

VARIATIONS IN DIAGNOSTIC AND PROGNOSTIC FRAMING IN THE
ZAPATISTA ARMY OF NATIONAL LIBERATION (EZLN) MOVEMENT

A Thesis

by

AARON PINNICK

Submitted to the Office of Graduate Studies of
Texas A&M University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF SCIENCE

December 2007

Major Subject: Sociology

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Approved by:

Chair of Committee,	Paul Almeida
Committee Members,	Rogelio Saenz
	Maria Escobar-Lemmon
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ABSTRACT

Variations in Diagnostic and Prognostic Framing in the Zapatista Army of National Liberation (EZLN) Movement. (December, 2007)

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The Zapatista movement of southern Mexico has received little analytical attention focused on the myriad of writings issued by the movement. To help fill this gap, this study uses David Snow and Robert Benford's concept of framing as a theoretical basis, and performs a systematic and discursive analysis of the communiqués issued by the Zapatista movement in order to understand how the movement framed itself over its thirteen-year existence. Communiqués were coded by noting evocations of the diagnostic frames of corrupt government, violent government, and neoliberal government and in terms of prognostic framing, general democracy, small-scale democracy, and revolutionary frames.

This research concludes that the prognostic frame of general democracy was very high in the initial years of the movement, and shifted towards the small-scale democracy frame after the election of Vicente Fox in 2000. The diagnostic frames dealt with in this research showed a slight downward trend as Mexico democratized, but there is significant inter-year variation in the prevalence diagnostic frames that seems to be related to specific acts of government repression, or other government actions. This research also concludes that a portion of the EZLN's success and long existence can be

attributed to the movement's ability to modify its diagnostic and prognostic frames to match the changing political and societal context that the movement existed in.

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1. INTRODUCTION AND RESEARCH QUESTION

While much has been written about the Zapatistas, the majority of the literature has examined how external agents (i.e. NGOs, Governments, national and transnational news agencies, etc.) framed the Zapatista Army of National Liberation (*Ejército Zapatista de Liberación Nacional*, EZLN). Other scholars have examined the movement as part of a broader wave of democratization and anti-neo-liberalism that swept through Latin America during the 1980's and 1990's¹, but little has been said about how the movement framed itself with its own propaganda². Thus, the research will examine the communiqués³ that have been released by the EZLN to determine how the movement *reframed* itself in terms of broader issues of democratization, neoliberalism, and government corruption. Also of interest for this research project will be how or if the movement has reframed itself during its existence; either in order to respond to the changing societal context that surrounded the movement or to the changing desires of the members of the movement itself.

More will be said about the content, style, and frequency of the communiqués (See Table 1 and the Methodology section), but for now, it is enough for the reader to know that the Zapatista movement's leaders used the communiqués to disseminate information to members of the movement, as well as individuals that may be sympathetic

This thesis follows the style of *Mobilization*.

¹ See Centeno (1999), Cadena-Roa (2003), and Harvey (1998).

² See Olesen (2005) and Bob (2005) for exceptions.

³ For this research, communiqués refers not only to the official documents released by the movement that they titled "communiqués," but also all written discourse published by members of the EZLN, or by organizations that made up the EZLN. All documents used in this research are publicly available on the Internet, and the specific websites where they were collected will be dealt with in the methodology section.

to the movement. These communiqués were not released in regular intervals, nor was there a regulated or consistent length, or writing structure that the communiqués followed. The content of the communiqués varied from calls to action, to tactics of contention, to myths or morality tales of the Mayan people⁴. It is also important to know that these communiqués were not sent directly to individuals, but rather they were posted in a conspicuous location, either in a prominent Mexican newspaper (e.g. *La Jornada*), or on the Internet to reach a broad audience.

This research contends that the use of diagnostic and prognostic framing techniques will vary throughout the life of the movement, and this variation will be in response to the changing political, and social conditions that the Zapatista movement existed in. To determine the changes in framing patterns over time, this research will examine the prevalence of three diagnostic frames (corrupt government, violent government, and neo-liberal government) and three prognostic frames (democracy in general, local autonomous democracy, and large scale revolution). While more will be said about how each of these frames will be defined and coded later, the research argues that the variations in these frames will occur according to the following trends: Both the general democracy prognostic frame and the local autonomous democracy frame prognostic frame will have been prevalent throughout the life of the Zapatista movement. However, this research expects the general democracy to be more prevalent in the beginning of the movement and wane as the movement goes on, and the local autonomous democracy frame will increase in prevalence as the movement matures. In contrast, the revolutionary prognostic frame will be most prevalent in the early years of

⁴ See Almeida and Urbizagástegui (1999) for similar appeals in Salvadorian national liberation music.

the movement, but the use of this frame will eventually wane. This research also contends that the neo-liberal government diagnostic frame existed in the onset of the movement, but will peak during the late 1990's. In terms of the other diagnostic frames of corrupt government and violent government, this research hypothesizes that these frames will remain relatively stable throughout the life of the movement in terms of their frequency, but these frames will show the most variation in respect to changes in the political, social, or historical context of Mexico. This change in framing will be the central focus of this research, with a special emphasis placed on how the EZLN modified its prognostic and diagnostic framing to better align itself with the political and historical context that the movement existed in.

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

2.1 Social Movements

Resource Mobilization theory dominated the social movement landscape from the 1970's to the early 1980's, and while the theory has been incorporated into the political process model, it is still important to note the impact that the theory had in general on the larger body of social movement literature, and social science in general. The resource mobilization theory states that a movement's success or failure is directly related to the movement's political power based on organizational resources. If a social movement lacks a certain level of financial or social capital, the movement will be unable to gain support for its cause, or organize in an appropriate manner (McAdam 1982: 20). The resource mobilization theory posits social movements not as random spasms of violence or irrationality, but rather as calculated response "to the harsh realities of closed and coercive political system" (McAdam 1982: 20). Because of this, movements emerge not in relation to a marked increase in personal discontent, but rather an increase in available resources that would lead disenfranchised individuals to believe that their action can result in change.

Much of the social movement literature of the past twenty years has focused on the Political Process Model (PPM) of mobilization. This theory, first advanced by Douglas McAdam, suggests that there are three main structural factors that determine a movement's ability to succeed. These factors include the organizational structure of the movement population; the perceived potential for success within a movement population; and the alignment of the movement members within the larger political structure (McAdam 1982: 40). The political process model finds that there is a clear empirical

process that a movement takes to emerge, gain support, and make political gains within a social system, and this process is inherently tied to political opportunities that exist within the state. Political opportunities vary in their exact nature, but in general they are changes in some level of the political climate that makes a social movement or rebellion appear to have a greater opportunity of success (Tarrow, 1998). Political opportunities can be subdivided into four general categories: the level of openness of the political system; a fractured or un-unified elite; the procurement of elite allies; and the state's ability and likelihood of repressing dissenters (McAdam, McCarthy, and Zald 1996: 10).

While the political process framework is certainly important to include in any social movement debate, McAdam's work has been criticized for being overly structuralist and for ignoring the potential of ideology or other "soft" factors that can impact or shape a social movements success (Goodwin and Jasper 2004: 9). Authors such as Snow et al (1986, 1988, 2005), and a host of other scholars claim that political opportunities themselves are insufficient for explaining all the components of social movements, and argue that cultural and ideological factors should be included in social movement analysis. While McAdam's work does place significant emphasis on structural aspects, it is obvious that McAdam is aware of the role that ideology plays within the process of emergence and maintenance. In his later work, he concedes the point that even the greatest political opportunities will not be seized by an aggrieved population if there is no definition of the existence of the opportunity, or some other cultural cohesion to band the aggrieved together (McAdam, McCarthy, and Zald 1996: 8).

Political process theory alone is insufficient for this research project, as the goal of this study is to understand, not the political opportunities that were present and enabled the EZLN to form, and gain some substantial results⁵, but rather the fluid ideology that surrounded the movement, and helped create a substantial pool of social resources from which the movement could draw. Hence, it is important to attempt to synthesize McAdam's theories into a more cohesive unit of social movement thought in order to promote the social movement discipline as a whole. As McAdam (2004) claims in his revisiting of his seminal work on the Civil Rights movement, he notes that his theories were obviously not perfect, or infallible, and claims that his theory was "woefully stylized approximations to a much more complicated empirical reality" (McAdam 2004: 201). Thus, in order to provide a detailed and accurate picture of the social movement, this research will attempt to include aspects of not only McAdam's work but also other aspects of social movement theory.

2.2 Framing

How a social movement or protest cycle garnishes support for its cause has long been a central question of social movements theory. One theory that has gained predominance in recent years is the notion of "framing", which involves the creation and alignment of grievances that fit with the culture and ideology of the society the movement is working within. Through the work of authors such as Snow and Benford (1986, 1988, 2000, 2005), and Noakes and Johnson (2005), the concept of social movement framing has advanced to a position of prominence in social movement theory.

⁵ See Shultz (1998) for a complete discussion EZLN's political opportunities, and the relation of these opportunities to the movement's emergence.

The notion of symbolic framing begins with a need for social movements to define themselves, and give a name to their grievances. Social movements must establish a means with which individuals will be drawn to supporting the movement (Tarrow 1998:110). Noakes and Johnston (2005) explain that there is no direct correlation between injustice and protests or social movements. Rather the emergence of a social movement organization (SMO) is based on how individuals are able focus attention on their movement and grievances. If a SMO is able to draw attention to its cause, persuade others that action must be taken, and motivate individuals to participate in the movement, then the movement will have embarked on a successful framing project, and will most likely enjoy success in their movement (Noakes and Johnston 2005:1-2). The authors continue that when frames are able to motivate a community or population, there is what is termed frame resonance. The frames advanced by a SMO appeal to the aggregate and the concepts that are advanced appear to the individuals to be aligned with their interests and cultural ideals (Noakes and Johnston 2005:11).

David Snow, Robert Bedford, Burke Rochford Jr. and Steven Worden, seminal authors on the topic of social movement framing, claim that SMO framing can be divided into four main categories: “(a) frame bridging, (b) frame amplification, (c) frame extension, and (d) frame transformation” (Snow et al 1986:467). Frame bridging is the process by two or more frames that are usually distinct in some way, are drawn together to create a synergism, and allow a greater number of individuals to be impacted by the framing process. Frame amplification is the act of marketing the frame to an aggregate. Frame extension is the expansion of a frame to a new area of the aggregate culture, to appeal to the desires or values of the group, even though these aspects may not have

originally been a part of the SMO's framing process. Frame transformation is altering old or familiar culture themes or frames to fit the SMO's current needs (Noakes and Johnston 2005:12). Through these four processes an SMO is able to define itself and its grievances, as well as apply these grievances to the world around the movement. These aspects also become vital to SMOs that are undergoing dramatic changes, as it is through these four methods that new frames can be developed, or frames can be adjusted to better meet the needs of the culture in which the movement is operating.

2.3 Diagnostic and Prognostic Frames

It is important to note that frames can also be subdivided into diagnostic and prognostic frames. Snow and Benford note that not all frames seem to have resonance with individuals, and at times will fail to develop a consensus amongst those the movement wishes to mobilize. They claim that when movements successfully employ diagnostic and prognostic framing techniques, the movement will have a greater chance of creating mobilization (Snow and Benford 1988: 199). Diagnostic frames serve the function of identifying a social problem and then linking that negative aspect of social life to a certain cause. In contrast, prognostic framing provides a solution to the problem, posed by diagnostic framing (Benford 2005: 38). While these two types of frames will often function in a complementary manner within a single social movement, Benford notes that some social movements will only present one of these two general types of frames, and thus, will be forced to reframe themselves, or risk becoming ineffectual (Benford 2005: 41).

In a separate but related article David Snow and Catherine Corrigan-Brown discuss the need for a SMO to balance its emphasis of prognostic and diagnostic framing, as an over-emphasis on either will often result in a lack of frame resonance with potential movement sympathizers (2005: 224-225). The authors contend that if a movement focuses too heavily upon diagnostic frames without at least dealing with a potential solution or cause to this problem, will most likely be ineffective, as the problem will seem unsolvable. In contrast an over-emphasis on prognostic framing would most likely fail to motivate individuals that are not directly related to the victimization that is being dealt with (Snow and Corrigan-Brown 2005: 225).

Another author that has also dealt extensively with social movement framing is Sidney Tarrow. Tarrow deals with is the notion of collective action frames. For Tarrow, these frames are what enable a social movement to establish its identity as distinct and separate from the identity of the status quo, complete with the movement's own symbols and (borrowing a concept from Gamson) "ideological packages" (Tarrow 1998: 111). These frames encourage collective action or rebellion, and form identities amongst individuals in the movement (Tarrow 1998 112-113). Tarrow claims that these collective action frames are required for social movement existence. Without them the social movement will lack a sense of cohesion, common goals, and quickly crumble under its own weight.

