

# Conceptual features of the ethno-political conflict in Chiapas within the framework of the modern globalism

Barsukova D. (Russian Federation)

## Концептуальные черты этнополитического конфликта в Чьяпасе в условиях современного глобализма

Барсукова Д. А. (Российская Федерация)

*Барсукова Дарья Андреевна / Barsukova Daria – студент,  
факультет международных отношений,  
Санкт-Петербургский государственный университет, г. Санкт-Петербург*

**Abstract:** *leftist ideas, having lost a significant share of its popularity around the world by the end of the last century, gave way to the formation of a new embodiment of social protest in the face of increasing globalization. This article deals with this alternative for Mexico — a relatively new and unique ideology of alter-globalism with a new configuration of the guerrilla struggle, which together constitute the phenomenon Zapatista Army of National Liberation.*

**Аннотация:** *левые идеи, растеряв существенную долю своей популярности по всему миру к концу прошлого столетия, уступили дорогу формированию новым воплощениям общественного протеста. В статье дан анализ такой альтернативы для Мексики — относительно новая идеология альтерглобализма и уникальная конфигурация партизанской борьбы, составляющие вместе феномен Сапатитской армии национального освобождения.*

**Keywords:** *Zapatista army of national liberation, Mexico, alter-globalism.*

**Ключевые слова:** *Сапатитская армия национального освобождения, Мексика, альтерглобализм.*

The so-called Zapatista Army of National Liberation (EZLN) came in 1994 in the south of the country as a result of complex reasons: the dependence of Mexico from the IMF, imposed neo-liberal reforms, large-scale economic and banking crises of 1994-1995, the monopoly in the political structures, ethnocracy, failures in social protection and infringement of the interests of the population of Chiapas Indians. However, the conflict between landowners and peasants about the monopoly over land has been known since the beginning of the XX century [1]. Factors such as fatigue from paternalism and authoritarianism of the local authorities have also contributed to the mobilization of the masses and increased solidarity within the group [2].

The Zapatista Army of National Liberation protest party was named in honor of the civil rights defender of the Mexican Revolution (which broke out because of the agrarian and the Indian population inequality problems) Emiliano Zapata. EZLN possesses elements of an army (although military operations are excluded in areas with civilian population and against non-governmental forces), political parties and public organizations, but cannot be called any of these forms in pure form. The movement has no leadership hierarchy, having five councils whose membership changes every two weeks, with a view to the widespread involvement of local governance [3]. The organization, thus, is only a means of pressure on the political elite and the mobilizing power of the population.

Zapatista leader until recently was Subcomandante Marcos [4], who has managed to combine the literary talent, talent to analyze existing political ideologies and concepts, to develop his own policy initiatives, as well as to support relations with the media, and to use emerging Internet capabilities [5].

The Zapatistas, in contrast to the radical left movements, do not seek to obtain the fullness of the federal government through guerrilla warfare, and are interested in implementing their own programs through direct dialogue with the government and with civil society. The EZLN's methods to combat can be traced with a certain evolution — from the attempts of armed uprisings in the early stages to a peaceful mass struggle and forms of civil resistance. These forms include demonstrations, peaceful campaigns (e. g. «*Marcha del Color de la Tierra*» at Mexico City in 2001), protests, propaganda in the media, negotiating. For example, the success of Internet-activity allowed to organize a half a million rally in support of the cessation of government anti-zapatista military campaign, and was later called the «zapatista effect» [6]. From the side of the government was also marked some unsuccessful attempts at setting up indigenous population against each other through the distribution of «assistance» to those who would be able to undermine the struggle against EZLN [7].

Considering the conflict in the context of macro-level, such factors as critical assessment of the current form of globalization, the pacifist nature of protest, proposal of the specific conditions of the social order change («globalism from below», as opposed to economic globalization), as well as the reliance on civil initiative, cause

sympathy on the part of those who disagree with the existing model of the public development. Some researchers suggest that the EZLN has directly inspired such large movements like *Occupy Wall Street* in 2011, *Indignados* in Spain (the conflict was covered by major European media like *El País* [3]) and the Greek *Direct Democracy Now!*, as well as events in Seattle, 1999, that disrupted the meeting of the WTO [8].

Through the emphasis on heterogeneous demographic nature of the Latin American region, the use of peaceful means of struggle, which are correlated with the traditional Indian ethics, as well as the universality of the Zapatista problems allowed the EZLN to become a phenomenon of its time. The presence of constrictive elements makes it possible to predict the long-term prospects of the protest. The twentieth anniversary of the existence of the movement proves not only its worth, but also the unresolved key socio-economic problems of the region.

### *References*

1. *Perez M. A.* Notas sobre religion y conflicto en Chiapas // *Indiana*. 2005. № 22. P. 220.
2. *Parra M. A.* Sociedad civil, movimiento zapatista y conflicto en Chiapas. Informe final del concurso: Fragmentación social y crisis política e institucional en América Latina y el Caribe. Programa Regional de Becas CLACSO, 2002. P. 8. [Electronic resource]: URL: <http://biblioteca.clacso.edu.ar/clacso/becas/20110119021114/parra.pdf> (date of access: 16 April 2016).
3. *Tucker D.* Are Mexico's Zapatista rebels still relevant? // *Aljazeera*, 2014. [Electronic resource]: URL: <http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/features/2014/01/are-mexico-zapatista-rebels-still-relevant-20141183731812643.html> (date of access: 15 April 2016).
4. *De la Grande B., Rico M.* Entrevista con Salvador Morales Garibay. El otro subcomandante // *Letras Libres*. 1999. № 2. P. 76.
5. *Henck N.* Subcommander Marcos: The Man and the Mask. Durham: Duke University Press, 2007. P. 31-32.
6. *Cleaver H.* The Zapatista Effect: The Internet and the rise of an alternative political fabric // *Aufheben*, 2005. [Electronic resource]: URL: <https://libcom.org/library/zapatista-effect-cleaver> (date of access: 21 April 2016).
7. *Graham L.* Zapatistas mourn a death and begin new cycle of building indigenous autonomy // *Americas Program*, 2014. [Electronic resource]: URL: <http://www.cipamericas.org/archives/12372> (date of access: 20.04.2016).
8. *Cham G. G.* La rebelión zapatista en el diario El País: análisis del discurso: de enero a febrero de 1994. Guadalajara: UDG, 2004. P. 14-16.