

Down by the Riverside in Chiapas

RICHARD STAHLER-SHOLK

Eastern Michigan University

It's 7:30, late morning in San Benito,* already steaming hot with no hint of breeze. Through the open doorway of our thatch roof hut I watch the chickens strut and scratch and peck, their clucks joining the chirping birds and buzzing insects and the occasional complaint of the community horse, whose fate is to be tied up in a jungle clearing until a heavy load needs to be transported to or from the two dugout *cayucos* on the banks of the muddy Lacantún River. The women have been up since before dawn, grinding corn and patting the mass into flat tortillas to toast on the *comal* over a wood fire. A shyly smiling girl in a brightly embroidered *huipil* brings our morning ration of warm tortillas, which I transfer to a plate to return the wrapping cloth. The men have already had their tortillas, perhaps with some reheated black beans, and headed out with machete in hand to their *milpas* to tend the corn.

Anna is still asleep in her hammock, which she has tied shut at the top to keep from falling out if she rolls over, so it looks like a giant blue cocoon. Anna is a 29-year-old school teacher from Catalunya, who had some jungle experience once before when she was a volunteer teacher in a rural community in Guatemala ten years ago. She is active in her teacher's union and in a Barcelona-based Chiapas solidarity group, which is how she wound up here in this remote corner of southeast Mexico near the Guatemalan border. It is mostly Europeans who come to Chiapas, which has barely registered in the U.S. news.

We are here as human rights observers, sent by the "Fray Bartolomé de Las Casas"

* Places and names have been changed to protect the people.

Human Rights Center, at the request of the seven families (some 40 people, half children) trying to survive in this settlement. They are Tzotzil indigenous people from the cool central highlands of Chiapas, survivors of a 1998 government-sponsored massacre that scattered the community. In 2001, one of their members who had traveled around the state as a religious catechist heard about some remote jungle lands that had no owner, and so the displaced villagers came to settle here and start a new life.

The people of San Benito consider themselves religious Catholics (of the Liberation Theology variety), and they hold prayer services Tuesday and Thursday evenings and Sunday mornings. They are also committed Zapatistas, part of the civilian support base of the Zapatista Army of National Liberation (EZLN), which rose up in rebellion against Mexico's "bad government" in 1994. Dissident religious and political currents wafting through this agrarian frontier over the last few decades have spread the radical idea that indigenous people have rights, that poverty is not randomly sown by divine providence, and that concerted collective action to improve social conditions is a worthy endeavor. Some elements of this discussion have echoed across the centuries, ever since Columbus claimed to have "discovered" what he first thought was India, dubbing its inhabitants Indians. Successive waves of what the Mayan peoples of this region still call *kaxlanes* (Castilians) have treated these lands and populations as natural resources, to be freely used for their own benefit according to legal and political frameworks of their own design and imposition. The sword and the cross went hand in hand in organizing and rationalizing the Conquest. Bartolomé de Las Casas, the 16th century Dominican friar for whom the human rights center was named, raised the heretical notion that perhaps the indigenous

people already had souls before the Spanish arrived, in which case slaughtering large numbers of them in the name of offering salvation would be barbaric. He raised these concerns in an entreaty entitled *A Brief History of the Destruction of the Indies* addressed to the Spanish crown, who salved their consciences by appointing him “Protector of the Indians,” and he continued to wrestle with these doubts from his backwater posting as Bishop of Chiapas. The 20th century bishop of Chiapas, Samuel Ruiz, influenced by the contemporary Vatican II Latin American current of Liberation Theology, became a prominent advocate of indigenous rights and founded the “FrayBa” human rights center in 1989.

Life for the settlers of San Benito reflects the marginal conditions in which much of the indigenous population still lives. They raise corn as their ancestors did—clearing and planting and harvesting by hand—supplemented by some beans and squash and chili peppers. When the harvest is good, they can sell some extra corn to buy such basics as machetes, hand corn grinders, and an occasional article of clothing. But subsistence agriculture became much more difficult since January 1, 1994, when NAFTA took effect, dumping corn produced by subsidized U.S. agribusiness on Mexican markets and driving prices down for peasant producers while the Mexican government was forced to eliminate price supports. Bowing to the god of the market, the Mexican government ended the agrarian redistribution that was a legacy of the 1910-17 Revolution, and began promoting the break-up of collective *ejido* lands into private parcels. This was a main reason the Zapatistas chose that date to launch their revolt, not just against the Mexican “bad government” but also against the logic of an unrestricted global market.