Social movement framing has become an integral portion of the literature, with many authors contributing to the field⁶. This research will add to this body of literature

⁶ See Benford's (2005) discussion of the Environmental Justice Movement; Tarrow's (1998) work on the Catholic Church and Polish workers; and Borland's (2005) analysis of the *Madres de la Paza*.

by synthesizing Benford's notions of diagnostic and prognostic framing to the historical and political context that surrounded the EZLN. Since framing processes are generally considered to be highly dependent on aspects of culture, it only makes sense to attempt to understand the broader culture that helped shape the culture of the movement.

2.4 Zapatistas

Much has been written about the Zapatista movement, as the movement has seemingly been the movement of choice for students of social movements and Latin American politics, providing fodder for left-leaning academics, Democracy theorists, and Latin American specialists with a seemingly endless supply of data. However despite this preponderance of research done during the nearly 13-year existence of the movement, little work has concentrated on how the movement has conceptualized and framed itself. This section will outline the major works on the EZLN movement, as well as what contribution to this large body of literature this research project will make.

While more will be said about the specifics of the movement later in this work, for now it is enough to know that the Zapatista movement began officially on January 1st 1994, when the movement declared war against the Mexican Government (Bob 2005: 117). The movement was centered in the southern Mexican state of Chiapas, and was made up mostly of indigenous farmers that were angered by the loss of access to communal farming lands, and conditions of abject poverty that were persistent in the region. The movement also focused itself on working towards a more democratic and just political system within Mexico (CCRI-CG 1993). The movement has had variable

levels of activity and activism throughout its 13 existence, and has aligned itself with a myriad of causes, but still remains relevant today.

One of the more recent works to deal with the Zapatista movement in depth is Clifford Bob's (2005) *The Marketing of Rebellion*. In this work Bob examines several social movements, and contends that social movement success is highly related to the movement's ability to gain the external support of Non-Governmental Organizations (Bob 2005:118). He claims that in the beginning the Zapatistas lacked a formalized ideological component of their revolution, and were thusly able to morph their ideology to match the broader social trends and patterns. He takes a cost benefit approach to his analysis of the movements, assuming that movements will act as rational economic actors, considering both the costs and benefits of any decision that they make (Bob 2005: 175). Thus, movements will be willing to make concessions to NGOs in order to ensure that they will eventually succeed (or at least garner external resources). Even though Bob's focus is on how resource poor challengers in the global South market themselves to northern NGOs, he gives less analytical attention to what the Zapatistas actually say about themselves.

As Bob correctly notes in his work, the EZLN always maintained that "their word was their weapon," as any real attempt to overthrow the Mexican government with force or direct military action would surely fail. Thus, the main focus of the movement (after the cease fire declaration of January 12, 1994) dealt with symbolic military actions and a constant dissemination of information to the Mexican populace and the world in general in regards to the plight, and goals of the EZLN (Bob 2005: 127). Bob claims that this technique of information warfare was vital for the accumulation of transnational NGO

support (Bob 2005: 128-131). This work attempts to extend on Bob's claim, by examining how these same processes of information warfare (viewed through the communiqués) impacted the motivation and mobilization of individuals within Mexico. Since EZLN's greatest weapon was their words, it becomes imperative to critically examine the words of the movement in an attempt to extend the analysis of Bob to the domestic portion of the movement. During the life of any social movement, a variety of external sources will make claims about the movement. These external accounts can range from media reports of the movement, to official government responses to the movement, but these responses will often times not reflect the messages or ideas that the movement itself wished to spread. Thus any serious study of the movement must include some discussion of what the movement said about itself, which this research hopes to do.

Another author that has dealt extensively with the EZLN and whose work has had an influential impact on the field is Thomas Olesen. Olesen claims that success of the Zapatista movement is due in large part to the movement's ability to make use of transnational networks, and the pre-existing frames present in these networks to mobilize individuals and to create international and local support (Olesen 2005: 205). Olesen claims that these frames can generally be grouped into three categories: democracy, neo-liberalism, and global consciousness. While these frames can all operate separately, in terms of the EZLN movement, they created a synergy that provided individuals involved or sympathetic to the movement with varying explanations for the need for mobilization (Olesen 2005: 20). Olesen focuses heavily on the importance of networks in building support for movements, and his work provides the basic categories of movement framing

that other scholars that wish to deal with this topic must at least be aware of if they are to make a serious attempt to understand EZLN framing.

Olsen's work is also noteworthy in that he attempts to deal with movement framing, not at the micro-level, but rather at a more meso-level (Olesen 2005: 21). He is less concerned with the mobilization of certain individuals in a movement, and rather takes a unique approach by examining how organizations and networks are mobilized to participate in movement. Olesen contends that in the case of the EZLN one should really speak of two networks: a core network and a periphery network. While both are active in the mobilization process, the core network is the organization of communities and groups that remains constantly mobilized and aware of the situation in Chiapas, while the periphery has periods of spikes and depressions in mobilization that are predicated around specific events that are of interest to the peripheral network (those networks outside of Chiapas, and Mexico) (Olesen 2005: 208). Thus, if there is a large loss of life in Chiapas, the EZLN's peripheral network will most likely become active in the movement, and these individuals will work in solidarity with the core network to achieve the ends of the movement. This claim is extremely important for this research as the obvious implication is that the context, both historical and political, that surrounds the movement is important in determining which frames and mobilization tactics will be effective. And I will systematically examine the frame of democratization, as well as other frames that I find relevant to show how they are emphasized or de-emphasized over time.

In a recent and very relevant article by Robert Jansen (2007), it is argued that social movements, in particular the Zapatistas and the Sandinistas of Nicaragua, were

able to gain legitimacy and support for their movement through the invocation of the collective memory of historic figures (2007: 955). More importantly for this research, the author claims that these memories have trajectories, in that the manner in which individuals within a society will view a historic figure in either a positive or negative light will vary due to the historical context in which the figures are invoked (Jansen 2007: 964). This contribution is notable in that it claims that the historical context that surrounds a movement must be taken into account. Topics such as framing and other cultural components of movements do not exist in isolation, but rather are dynamic aspects of the movement process, and to attempt to understand cultural phenomenon without considerations of historical context will lead to incomplete understandings of the cultural phenomenon.

2.5 Historical Context

The democratization process in Mexico seems to defy most common notions of democratic transition. Unlike most processes of democratization that result after a dictator or other authoritarian regime is toppled, or liberalizes, the Mexican road to democracy initially replaced one form of authoritarianism with another, instead of actually transitioning to democracy. While the Mexican government that existed after the Mexican revolution was technically a republic, in all actuality it possessed many characteristics that would cause it to be classified as a semi-authoritarian regime, constituting a hybrid of a democracy and an authoritarian regime (Cadena-Roa 2003: 109-110). While the government held elections, and maintained a civilian control of the military, the Mexican government also exhibited a highly centralized power in the

executive branch, severe repression of political opposition, and elections that were neither impartial or free from tampering nor truly competitive (Cadena-Roa 2003: 111-112). Given this pseudo-democratic state⁷, it becomes clear that any democratization that occurred was not likely achieved solely through the officially sanctioned channels of systemic change (e.g. voting). It thus becomes essential to understanding the role that social movements, especially the EZLN, played in the state's transition to a more democratic government.

The Zapatista movement emerged during a period of political and technological change in Mexico. The *Partido Revolutionary Institutional* (PRI), which had been the dominant and sole majority political party from 1929 until the late 1980's, was losing power, with a major rift forming between two major sections of the party (Centeno 1999: 7). This rift between the career politicians (*políticos*), and the younger and more inexperienced technocrats (*técnicos*) created internal tension in the late 1980's as the *políticos* attempted to move the party from its nationalist and populist roots and towards a free market agenda (Centeno 1999: 77). This became irreparable in the 1988 election when PRI selected Carlos Salinas de Gortari to be its presidential candidate, which resulted in several key members of the party resigning their positions and forming the *Partido Revolucionario Democrático* (PRD). While the PRI still "won" the 1988 election⁸, it was by its narrowest margin of victory--only 50.7% of the popular vote—until the party's eventual loss in the 2000 elections (Preston and Dillon 2004: 171).

⁷ See Markoff (1996)

⁸ There were many questions about the validity of Salinas' victory. For a full discussion of this controversy see Preston and Dillon (2004).

During this same time period of political instability in Mexico's capital, the southern state of Chiapas was undergoing a period of great social and political change.

In 1983, then newly elected president Miguel de la Madrid was making the security and prosperity of Chiapas a priority for the new administration. Plan Chiapas was introduced to help secure Mexico's southern border from the influx of Guatemalan refugees and to reduce arms smuggling along the border. To do this, the Mexican government increased the communication infrastructure along the border, with the goal of settling land disputes, and ensuring government access to the Mexico's southern border (Harvey 1998: 151). The plan, implemented in 1983, provided for the construction of new roads in the remote and physically isolated region, which would spur the tourist and petroleum industries, and provide Chiapas with much needed economic development and growth. However, once the influx of Guatemalan refugees subsided in 1985, the development of this infrastructure came to an end, and was not resumed again until the Zapatista uprising in 1994 (Harvey 1998: 152). Plan Chiapas was augmented by *Plan del Sureste*, also enacted in 1983, which encouraged farmers to settle in the region, in order to decrease the low population density and isolation of the area.

Unfortunately, *Plan del Sureste* along with Agrarian Rehabilitation Program (a program that redistributed 80,000 hectares of land to around 9,000 peasants), only exasperated issues of environmental degradation and brought the need for more sensible land reform to the forefront of the political landscape in Chiapas (Harvey 1998: 153). While the *Plan del Sureste* succeeded in drawing migrants towards the Chiapas region, more than doubling the population of the state in two years, the settlement of land had occurred in an unstructured manner, and resulted in greater conflicts between landowners

and peasants, as well as conflicts between different groups of peasants (Harvey 1998: 153-154). Due in large part to rampant corruption, wealthy landowners were allowed to maintain their land for private use, and were thus able to evict (often violently) peasants that were occupying the land that should have been distributed for public use (Harvey 1998: 160-162). In response to these violent and inappropriate evictions, several peasant movements emerged out of Chiapas and marched upon Mexico City to demand proper agrarian reform in 1987 (Harvey 1998: 163).

It was in these agrarian movements that the EZLN movement was fostered. Prior to Marcos' participation in the EZLN, he along with other future members of the EZLN were members of the National Liberation Forces (FLN), which came to help the indigenous farmers of Chiapas in 1983, and it was out of this work in Chiapas that the EZLN was created with just 6 members (Ponce de Leon 2001: 447). During the late 1980's, during the previously mentioned peasant and agrarian protests, the EZLN movement grows to 1,300 members (Ponce de Leon 2001: 447).

While these indigenous farmers movements were instrumental to the creation of the EZLN, Hayden notes too that the EZLN was heavily inspired by the liberation ideology of the Catholic Church during the 1960's. He contends that when the Catholic priest Samuel Ruíz entered Chiapas, he was faced with a tradition of resistance that would not simply accept western notions of religion, and the Church was forced to alter its ideology to meet the needs of the indigenous (Hayden 2002: 6). This tradition of resistance also prevented members of the EZLN from entering Chiapas and importing Marxism or radical communist ideology (Hayden 2002: 7).

Given that the early 1990s were a time of perceived political weakness, violence surrounding land reform, as well as the neoliberal platform of Salinas and the PRI, which was instrumental in the passage of the North American Free Trade Act (NAFTA), that the conditions were ripe for the Chiapas uprising on January 1st of 1994, and the emergence of the *Ejército Zapatista de Liberación Nacional* (EZLN) also known as the Zapatistas. The movement began as a many Latin American movements of the Cold War era had: impoverished peasants violently lashed out at the government, demanding everything from land re-distribution to democracy and social justice (Olesen 2005:1). The original Zapatista Manifesto, dated the December 31st of 1993, expounds the evils of the members of PRI, claiming that they are traitors to their country. The manifesto claims that under the PRI, Mexico has become an extension of the United States, and is continually suffering from American imperialism and neoliberal economic policies that disadvantage working Mexicans (Ponce de León, 2001: 13). The manifesto declares war on the Mexican government, claiming that all other legitimate attempts at change or reform have been exhausted and armed conflict is the only potential means of resolution. The declaration invokes article 39 of the Mexican Magna Carta, the Geneva Convention, and other international conventions of modern warfare.

