

From Eduardo Galeano to Dauno Tótoro and Emiliano Thibaut

Dear Friends:

I don't write introductions, however this text perhaps might do to be included in your book. It was written several months ago, and continues to state what I believe in.

With a hug,
Eduardo Galeano

In Chiapas, the masked ones unmask the centers of power. And not only the local power, which is in the hands of destroyers of forests and exploiters of people. The Zapatista rebellion has been disrobing this power which reigns over all of Mexico, a power of whose worst customs show that women and ballot boxes are there to be violated, and that politics consist off stealing the horseshoes off of galloping horses.

The echoes of Chiapas reach much further than the region and the kingdom of Marcos, the spokesperson, has said that he his Zapatista in Mexico, and also gay in San Francisco, black in South Africa, Muslim in Europe, Chicano in the US, Palestinian in Israel, a Jew in Germany, a Pacifist in Bosnia, a woman on her own on any subway after ten at night, A peasant without land in any country of the world, and a worker without a job in any city. In a very dear letter, the 'sub-commander' in remembering his old friend Antonio, recounts that the old Antonio opined that each one is as small as the fears that are held and as large as the chosen enemy.

In that, I believe, resides the greatness of this campesino movement, which has sprung up in a place that has never been newsworthy for the public opinion makers: their cries have a world wide resonance, because it expresses a passion for justice and a spirit of solidarity that defies the almighty system that has taken over, with impunity, the entire planet. Their defiance is based with bravery on facts, and with a humor in their words, courage and light heartiness, two things which we are sorely missing.

The world is subject to a vast and invisible dictatorship. According to which injustice does not exist. Poverty, for instance, which torments so many and which is multiplying, is not the result of injustice, but the just punishment that inefficiency deserves. And if injustice does not exist, the passion for justice is condemned as terrorism or disqualified as mere nostalgia. And what with solidarity? What does not have a price, has no value: solidarity has never been quoted for less value on world markets. Charity is better thought off, but until now, as far as I know, the superpower of the world has not offered a Ministry of Economy to Mother Theresa of Calcutta.

The supergovernment: governments are governed by a bunch of pirates, elected In no election. They decided the fortunes of humanity and dictate moral codes. Instead of a hook, they have a computer for a hand, and on their shoulder the carry a technocrat instead of a parrot. They dominate the seven seas of high finance and international commerce, where those that speculate will navigate while those that produce drown. From there, they distribute hunger and indigestion on a world scale, and on a world scale they order around those that give orders, and are vigilant of those that are ordered. Television, which transmits their orders, calls world peace or international equilibrium, a world that is resigned.

But the human condition has an obstinate tendency to bad behavior. Where it is least expected, a rebellion springs up and dignity is brought forth. In the mountains of Chiapas, for example. During a long time the Mayan Indians remained silent. Mayan culture is one of patience, it knows how to wait. Now, how many people speak through their mouths? The Zapatistas are in Chiapas, but they are everywhere. They are not many, but they have a lot of

spontaneous ambassadors. As no one names their ambassadors, no one can fire them. As no one pays them, no one can count them, or buy them out.

Eduardo Galeano, 1996.