As I stood watching sacks of corncobs being dumped into the machine that removes the

Down by the Riverside

A contracorriente

kernels, Gregorio explained to me that each sack of excess corn grains, beyond what was needed for their consumption, could be sold to the *coyote* or middleman across the river for 120 pesos (US\$ 11). But the *coyote* got three times that price selling it in Comitán, since the people of San Benito lacked a pickup truck to take their produce 3-1/2 hours down the road to town. The small gas-run shucking machine had cost them 17,000 pesos (\$1,500), equivalent to more than half of the village's entire harvest. Based on the typical harvest and consumption needs, I estimated the annual income at around US\$ 800 per family.

Six years after the assault on their highland village of origin, the community lacked access to education or health care. The children scamper barefoot through the jungle, dive in the crocodile-infested river, chase lizards, and stop by the human rights observer hut to watch the strange ways of the *kaxlanes* and giggle. Many have swollen bellies or open sores. One little girl comes by every day with her infant sister slung over her back in a shawl. The little one is always crying. She has a skin infection on the side of her nose that appears to be impetigo, and oozing sores on her legs that could be from the *colmoyote*, a flesh-burrowing worm transmitted by fly bites, or perhaps infected tick bites. The big sister holds the crying infant still while Anna and I smear on some antibiotic ointment, the only thing we can think of to feel a little less helpless.

A few of the older children who might have once had some schooling speak a little Spanish, as do two or three of the men, but otherwise communication is limited to our very few words of Tzotzil and gestures. But that doesn't stop people from dropping by to visit, greeting us with smiles when we go down to the river to bathe or to wash dishes or clothes. Gregorio,

who speaks the best Spanish, explains to me as we watch the corn-shucking operation that the community refuses to be displaced again: “We’ll die here first,” he says quietly.

Neither option is very attractive, but both are real possibilities. The government’s first response to the 1994 Zapatista rebellion was a military offensive. Fighting was formally suspended after twelve days when peace talks began, which merely inaugurated the government’s “low-intensity warfare.” This included an escalating occupation of the mainly indigenous “conflict zones” of Chiapas by about one-third of the Federal army, one soldier for every two families in the region. The counterinsurgency campaign then shifted its emphasis toward state-sponsored paramilitary groups, consisting mainly of rootless young indigenous men who lack land and are given arms and money to attack communities of Zapatista supporters. This allows the government to portray the killing in Chiapas as inter-communal violence, and its own troops as a stabilizing force. The most intense military/paramilitary operations have shifted from the jungle canyons of east-central Chiapas to the northern zone to the central highlands, and now to this southeastern slice of jungle where the government had demarcated the vast “Montes Azules Biosphere Reserve” thirty years before. The government has been waging a campaign of evicting settlers from Montes Azules over the last two years, particularly targeting recent Zapatista settlements of indigenous people who have taken refuge here after already being violently displaced from their original homes by paramilitaries.

Officially, the government invokes a conservationist rationale for evicting settlers from the biosphere reserve. Yet the government had conceded a vast swath of largely overlapping territory in the 1970s to a group of 66 indigenous families which it inaccurately labeled the

“Lacandón Community,” giving them trinkets in exchange for exclusive lumber concessions to strip valuable hardwood from the forest. So much for conservation. Over the decades, various communities of Tzeltal and Ch’ol people living within the overlapping Montes Azules and/or Lacandón Community boundaries also received recognition of their land rights under the agrarian reform. In the midst of all these overlapping concessions, the government only initiated evictions when communities of Zapatista supporters began to settle the southern fringe of the jungle reserve.

Another clue to the newfound interest in Montes Azules may be found in President Fox’s much-publicized “Plan Puebla Panamá” (PPP), a grand scheme to attract billions of dollars of investment to southern Mexico and Central America. The PPP would encompass port and railway facilities for new sweatshops, and dams for hydroelectric power for the anticipated boom. The dams would flood lands that are currently inhabited, but the resulting population displacement would feed cheap labor into the sweatshops. Part of the attraction of the region for foreign capital is the rich biodiversity found in this stretch of jungle. An exposé by local NGOs already halted one biopiracy project, by the “ICBG Maya” consortium in collaboration with researchers from the University of Georgia. Just downriver from the settlement here in San Benito is a mysterious “ecotourism station” run by a former Secretary of Environment turned entrepreneur. Small planes land and take off daily, and locals believe they are taking genetic samples of jungle flora and fauna.