This initial violent uprising lasted very briefly, only 12 days from its inception on January 1st until a cease-fire was declared. During this time the EZLN occupies several towns in the state of Chiapas including Ocosingo, Las Margaritas, Altamirano and San Cristóbal de las Casas (Despite this brief and lopsided conflict, the EZLN's actions were sufficient to draw the Mexican government into more permanent peace talks, with the goal of preventing future destabilizations of the region. The talks were however,

unsuccessful, and the PRI's peace proposal is rejected by the EZLN (Ponce de Leon 2001:448). Due in part, if not in whole, to the actions of the EZLN, on April 10, 1994 Mexican President Salinas appended "Reform Article 27" to the Mexican Constitution which claims that land that was given to individuals by the government from 1878 onward, that has resulted in the monopolization of land or resources will be subject to review and potential reallocation (Olesen 2005:130-131). While this piecemeal reform by the PRI was a start, and indeed as we shall see this first small scale success did provide the EZLN with a level of motivation, and a feeling of agency, it did little to actually achieve any of the EZLN's explicitly stated goals.

While this initial wave of violent contention did not last long, the EZLN continued to work against the Mexican government through more symbolic means. In this symbolic struggle (February 1994-2006), the Zapatistas issued hundreds of communiqués that this research will analyze. While the EZLN was still active, and engaged in many rounds of physical protests, the actual repertoire of contention that was employed after this initial round of violence will be elucidated by the actual communiqués.

2.6 Contributions to the Literature

As discussed above, social movement framing and the EZLN both have a well-established body of literature. However, through an examination of the variations in the domestic diagnostic and prognostic framing techniques of the EZLN, this research attempts to contribute to the already extensive bodies of literature on social movements and the EZLN in three ways: First, this research attempts to extend the analysis of EZLN

frame variation to a purely domestic level; Secondly, this research attempts to provide a systematic analysis of the communiqués issued by the EZLN to understand how the movement framed itself, especially in regards to changes in the social and political context that the movement existed in; Finally, this research attempts to apply the more nuanced interpretation of frames, specifically diagnostic and prognostic frames, to the EZLN movement.

As was previously discussed in this research, authors such as Olesen (2005), and Bob (2005) do an excellent job discussing how the EZLN movement was able to adjust its ideology and framing techniques over time to continuously motivate individuals and to remain relevant. However, the majority of their works deal with EZLN framing techniques on a transnational level. While this was certainly a very important component of the EZLN, many of the movement's chief concerns were over domestic issues. Thus, the question becomes did the movement's domestic framing techniques vary over time, as authors contend occurred with the transnational framing? This research will attempt to answer this question, and in doing so add to the predominantly transnational literature on the EZLN.

Of particular interest to this research will be how, and if, the movement's variations in framing techniques corresponded with changes in the social and political environment that the movement found itself in. This research hypothesizes, (influenced by works such as Bob (2005), and Borland (2005)) that context matters and a movement's responses to success or failure will be heavily mediated by the historical and

societal context that the movement finds itself⁹. Much like McAdam's seminal notion of political opportunities, this research contends that there are cultural or historical opportunities that can function in a very similar manner. At certain periods in time a movement's ideological components may resonate more effectively with the individuals that are involved in the movement. For the EZLN during its 13 year existence, the movement has witnessed dramatic changes in the political climate of not only Mexico, but also the world as a whole. So too the movement has undergone fundamental changes in almost every aspect of its ideology, goals, and tactics. At the completion of this research, the EZLN will have morphed from an armed movement that called for the wholesale revolution of almost every aspect of Mexican government, to a peaceful movement that advocated social and political change through working with the Mexican government. While it is possible that the leaders of the EZLN simply awoke one day with a sense of compassion and love for their government, it is the opinion of this researcher that this is unlikely the case.

This research will also add to the literature on the EZLN by systematically analyzing a sample of the communiqués that were released during the movement. Given the long history of the movement it is interesting to examine how the movement framed and reframed itself within its official rhetoric. This analysis of communiqués is essential in understanding the EZLN movement, because the release of these communiqués was one of the movement's main methods of resistance. As has been noted by members of the EZLN and by academics, the EZLN considered its word to be its words to be one of

⁹ There is a substantial body of social movement literature that deals with social movement outcomes in terms of the final or long-term impacts of the movement. However, this research will focus instead on mini-successes and failures within the life of the movement with a special emphasis on framing over time.

its most effective weapon, and it is through these words that the movement resists (Marcos 1999: 168).

Studying the communiqués themselves is also immensely important contribution for the literature on the EZLN as these documents provide social movement scholars with an incredible wealth of empirical examples of the movement's framing processes. Since the vast majority (if not all) of the movement's major internal and external dialogues have been preserved and posted on the Internet, one can easily understand how framing process vary over time. This body of data allows researchers to easily understand the framing processes that were occurring throughout the movement's growth and evolution. Few movements allow researchers such unfettered access to its collective thought process as the EZLN. Through the movement's communiqués and other publications, researchers can allow the EZLN to speak on behalf of itself, which allows for an excellent empirical test of the concepts of social movement framing.

This research also provides a unique perspective on the Zapatista movement, as it is not an attempt to force external ideas and opinions onto the movement. Since the EZLN continually claimed that much of their protest was symbolic in nature, and that their words were their most effective weapons, it only makes sense that a critical understanding of the movement can only truly occur if the movement's own discourse is studied. While many other works deal with what has been said about the movement, and its effectiveness, little has been done to critically evaluate the words that the EZLN used to lead its movement.

Finally, this research will add to the social movement framing literature by contributing to the discussion of diagnostic and prognostic framing techniques. Although

these concepts were first noted by Snow and Benford in 1988, recently there has been an increase in the popularity of these topics within the field of social movements. As both Snow and Cordigall-Brown (2005) and Benford (2005) demonstrate, the concepts are becoming more prevalent, and they have yet to be applied to the EZLN movement. It will be interesting to note if these framing techniques are applicable to EZLN, and to understand if they vary over time in a similar manner to other research on EZLN frame variance.

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1 Review of Literature

Using discourse in social sciences has become increasingly more accepted as a legitimate data source. More scholars are accepting the idea that the words people, or organizations, use are on some level an accurate representation of cultural and social meaning. While studies using discourse cannot obviously deal with all types of social science questions, this data source does provide a unique insight into the research question posed here. As noted previously, large scale, transnational social movements will have volumes written about them, and often times what is written may not actually be representative of the culture or ideas of the individuals within the movement. Thus, it becomes paramount to rigorously examine the content of the movement's communiqués. In this section I will review the body of literature that provides a context for studies that wish to use written texts as sources of data.

Content analysis began as a mainly quantitative method of data analysis. Individuals would take a series of written documents (usually newspapers) and simply count the occurrence of certain words or phrases (Marshall and Rossman 1999:117). Often complex computer programs would be used to count the exact number of times a certain word was used. The underlying assumption being that through the counting of a certain word, or combination of words, one can obtain some "measure of meaning" (Johnston 2002: 77). However, as the technique has gained in popularity, it has also become an accepted technique for researchers to understand cultural or subjective meanings behind an organization's statements. Many social scientists claim that this

subjective interpretation of words or phrases differs from content analysis, and refer to this process as discourse analysis.

Discourse is “the sum total of the ‘manifestos, records of debates at meetings, actions of political demonstrations, newspapers articles, slogans, speeches, posters, satirical prints, statutes of associations, pamphlets, and so on’ of a time place and people” (Johnston 2002: 67). Similarly, a system of discourse can be thought of as a “way of representing the world” (Denzin 2001: 147). Thus, discourse can be thought of in a manner similar to the previously defined concepts of frames, but in a written or concrete form, as opposed to the more amorphous and ideological form that frames take.

Since discourse deals with such a broad range of communication, the analysis that surrounds it is often less concerned with counting the actual occurrence of certain words or phrases, but rather looking at the context that surrounds the use of these words or phrases. Discourse analysis assumes that all meaning is contextually driven, and the meaning that can be gained from a movement’s publications or documents is assumed to be in a constant state of flux based on this context (Johnston 2002: 67). Thus, content analysis is insufficient for determining meaning over periods of time as frames or contextual meanings of phrases or words will certainly change throughout a movement. The work of Elizabeth Borland provides an excellent example of how this technique can be used to examine the changes in a movement’s framing processes over time (2005).

Borland examined the slogans used by the *Madres de Plaza de Mayo*, in Argentina, noting that each year before the movement’s annual December rally, the movement held a meeting to determine what slogan would be used during the protest. These slogans changed over time, and Borland reviewed them to determine if one or

more of four larger frames was being utilized with the slogan (Borland 2005: 120). The fact that the slogan did not remain the same over time was a conscious decision by the organizers of the movement to focus their frame around the social conditions of that period of time. For example, in December of 2001, after the US's obvious push to fight terrorism, the *Madres'* used a slogan that asked for an end to state sponsored terrorism (Borland 2005: 121). This is an obvious example of frame bridging, as the movement hoping to gain greater support from individuals that had previously not been involved with the movement, but now would be because of their concerns about terrorism. Content analysis alone would be unable to really do anything with this abrupt change in frames, as the computer program, or researcher, would have to be told that terrorism was of interest to the researcher, and that this too should be counted and measured. While it would be unlikely that a researcher would think to add this specific, and rather unrelated topic to their counting, when an individual is analyzing the data for its context, the sudden concern for terrorism becomes very clear, and also quite interesting.

This form of research contains several advantages, which will make it exceptionally useful for this research project. First, by examining what the movement has stated there is little question as to the meaning or frames that are being employed. Certainly, there will be some subjective interpretation by the researcher, but since one data source is being used, as opposed to a myriad of respondents that would occur in survey research or through the use of texts from various sources, the meaning will be much easier for the researcher to ascertain, as the quantity of subjective interpretations will be limited. Also, since discourse analysis assumes that there will be some change and conflict within the system of discourse, it is particularly useful for this research

project, as the project is attempting to determine how the frames of the Zapatista uprising have changed in its 13-year history. As Johnston notes, discourse analysis can be instrumental in tracking longitudinal changes in a movement of organization, and it is particularly well suited for dealing with questions of how (Johnston 2002:70).

Similar to Johnston's work, Marc Steinberg claims that our current notions of how we study framing must be re-evaluated. He claims that frames and the language that is inherently associated with these frames are in a constant state of flux. For Steinberg, frames must be studied not in terms of static concepts and ideology, but rather as a conversation between parties (Steinberg 1998: 856). The discourse used within a frame could have radically different meanings for different individuals, and because of this, frames should not be assumed to provide insight into large-scale ideologies or static systems of belief for large groups of individuals. Frames should really be thought of as discursive repertoires, in which meaning and ideology is created at the individual level and then disseminated to the larger group (Steinberg 1998: 857). Steinberg claims that the process of framing essentially works in reverse of the process advocated by Snow and Benford. Meaning and ideology are derived from the conversation that occurs between the movement and the individuals that listen to the messages spread by the movement.

While this paper will not take up the debate over the creation of meaning between signifier and signified, Steinberg's work is important to note in the context of this research in that it again points out the importance of longitudinally studying discourse. As Steinberg makes quite clear, frames and movement ideology are anything but static or fixed over time. Frames will vary based on the social context of the individuals that receive the messages, and on the context that surrounds the movement as it presents its

messages. Thus, studies that fail to examine the changes in movement framing will not be getting the whole story. These movements will only be seeing a small cross-section of what the movement was about¹⁰.

3.2 Communiqués

At this time it seems appropriate to deal briefly with the communiqués and discuss their general content, appearance, and other details that will illuminate what exactly this research will be using as its data set. The communiqués that are and were issued by the EZLN are the official statements of the EZLN in regards to a whole array of issues that the members of the EZLN face. There have been approximately 575 communiqués released to the public over the life of the movement, and while the exact manner of their release varies, they are most commonly either submitted to *La Jornada* (a Mexican newspaper with national circulation) or posted online at EZLN.org or similar websites.¹¹ Often times the communiqués will be in response to a particular government

¹⁰ Similar to both discourse and content analysis, protest event analysis is methodology that examines how a protest is performed, what methods are used by the protestors, and how do the protestors view themselves and other members of the protest. Individuals conducting protest event analysis take material disseminated by a social movement, or take a regularly published medium (usually newspapers) and examine the content of the movement (Koopmans 1999: 90-91). For example, an individual could systematically examine newspapers that were published during the span of a social movement, and count the number of times that a movement is portrayed as violent. One could then safely contend the degree with which the media (or the other agents involved in the protest) viewed and portrayed the movement as violent.

¹¹ It is important to note that EZLN.org was not originally a website run by actual members of the EZLN movement. While the leaders of the EZLN allowed private individuals to use the EZLN.org domain name, private individuals were responsible for the content, and design of this website. Currently, the website EZLN.org will redirect you too another website, EZLN.org.mx, which is currently the official website of the movement. More will be discussed about how external forces may have shaped the

incident or action (for example, a number of communiqués were issued during the cease-fire talks of 1994, that outline exactly what was occurring at the talks, and what the EZLN hoped to accomplish), but there are several examples of communiqués that deal more with cultural aspects of the EZLN movement (for example, how Zapatistas should act or deal with situations, parables or ancient Mayan wisdom, or messages of solidarity with other movements).

