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**PLACE, SPACE AND THE REINVENTION
OF SOCIAL EMANCIPATION ON A GLOBAL SCALE:
SECOND THOUGHTS ON THE THIRD
WORLD SOCIAL FORUM**

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ABSTRACT

If the first World Social Forum, in Porto Alegre, 2001, was mostly marked by protest against the World Economic Forum taking place at the same time, and the second, in 2002, by attempts to specify the meaning of 'Another World is Possible!', the third, in January 2003, was marked by a questioning of the extent to which the Forum——now an increasingly globalised phenomenon—was itself practising what it preaches to others. This paper considers WSF3 in terms of: 1) the danger of going forward to the past of social movements and internationalism; 2) the problematic relationship with the 'old' trade unions; 3) the uneven age, gender, ethnic, etc. composition of the Forum; 4) the uncertain future of a proposed global social movement network; 5) the necessity of a communications/media/cultural internationalism; 6) the possibility of an academy of global empowerment. The conclusion is that the 'secret of fire' of radical-democratic and internationalist social movements is now a public one, thus offering some guarantee of a continuation and deepening of the Forum process.

CONTENTS

If we agree that the most important characteristic of the Forum is the 'open space' it offers for free exchange, then especially at the present juncture in history, the World Social Forum needs to make it its task to promote the idea of open space as a general political culture in civil and political work. Building open space – building an open political culture, and defending open space – needs to be seen as a project in itself, and those who believe in this idea need to come and work together on this…Given that the World Social Forum is meant to be an open plural process, embracing people of many different persuasions, we need to work to build an organisational process that is based on norms and principles that are openly and commonly defined, and not on gentlemanly or comradely behaviour between a few and that cannot be questioned by others (Sen 2003a).

The WSF's utopia concerns emancipatory democracy. In its broadest sense, emancipatory democracy is the whole process of changing power relations into relations of shared authority. Since the power relations against which the WSF resists are multiple, the processes of radical democratisation in which the WSF is involved are likewise multiple. In brief, the WSF is a large collective process for deepening democracy. Since this is the WSF's utopian distinction, it is no wonder that the issue of internal democracy has become more and more pressing. In fact, the WSF's credibility in its struggle for democracy in society depends on the credibility of its internal democracy (Santos 2003a).

A transversal politics of location and connection demands explicit attention to concrete mechanisms that enable open dialogue, such as limiting speaking times, allowing each to speak in turn, and facilitating intensive one-to-one conversations. On a transnational level, it also requires efforts to take on board linguistic diversity. Possible measures here include communicating in more than one language, non-verbally and through translators. Furthermore, open dialogue also requires efforts to tackle the power relations between participants that structure access to dialogue and shape its outcomes. Applied to transnational politics, this necessitates that political actors make proactive efforts to redress the iniquitous geopolitical distribution of economic, social and technological resources. Thus the locations of meetings and organisations should be made accessible to…and funds targeted to enable the poorest to participate in agenda-settting […] Finally, the movement praxis delineated here offers an alternative to both reformist complacency and the revolutionary model of change, one that aspires to transform social and political structures through complex processes of societal self-organisation (Eschle 2002: 33.0-31).

What we want is the full development of cyberspatial practices… We want social movements and social actors to build on this logic in order to create unheard of forms of collective intelligence – subaltern "intelligent communities" capable of re-imagining the world and inventing alternative process of world-making…The result could be a type of world-scale networking based on internationalist principles (a Fifth International? The Cyberspatial International)[…] What we want is the world's Left to take this model seriously in their organising, resistance and creative practices. The lessons for the Left are clear! In the long run, this amounts to reinventing the nature and dynamics of social emancipation (Escobar 2003).

1   INTRODUCTION

The World Social Forum (WSF), taking place annually in Brazil since 2001, is one of the most remarkable expressions of the more general Global Justice and Solidarity Movement (GJ&SM). Attendance has risen from some 10,000 in the first year to 100,000 in 2003. And even if an overwhelming percentage of participants in 2003 came from Brazil itself, some 17,000 attended from abroad. And even if the largest percentage of foreign participants have come from Latin America and Western Europe, this year also saw increasing numbers from North America, and significant, if limited, participation from Africa (mostly South) and Asia (mostly India). Even if, finally, the majority of participants are university-educated, significant movements of workers and the unemployed, of the landless and of indigenous peoples have—along with their particular concerns—been present. As satellites circulating around the Forum itself, there have also been forums of educators, of parliamentarians, of municipalities and of others—all committed to the condemnation of neo-liberal globalisation and to the slogan 'Another World is Possible!'. And, whereas such international protest events, seminars and celebrations customarily take place in the North, this one has been firmly placed in the South. (Sousa Santos 2003a).