The latest tactic for expelling communities from Montes Azules has been to send in Agrarian Reform officials, promising land and houses and food elsewhere to those who

“voluntarily” accept relocation, while threatening forcible eviction of those who don’t. Some have taken the bait, only to find themselves left stranded in a “temporary” hostel in the town of Comitán, or given land with competing claimants or with no access to water, or shortchanged on the promised provisions. In some cases the communities have divided into a Zapatista side that refuses government handouts and another side that accepts. In one such divided community a year ago, after those who accepted were relocated, government forces came in and arrested the leader of the Zapatista group in resistance (allegedly for robbery) and scattered the remaining families, burning down their houses.

So it was with some trepidation that the community of San Benito watched a helicopter appear over the horizon, circle in over their seven thatch huts, and land somewhere on the far side of the river. The people here, after three years of peacefully working this land, were divided a few months ago when government agents came in with smiles and promises, and six of the original 13 families started taking government aid. The Zapatista side moved over here, a few hundred yards upriver, and established their formal affiliation with the Zapatista regional Good Government Board of “Freedom for the Mayan Peoples.” They now referred to their former friends as *priistas*, an old habit from the 71 years of rule by the PRI party, even though the government was now in the hands of the even more conservative PAN party and ex-Coca Cola executive President Fox.

The helicopter had brought in 19 government agents, and the people of San Benito all gathered on the riverbank to watch their neighbors ferry their new benefactors across the river by *cayuco* in groups of four. Some time after the last *cayuco* had crossed, with the villagers still

gathered at riverside talking among themselves, one of the agrarian reform officials suddenly appeared in the clearing, escorted by two *priistas*. She was a wiry, thirty-something woman named Alejandra, sporting close-cropped brown hair with frosted highlights. With the overly-chipper air of a kindergarten teacher, she greeted the assembled crowd and launched into a speech about how they were here to help, they were going to have a meeting over there (indicating the pro-government cluster of huts), and they wanted to invite everyone on this side to come hear the proposal they brought about how to make the best use of the land. Turning pointedly to Anna and me, she said, “You observers can come too. That way you can have a more objective evaluation of whether any human rights are being violated.” Anna, sidestepping the provocation, simply replied, “If the folks here decide to go and they ask us to accompany them, we’ll do that. Otherwise, no.” We then stepped discreetly to the background, and Gregorio, who spoke the best Spanish, began to speak.

“We are not with the government,” he began. He pointed to the hand-lettered sign they had nailed to a tree at the riverbank that said, “Zapatista Army of National Liberation. Entry by government officials is prohibited.” He continued, “We are a Zapatista community. We are in resistance. We don’t want government people here.” Alejandra started to protest that she had only come to invite them to a meeting, and that it was about giving them land. Gregorio responded calmly, “We already know that the government’s word is pure lies. Look what happened to the people in Santa Cruz, you promised them aid for three years and it ended after three months.” Alejandra broke in again, “I recognize that some mistakes have been made. But I’m here to make sure the promises are kept. You can pick out the land you want—look, these

people have already chosen their land!” Gregorio continued patiently, “This is the same government that’s responsible for the massacre at Acteal in 1997—45 men, women and children massacred. The government also killed people from this community, on June 10, 1998 in the highlands. Why do they send soldiers from village to village to kill? Then they come with promises that are pure lies.” He switched back and forth from Spanish to Tzotzil for the benefit of the *priísta* escorts. Alejandra, visibly worked up but maintaining her forced smile, responded: “No, I agree, that wasn’t right. I have nothing to do with what the soldiers do, I disagree with it, in fact I have denounced it myself. But look, I just came to invite you to a meeting, so you can hear the proposal yourselves.” Gregorio, ever calm, replied without missing a beat, “If you want to invite us to a meeting you can present yourselves at Caracol No. 1, to the Zapatista Good Government Board, and see what response they give you. I’ll take you there myself right now if you want.” Alejandra, backpedaling quickly, said, “No, no, I already know where it is. Anyway, that’s all we came for. If you want to come, we’ll be meeting over there.” Like a movie star or politician, she said goodbye with a huge smile and a wave and whirled around to disappear with her entourage.