For the purpose for of this research, all communiqués that were considered to be part of the population from 1994-2005 were obtained from a third party anarchist website¹², which provided a comprehensive list of EZLN communiqués and publications translated into English¹³. Since this website did not contain any publications from 2006, a second website had to be used to gather the communiqués for this year. The 2006 communiqués came from a website¹⁴ in North Carolina that affiliates itself with the “Other Campaign”, the EZLN’s program that was meant to serve as an alternative to the presidential campaigns in Mexico during 2005 and 2006.¹⁵ All communiqués that were used were translated into English by a third party and not by the researcher, to ensure that other individuals that may wish to replicate this project will have access to the exact same translations and interpretations as the ones used by the researcher.

It is important to note that while all data within this research was collected from two websites, the acceptance of the Internet as a source of data is becoming more and

perception of the EZLN later, but it is important to note that, in its original inception, EZLN.org, was not a Zapatista run website.

¹² <http://flag.blackened.net/revolt/mexico/ezlnco.html>

¹³ This site was chosen because of the compressive nature of its communiqué collection, and its ease of use.

¹⁴ <http://elkilombo.org/sixthrelatedcommuniques.htm>

¹⁵ This incarnation of the EZLN movement was officially terminated on September 22 of 2007 (Marcos 2007)

more accepted. As Almeida and Lichbach (2003) note, activist websites are often superior in representing their own movement, but caution must be taken in using activist websites for data on such things as repression, and one may wish to corroborate movement claims with external sources (266). Since the main goal of this research is to examine how the movement discussed itself, and the issues it wished to address, it seems acceptable to use the Internet, and activist websites as a data source. Since the events of repression that are discussed in this research were not necessarily corroborated with external sources (as much of the repression was small-scale repression, or claims of threats and harassment that would most likely not appear in mass media) one should be aware of this limitation, and future research should attempt to find further sources that could corroborate claims of violence against the EZLN.

While the communiqués were often written, or at least signed by Subcomandante Marcos, a number of the communiqués were signed by, and presumably created by the EZLN's head decision-making committee, the Clandestine Revolutionary Indigenous Committee—General Command (CCRI-CG). While the authorship may have varied slightly, all of these communiqués will be analyzed together. While this limitation of this study should be noted, it is deemed an acceptable limitation for several reasons. First, the purpose of the study is merely to analyze how the Zapatistas themselves framed their movement, and while counter frames and reframing processes will be dealt with, the specific personage or faction of the movement that was responsible for this reframing is of less interest. Secondly, the authorship of the communiqués is often times ambiguous. While the majority of the communiqués are signed by Subcomandante Marcos, they will sometimes be signed by him in the name of the CCRI, and other times the document will

only be signed by the CCRI. While it is known that there were 12 members of the CCRI, exactly which of the 12 authored the communiqué is unclear. Thus, it is the opinion of the researcher that any analytical distinction that would be drawn between communiqués signed by Marcos or the CCRI would be rather arbitrary, and it would be unlikely that any researchers attempting to recreate the project would make the same decisions as to authorship. Thus, the only way to ensure analytical clarity is to simply lump these communiqués together.

Declarations are essentially the EZLN's official mission statements to the world. They are longer, more formally constructed, and layout key points of contention, as well as the strategy and tactics that the EZLN is planning on using to achieve its goals. Six Declarations of the Lacandon Jungle have been issued, beginning with the official declaration of war that was declared (with the most recent declaration issued in 2005). There have also been two Declarations of *La Realidad* issued during the EZLN sponsored meeting on indigenous rights. It is important to keep the Communiqués and Declarations separate, both in Table 1 and analytically in this paper, for several reasons. First, the audience that communiqués and declarations were meant to reach are very different. While they were both disseminated to the public at large, communiqués were generally designed to be read by individuals in the EZLN, or individuals that were at least sympathetic to the movement. Much of the content in communiqués, as previously noted, deals with the day to day interaction of the EZLN with the Mexican Government, what the EZLN is doing to achieve its goal, tactics that individual EZLN member should use, etc. In contrast, Declarations were intended to be consumed by the world at large, regardless of their political views or opinions of the movement. These were issued by the

EZLN to tell the world what they were about, to legitimate themselves in the international community as a serious and valid challenge to the existing Mexican political and social order. The frames and ideological concepts used in these documents will certainly be different, as these documents are intended not only for Zapatista viewing, but also for the viewing by individuals unassociated with movement and members of various governments.

Table 1 below provides some brief information about the frequency of the communiqués as well as information about the more official declarations. The table below does separate the communiqués that were published under the name of the Zapatista Front of National Liberation (FZLN), as this subsection of the movement clearly attempted to distinguish itself from the EZLN, as the civilian, peaceful arm of the Zapatista movement (Marcos 1997). Even though the communiqués were at least somewhat authored by Subcomandante Marcos, like the declarations, the purpose of these documents was explicitly for consumption by individuals that were not currently members of the movement, or individuals that were sympathetic towards the movement but were unwilling to engage in a high level of movement participation. Like the declarations, these communiqués are documents that are very interesting, and should be the subject of future research, as these documents provided an excellent example of frame extension, but to make sure that this project maintains some semblance of manageability, they will be left for future research.

Table 1¹⁶: Frequency of EZLN Communiqués

	Number of EZLN Communiqués Released	Number of FZLN Communiqués Released	Number of Declarations Released
1994	21	0	3
1995	64	0	0
1996	39	0	3
1997	36	6	0
1998	40	1	1
1999	97	2	0
2000	78	3	0
2001	99	1	0
2002	35	0	0
2003	27	0	0
2004	10	0	0
2005	8	0	1
2006	15	0	0
Total	575	13	8

As table one indicates, a large number of communiqués were released by the EZLN over its existence. To make this research project more manageable, a simple random sample of these 575 communiqués was taken and coded. This sample consisted

¹⁶ These totals came from two websites: <http://flag.blackened.net/revolt/mexico/ezlnco.html> for the communiqués from 1994 through 2005, and <http://elkilombo.org/sixthrelatedcommuniques.htm> for 2006.

of 231¹⁷ communiqués, which spread out over the 13 years within the population, that 18 communiqués from each year were coded. In 2004 and 2005 fewer than 18 communiqués were released, so all of the communiqués from those years were coded and the total of 18 communiqués that were missing were redistributed over the three years with the highest number of communiqués released (1999, 2000, and 2001). Thus, the three most active years of communiqués will have 24 communiqués coded instead of 18.

To randomly select the communiqués to be coded for each year, all communiqués were separated by their year of publication, and then alphabetized by the title of the communiqué. Then every other communiqué was selected until there were 18 (or 24 in the case of 1999, 2000, and 2001). If there was an insufficient number of communiqués to select every odd numbered communiqué (as is the case with the communiqués from 1994 and 2003), then the first 18 were simply selected.

3.3 Coding Rules

The first step of the coding process was to dissect the prevalent and numerous collective action frames used by the EZLN into instances of diagnostic and prognostic framing. Diagnostic frames, as noted earlier in this work, are references by the movement towards problems that exist in society that the movement considers to be central to their grievances and issues that the movement wishes to address (Benford 2005, Snow and Corrigall-Brown 2005, Snow and Benford 1988, McAdam, McCarthy and Zald 1996). Diagnostic frames are obviously varied in their specific articulations, but as

¹⁷ The size of this sample was determined by using RAOSOFT's sample size calculator, with a population of 575, a 5% margin of error, a 95% confidence interval, and a response distribution of 50%. This sample calculator is available online at <http://www.raosoft.com/samplesize.html>.

Benford notes, “what was once regarded as a misfortune is articulated as unjust, inexcusable and immoral” (2005: 38). Using this statement as a guide, diagnostic frames were limited to statements of social problems that are also linked either directly or within the larger context of the communiqué specifically to the *Mexican government*¹⁸, as without this “who” portion of the statement it is merely a statement of a misfortune. It is only when these misfortunes are specifically tied to an actor that either causes them or permits them to happen that the statement becomes a diagnostic frame. For example, while many statements within the communiqués may point to social problems such as poverty, poor education, lack of health care, etc, it is only when these statements also include references to the Mexican government causing the problems (or being complacent towards the problem) that the statements can be coded as diagnostic frames for this particular coding scheme. For a frame to have resonance, especially an injustice frame, there must be both a “victimage” portion as well as a “perpetration” portion (Snow and Corrigall-Brown 2005: 224) or the frame will most likely fail to motivate individuals towards action.

The diagnostic frames that met this standard of describing a problem as well as who is responsible can be generally classified into three categories: corrupt government,

¹⁸ The EZLN also places blame on other actors, such as international capitalism, for the social problems within Mexico. However, this research will only focus on the diagnostic frames that deal specifically with the Mexican government. This decision was made based on: first, to help fill a void in the literature that focuses heavily on the international aspects of the movement; and secondly, the EZLN is in the end only in danger of reprisal from the Mexican government. In a very Weberian sense, the state has a monopoly on the legitimate use of force, and at any time could have simply embarked on a campaign of genocide against those sympathetic to the EZLN. Thus, the relationship between rebellion and government is not only interesting to study, but also vitally important, as the movement must walk the line between antagonizing the government and maintaining some level of freedom to rebel.

neo-liberalism, and violent government. The corrupt government frame can be defined as general statements of the Mexican government being an illegitimate and unfit ruling body. This can include statements of the Mexican government not following its own laws, failing to live up to treaties or agreements it made it with the EZLN (or other members of society), as well as claims of corruption, fraudulent routes to power, and claims of general incompetence. Neo-liberalism, a frame that has been used by other EZLN researchers¹⁹, contends that the Mexican government has essentially betrayed the people of Mexico in favor of profiting from free markets. This frame also can include claims that the Mexican government is exploiting regions of Mexico, especially the Chiapas region, for its resources, and neo-liberal policies are responsible for a great deal of poverty and other social problems in southern Mexico. A second major subdivision of the corrupt government frame is the violent government frame. This frame contends that the Mexican government is engaging in either small or large-scale harassment and violence against members of the EZLN. To increase the clarity of the definitions of each frame, “Table 2” below provides a succinct definition of how each frame was coded. While any researcher that attempts to reconstruct this work will most likely make different decisions about how certain phrases should be coded, hopefully the table below, along with the above discussion of coding techniques, will allow future researchers a greater ability to replicate this research.

¹⁹ See Olesen (2005) and Bob (2007).

Table 2: Diagnostic Frame Definitions

Frame	Definition
Violent Government	Claims of violence against individuals, including threats, and harassment
Corrupt Government	Claims that the Mexican government is an illegitimate ruling body.
Neoliberal Government	Claims that the Mexican government, through neoliberal economic policies, is harming the Mexican people.

Prognostic frames are created to provide members of the movement and society with *solutions* to the problems that are brought to light through a diagnostic frame (Benford 2005). While prognostic frames can provide an array of solutions to problems, it is important that these frames provide specific and workable solutions towards the problems the movement wishes to deal with. If the solution is vague, and does not seem to provide a clear path or means to ameliorate the problems associated with diagnostic frame the prognostic frame will be ineffectual in motivating individuals towards action (Benford 2005: 41). This notion is of special importance to this research, as many of the EZLN's prognostic frames are very basic calls for democracy or far-fetched calls for the overthrow of the Mexican government or the dismantling of large-scale multinational institutions such as the WTO. While both abstract and specific prognostic frames will be coded, a distinction should be noted between the unspecific prognostic frame of calls for general democracy and the much more specific frames of small-scale autonomous municipalities. Given previous work of Benford (2005) one would assume that

prognostic frames that provide a specific workable and precise solution will be more effective in mobilizing individuals.

In terms of coding, the prognostic frames can essentially be broken down into three basic categories, all of which are centered on democracy: democracy, large-scale revolutions, and small-scale democracy²⁰. The democracy prognostic frame involves general or unspecific calls for a more democratic Mexico. This frame includes not just the establishment of fair elections, but also an end to corruption, and an adherence by the government to a rule of law. The revolutionary frame contends that only through a fundamental shift in the Mexican government can the problems posed by the diagnostic frames be dealt with. This can involve a broad revolution that overthrows the Mexican government, the repeal of the NAFTA, or a switch to a Marxist economic system. The final prognostic frame contends that the problems facing members of the EZLN could be solved through small-scale regional autonomy that allowed individuals in areas such as Chiapas greater control over their land and resources. As with the diagnostic frames, below one will find “Table 3” which provides definitions of the prognostic frames, so that future researchers will have a greater potential to replicate this study.

²⁰ The EZLN did use other prognostic frames that did not deal with democracy, but since these prognostic frames are the frames most closely associated with the diagnostic frames that are dealt with in this research.

