Calderon Hinojosa:

Calderon was elected president in 2006. Like Fox he was a member of the centre right PAN party and a Neoliberal enthusiast (Russell, 2016;

Castro-Rea, 2017). Calderon during his tenure was faced with increasing resistance against his government's policies. He was active in the use of the military, which was at the time subsidised by the US, and implemented his Iron Fist rule initially designed against the ever increasing drug trade across Mexico. Calderon's administration decreased the budget for public administration and redirected the funds to the military. Public minister's budgets were also cut and reappointed to National Security ventures (Wortham, 2013; Stahler-Sholk, 2007). These ventures included beginning the war on narco-traffickers and the rise of military power to unprecedented levels. Calderon's administration breaks down into three distinct priorities. Combating poverty, creating jobs and improving public security. During Calderon's tenure Mexico faced an increased militarization and increase in military checkpoints across the southern and northern states. (Guerrero, 2013; Schaefer, Bahney, & Riley, 2009).

Mexico is a weak state, particularly in the border regions, and that has been the way since the early 1990s and groups have taken advantage of it. (Nava, 2011; Olson & Lee, 2012) Many reports have pointed to the rise of the private security sector in Mexico and the levels of corruption that do exist (Müller, 2010; Perret, 2013). Arguing that by the time Calderon had taken power there had begun a creation of an artificial social conflict that was designed to escalate local polarization (Castellanos, 2008; Henck, 2011). The government laid plans for a legally justified military incursion into the Zapatistas regions, and there was the creation of conflict so the military could intervene as peacekeepers. There was a reappearance of paramilitary groups across Mexico during Calderon's tenure, and aggression

against indigenous, especially Zapatistas rose (Castellanos, 2011). This included the return of OPDDIC (Organization for the Defence of Indigenous and Peasant Rights), who were responsible for attacks on Zapatista people and were trained, funded and arguably joined by the Mexican military in these attacks. Due to the military involvement, a large reason the Zapatista public were largely unharmed was their lack of retaliation to the attacks. The government had a hard time framing the attacks as indigenous fighting and a complete attack would have been at significant political cost (Fazio, 2013; Reyes, 2015).

Post PRI Mexico in the 2000s was changing. There was a changing structural role of the state and the political class occurring across Mexico. This was occurring at a time that the Zapatistas were seen as having a break with the Mexican political class (Almeyra, 2014; Modonesi, 2014). The Zapatistas during this time were largely irrelevant. The Other Campaign waged by the Zapatistas had failed. There had been long periods of silence from Subcomandante Marcos and the Zapatista had kept to themselves in Chiapas. The Zapatista were slowly becoming politically irrelevant during this period, as other issues had started to develop across Mexico that were creating attention (Wilson, 2014; Reyes, 2015; Castellanos, 2008). Calderon did not release any policy or intent on solving the issue in Chiapas and the Zapatistas completely shifted their ideology towards a social movement in the way to reinforce their legitimacy (Reyes, 2015).

Presidency of Enrique Pena Nieto:

Enrique Pena Nieto, sworn in as president on the 1st of December 2012, the first member of the PRI to become president since 2000. *The*

Economist (2012) said that this return to power by the PRI came due to the inability to create and real change or progress by the two of PAN Presidents, the monopolies and poverty still remained. There was no real choice from the left and Pena Nieto seemed to be the least bad option for Mexican voters (Economist, 2012; Jespersen, 2013). Before assuming office as President Pena Nieto was governor of the State of Mexico, where he did achieve success with the infrastructure that he was able to build and keep promises that he made. However under his watch the murder rate and violence in the state was still at a high level. (Economist, 2011). Pena Nieto promised great economic policies that would improve Mexico and made it a global player, as well as strengthen ties with the US, though there was the continued issue of the drug trade and the levels of murders and violence that plagued Mexico during this time (Valenzuela, 2016).

Pena Nieto continued the tone that was created by Calderon by promising to minimize the death rate. He created a national police force that was to be trained by the US with counter insurgency tactics. Named the Gendarmerie, the 40,000 strong paramilitary force was designed to take on the kingpin strategy and meant to eradicate the drug war in Mexico. This strategy was a continuation of that of Calderon's, but in a repackaged form. Pena Nieto with his creation of the new paramilitary force also received accusations that the new internal security law that he had put in place was violating human rights and there was a lack of protection towards news journalism as well as the use of Pegasus software to spy on them. The Law of Internal Security was endangering citizens as it essentially gave the military a blank check. They or the President were able to attack any group

which they considered to be a danger or threat to them, without the need for justification (Graham, 2012; Ahmed, 2017; Corcoran, 2012). The CNDH had put out many reports about Pena Nieto's internal law of security and the potential for human rights abuses, due to the overwhelming favouritism of the discretionary use of the military in its interpretation (Daly, Heinle & Shirk, 2012).