The community stood around the riverbank—which Anna and I had dubbed the convention center, because it was the only spot that offered a little shady relief from the steaming heat, and it was the congregating place for bathing, laundry and dish-washing. They chuckled that Alejandra was afraid to take her proposal to the Zapatista regional autonomous authorities. But there was an underlying sense that the stakes were rising, and the community would be even more isolated if their neighbors were spirited off to faraway lands. Gregorio pointed out that one

of the *priistas* who had accompanied Alejandra had lost a brother in the 1998 massacre, and he shook his head in disbelief that he could align himself with the government.

Despite the division, these were people they had grown up with, and they were still on speaking terms. The divisions had arisen initially when two teenage brothers on the other side began breaking the Zapatista ban on alcohol, and their aggressive drunkenness became a source of tension. The Zapatista communities enforce strict dry laws—a policy demanded by the women, concerned about both the waste of family resources and domestic violence. As in the U.S., the introduction of alcohol has contributed to the disintegration of indigenous communities. Yet the two halves of this village, perched precariously on the jungle riverbank, remained intertwined. They share a water hose which the once unified community had installed to bring fresh water from a mountain stream. When the part of the hose leading to this side was slashed in four places with machetes a few weeks ago, they went over to speak to the *priista* whom they believed responsible. After he denied responsibility, they went to speak to the nearby rancher. The rancher was by no means a Zapatista, but everyone knew the *priistas* had been stealing the rancher's bananas and yucca. That triangulation was enough to get the *priista* suspect to repair the hose, and life went on. Similarly, there was an established community on the other side of the river that was not Zapatista, but friends there had an agreement to alert each other if the army was coming. The *priista* side of San Benito received a gift of tennis shoes the day after the government's first visit, and news immediately reached the Zapatista side, where the reaction seemed to be more amusement than envy.

Anna and I decided that the frosty-haired Alejandra probably half believed her

paternalistic discourse of helping the poor Indians. Perhaps whatever doubts she registered were suppressed by ambitions of climbing within the ranks of the Secretariat of Agrarian Reform, perhaps to an air conditioned desk job which would not require her to paddle down muddy rivers from village to village.

Life in San Benito seems to move in slow motion, but every day brings new surprises. At dusk, parrots often swoop by in pairs, and the howler monkeys roar from a tree at the edge of the village clearing. One evening as we tended the fire, a large insect scurried up. We commented on what a strange-looking beetle it was, with big pincers, and look how his tail is rolled up—then we suddenly realized it was a scorpion, and grabbed a stick to kill it. (We would squash two more before our stay was up, and one small one got away.) There are butterflies with translucent wings, iguanas like little dinosaurs perched on tree branches, and the constant sound of crickets instead of motors. The people of San Benito smile at us as we walk along the paths to the river and the latrine (a hole in the ground used only by *kaxlanes*) and the clearing that serves as a soccer field, where there is usually an afternoon barefoot pick-up game. Sometimes the women bring us some boiled squash, or bean-filled tamales, or a precious egg. Gaggles of children come by to hang on us, chase the chickens, or draw pictures with the colored pencils Anna brought. Usually they draw plants and animals, which helps expand our limited Tzotzil vocabulary, but sometimes they draw motorboats and helicopters and tell us it is “the soldiers” or “SEMARNAP,” the Secretariat of Environment, Natural Resources and Protected Areas that is trying to evict them. One day little Gilberto toddles up with his friend Horacio, both towing pieces of dugout log fashioned into mini-*cayucos* which they pull by an attached vine, the only

toys we have seen in the village.

Five days after the first government visit, the SEMARNAP motorboat showed up again at 10:30 am on a Wednesday, ferrying in 20 government agents to the *priísta* side. This time the motorboat buzzed our shore and the government officials took video footage of the assembled Zapatista supporters, with a camera mounted on a tripod. Later in the day they were spotted on the perimeter of the Zapatista settlement taking more pictures. The normally bustling settlement fell silent as everyone stayed in their huts. Then the motorboat ferried the *priístas* back and forth across the river for a couple of hours, apparently to shop with their new loot. Around 4:00 pm the boat started shuttling the government people back across the river. A young woman recognized at least one of them, saying “That’s the doctor from the bad government!”