Table 3: Definitions of Prognostic Frames

Frame	Definition
General Democracy	Claims that social problems will be solved through a more democratic Mexico.
Revolutionary	Calls for a large-scale revolution that would fundamentally change the structure of the Mexican government.
Small-scale Democracy	Claims that autonomous, small-scale control will better solve the social problems facing EZLN communities.

Occurrences of each frame were counted from the before mentioned random sample of communiqués, to determine any increase or decrease in the use of various frames over time (in years). Invocations of a certain frame were considered to end at the end of a sentence, so each sentence that contained a frame was counted. Thus if two sentences within a paragraph invoked a certain frame, even if it was the same frame, this research would count two invocations of the frame. Rarely there would be a need to extend the frame into two sentences, while still only counting it as one frame invocation. The only time this was done was when there was when the subject of the frame (i.e. the Mexican government, or the autonomous municipalities) was specifically named in one sentence, and was then referred to by a pronoun in the proceeding sentence.

Frames that were repeated within the same communiqué were counted as separate instances of the invocation of the frame. This is done to ensure that there will be an accurate count of number of instances of the use of a frame, as to count only the first instance of each frame could result in a artificial reduction in the quantity of the most

frequently used frames. Also, it ensures the highest probability that other researchers will be able to replicate the results that are found in this research project. The only exception to this rule is that salutations and closing statements were not counted as instances of framing. This was done because almost every communiqué (regardless of its substance, length, etc) is closed with “Democracy! Liberty! Justice!” Obviously, if all closing were counted it would artificially increase the instance of the “democracy frame” by approximately 575 cases, which would skew any meaningful results that could be gained.

4. ANALYSIS OF ZAPATISTA FRAMING

4.1 Overview of Diagnostic Frames

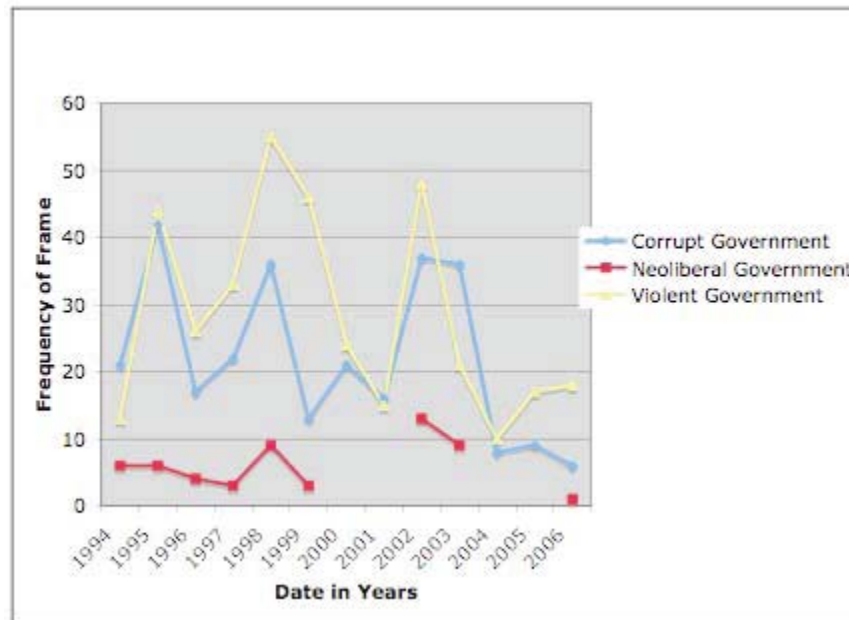
“Table 4” provides several interesting conclusions about the diagnostic framing techniques used by the EZLN movement, and how these techniques varied over time. We notice that the diagnostic framing techniques used by the movement fluctuate rapidly, with almost no stability amongst years in terms of how often a certain frame is used. While there is some stability amongst the neo-liberal government prognostic frame, from year to year, the corrupt government frame and the violent government frame experienced extreme variation from year to year.

“Figure 1” graphically demonstrates a similar trend amongst the communiqués, showing wide fluctuations between years. The graphic display of these results does provide an interesting trend that shows both the violent government frame and the corrupt government moving up and down almost in unison. While this variation may seem at first random, when one takes into account the historical context that the movement found itself, it becomes very obvious that the movement is actively changing as a response to the social conditions that surround it.

Table 4: Diagnostic Frames Prevalence

Year	Corrupt Gov.	Percent of Total Frames	Violent Gov.	Percent of Total Frames	Neoliberal Gov.	Percent of Total Frames
1994	21	52.5%	13	32.5%	6	15%
1995	42	45.7%	44	47.8%	6	6.5%
1996	17	36.2%	26	55.3%	4	8.5%
1997	22	37.9%	33	57%	3	5.2%
1998	36	36%	55	55%	9	9%
1999	11	21%	30	74.2%	3	4.8%
2000	21	46.7%%	24	53.3%	0	0%
2001	16	51.6%	15	48.4%	0	0%
2002	37	37.8%	48	49%	13	13.3%
2003	36	54.5%	21	31.8%	9	13.6%
2004	8	44.4%	10	55.6%	0	0%
2005	9	34.6%	24	65.4%	0	0%
2006	6	24%	19	72%	1	4%

Figure 1: Variations in Diagnostic Framing



4.2 Violent Government

The diagnostic framing techniques that are used by the EZLN, to some extent, are inherently reactionary, and thus changes in the usage of the frame can be most easily explained through understanding the context that the movement is attempting to survive in. For example, in 1998 there is a dramatic increase in the prevalence of “violent government” frame, which, as noted above, deals with repression, (either actual physical violence, demonstrations of force, or detainment and harassment) used by the Mexican government against members of the EZLN. The increase in the prevalence of this frame may be due to a calculated decision on the part of the EZLN leadership to attempt to use this diagnostic frame to gain support, but the more likely explanation is that there was either a substantial increase in the frequency of repression used by the Mexican government, or there was a single large incident of repression that warranted a substantial

amount of communiqué space. When one examines the communiqués from this year, one notices that there was indeed a major act of government repression on the 14th of April. According a communiqué, 800 members of various federal police and military agencies, entered the village of *Diez de Abril*, and proceeded to fire at and beat civilians, destroyed property including houses and arrested two individuals (Gómez Sántiz 1998). Other communiqués issued that year dealt with similar issues of government harassment and violence that was occurring at the time, either in dealing with specific instances of violence or more general repression that was being experienced by members of the EZLN at the time. It should be noted however, that despite these specific acts of repression that warranted entire communiqués, the influx in the violent government frame was more likely the response to different social conditions.

Of the 18-communiqué sample from 1998, 12 dealt with the Commission of Concordance and Peace (“Cocopa”). This organization was created to establish a dialogue between the EZLN and the Mexican government, and to broker some form of peace between the two sides. During 1998 the peace talks between the two parties and Cocopa was attempting to arrange more dialogues and discussions. In response to this, the EZLN wished to present itself as a willing partner to the peace process, and thus, repeatedly referred to the Mexican government as waging war against them. The communiqués during this year repeatedly and routinely attempted to portray the Mexican government as violent and insincere in their pursuit of peace. Since the EZLN would most likely wish to re-enter any further dialogues with the support of the Cocopa, it is hardly surprising that they would attempt to portray themselves as not only willing

participants in the pursuit of peace, but also as the sole participants in the pursuit of peace.

This case of diagnostic framing seems to support the hypothesis of this research, that the EZLN movement would modify its framing techniques in response to the social conditions that surrounded the movement. While there may be a myriad of specific social conditions that combined causing the reframing, as appears in the case of 1998, the movement is still rationally and intelligently adjusting its ideological components to provide its members with a vision of reality that validates the movements existence. When one examines another year, 2006, with an especially high number of communiqués that use the “violent government” frame, one can note similar linkages between the context that the movement found itself in, and the diagnostic frames that were used.

By 2006, the EZLN was again in need of ideological refreshment. The activity level of the movement diminished, as communiqué releases were at the lowest point in the movement’s existence (with only 18 communiqués issued between 2004 and 2005). In July of 2005 and continuing into 2006, the EZLN embarked on its Sixth Declaration of the Lacondeon Jungle, and embarked upon “The Other Campaign.” This campaign involved a grassroots journey across Mexico in an effort to spread information about corruption in the Mexican government, and to listen to the desires of the Mexican populace (Marcos 2006). The journey was carried out by Marcos himself (now calling himself Delegate Zero) as well as other high level members of the EZLN, and its intent was to help unify the people of Mexico. This process of unification was morphed into an attempt to unify individuals behind the violent government frame, when on May 3rd, the Mexican government attacked peasants in the town of Atenco.

Atenco was the site of a brutal repression on May 3rd of 2006, when police officers attempted to disrupt vendors selling flowers in a plaza city. Members of the People's Front in the Defense of the Land (FPDT) responded with protests to protect the peasant's rights to sell products on public land, and the situation escalated into one of violence between police officers and protestors. Numerous people were violently assaulted; women were sexually assaulted, and up to 200 individuals were arrested for some period of time (Santos 2006). The EZLN's response to this attack was to shift its diagnostic framing technique off of the need for unity and global solidarity that existed previously during the "Other Campaign" to the familiar and often used frame of the Mexican government as a violent and oppressive regime. The case of 2006 is interesting not only because of its use of the violent government frame in response to the context of society, but also, it is a good example of the movement actually shifting its framing from the calls for global unity and solidarity that were prevalent in the communiqués issued during the "Other Campaign"

In a communiqué issued on June 3, 2006, the EZLN denounced the Mexican government for holding approximately 30²¹ political prisoners. The communiqué makes several claims to both Mexican and global solidarity, making such claims as "To the unanimous cry, we are all Atenco..." (CCRI-CG 2006(a)). The communiqué also goes on to list how many sit-ins have taken place, and which cities and countries have mobilized in support of the political prisoners (CCRI-CG 2006(a)). The communiqué also states

²¹ An external account of event claimed that 173 individuals were detained or imprisoned during this wave of repression (Santos 2006). The large discrepancy could be due to many factors, but most likely the two accounts are not contradictory, since the communiqué was dealing with individuals that had remained in prison for almost a month after the repression.

“The world demands explanations for the barbarous crimes committed...” (CCRI-CG 2006(a)). Another communiqué issued on May 28, 2006 echoes this global solidarity frame, claiming that every part of the world people are stating, “San Salvador Atenco is not alone...” (CCRI-CG 2006(a)). The communiqué also goes on to list not only all the countries that have expressed solidarity with the EZLN, but all other organizations and social movements that had issued statements of support and solidarity with the EZLN. A high ranking member of the EZLN released a communiqué that states “We have always known of the solidarity between the peoples from below, yet we were amazed and filled with pride that we can count on all of those that are like us, that is to say, rebel and with dignity” (Moisés 2006). Marcos too issued similar statements of unity stating:

This is our message companeros and companeras. Not only for the Other Campaign in this Other Mexico, in this Other Mexico City that is rising up. It is our message to the Other Campaign in the entire country. From Chiapas, Quintana Roo, Yucatan, Campeche, until the two Baja Californias, Sinaloa, Chihuahua, Tamaulipas, Nuevo Leon. From the north to the south, from the east to the west so that the Other Campaign echoes in Atenco and let there be justice for those that have fallen!! [sic] (Marcos 2006).

While 2006 did not have the highest level of violent government framing, (in fact, the 24 instances of this frame seems almost low) when one examines the prevalence of this frame compared to the prevalence of the corrupt government frame (9 instances) and the neo-liberalism frame (1 instance), it becomes quite clear that the focus of the movement at this time was on responding to the violence of the Mexican Government. This year is also quite interesting in that the movement seemed to be trying to move away from its old diagnostic frames of violence and corruption. However, when the government attacked indigenous individuals, the EZLN was quickly able to revert to its

older frames in order to ensure that the movement remained relevant with individuals, and was able to synchronize its diagnostic frames with the experiences and realities of those it wished to mobilize. Considering the low prevalence of the other diagnostic frames, one might even conclude that if the Mexican government had not attacked the individuals in Atenco, the EZLN would have had little material to use to rally its base and mobilize individuals.

It is important to note that although this discussion focuses on a few years in which there were obvious governmental repressions logically justifying an invocation of the violent government frame, the general conclusions that are drawn about the EZLN's choice to invoke this frame can still be generally applied to other years. For example, in 2002 members of the EZLN were influential in the struggle against the expansion of an airport in the Mexico City area. In this incident, approximately 4,375 peasants were to be removed from their land, provided with only a modicum of what their land was worth in compensation, in order to make way for the airport expansion (Russell 2002). The conflict came to a head when 120 peasants, on their way to protest the airport expansion, were involved in a violent confrontation with 140 police officers, in which 30 peasants were hurt, some seriously (Russell 2002). Again in 2002 we see an above average frequency of the violent government frame (48 instances). While the decision to use the violent government frame could be coincidental, it is quite interesting that the high prevalence of this frame seems to correspond with large scale, and very visible instances of governmental repression. While the invocations of the violent government frame may not be simple reactions to these instances of repression, but rather, after an incident or repression, the leaders of the EZLN felt that the use of this frame would have greater

resonance with sympathizers, as their depictions of a violent government would closely match the experienced realities of the individuals within the society.