Conclusion:

Mexico's successive presidencies and their policies had a significant impact on the handling of the Zapatistas and the Chiapas uprising. From Salinas and Zedillo through to Pena Nieto, all the presidents had significant other issues that played a role in the treatment of the Zapatistas. There was the presence of NAFTA, the reluctance to engage due to international condemnation, and the need for political stability. The Peso crisis and international bailout were similar factors of international condemnation and political stability that took to the fore. PPP and other plans for economic development around Chiapas needed the treatment of the Zapatistas to be different. This also coincided with the growing significance and impact of the war on drugs and the rising violence that it had brought. The presidencies also had significant issues that overshadowed the Zapatistas during their times. Their priorities were elsewhere and the lack of definitive policies relating to the Zapatistas being pursued by the presidencies reflected this. There was also the international condemnation that they received when they did act against the Zapatistas and the significant influence that the United States had on Mexico's politics that played an important role in the treatment of the Zapatistas by the successive presidents.

Chapter 4

Political Culture:

J Harry Wray in *Sense and Non-Sense* (2000) argued that every country has a political culture that is defined by their shared values, norms and belief systems. The shared beliefs define the relationship between the government and the citizens. Countries have different types of ideologies and will adapt or alter depending on the beliefs or values that the country holds (Wray, 2000).

Robert Putnam (1971) argued that “elite political culture” may be defined as the set of politically relevant beliefs, values and habits of the most highly involved members in the political system. The political culture that you’re influenced by, influences your political style the decision making and subsequent thought processes that you go through. Culture has a powerful influence on people’s behaviours and thoughts, particularly involving interaction between groups and resolving conflicts or disagreement (Putnam, 1971).

Culture can be used to view observable political effects. Culture in this sense is used as a casual or explanatory variable. According to Asad, (1993) an empirically grounded, practice-oriented approach to culture can help to explain how political identifications are established. Rhetoric and symbols not only exemplify but can ultimately have the power to produce political compliance and or affect political outcomes (Asad, 1993). Lisa Wedeen (2002) argued that even at a minimum, studying or exploring culture by identifying practices has developed into the ability to

understanding or politics and decisions the made. Martha Finnemore (1996) in *Norms, Culture and World Politics* argued that sociological institutionalism challenges dominant ideas in international relations. This idea provides a system of framework in which to analyse both international and domestic politics. The idea generates testable hypothesis about international behaviour and the power that culture has on politics.

Mexico has a strong affinity towards masks, playing a significant role both spiritually and culturally. There has been numerous amounts of work published on the symbolism and use of these masks in Mexican culture. However, not a great deal has been published on the Zapatistas use of their masks and the affect it may have had on the treatment they received during their rebellion against the Mexican government. This chapter explores the use of masks in Mexican culture and discusses if this could have had an effect on the governments' psyche and how they dealt with the Zapatistas.

Labyrinth of Solitude:

A key piece of work within this frame of political culture is *The Labyrinth of Solitude* by Octavio Paz, (1961) particularly the chapter on the Mexican Mask. The themes that run through the work are that solitude is responsible for the Mexican perspectives on death, fiesta and identity. He stated the Mexican is made up of two distinct cultures and identities, the Indigenous and the Spaniard. However, in denying one part of their identity, they become stuck in a world of solitude. The true Mexican is usually hidden behind a mask (Paz, 1961). Throughout his work, Paz described the Spanish influence and views of society that have passed onto the Mexican

psyche. Something quite poignant and relevant was the views of woman that Paz describes, particularly due to the fact the Zapatistas' rebellion was full of young girls. He said, "Woman should be secretive, an impassive smile", and a "woman's place is in the home, with a broken leg." (Paz, 1961, p.36)

The Mexican considers the woman to be dark, secretive and passive, does not attribute evil instincts to her, and pretends she has none. It is impossible for her to have a personal or private life, for if she was to be herself, she would be a mistress to her own wishes, passions or whims, and she would be unfaithful to herself. It is believed that the Mexican woman quite simply has no will of her own and only comes alive when someone wakes her (Paz, 1961). These are all statements from Paz that showed the underlying feelings towards a Mexican Woman.

