

Indigenous Rights or Revolutionary Transformation? Session 12

Varese, Stefano. 1996. "The Ethnopolitics of Indian Resistance in Latin America." *Latin American Perspectives*, 23 (2): 58-71.

1. Varese argues that in order to understand indigenous political resistance and cultural tenacity, we need to understand the relationship between indigenous elites and dispersed rural communities. Why? Also, in broad terms, what have been the overall features and transformations of that relationship?
2. What are *moral ecology* and *moral economy* and why do they matter in Varese's analysis?
3. Varese outlines rebellions with a "moral ecology" theme. What are the main ones he speaks about and what is distinctive about them?
4. What is the problem presented by the co-presence of both "use value" and "exchange value"?
5. What are the expressions of an indigenous "moral economy"?
6. Note how Varese brings back together the discussion of indigenous resistance with the critique of anthropology.
7. Does Varese endorse the notion that there has been an indigenous resurgence?

Nash, June. 1995. "The Reassertion of Indigenous Identity: Mayan Responses to State Intervention in Chiapas." *Latin American Research Review*, 30 (3): 7-41.

1. What were the primary "demands" advanced by the EZLN? Were they primarily linked to NAFTA, or more historical in nature, or both?
2. In the early pages of the article you might encounter what you might possibly think are sterile academic debates without any conclusion, concerning the nature and meaning of the Zapatista rebellion. But the Zapatistas themselves have a voice in the matter: how do they represent the meaning of their own uprising?
3. What points do you think Nash is trying to make by outlining the various communal religious rituals that deal with rebellion and opposition?
4. What role did internal class and gender cleavages play in transforming indigenous politics around the time of the uprising?
5. What is an *ejido* and why is its maintenance, or rupture, an important part of this story?
6. To what extent does neoliberalism figure in this story?
7. The struggle in Chiapas was not just about identity, says Nash. What else was it about?
8. There seems to be an underlying complaint, related to us by Nash, that the Zapatista program for change was perhaps not "indigenous" enough. What does that complaint stem from? How is it ironic?

Esteva, Gustavo. 2001. "The Meaning and Scope of the Struggle for Autonomy." *Latin American Perspectives*, 28 (2): 120-148.

1. How is Mexico a "foreign invention"? Why might that be a significant point for the author to make early on? Relate this to "imaginary Mexico" and "deep Mexico."
2. How does Esteva's interpretation of the events in Mexico differ markedly from those of June Nash? Which one do you find more persuasive, and why?
3. Esteva casts the Zapatista uprising as an expression of a different idea of "civil society". What does he mean?
4. Trace the multiple ways that "autonomy" figures as central to the Zapatista vision of change.