However, one should note that a violent repression alone is not enough to equate to a spike in the use of the violent government frame. On the 22nd of December in 1997, “Red Mask” paramilitaries backed by the PRI, attacked a church in Acteal, killing 45 Zapatista sympathizers, 21 women, 15 children, and 9 men (Weinberg 2000: 101). After the massacre, around 100 individuals were arrested for their role in the attack, however their sentences were overturned by late January of 1998 (Weinberg 2000: 101). One would assume that the massacre of civilians within a church would have attracted a sizable amount of communiqué discourse; however 1997 had a fairly average number of instances of the violent government frame (33). If the invocation of the violent government frame is directly correlated with acts of governmental repression, one would assume that 1997 would contain an especially high level of instances of this frame. However, as is demonstrated by the earlier discussion of 1998’s use of the frame, there are other political and strategic considerations that most likely contributed to the use (or lack there of) of the violent government frame.

One could assume that since the massacre happened near the end of the year, the communiqués denouncing the massacre could have simply spilled into 1998, and could be partially responsible for the already discussed peak in the instances of the violent government frame, with 55 instances. While this may in fact be the case, one would still expect to see a significant spike immediately around the event. Also, since this study examines inter-year changes in framing patterns, the researcher must unfortunately draw the line between years, to prevent the conclusions from becoming ad-hoc, and to maintain

some level of analytical clarity, (events and the reactions to these events can rarely be confined to specific times, and one could argue that the reactions to an event can often go on into infinity) and to allow for external reproduction of results. Future research may be better to answer this question of repression and the invocation of the violent government frame if they were to delineate their results by month instead of year.

Another result that should be discussed that may weaken the theory is the case of 1999. While in terms of a simple counting of frames used, 1999 is a relatively unremarkable year. However, when one looks at the percentage of frames used during this year, one notices that the violent government frame made up 74.2% of all diagnostic frames used during the year. This percentage is higher than the percentage of the violent government frame used during any other year, and no communiqué or external sources makes mention of a large scale repression during this year. The majority of violence dealt with in these communiqués deals with increased military presence, or small-scale harassment of individuals. While one could only speculate as to the exact reason for this increased presence of the violent government frame during this year, it is quite possible that the frame had been particularly effective in previous years and the EZLN was attempting to simply use a frame that had resonated effectively with individuals previously. It is also possible that the percentage of violent government frames exists solely because the prevalence of the corrupt government frame was exceptionally low during this year, artificially raising the percentage of the total frame population that the violent government frame represented. While more will be said later about why the corrupt government frame was low during this period later, for now it is enough to say that the presence of a legitimate challenge to the PRI during the 2000 election cycle, as

well as political parties calling for fair and open elections most likely contributed to reduction of the corrupt government frame. Regardless of the exact reason, future research should examine this potential counter example to the theory in greater detail.

While the choice to use this frame is very obvious in years where there were large scale repressions or rampant violence against members of the EZLN, it is also important to understand that this frame was also invoked in times of small scale repression or harassment, as well as when the movement was attempting to diminish the legitimacy of the Mexican government. This de-legitimation of the Mexican government through their choice to use force will be discussed in greater detail during the prognostic framing section of this paper, but for now it is enough to say that the use of this frame was essential to not only report instances of violence, but also to indicate the pressing and real need for a democratic transition towards a government with greater respect for human rights, liberty, and an increased tolerance for dissent. The violent government frame was essential for the EZLN, as it served to emphasize the consequences that faced the people of Mexico if a more democratic society was not established. Again, the movement's choice to use this frame is not accidental, and can be explained through an examination of historical context, and tactical necessity.

4.3 Corrupt Government

Just as the violent government can be explained through an understanding of historical context, so too can many of the variations in the prevalence of the corrupt government frame be better understood given an understanding of the context that the movement found itself. For example, one of the years with the highest prevalence of the

corrupt government frame was 2003, with 36 instances of the frame (only 1995 and 2002 had higher instances of the frame with 43 and 37 instances respectively). This emphasis on corrupt government during this time period can be, at least partially, by the EZLN's decision to establish *caracoles* during this time.

In July of 2003, the EZLN began to work with local communities to create autonomous governments, called *carcoles*²² that would oversee the running of indigenous communities within Mexico, primarily in communities within the state of Chiapas (Marcos 2003). These *caarcoles* would be responsible for fulfilling the needs of the indigenous communities that various levels of the Mexican government had failed to provide, and would be overseen by one of five "Good Government Juntas" that would ensure that these small autonomous governments remained free of corruption, respected human rights, and operated within the general accords of the EZLN (Marcos 2003: Online). The establishment of new small scale democracies within the areas of EZLN support makes the increase in the corrupt government frame obvious: the frame served to remind individuals of why there would be a need for the *carcoles*, since the Mexican government was inept, and corrupt. Without the presence of this frame it would be doubtful that many individuals would be willing to join and participate in the *carcoles*, as the Mexican government may appear to be an acceptable option. In this instance we see the EZLN's diagnostic and prognostic frames aligning.

²² The EZLN and the Mexican Government initially proposed these autonomous local governments in the San Andres Accords that were signed in February of 1996. The establishment of these local governments was one of the main reasons why the Zedillo Administration refused to later honor the accords, as the government claimed that the creation of autonomous governments would undermine the unity of the Mexican State (CCRI-CG 1996)

A second example of societal context determining the EZLN's framing strategy is 1995, when the corrupt government frame was at its peak. During this year the EZLN and the Mexican government were in dialogue, attempting to come to a resolution of hostilities between the two parties. During this year, many of the communiqués dealt with this peace process, and how the government was either not taking it seriously, or unwilling to work with the movement toward peace. The government is continually framed as liars that are taking advantage of the EZLN's unilateral ceasefire, and are only using the peace talks as a means to draw EZLN members into the open so that they may be jailed or attacked. There is a constant theme during this period that the government is simply using the peace talks to seem open to dissent, but in reality they have no desire for peace or openness.

Another trend to note in terms the corrupt government frame is the general downward trend in prevalence of this frame. This trend can be most clearly seen by examining "Figure 1" which shows that, while there are peaks in the number of times the frame is invoked, each peak is less than the previous, and each subsequent low point is lower than the previous low point. The most obvious explanation for this trend is the general process of democratization that was occurring in Mexico during this time. As will be discussed in the general democracy prognostic framing portion of this research, after the defeat of the PRI in the 2000 election, the government in Mexico was, at least objectively, much more democratic. Vicente Fox was elected on a campaign of increased democratization, progressive social democracy, and promised to help lower social inequality and poverty (Preston and Dillon 2004: 490). Also, seven weeks after Fox was elected, (but while Zedillo was still in office) the Mexican Supreme Court ruled against

the Zedillo administration, ordering him to make public previously confidential banking data from the Mexican government (Preston and Dillon 2004: 514). Fox also released records of the PRI's secret police force, and ordered a special investigation into government repression and violence (Preston and Dillon 2004: 512).

Fox's administration exhibited an openness that would have been unimaginable during the PRI rule. While his election certainly did not make Mexico a perfect democracy, it certainly changed the public perception of the Mexican government. This new openness and more democratic society would certainly make the corrupt government have less resonance with the Mexican population. Claiming that the government was run by liars, and cheats would motivate individuals less, if these liars and cheats were fairly elected, and at least appeared to make the state a less corrupt.

The corrupt government seems to support the hypothesis of this work, by demonstrating that there are often contextual reasons for the invocation of specific frames. However, it should be noted that the corrupt government frame was not especially prevalent in election years (especially 2000, and 2006), which would be expected, as unfair elections are an obvious sign of corruption, and would indicate the greater need for democratization. This could be seen as an argument that fails to support the hypothesis of this research, as the societal context of upcoming elections should increase the use of this frame. While this may certainly be possible, it is the opinion of this researcher that one could argue that this diminishment of the corruption frame merely reflects the fact that the elections of 2000 and 2006 were generally considered to be fair elections, resulting in the defeat of the PRI. It is also important to note that the EZLN had lost interest in electoral politics, as the organization refused to back any candidate in

the 2006 Presidential Elections, claiming none of the candidates did enough to support indigenous rights (Méndez Antonio 2006). Due to this potential disagreement of interpretations, it is safe to conclude that more research should be done on this diagnostic frame. Specifically, future work should attempt to break the frame down into smaller components, dividing instances of government ineptitude, election fraud, and general corruption.

4.4 Neo-liberal Government

The EZLN officially declared war against the Mexican government on January 1st 1994, the same day that the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), the epitome of neo-liberal economic policy in the Americas, was enacted. This clearly demonstrates the importance of neoliberalism, as a frame for the EZLN, as from the very beginning neoliberalism was a major diagnostic frame used by the movement. The EZLN communiqués deal with neo-liberalism in two main ways: by outlining the economic harm done to individuals by these policies; and by claiming that those in the Mexican Government that support the policies are traitors. While both approaches emphasized the negative aspects of the NAFTA and neo-liberal economic policies, one frame (the NAFTA as treason frame) is contingent on the Mexican government as an actor, while the other (i.e. neo-liberalism results in poverty) could be applied to many cultures at many periods in history, and to any government. Thus, for this research, as noted in the coding rules, only instances of neo-liberalism that were specifically linked to the Mexican government were counted, and the results would seem to indicate that this frame is the least prevalent of all the diagnostic frames. However, this low prevalence is

most likely due to the limitations of this study (which will be discussed in greater detail later in this work), and in order to ensure the importance of this frame is adequately conveyed in this research, (and to hopefully address this known limitation) the first portion of the discussion of the neoliberal frame will deal with the invocations of the neoliberal frame that allude to an unspecified actor. Once this has been discussed, the more specific neoliberal frames that specify the Mexican government as actor, and were thus counted in the coding scheme will be discussed.

Neo-liberal economic policies are continually demonized in the EZLN communiqués as at least partially responsible for the conditions of poverty that exist in the Chiapas region. However, instead of attacking the policies themselves, and discussing why an alternate economic strategy would be superior, neo-liberalism, and those that support it, is framed as treasonous and as an affront to Mexican autonomy. In a communiqué issued the 1st of May 1994, the EZLN states “Business of evil wealth have a new etiquette. Another mask hides our pain from our own eyes. A new name has been given to injustice, to slavery, to the usurpation: neoliberalism” (CCRI-CG 1994 (a)). The communiqué also states that the Mexican Government “offers our history and our soil for foreign money” (CCRI-CG 1994(a)). Then President of Mexico Carlos Salinas de Gortari was specifically named by Subcommandante Marcos as selling Mexico to foreign nations through his work on implementing the NAFTA, as well as undoing all of the agrarian reforms that were implemented by the Mexican Revolution and Emiliano Zapata (Marcos 1994(a)). Salinas is also referred to as an usurper and his reforms to article 27 of the Mexican Constitution are deemed treacherous. The CCRI-CG also go so far as to call him an outright liar for claiming that these reforms are in the spirit of Emiliano Zapata’s

original land reform proposals (CCRI-CG 1994(b)). In another communiqué, Marcos claims that one of the steps to becoming “Man of the Year” is to open a store with a sign that reads “Mexico 1994-2000 Huge End of Century Sale” (Marcos 1994(b))

Neo-liberal economic policies are not hated because they are ineffective, or because they are not necessarily the most effective policy. Rather, the EZLN clearly claims that those in the Mexican government that have implemented these policies are in the process of selling Mexico to foreign powers. The framing of the Mexican Government in this light provides the EZLN with greater legitimacy for their claims for a need to overthrow the Mexican government. Since individuals like Salinas and other government officials are no longer acting in a manner that works to benefit the people of Mexico, these individuals no longer possess legitimate claims to rule. If these individuals are now acting to benefit the United States, or other foreign powers it is quite likely that even moderate Mexicans could agree that changes needed to be made.

It is important to note too, that this claim of treason is historically contingent. If the NAFTA had not been enacted at the time these claims were being made, it is doubtful that this frame would have had as much resonance with the population. However, after the Salinas administration’s enactment of an international agreement, it became very easy to paint him as a pawn of transnational corporations, and as a puppet of the United States. If Salinas would have rejected the NAFTA, or in some manner stood up to its enactment, or had he not reformed Article 27 of the Mexican Constitution, it is doubtful that the EZLN would have been able to claim that he was more interested in serving the interests of big business and foreign money.