The Mexican Mask:

The mask has a powerful use in this regard. It allows women to break free from the views that exist in society and allows them to be their true selves. They are no longer denying one part of their identity and have the ability to free themselves from the dominant thought. The mask, in this respect allows for a form of self-defence. (Paz, 1961) This can be seen as both dangerous and empowering by those who are not masked. For the government, the Zapatista Women are no longer bound by the social constraints that exist and are able to freely express themselves. They were no longer hiding behind the face of solitude. Their true selves were able to be expressed. Looking deeper into the Mexican psyche, Mexican people inherently view the world around them as dangerous. Hostility of their environment and their history teach them to protect themselves. They are

afraid of expressing their true selves. Masks serve as a form of defence while at the same time providing separation from the harsh realities that they were facing (Paz, 1961). Their masks allowed the Zapatistas to be their true self, not what they were being classed as in society, the poor indigenous farmers. As the Zapatistas wore masks, it gave them power or an aura as they were being able to be their true self. Managing to escape the face of solitude that the majority of Mexico was still hiding behind.

Thomas Nail (2013) in his article, *The Politics of the Mask*, looked at this in another aspect, and links it to other masked movements throughout history. The most common argument is that masks bring about a faceless/non hierarchal movement where members can't be targeted based upon rank or significance (Nail, 2013). Masks reject the political representation of the party and the state. Throughout history, the goal of social movements was to publicly demonstrate the power and identity of a group, communicating 'we are x, we are here.' The wearing of the masks make a statement against the corruption and misrepresentation of the state and the system that the Zapatistas believed to have been committed. Masks made a symbolic and practical rejection of individual identities that parties and states require to 'represent' their members. The Zapatistas, with their use of masks, are working outside of the traditional framework and creating new lines of representation. Were the Mexican authorities prepared to deal with this new form of representation? Is this why the Zapatistas were dealt with differently?

Masks create political universalism, because anyone can be a Zapatistas by donning the mask. This may have been hard for the PRI, as

the person in their sights might not have just been that peasant farmer from Chiapas any longer. Masks also undermine hierarchy and authoritarianism by elimination markers of authority (Nial, 2013). This ruled out the ability to effectively target and eliminate leaders or high ranking members of the Zapatistas, a method that had been used effectively before by the PRI during their tenure in power. The use of masks also played into the preferential treatment of elites by the PRI, they could no longer tell who was an indigenous peasant and who could be a member of the elite. Alex Khasnabish (2010) in his work *Rebellion from the Grassroots*, provided an analysis on the Zapatistas' use of Masks. He wrote that Marcos and the Zapatistas used masks for two specific reasons.

The primary one is that we have to watch out for protagonism-in other words, that people do not promote themselves too much. It is about being anonymous, so that they can't corrupt us... we know our leadership is collective. Even though you are listening to me now, because I'm here in another place, masked the same way others are talking. This person today is called Marcos and tomorrow will be called Pedro in Margaritas or Jose in Oscingo or Alfredo in Altamirano. Finally the one who speaks is a more collective heart. Not a caullidior. And the time will come when the people will realise that it is enough to have dignity and put on a mask and say well than I can do this too (Khasnabish, 2010, p. 209-210).

The masked faces of the Zapatistas were also meant to evoke the states of indigenous peoples in Mexico. By masking themselves, the Zapatistas became faceless, anonymous and without identity. The denial of dignity and

all consequences that flow from that, had been a long characteristic of the fate imposed upon indigenous people since the invasion of the Americas. Faceless and without dignity, people became fodder for those in power. But in taking up masks voluntarily, the Zapatistas reclaimed the stolen dignity and reminded everyone that the most marginalised, invisible and oppressed had the power to remake the world (Khasnabish, 2010, p. 212). Crucial to the Zapatistas' response was their use of symbolic violence. The masks gave the Zapatistas a symbolic appearance as an 'army of the other' giving them the ubiquity and an unlimited presence declaring their complete infiltration of the territory (Conant, 2010, p. 156).

Most People are Other People: (Wilde, 1905)

We are influenced to an amazing extent by people with whom we identify. A fostered sense of identity with one group of people can be made into a powerful weapon to brutalize another. The art of constructing hatred takes the form of invoking the magical power of some allegedly predominant identity that drowns other affiliations (Sen, 2007; Slocum-Bradley, 2008). The major source of potential conflict in the contemporary world is the presumption that people can be uniquely categorised based on the identity. So, conversely, the lack of this identity makes it difficult to construct the hatred or the ability that it takes to build a specific target. The masks of the Zapatistas create this lack of identity. True, it does create a new class of masked people that can become targeted, but the difficulty is what lies under the mask, one can't tell who is really under it. The magical power of the alleged predominant identity is hard to follow if the identity is not a clear, cut one. Identity can kill and kill with abandon. A strong and

exclusive sense of belonging to one group or differentiation from another becomes a dangerous one. Violence is fronted by the imposition of singular and belligerent identities, championed by proficient artisans of terror. The work on social capital by Robert Putnam explored the power on how identity in a community has so much power on the lives of those affected, whether that's being positive or negative (Putnam, 2001). Violence is associated with identity and is replicated the world over. Students in Tlatelolco in 1968 were easily targeted, as they all fitted a specific identity. Teachers in Guvero, again were easily targeted. Was it really the lack of a visible identity that led to the Zapatistas different treatment?