Anna and I mused about how long the people here would be able to hold out against the combination of bribes and threats. The Good Government Board was far away—66 pesos in roundtrip fare, to be exact, as one villager said when we asked him how far—and it wasn’t clear what concrete benefits or protection it was able to offer immediately. For the moment there was a kind of standoff: The “bad government” refused to deal with the Zapatista regional authorities in the Good Government Boards; but the loyal Zapatista support base saw no reason to deal individually with representatives of the “bad government” that regularly deceived and killed them. The government’s strategy for now seems to be to try to whittle away at the Zapatista support base, and periodically use military or preferably paramilitary force against isolated communities when international attention wanes and the political cost seems low. As the afternoon heat recedes in San Benito, the *priístas* ignite firecrackers to celebrate their sudden

good fortune, while the Zapatista side quietly goes about their business of soaking kernels of corn to grind for their daily tortillas.

The next morning, I raced to the river at the sound of the approaching motorboat, joining the small crowd of women and children already gathered to watch. The men had already gone out to the *milpas* to start their labors hours earlier, and it would take awhile to send some children running out to alert them. After about 20 minutes, Alejandra and five other government officials appeared, boarded the SEMARNAP launch, and sped back over to the *priista* side. This unaccustomed flurry of visits suggested that the anticipated relocation of the *priistas* might be imminent, especially since yesterday's delegation had included Marta Cecilia, a high-level agrarian reform official who seemed to be in charge of the recent campaign of evictions.

This latest group of government officials, which was just here yesterday, must have gone all the way back to spend the night in town in Comitán, 3-1/2 hours down the road. Apparently they didn't want to spend one night in the living conditions to which they had consigned millions of indigenous people. "La joyuch xi'ich," said one of the women on the riverbank—"They suck blood"—referring to the red streak left on her arm when she swatted a mosquito. An apt characterization of the government agents too, I thought.

Anna is still asleep in the hammock, sick with a stomach bug. Many of the children here have swollen bellies from intestinal parasites and/or malnutrition, and we've been trying to avoid sickness by purifying our water with tincture of iodine, but sanitation is hard to achieve amidst the ubiquitous mud and chickens and dogs and flies. When I returned from washing dishes in the river, Rosalina, a teenage girl who had seen Anna throwing up, had come over to help make the

Down by the Riverside

A contracorriente

fire for breakfast. Earlier in the pre-dawn hours, tiny Mario had struggled in with a shoulder-load of firewood as big as himself. He stopped to give me a big swat on the back as I lay in my hammock, jolting me out of my half-asleep state, then proudly showed me the squashed mosquito: “Xenen!” he exclaimed with a huge grin. Everyone here is so concerned about our wellbeing, it’s embarrassing in a community that has so little. Even the folks who don’t speak a word of Spanish come by to keep us company for a spell, sitting on logs or standing around for awhile before taking their leave with a smile and a friendly “Ta likelto,” See you later.

One evening we went to the prayer service, which consisted of about twenty people crammed into a tiny corn storage shed that doubled as a church. Inside it was dark and heavy with the aroma of corn, with a hammock tucked over a center beam. The altar was a small shelf with plastic figurines of Mary and Jesus. Above it was a fading cardboard picture of a very Spanish-looking monk kneeling and looking skyward, in front was a lit candle stuck in a sugarcane stalk, and underneath a ceramic dish with *copal*, the traditional Maya incense. The community catechist had a battered old guitar and opened with a song in Spanish, followed by a collective recitation of Our Fathers and Hail Marys in Spanish and Tzotzil. Then with the congregation kneeling in the dirt, he launched into a long and impassioned ad lib prayer in Tzotzil. We caught a few words in Spanish that apparently had no Tzotzil equivalent: “communities,” “enemy,” and “evict.” Then there was a closing song, the women filed out, and the men stayed for a meeting among themselves.

During several days of our stay, the main activity in the community was the construction of two new houses, a sign of their determination to stay put. Unlike the existing huts in the

Down by the Riverside

A contracorriente

village, these were being built with even-sized boards cut with a chain saw, and a roof of corrugated zinc instead of palm. Construction began with the felling of a tree for lumber, and to the chagrin of the builders, that event was filmed by Alejandra and her government crew who gathered at the border between the two halves of the divided village. Aware that the government would use this as evidence that they were destroying the forest, they hastened to assure us that they only cut the minimum necessary for their own house construction, never for commercial purposes. The construction was all by hand using pieces of string to measure, with no tools besides a hammer and nails.