While a major component of the EZLN movement is its resistance to neo-liberal economic policies, the portion of this research looked specifically at neo-liberalism in relation to the Mexican government found the frame to be much less important and prevalent. With this in mind, one notes that the neo-liberal frame is really only prevalent during 2002, and the frames remains relatively unused throughout the remainder of the movement. Again, when one understands the social conditions that surrounded the movement, it becomes readily understandable why these two years (1994 and 2002) serve as peaks for the neo-liberal diagnostic frame.

Until 2002, the role the Mexican government had specifically played in the expansion of neo-liberal economic policies was not something that was overly prevalent in the communiqués of the EZLN. However, in 2002, the Mexican government launched the *Plan Puebla-Panama* which, according the EZLN would force many in EZLN territories to relocate, as the land they were currently farming and living on would be turned over to internal interests that would exploit the land for their own ends (Flores Mago'n 2002). This is seen by the EZLN as an obvious extension of neo-liberal economic policies, as multi-national business were given the rights to the land that indigenous and peasant farmers had used for subsistence for generations.

While neo-liberal policies had impacts on Mexican society, and certainly these policies had caused a significant level of poverty and suffering for Chiapas and the areas most closely tied to the EZLN, it is not until the Mexican government is threatening expulsion and forced relocation, that the frame is used in the communiqués. Again, this makes sense, as it would be difficult to motivate individuals towards fighting against neo-liberalism, when it is seen as a grand, macro level, economic system, that only impacts

members of the EZLN in the abstract. When it can be directly tied to the Mexican government, and especially when it can be linked to the familiar grievance of land rights and expulsion (a problem that motivated many previous peasant uprisings in Mexico²³) the frame would have great potential for motivating the EZLN base to action. This was certainly no secret to the leadership of the EZLN, and it is highly likely that they took this opportunity to not only create new support for their movement, but also to reinvigorate their agrarian base of support with familiar grievances.

It is important to stress however, that this under-representation of the neoliberal frame in this research is most likely due to the coding scheme that was employed in this research. Since one of the main goals of this research was to examine how the movement's domestic framing techniques varied over time, the research made the decision to look *only* at the diagnostic frames that explicitly stated the domestic actor of the Mexican government (or obvious proxies of the Mexican government such as the military). This provides an obvious limitation to this research: since neoliberalism is, by its very nature, a transnational phenomenon with global actors, looking at the issue from a stand point that is only interested in domestic actors will inherently decrease the prevalence of the frame. With this limitation in mind, one must be wary when drawing conclusions about the importance of this frame. Future research or attempts to recreate this project should bear this in mind, and perhaps consider a different way to define neoliberalism within the coding scheme.

²³ See Harvey (1998) and Centeno (1999).

4.5 Prognostic Frame Overview

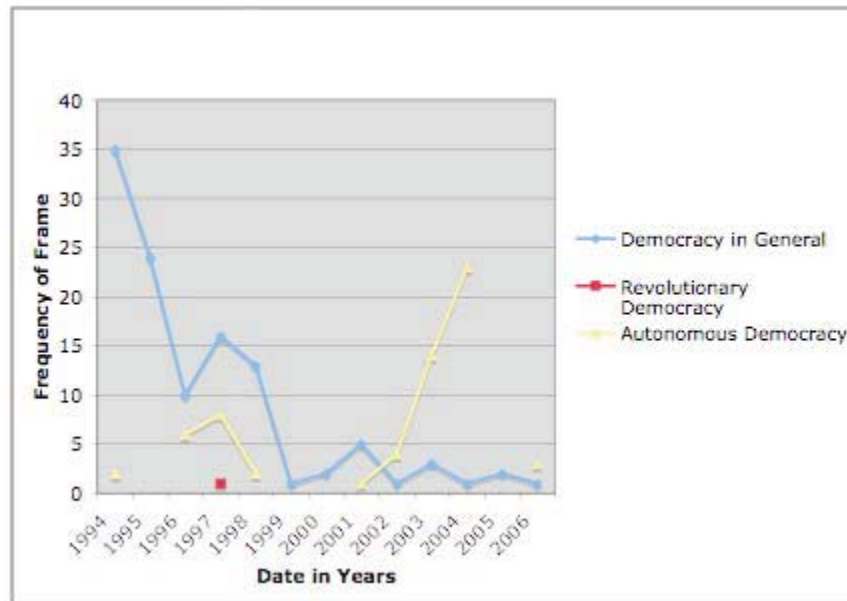
An important trend to note in Table 5 is that as the movement matured, its prognostic shifted from one of generic democracy, to a more specific frame that stressed micro level democracy and local autonomy. This trend would be expected based on Benford's (2005) work, which contends that movements that lack specific or workable solutions will be unable to motivate individuals towards action. While prognostic frames need to be as reactive as diagnostic frames, this adjustment of frames can still be at least partially explained by examining the social conditions that surround the movement.

Figure 2 demonstrates similar trends in prognostic framing techniques graphically. As will be discussed further in this work, there is a clear relationship between the general democracy frame and the small-scale autonomy frame, that demonstrates over time, the general democracy frame loses resonance with individuals, and the movement must shift towards new framing techniques.

Table 5: Prognostic Frame Prevalence

Year	Democracy General	Percent of Total Frames	Democracy Local	Percent of Total Frames	Democracy Radical	Percent of Total Frames
1994	35	94.6%	2	5.4%	0	0%
1995	24	100%	0	0%	0	0%
1996	10	62.5%	6	37.5%	0	0%
1997	16	64%	8	32%	1	4.8%
1998	13	86.7%	2	13.3%	0	0%
1999	1	100%	0	0%	0	0%
2000	2	100%	0	0%	0	0%
2001	5	83.3%	1	16.7%	0	0%
2002	1	20%	4	80%	0	0%
2003	3	17.6%	14	82.3%	0	0%
2004	1	4.2%	23	95.8%	0	0%
2005	2	100%	0	0%	0	0%
2006	1	25%	3	75%	0	0%

Figure 2: Variations in Prognostic Frames



A second conclusion that can be drawn by examining Table 5 in relation to Table 4 together is that while there is no specific formula that indicates how many prognostic frames are required to provide solutions to a specific number of diagnostic frames, it is important to note that the actual quantity of prognostic frames remained relatively stable over time. While it is hard to draw definite conclusions from this comparison, it is interesting to note that perhaps this helps explain why the movement was able to exist for as long as it has: it was constantly able to provide solutions to the social problems it claimed to exist in society. While these specific prognostic frames did vary over time, the general quantity of solutions presented remained relatively constant.

4.6 General Democracy

The frame of democratization was ubiquitous throughout the communiqués that were issued by the EZLN, and the communiqués that were issued in the first years of the

movement were of no exception. In a communiqué issued on January 20th of 1994 the Clandestine Revolutionary Indigenous Committee, General Command (the formalized leadership organization of the EZLN) (CCRI-CG) issued a communiqué that made the invocation of a democratic frame quite obvious, stating: “We will continue to struggle until we achieve the freedom that is our right, the democracy that is our reason, and the justice that is our life (CCRI-CG 1994(a))!” This democratization frame is quickly established as a prognostic frame within the movement’s discourse, as the CCRI-CG issued a statement on the 6th of January, 1994 claiming that only after the democratic will of the people is recognized, will poverty decline, and standards of living increase (CCRI-CG 1994(b)). Much of the communiqués take similar approaches to dealing with the concerns facing the individuals of southern Mexico: a wide array of problems and social issues are raised by the EZLN, and a general solution of democratization is proposed. While this allows for a greater fluidity in terms of framing and frame extension, it becomes problematic for movements in terms of the movement’s ability to maintain high levels of movement participation.

The EZLN’s focus on democracy can also be seen in the movement’s emphasis on its own democratic practices. In a communiqué dated June 3, 1994 (which appeared in *La Jornada*), the CCRI-CG explains that its decision to reject or accept the peace accords presented by the Mexican Government would be based on democratic assemblies and democratic voting (CCRI-CG 1994(c)). The EZLN consulted with individuals from all communities and *ejidos* where members of the EZLN lived²⁴, and were willing to base

²⁴ The communiqué does not say specifically which towns or communities were involved in this consultation, it does claim that all communities with EZLN members were part of

their decision upon a fair and democratic vote (CCRI-CG 1994(c)). A week later the EZLN released the results of this vote, noting that the overwhelming majority of individuals that voted (97.88%) were opposed to the peace accords. However only a small minority of individuals (3.26%) felt that the EZLN should renew offensive hostilities towards the Mexican Government (CCRI-CG 1994(d)). Thus, the EZLN stated in the same communiqué that they would ask the Mexican Government for renewed peace talks, and would cease all offensive military actions against the Mexican Government. The EZLN was willing to completely alter its tactics to maintain a democratic stance. These communiqués are also important, because the EZLN was providing a transparency to its structure that would help demonstrate the differences between the democracy it hoped to create, and the pseudo-democracy that existed in Mexico at the time.

The frame of democracy serves as the main prognostic frame for the EZLN at this time. Democracy is continually referred to as a key aspect that was missing from Mexico at the time, and once democracy was realized, there would be wide sweeping reforms that would make the country better for everyone. In a communiqué outlining the demands that the EZLN would bring to the peace talks with the Mexican Government, the CCRI-CG states that democracy is “a fundamental right to all Indigenous and non-Indigenous people. Without Democracy there can be no freedom, justice, or dignity. And without dignity there is nothing” (CCRI-CG 1994(e)). The same communiqué demands that there be fair and open elections, and that all individuals in government that won their seat in a contested or fraudulent election resign (CCRI-CG 1994(e)). While this communiqué

the consultation. It would be safe to assume that these communities would be located primarily in South-Eastern Mexico, as that is where the EZLN was most active.

outlines a wide variety of grievances that the EZLN wants addressed, democracy seems to be the lynchpin towards making the rest of the demands viable (as the majority of demands deal with equal rights, and justice for Indigenous Mexicans, as well as Mexicans living in poverty). In 1994, when the EZLN movement first began, the communiqués exhibit the highest level of the general democracy frame. This frame is characterized by generic or unspecific calls for democracy, with few details given as to how a more democratic Mexico can be created or how the EZLN will help implement democracy. However, this unrefined notion of the movement's goals is not surprising since the movement, at the time, had just declared war on the Mexican government, and was struggling for both national and international legitimacy. One of the easiest ways to claim legitimacy would be through attempting to align the movement with the sentiments of the people, as well to claim to be fighting against a newly elected administration, that "won" the election under a cloud of suspicion and claims of voter fraud. The EZLN most certainly did and does care about creating a more democratic Mexico. However, in its infancy the movement most likely spoke so often of its desire for democracy because of its desire to let all that were listening know that the movement was not a Marxist or other undesirable movement. Also of importance is that EZLN officially began during the apex of the "third wave" of global democratization²⁵.

²⁵ See Huntington (1991) and Markoff (1996).

4.7 Autonomous Democracy

As the movement progresses we see an inverse relationship between the instances of the general democracy frame and the instances of the local democracy frame. Once the movement enters the 21st Century, the general democratic frame is almost completely forgotten. This is most likely due to the fact that democracy did, in some respect, come to Mexico with the election of Vicente Fox in 2000. General calls of an illegitimate government that needed to be replaced by a government with the true will of the people would become less effective in the minds of the individuals the EZLN hoped to motivate. Thus, the movement began to make calls for local autonomy so that EZLN and indigenous communities could govern themselves without the interference of the Mexican government²⁶.

The local democracy frame reached its apex in 2003 and 2004, as the EZLN actually established the Good Government Junta. The Juntas were five autonomous local governments, located within Chiapas that were created as models of democracy, tolerance, and other values that the EZLN was based upon. They, according to the EZLN, provided members of the community with a wide array of social services, including education, health care, and safety, that Mexican government had been unwilling or unable to provide for individuals within Chiapas. During 2004 the majority of communiqués issued deal not with problems of the Mexican government, but rather the effectiveness of these small, autonomous governments.

²⁶ The notion of autonomous indigenous communities actually began very early in the EZLN movement, and the establishment of these communities was one of the conditions of the San Andres Accords. However, I contend that these communities that were designed ensure indigenous rights are very different than the Good Government Junta that is dealt with in later years.

4.8 Revolutionary Frame

It is interesting to note that this research found almost no invocations of the need for some form of large-scale revolution, or some form of fundamental shift in the structure of the Mexican government. This is surprising since the early writings of Sub-Commandante Marcos, and EZLN, present the need for a highly class conscious body of workers. In an essay written by Marcos in 1992²⁷, he claims that capitalism has caused ecological destruction and the impoverishment of the state of Chiapas. He contends that much of the poverty is due to the fact that large corporations take much of the oil, and natural resources that exist in Chiapas out of the state, with none of the profits being returned to Chiapas (Marcos 1994(a)). However, this lack of a revolutionary frame is most likely due to the manner in which the data was coded.