Gary H, Gossen in his 1996 article *Maya Zapatistas Move to the Ancient Future* argued that Mayan culture in an essence, and places large importance on anonymity and secrecy that the Zapatistas use of masks is portraying. That the use of masks by the Zapatistas is activating something that is deep within the psyche of the Mayan culture (Gossen, 1996). He quoted an Indian writer Rigoberta Merchu, who said:

We Indians have always hidden our identity and kept our secrets to ourselves. This is why we are discriminated against. We often find it hard to talk about ourselves because we know we must hide so much in order to preserve our Indian culture and prevent it from being taken away from us. (Gossen, 1996, p.534)

Mayan Cognitive Baggage:

Gossen subsequently argued that the Mayan people carry “cognitive baggage in their languages, minds, hearts and soul” (Gossen, 2013, p.258)

and that the use of the Masks takes this baggage away and lets them truly be free (Gossen, 2013). This point takes on that Paz was referring to in his writings from the *Labyrinth of Solitude*. The masking incognito mode of self-representation of the Zapatistas appears to be linked to the construction on the Mayan self and society. It cannot be passed off simply as Guerrilla theatre nor as simply as a security measure. Gossen argued that it is in fact a logical strategy of caution and modesty in the arena of instrumentality where the goals are not yet achieved and the benefit of the community has no yet manifested itself (Gossen, 2013). For the presence of the self, it is best for the individual to be ritually homogenized through the use of the masks. Gossen added that this idea folds itself deep into the matrix of ancient Meso-American ideas about the self and society (Gossen, 2013). For Patricia Montilla, the masks appealed to an ancient tradition of symbolic power (the symbolic function of the mask is the same as the primal animal disguise) individual human expression is submerged, in its place the wearer assumes the dignity and the beauty of the animal demon (Montilla, 2013).

When we look at someone we study them and their features through the lens that society has setup or that we have subscribed to. The Mexican mask represents the absence or lack of ability to do this. The Mask represents a collective psyche that ultimately conceals the self from the lens that is normally used to deconstruct someone. Masks conceal identity and liberate the wearer from socially constructed views. Bakhtin argued that the Mexican Mask is “one of the most complex elements” (Montilla, 2013, p. 360) of Mexican culture, which negates unitary conceptions of the self and allows change and reincarnation. “Masks can be seen as a source of power

that give the wearer and the culture the strength to prevail against inherent struggles of life” (Montilla, 2013, p. 360). Something that does create a point of discussion is the use of ski masks by the authorities. There is significant evidence that shows the Mexican military and police wore masks when executing orders against cartels, criminals and rebel groups (Malkin, 2009; González, 2010; Meyer, 2014). Would this then negate the effect the masks if both sides were using them? As the Mexican authorities were using the masks for protection from being identified, would this have not allowed them the same power that the Zapatistas gained from using the masks?

Conclusion:

In conclusion and to answer the hypotheses posed at the beginning of this chapter, the use of masks helped the Zapatistas in being treated differently from every other group who engaged in open rebellion with the Mexican Government. From the scholarship on the Zapatistas and masks it is difficult to find any evidence that suggests the masks played a significant or defining role in the treatment of the Zapatistas, any more than if they used masks in any other culture or society. There is something deeper, which has yet to be accurately described about the masks, Mexican society and culture and the power that surrounds them. But for the purpose of this thesis, the masks did not play any significant part to answering the fundamental question.

Something that also may have negated the hypotheses posed on the masks was that fact that the military and police used ski masks for much of the same reason that the Zapatistas were using theirs. This could have negated the cultural impact that the Zapatistas could have received.

Chapter 5:

Corruption in Mexico:

Stephen D Morris (2009) argued that corruption pervaded the Mexican political system, where it endures as an institutionalized part of the political system as well as a part of everyday life. Thanks to this and the nature of Mexico's political system, Mexico has had a long history of political corruption (Morris, 2009). Scott Stewart (2011) argued that Mexico's corruption goes far deeper than just the corrupt government institutions, that the corruption is just a symptom of deeper, systematic and cultural problems (Stewart, 2011). There was a legacy of institutionalised PRI corruption that had existed in Mexico and that there were still the possibility for this to continue in the post PRI governments (Morris, 1999; Shelley, 2001). A history of limited respect for the law and state structures that existed among the elites across Mexico. Various sources all argued that there is rampant corruption across Mexico and a strong system of clientelism that exists (Karcz, 2017; Johnston, 1997; Green & Ward, 2004). Ward and Green (2004) continued that, due to clientelism corruption and violence go hand in hand and will occur together. Karcz (2017) argued that Mexico had a system of grand corruption in which there is a causal link between grand corruption and state terror, in which powerful public officials collude with paramilitary groups or criminal groups for their private interest, leading to state terror. Mexico's corruption was duly noted with the dominance of the PRI governments including Salinas and Zedillo and there was evidence of it being present in the PAN governments especially that of Calderon's (Karcz, 2017). In Mexico, the players change every six years,