Two days before our departure, Alejandra and her crew showed up again, this time with a truckload of goodies for the *priístas* which they unloaded at the far riverbank. The SEMARNAP motorboat ferried across 32 large sacks, apparently of corn, along with 2 cardboard cartons, 2 small plastic sacks, and a large roll of plastic sheeting for temporary roofing. With disdain, the villagers on this side told us the *priístas* had sold all of their last corn harvest and were now living on government handouts, sitting around all day without going to their *milpas*. It seemed particularly ironic that the government would be giving away corn to Mayan peoples, whom the gods had made out of corn, the people who had been planting corn here for a thousand years before the first Spanish ancestor of today's government officials arrived on these shores. Breaking their ties to the land and creating new dependencies all fit into the larger scheme: eliminating inconvenient people and ways of life that are not part of the global corporate machine.

Sunday is our last day in San Benito, and I wander over to the corn shed for 6:00 am

church service. Only the men are there, kneeling barefoot on the dirt floor, praying to Totik (which is also the word for the sun, and for father). There are songs, and Our Fathers and Hail Marys, and reading of three biblical passages in Spanish and Tzotzil. The catechist gives a sermon after each reading, then there is a discussion of how the passage relates to their lives. This time Gregorio translates one of the sermons for my benefit, and it went something like this: Those who have faith have to follow the one correct path, of truth and justice. The government has tanks and airplanes, but we have conviction. Just as Moses led his people through the Red Sea and their enemies were eliminated, we might have to cross the Lacantún River, and our enemies will disappear. Alejandra comes with gifts of corn, but it's like when a child cries for milk and you give him a pacifier, it shuts him up for awhile but it doesn't fill his belly. We won't be bought or silenced, we need land to work, not handouts. That's what the word of God is saying here, he concluded.

The night before, we were invited to a housewarming party of sorts. Fabio, an older man of few words who was going to live in the first of the two new houses, stopped by when Anna and I were sitting on a plank behind our hut, a shady refuge from the blazing afternoon sun. "We're going to eat corn on the cob," he said in his best Spanish. "In the new house. And sing songs. We'll sing the Zapatista hymn. Come." And so it was, a pleasant evening of song and slapping mosquitoes, until the evening rains came.

After church, we have a late breakfast, then bring the leftovers to feed to the newest puppies in San Benito. The owner built a little thatch doghouse to shelter the pups from the sun, but dogs are on their own for food here, and only the crazy *kaxlanes* bring them food. Gregorio

Down by the Riverside

A contracorriente

sees us and invites us to come sit with him and his family awhile. We chat about the possible impending eviction. They'll burn down our houses and steal our animals, he says quietly. He tells us stories of the army coming into villages in the highland region he came from, raping the women and shooting indiscriminately, killing friends of his. He recounts the events in a matter-of-fact tone, but there is a far-off look in his eye. His eight children swing in the hammock and frolic in the dirt. His wife, who speaks no Spanish, hands him the infant so she can go inside and check on the fire. Gregorio asks us if we have heard of ways to not have any more children. We mention some methods and suggest that they might ask the health coordinator of the Good Government Board to give some instruction to a designated health promoter from the village. We talk about other local health issues, like the bite of the *mosca chiclera*, the fly that transmits the *colmoyote* worm. They would like to have more health resources, and eventually a teacher as well, he tells us, but for now security is the top concern.

Our two week stay comes to an end and we make the day-long trip back to San Cristóbal, tired but energized, and file our report with the human rights center. That evening we go see a two-part documentary about the Zapatista movement made by *La Jornada*, an independent left newspaper that has carried the only serious coverage of Chiapas in the Mexican media. In one scene, the Zapatista representatives are commenting during a break in the peace talks, which later collapsed when the government reneged on implementing the San Andrés accords on indigenous rights and culture that they signed in 1996. The ski-masked rebel says the government told them, "We've spent the last few months studying your demands, but we're not sure what you mean by 'dignity.'" We think it means something like helping you out, we want you to explain to us what

this term ‘dignity’ means.” Laughing, the Zapatista continued, “We told them to go back and study some more.”

A *Contra* corriente

A Journal on Social History and
Literature in Latin America

© 2003 A Contracorriente

Una revista de historia social
y literatura de América Latina