While there were numerous invocations of the need for worker unity, the impoverishment of individuals that struggled against neo-liberalism, and poor living conditions of workers in general, there was very little discussion of a specific radical democratic solution that would have served as a prognostic frame to these social problems. There were instances where there was an implied revolutionary frame (i.e. the condemnation of capitalism, or a call that peasants unite together), but aside from one exception, there was no clear or specific call for a large scale revolution or a fundamental shift in the economic sphere or structure of the state. One could contend that the EZLN's initial call for an overthrow of Mexican government would be a call for a revolutionary or Marxist state, but these open declarations of revolt are generally little more than that,

²⁷ While the essay was written in 1992, it was not published until January 27th, 1994. This delay in publishing is most likely due to Marcos' determination that the people of Southern Mexico would be unwilling to accept an overtly Marxist ideology.

and simply call for democracy in general. It is quite possible that the general democratic frame subsumed the revolutionary frames, as this frame was most prevalent during the period before the EZLN declared a cease-fire. Future research would be well served to break the “general democracy frame” down into more specific sub-categories.

4.9 Peace in Democracy

Another sub-frame of the democracy prognostic frame that emerges out of the later EZLN movement is the peaceful democracy prognostic frame. While this frame was not specifically coded and counted in the research²⁸, it becomes very prevalent in the later communiqués, and it is also quite important for the movement once the EZLN begins to establish its own autonomous democratic structures, and will be discussed briefly at this time. In contrast to the EZLN initial prognostic frame of an armed overthrow of the Mexican government, by the time the movement had entered the 21st Century the movement had shifted its main diagnostic frame from one of armed combat to one of peaceful mobilization. While the EZLN ceased offensive hostilities in 1994 after a vote of known EZLN communities, the emergence of a democratic peace frame emerged much later in the movements life. During the year 2000, the EZLN began framing the issue of democracy as inherently tied to peace, and an end to hostilities

²⁸ The decision not to specifically count the “peaceful democracy” frame is based on two main lines of reasoning. First, establishing parameters for this variable would be very difficult, as even when the movement was in a state of open war with the Mexican government, there would still be the implicit assumption that peace was desired, as it would ameliorate loss of life and other unfavorable conditions that exist during a state of war. Thus, the counting of these implications becomes extremely arbitrary, as any claim that the war was bad could be counted as an endorsement of peace. Secondly, there would most likely be a high level of collinearity, as any condemnation of violence in the violent government diagnostic frame, could also be considered a call for peace, either explicitly or implicitly.

between the organization and the Mexican government. It was around this time that the EZLN appointed a “Peace Commissioner” to carry out dialogues with the Mexican Government (CCRI-CG 2000). In a communiqué released on February 2, 2000, which supported the students then on strike at the *Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México*, Marcos states that Mexican democracy is at a critical juncture. “What is at stake is the future of a country that is in dispute between those who want to run it at the point of a bayonet, and those who want it free, democratic, and just” (Marcos 2000(a)). In another similar statement, Marcos writes, “No one can speak of democracy, of liberty or of justice in this country... while dialogue is a sham and there is no truth other than violence.” He continues by stating that this a time for all progressive individuals in Mexico to take part in peaceful mobilization to ensure freedom and democracy (Marcos 2000 (b)). Peace and democracy are tied together in one ideological frame in which one cannot exist without the other. In another communiqué released in June of 2000 the EZLN speaks about creating a “Great Front Against War and for Democracy”, which it claims will serve as “a platform for stopping the war and for furthering a true transition to democracy” (EZLN 2000). The same communiqué directly links peace and democracy by noting, “...the struggle against war and repression is both one of principle and, at the same time, the struggle for democracy” (EZLN 2000). The communiqué continues by stating, “there cannot be democracy with war” (EZLN 2000). There is no longer any real attempt by the EZLN to engage in an armed struggle with the Mexican government, as an open war with between poor rural farmers and a developing government is obviously a fight that the EZLN would be unlikely to win. Instead, by linking the goal of democracy

with the means of peace, the EZLN is able to synthesize its diagnostic and prognostic frames.

Not only does the Mexican Government's continued use of force against an enemy that refuses to respond in kind de-legitimize its use of force, but it aids the EZLN in its efforts to mobilize individuals towards its cause. During 1994, when the EZLN was, for at least part of the year, in an open war with the Mexican Government, communiqués dealt with large scale, grandiose issues that would validate a war. Communiqués dealt with the number of individuals impoverished, the amount of natural resources that were being unfairly removed from the region, the violation of the sovereign right of farmers to work on common lands. In contrast, many of the communiqués issued during the year 2000 deal with small-scale mistreatments of EZLN supporters at the hands of the Mexican military. This change in tactics demonstrates to individuals several things: first, that even individuals that are not actual members of the EZLN could be targeted and harassed by a corrupt military; Second, that the military, and the Mexican government as well, is illegitimate in that they force against individuals that will not or cannot respond in kind. Framing the Mexican government in this light is very similar to the 1994 framing of these individuals as unauthentic Mexicans, or traitors to the ideals that were at the center of the Mexican revolution.

Also, it is important to note that the prognostic frame of pacifism is much easier for average individuals to accept. No longer is the EZLN asking individuals to uproot their lives, move to Chiapas and risk the life as well as their freedom for the land rights of poor indigenous farmers. Instead, the EZLN is asking individuals to participate in a campaign of peaceful mobilization in order to, not overthrow the Mexican Government,

but rather create a genuine and lasting peaceful and democratic state. The conflict in Chiapas is no longer being framed as a struggle by a few for their rights, rather it is now being framed as a struggle for the rights of all. If individuals want to avoid being harassed by an illegitimate government, then they must support the EZLN in its peaceful mobilization.

This method of framing seems to resonate more with individuals, as 2000 was one of the years with the one of highest number of communiqués issued (78). The only two years in which the EZLN was more active in the dissemination of communiqués was in 1999 and 2001. It is most likely not a coincidence that it was around this same time of a shift towards peace, that the movement issued almost half (47.6%) of all of the communiqués issued between 1994 and 2006.

5. CONCLUSIONS: BRINGING CONTEXT BACK IN

Throughout the course of any social movement, the political and historical context in which the movement exists will obviously change. Neither the movement nor the world in which it exists is a static entity; rather the ideological frames of the movement are constantly in flux and are responding to the shift in the world around it. When one uses this conception of fluidity and contingency to understand prognostic and diagnostic frames, understanding why a movement modifies its framing practices over time becomes possible. With this in mind one can gain a greater understanding of why a movement acts in a certain manner, and also understand the movement as a part of the larger political and societal context.

It is no surprise that the EZLN's initial prognostic frame was a violent overthrow of the Mexican government, and the initial diagnostic frames stressed the corrupt nature of the Mexican Government. The *Partido Revolucionario Institucional* had been the sole ruling party for over 70 years, and elections were widely considered to be wrought with corruption and fraud. The North American Free Trade Agreement had just passed, which ensured that other major North American powers would become highly invested in the economic conditions and state of Mexico. Given these seemingly massive structural barriers, it is quite understandable that the impoverished individuals in Chiapas would feel that it would be a waste of time to attempt to work through the Mexican government. Instead, the EZLN decided that they would try to present the individuals of Mexico with a revolutionary alternative to the undesirable political situation within Mexico.

It is at this period of an un-trustworthy political that we see the greatest calls for democracy in general (See Table 5 and Figure 2) and some of the highest invocations of

corrupt government frame (See Table 4 and Figure 1). While it is clear that the EZLN obviously had the establishment of autonomous, local, governments in mind for very early in their movement, (Hayden 2002: 13) their calls for general democracy (as opposed to local democracy) were most likely inspired by the desire to mobilize all of Mexico against the PRI. After it became clear that the masses of individuals in Mexico were not willing to overthrow the Mexican government in a violent fashion, but would rather work for a more democratic Mexico by voting for Fox in 2000, the EZLN shifted its focus from democracy in general towards its more specific prognostic frame of a system of autonomous governments.

The PRI almost lost the 1994 election due to its own internal divisions, and the *Partido de la Revolución Democrática* (PRD) was campaigning on the platform of a more democratic Mexico during the run-up to the elections of 1998 (Preston and Dillion 2004: 353). The EZLN was obviously aware of these occurrences, and changes in the political climate, and it was obvious that some form of change was on the way. However, after Fox was elected in 2000, and despite his promise to solve the situation in Chiapas in “15 minutes”, members of the EZLN found themselves in almost the same position they were in prior to this democratic election (Wild 2007). Thus the EZLN renewed its struggle to obtain autonomous local level democracy, so that the indigenous populations that were still being either ignored or persecuted by the now democratic government would have some recourse. While the diagnostic frames really did not change during this period, the solution to these social problems differed radically. It was not enough to simply have a less corrupt election, or the election of a non-PRI candidate. Rather, the movement shifted its focus back onto providing the social services (through

the *carcoles*) and democracy to indigenous individuals that the Mexican federal government had failed to provide them with.

The EZLN's final incarnation too is really no surprise. While Mexico had certainly become more democratic and less corrupt during the Fox administration (Preston and Dillion 2004), conditions of poverty and other social problems in southern Mexico seemed to have changed little. However, the movement was fading into obscurity due to a lack of national support, or causes around which the EZLN could rally its base. Marcos had granted a good portion of his leadership to Teniente Coronel Insurgente Moisés, changed his name to Delegate Zero, and embarked upon a journey across Mexico in an attempt to remind Mexico of the need for the EZLN (Marcos 2006). The *caracoles* were effective in providing services to the indigenous communities in southern Mexico²⁹ (Marcos 2004), but it seemed that their prognostic frames of democracy in general, and autonomous democracy were failing to resonate with the larger population of Mexico.

However, the EZLN was thrown back into its element when in 2006 a group of indigenous individuals experienced repression at the hands of the Mexican police in Atenco. If the incident at Atenco had not occurred, the EZLN may have had no real new causes with which it could mobilize individuals. Democracy had been achieved, at least on some level. There were still certainly many social problems that needed addressing in Mexico, but it seemed that the EZLN had little in the way of solutions for these problems. Neo-liberalism would most likely not be ended, regardless of the movement's global

²⁹ The only assessment of the effectiveness of the *caracoles* system was made by the EZLN in a communiqué. As such, one could certainly claim there is a potential bias in this claim.

meetings on the subject. When one reads the communiqués leading up to this incident, there are several that seem to be reminding individuals of the violence the Mexican government is capable of, and warning individuals that the EZLN might have to close the Good Government Juntas, in order to avoid repression. However, when Atenco occurred, the movement was not only presented with an enemy, but it also was presented with a cause that individuals (both international and domestic) from all walks of life were motivated by. The communiqués of 2006 really do not present a prognostic frame to solve this issue of a violent government. Instead they simply call for mass societal mobilization, to demonstrate the need for a more peaceful and just government and to show solidarity with those imprisoned.

So we return to the central question of this research: how do social movements respond to changes in the context in which they exist? This answer is different for every movement, but at least in the case of the EZLN, the movement responded by reframing itself, so that it attempted to remain relevant in its new political context. The movement modified its diagnostic and prognostic frames so that it would maintain resonance with its radical base of participants that would certainly be unsatisfied by the moderate reforms that were occurring. The movement no longer advocated just simply a need for democracy, like it did in its initial inception. Rather it called for a small-scale autonomous democracy that was heavily invested in peace and social justice. This prognostic frame adjustment served to better align with the diagnostic frames being used by the movement at the time, and helped to provide readers with a greater understanding of what could and should be done to improve their everyday lived realities.

In terms of the contributions that this research sought to make, this research confirms the theories advanced by Bob and Olesen. Like the transnational framing techniques discussed by these authors, domestic framing techniques also varied over time, and as hypothesized, several of these frames (especially the prognostic frames) varied in relation to the changes in political and social contexts. Also, the communiqués served as an extremely rich and worthwhile data source, that enabled this research to better understand the framing techniques used by the EZLN. Finally, the concepts of diagnostic and prognostic frames are especially applicable to the EZLN movement, and further work should be done to further break down these concepts to better understand their relationship to variations in societal and historical contexts.

Given this conclusion, future research on the EZLN, and social movements in general should remember that these movements do not exist in a vacuum. The culture, political situation, and historical context will play a large part in understanding why a movement acts in a certain manner. While these contexts will certainly not explain every ideological change in a movement, it is important to remember that movement leaders are obviously aware of the culture in which they exist, and movements that are successful (in some respect) will most likely take advantage of these ideological openings. Also, movements that are successful (or at least able to survive for long periods of time) will also need to constantly balance their diagnostic and prognostic frames, if the movement wishes to remain relevant with its supporters. Not only does the prognostic frame need to align with the diagnostic frame, but also both of these frames need to match the lived realities, or experiences of the individuals that the movement wishes to mobilize.

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