while the high level of corruption continues (Lupsha, 1991). Calderon's drug fight was rigged and there was favouritism and corruption involving certain cartels, that being the Sinaloa Cartel. Dozens of high level cartel operators were killed or captured while the leadership of this cartel had been untouched. (Beittel, 2011; Morris, 2012; Beith, 2011) The cartel had a long history of protection and collusion with authorities that go back to the early PRI days (Beith, 2011; Krzeski, 2013). There have since been arrests of this cartel, but not on the scale or effectiveness of the others. Corruption in Mexico has permeated several segments in society. Political, economic and social and has greatly affected the countries legitimacy, transparent, accountability and effectiveness. The corruption has evolved due to the legacy of elite, oligarchic consolidation of power and authoritarian rule that has persisted in Mexico for decades. Mexico has the environment in which corruption thrives to such an extent that "corruption is not a disagreeable characteristic of the Mexican political system: it is the system." (Grasso, 2017, p.1; Shirk, 2012; Zaid, 1987)

Inequality in Mexico:

Mexico is an unequal society and as with most of Latin America has a vicious cycle of inequality (Hernandez, 2015; Karl, 2002). Under the PRI, Mexico was run as a criminal state, and

one where much, if not most, state activity has been privatized where either those in power or those with leverage over those in power use state agency to advance their private interest at the expense of public good (Rosas, 2018, p. 56)

When the PRI lost power in 2000 the inequality and corruption of the government decentralized and diversified, but never disappeared (Rosas, 2018).

Racism in Mexican society is a contributor to the inequality and unequal aspects of Mexican society. In Mexico there exists a deep seeded racist logic that has emerged from the experiences from historical development. While developing a political ideology and complex configuration of the Mexican identity due to Spanish influence during the birth trauma of Mexico (Moreno, 2010; Zizumbo-Colunga & Martínez, 2017). Whiteness is seen as legitimacy and privilege. Recent studies have shown that there is significant racial inequality in Mexico. Darker skin is strongly associated with decreased wealth and less schooling. The studies argued that race is the single most important determinant of a Mexican citizen's economic and educational attainment and consequently their place in society's hierarchy (Moreno, 2010; Zizumbo-Colunga & Martínez, 2017). These determinants and logic exist across generations of Mexicans. Light skin fall into highest wealth, longest life expectancy, schooling attainment, influence on society etc. the racism in Mexico significantly impacts the indigenous communities and the mixed race communities. Chiapas, the home state of the Zapatistas, has 13.5% of Mexico's indigenous population. The Zapatistas themselves are largely made up of poor rural indigenous people. Mexico and Latin America have a vicious cycle of inequality (Rosas, 2018; Karl, 2002). This inequality is based upon endowments of wealth and or family connections, it is argued that these inequalities affect prospects for growth and shape political and social life. The concentration

of political and economic power is from a legacy of colonialism. Mexico as with much of Latin America have had a hierarchical political structure based upon executive dominance, weak rule of law and excessive militarism. The inequalities that were established by the centralization of power provide the basis for exclusionary authoritarian regimes. Where the influence of giant, domestic family based groups distort political decisions. These inequalities and the way there are created are self-reinforcing patterns (Villarreal, 2014; Karl, 2002)(Bruno, Ravallion & Squire, 1998).

Mexico is an unequal society (Fox, 2011; Hernandez, 2015; Esquivel & Cruces, 2011). Corruption and inequality coexist in a vicious cycle that disproportionately affects the poor (Karl, 2002; Rosas, 2018). This cycle can weaken states capacity, destabilize governance and empower populist, criminal or alternative structures. These issues have long pervaded Mexico. There is vast inequalities across Mexico, Mexico falls into the top 25% of inequality for countries in the world. Between the years of 1984-2014, Mexico has had a Gini Coefficient average of 49, with a max level of 51.7 and a low of 46. The average around the world sits at 37.3. The same studies argued that this Gini Coefficient demonstrates that inequality is playing a significant role in the increasing violence across Mexico, as the coefficient has been increasing as Mexico's levels of violence have been increasing with direct correlation (Enamorado, Lopez-Calva , Luis-Felipe; Rodriguez-Castelan, Winkler& Hernan, 2014: Institute for Economics and Peace, 2015; Juárez, 2014).

Internal Colonialism:

Internal colonialism is a notion of structural political and economic inequalities within a state. Uneven and combined development, rejection of the idea that human society developed through a uni linear sequence of stages (Gutiérrez, 2004; Hind, 1984; Frank, 2018). Chiapas as a state has been involved in a legacy of internal colonialism, which has encouraged the federal government to treat the region as an extractive zone, while still remaining the least electrified, schooled and literate state in the country and among the poorest (Institute for Economics and Peace, 2015). Any effort politically that has been made to improve the situation in Chiapas have either been overridden by the local elites or been overlooked by federal government. (Ruiz, 1993; Russell, 1995; Harvey, 1998; Prasad, 2003). Chiapas has played a strategic role for Mexico in the relationship with the United States and the presence and effects of internal colonialism are felt across the state (Castillo, 2006; Weinberg, 2000; Casanova, 1963). Going back to the early periods of Chiapas being a state in Mexico, the Indians in Chiapas lost their land, were forced to work for outsiders and became politically dominated. These relationships were a “function of the structural development underdevelopment dichotomy” (Stavenhagen, 1970, p. 277) that existed within Mexico. Chiapas and the Indians in the region would persist as a form of cheap, disposable labour (Stavenhagen, 1970; Gutierrez, 2004).

Elite Leadership:

Rafael Sebastian Guillen Vicente, Subcomandante Marcos. El Sub, Delegate Zero. Known by numerous names, the leader and spokesman of

the Zapatistas was a former University professor from the University of Autonomous Metropolitan University, with a masters and bachelor's degree from the National Autonomous University of Mexico. From a self-described middle class family from Tampico, Tamaulipo Mexico son of an elementary school teacher and a store owner, Marcos is a world apart from the other members of the Zapatistas (Henck, 2007; Camp, 2011). His sister is Mercedes del Carmen Guillen Vincente who is the attorney general of the state of Tamaulipo and an influential member of the PRI (Khasnabish, 2003; Carreron, 2001; EZLN, 2001; Camp, 2011). The Guillen Vicente family is from the right side of Mexico's inequality divide, with significant connections to those in power. The family ties that Marcos has through his sister and the vast history Mexico has of corruption and inequality affecting political decisions could have had its part to play with the Mexican authority's treatment of the Zapatistas. Marcos was the face and figurehead of the Zapatistas movement. He was their spokesman and of the right colour and ethnicity in regards to the perceived racism that exists in Mexico. He is well educated, well-spoken comes from a stable economic base and has good family ties. In comparison to other rebellions during this time in Mexico, this was a stark contrast to the norm. The spokesman of the Zapatistas looked like a member of the Mexican elite, spoke like one, came from family like one and had ties to members of the dominant party of the time. There is a strong history in Mexico of corruption and influencing political decisions, groups or individuals receiving preferential treatment or having a blind eye turned on them. This was a contrast to other rebellions in Mexico that were brutally repressed by the Mexican authorities. The Party

of the Poor for comparison with the Zapatistas was founded in 1967 in Guerrero, Mexico. This group was led by a rural school teacher and union member Lucio Cabanas, who didn't have the connections with the elite nor was a member of the elite himself (Marley, 2008; Bornemann, Schmidt & De Schmidt, 2007). This group was brutally repressed by Mexican authorities. The People's Guerrilla Group was another group that was brutally repressed by the Mexican authorities. The group's leadership was comprised of teachers, students and peasants, with no link to the Mexican elites. Little is known of the People's Revolutionary Army and their leadership, however those who have been speculated have no ties to elites in Mexico (Marley, 2008; Bornemann, Schmidt & De Schmidt, 2007).

A number of different scholars in Mexican politics emphasized the political power of local elites (Khasnabish, 2003; Carreron, 2001). In Mexico, the local elites of various states have significant political power, this continues along the theme of corruption and preferential treatment elites gain. However it also highlights the reforms that successive PRI presidents had put in place, most notably Miguel de la Madrid followed by Salinas and Zedillo. When Madrid took office, he demanded that the policies that needed the most attention and reform was decentralization of the economic and political systems. A strong emphasis was placed on the necessity to reduce the patterns of concentration of Mexico City power, and towards a system of distribution of political and economic power being balanced across the country and levels of government (Rodriguez 1992; Rodriguez 1993; Nickson 1995; Hiskey 2000). Madrid's reforms expanded the responsibilities of local elites across Mexico. The local elites took advantage

of the decentralization to gain more political and economic power and exercise impunity and corruption without federal control. This increase in local political power links in with Chiapas predisposition to use local militia to assert control (Nieto 2011; Yves 1992; Rodriguez 1993). Would it have also had significant impact on the Mexican Militaries lack of engagement in the region?

Conclusion:

Mexico is an unequal and corrupt society, with vast and complex inequalities and racism against the poor and indigenous the Zapatistas fall into both groups. However the overall treatment the Zapatistas received goes against the way these groups have been traditionally treated. Corruption in Mexico is built into the system and has been a part of the political culture for many years. Due to this corruption, there exists a preferential treatment of elites, which could have included the Zapatistas rebellion as there are signs that point to Marcos having the potential to being classed as an elite, or at least having family connections that would generate preferential treatment.

Conclusions:

This thesis has examined what caused the Zapatistas 1994 rebellion to be treated differently from all others in Mexico's history. A range of hypotheses that covered different and interlinking areas in an effort to formulate an answer, or at least to create more discourse on the topic. As was mentioned throughout the thesis, the way the Mexican government and military reacted and handled the rebellion was uncharacteristic. Throughout their history, the Mexican authorities have typically chosen to brutally repress anybody who spoke out, demonstrated, or rebelled against them, and refused to go into peace talks with them, which makes the Zapatistas a unique case.

H1: The Zapatistas and Subcomandante Marcos' use of the internet and media have had a significant impact on their ability to survive the Mexican authorities.

The Zapatistas use of the internet and media does appear to have had a significant impact on their ability to survive the Mexican authorities.

Communication is crucial across politics and politics determines who gets what, when and how. "Liberation technology" and the ability it provides for dissemination of information was crucial in this respect especially that the Zapatistas was a grassroots struggle. The Zapatistas were able to efficiently put their voice and message out to the global community, something that other groups struggled to or never got that chance to effectively do. The PRI relied heavily on the suppression and the ability to work without outside influential judgement. The Zapatistas ability to disseminate their message across many different mediums and platforms, allowed them to break this suppression. Many authors such as Khasnabish (2008, 2010) who had

written on the Zapatistas rebellion have argued that it was the ability to disseminate their message and not succumb to the suppression that was the strength behind the Zapatistas success.

H2: The internet presence of the Zapatistas have had a significant effect on the exercise of restraint by the Mexican authorities.

This hypothesis links to a similar conclusion of the previous one. The presence online of the Zapatistas only helped to further the case, and the internet and media played a significant impact on the treatment of the Zapatistas. The internet allowed the Zapatistas to remain relevant and their content kept being disseminated. Without this constant presence on the internet, the Zapatistas would have struggled to keep the notion of “liberation technology” and communication strong.

H4: The Mexican Government has shown a lack of interest in Chiapas.

The lack of interest hypothesis is a little harder to answer. Though there is significant evidence to suggest that the PRI wasn't aware or interested in the Zapatistas in the lead up to the rebellion, or a Chiapas as a state, it's difficult to unanimously state that this had an overall impact on the treatment of the Zapatistas. There was still significant repression in the neighbouring state of Guerrero, which is just as poor and 'backward' as Chiapas, but did experience the brutal repression from the Mexican authorities. There was no evidence that there was significant knowledge on the students in Tlatelolco, and they were brutally repressed. This hypothesis does raise an interesting and possibly significant question, that of the preparedness of the PRI and Military. As Doyle (2003, 2004, 2009) in her work shows, there was significant lack of knowledge of the Zapatistas and

lack of preparedness on behalf of the government and military in the initial period of the Zapatistas rebellion. If both groups were prepared for the rebellion, and had the required knowledge and preparedness, would the actions taken still have been the same?

H₃: The historical period of the Zapatista rebellion is a crucial causal factor in the restraint exercised by the Mexican authorities.

H₆: The Salinas and Zedillo governments did not want international condemnation from the repression of another group.

These hypotheses both link significantly with each other due to the NAFTA deal and later on the Peso Crisis, and affect how the Zapatistas were ultimately treated. As Salinas and his PRI Government had placed so much importance on the NAFTA deal to continue the neo-liberal economic plan they had set out, they didn't want anything to impede the success. This meant no condemnation from the USA or the international community, nor the risk of fighting an internal rebellion that could impact the internal political stability of Mexico. If the rebellion occurred years before or after NAFTA's commencement date, the outcome for the Zapatistas may have been very different. The pressures from outside influences that Salinas and Zedillo faced about their human rights record would not have been anywhere near as strong. Salina's shuffled his cabinet to put in place people with human rights leanings and negotiation experiences, and removed people who had been involved with repression. Zedillo also faced significant pressure from the USA and international community after the bailout his government received following the Peso Crisis. The Zapatistas took advantage of the timing of these events, the lack of manoeuvrability the Mexican government had, and entered into negotiation and peace talks. The

timing of the NAFTA deal and the Zapatistas also ties into H_0 and H_1 as there was significant social networks around the world that were already anti NAFTA and neo liberal agendas, which the Zapatistas signified and gained support from.

H₅: The Zapatistas' use of masks triggered a cultural sensitivity that appears to have affected the Mexican Government and military.

Though there is significant scholarship written on and about Mexican culture and the use of masks and the significance they provide, it is hard to quantify the relevant impact that the masks had on the treatment of the Zapatistas. If the students in 1968 had been wearing masks would their treatment have been different? There could have been something behind the Zapatistas use of masks and the different treatment they received. It is just hard to quantify in regards to this thesis. Mexican Federales and military also wear ski masks just like the ones that the Zapatistas use, this could have negated any affect that the power of the masks might have created. If both sides were using masks in a similar way, the cultural effect could have been effectively negated.

H₇: The Zapatistas were treated differently because of Mexico's preferential treatment of elites.

Significant work has been published on the point that Mexico does have preferential treatment of elites and certain groups. There is vast and deep corruption in Mexico. It is not an equal society and groups and certain people do get treated differently due to their connections, or simply bribery. On the part that the Zapatistas were treated differently due to the preferential treatment of elites it is not clear cut. It is true that Marcos's sister is a member of the PRI, though it is not openly known how much of a

relationship they have. There also still exists some debate on Marcos's identity. He has never formally recognised himself as being Guillen Vicente, which would impact significantly on this hypothesis. However, despite all this there still exists significant corruption and preferential treatment across Mexico. This in itself leaves the plausibility of this question still open, though there would need to be more research into the elite status of Marcos and his family ties.

H₈: The Zapatistas were a low priority for the Mexican Governments following the 1994 uprising.

Like in some of the previous hypotheses, after the 1994 uprising the Zapatistas were a low priority for the Mexican Government. Salinas was focused on the NAFTA deal. Though he was concerned with the Zapatistas during his period, NAFTA was his priority and his actions reflected this. Zedillo was similar to Salinas in that the Zapatistas did rank in significance, but there were major issues like that of the Peso Crisis that took precedence and the political concessions that were made following it. Fox and Calderon were more focused on economic development and the rising violence of the drug wars that were taking place. Pena Nieto could also be classified into this group, as economic development and the War on Drugs were at the forefront of his priorities. These three presidents never had overt policies regarding the Zapatistas and during their respective tenures the Zapatistas were slowly becoming politically irrelevant. This hypothesis does hold some validity to it, post 1994 the successive governments had their priorities elsewhere, the Zapatistas themselves were also slowly becoming politically irrelevant as time passed. The ability for the Zapatistas to survive the initial 1994 uprising went a long way to them surviving.

This thesis addressed Mexico's reluctance to repress a dissident group of poor indigenous farmers from Chiapas. This was a unique event in the Mexican context due to an obvious precedent that had been set by the Mexican authorities over a number of years. This question has bigger implication in the Mexican context, the reluctance on behalf the Mexican government highlighted the limitations within and across the Mexican government and authorities. The Zapatista rebellion has had an impact on civil-military relations across Mexico. It has highlighted international and domestic attention towards indigenous rights, recognition and self-determination. This alone is something that could have a significant impact in years to come. The Zapatistas and international communities' use of the internet as a liberating medium, and as a tool of protest is another significant implication to arise from the Zapatista rebellion. This area is rich as it's only growing and becoming more assessable. The Zapatista effect, rise of an alternative political fabric and the growing power of grassroots social movements has influenced movements in North America like that of the occupy movement and other anti-capitalist and globalization movements. The Zapatista have inspired people from around the world, but their success in surviving repression in Mexico was highly context-dependent and thus not readily replicable by rebel groups in other countries. The Zapatista rebellion is thus a source of inspiration, but not a practical model that could be emulated by others around the world. Movements have replicated signs, slogans and insignia from the Zapatistas, the inspiration of the Zapatistas is clear, their methods are not directly correlated however. The Zapatistas movement has facilitated a discussion on the use of the internet, grassroots

movements and the fabric of politics and the political sphere. This has all occurred during a time when the existing political, social and economic order is facing new challenges from the power social media and “liberation technology” is providing, with the Zapatista movement being just one example of what can occur.

This plausibility probe case study on the Zapatistas allowed for the probing of potential theories to find the potential validity of them and if they were worth developing further. The use of the plausibility probe was useful as it has been used as a setup for a more intense case study with the room for theory development and a multi stage research strategy.

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