If the first WSF, in Porto Alegre, 2001, was mostly marked by protest against the World Economic Forum taking place at the same time, and the second, in 2002, by attempts to specify the meaning of 'Another World is Possible!' (Waterman 2003a), the third, in January 2003, was marked by a questioning of the extent to which the Forum—now an increasingly globalised phenomenon—is itself practising what it preaches to others. This paper therefore considers WSF3 in terms of: 1) the danger of going forward to the past of social movements and internationalism; 2) the problematic relationship with the 'old' trade unions; 3) the uneven age, gender, ethnic, etc, composition of the Forum; 4) the uncertain future of a proposed global social movement network; 5) the necessity of a communications/media/cultural internationalism; 6) the possibility of an academy of global empowerment.[1] The

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[1] This is an edited version of Waterman 2003b, which is almost twice as long, reveals intellectual debts and includes a more-extensive bibliography. Stimulus for the production of a tauter version was provided by Edward Fullbrook, of the *Post-Neo-Liberal Review*. A reader for the ISS Working Paper Series, additionally suggested that the surgical removal of the 'tongue in cheek, cynical/optimistic self' from the draft paper would allow the arguments to come through better. I hope that the paper has been improved as a result, though without total disappearance of the cynical/optimistic self. (Responsibility for this disposition, however, rests surely with Gramsci, though he called it 'scepticism of the intellect; optimism of the will'). Acknowledgements, as always, to Gina Vargas, in Lima, my favourite interlocutor.

conclusion is that the 'secret of fire' of radical-democratic and internationalist social movements is now a public one, thus offering some guarantee of a continuation and deepening of the Forum process.

2   THE FUTURE OF THE MOVEMENTS AND INTERNATIONALISM: FORWARD TO THE PAST?

At the centre of initiative and decision-making within the World Social Forum has been the Brazilian national Organising Committee (henceforth 'Committee') and the International Council it created (henceforth 'Council'). These are not subject to the principles of participatory or even representative democracy. The committee members may or may not be accountable, in various political or financial ways, to their respective communities (mass organisations, non-governmental organisations, funding agencies) and the same is largely true of the Council, the role of which seems to have been to give international legitimacy to the Committee, whilst having a quite ambiguous relationship to it. The historical justification for the existence of both has been the quite remarkable vessel they have launched—an international and internationalist encounter, outside the immediate spheres of capital and state, targeted against neo-liberalism and capitalist globalisation, increasingly concerned with proposing radical-democratic alternatives to such. And this all on the understanding that the place, space and form is the guarantee for the necessary democratic dialogue of countries and cultures, of ideologies, of political levels, collective subjects and movements /organisations. In so far as *re*-presentation is today as important, or even more important, than *representation* (a problematic quality within both liberal democracies and, for example, labour movements), the forms and contents of a a new counter-hegemony have been at least sketched out by the committees of the Forum and on a global scale.[2]

This space has, however, never been a neutral or innocent one. (Like death and taxes, money and power are always with us, and the failure to confront these openly suggests either occupational blindness or bad faith). This space has not been as far

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[2] Since this piece was first drafted, Boaventura de Sousa Santos (2003b) has produced an original analysis and theorisation of the Forum. He gives considerable importance to the 'self-democratisation' of the Forum – that aspect of the process on which this paper concentrates.

beyond the old politics and parties and parliaments as it might like to claim (Sen 2003b, Teivainen 2003).

The Committee consists of a number of representatives of social-movement and non-governmental organisations (NGOs), the latter of which might address social movements and civil society but be answerable only to themselves. (It consists of two Brazilian movement organisations, six NGOs, of seven men, and only one woman.) These bodies have been oriented toward, or circulate around, the *Partido dos Trabalhadores* (PT, Workers' Party), and/or its recently-successful presidential candidate, Lula da Silva. Just as the Porto Alegre Forums have been places where this (and other Brazilian parties) could influence events and publicise themselves, so was the European Social Forum, Florence, November 2002, one in which the *Rifondazione Communista* (and other Italian political parties) did. Such parties, and far-less-sophisticated and interesting others, have often hidden their political lights behind NGO bushels. The WSF has been a site to which various inter-state agencies, such as those of United Nations, have access or upon which they exercise influence. State-dependent funding agencies, national and international, and the massive private-capitalist US foundations, have supported the Forum itself, or various, selected, inter/national NGOs influential within it.

The Council was created top-down by invitation of the Committee (of 90-100 members, mostly NGOs and inter/national unions, only 8-10 are women's networks). This gargantuan assembly has no clear mandate or power, therefore acting for the committee largely as a sounding board and international legitimator. The nature and representativity of the members, and the extent to which they are answerable to any but themselves, remains obscure. Many of them do little other work in the Council than turning up and then fighting for their corner—such as the maximum number of representatives within the Central part of Forum programmes in the hands of the Committee or Council. The Council does not operate behind closed doors, but its proceedings are barely reported by its members to even the interested public. There has, recently, been formal discussion about the role and rules of the Council, consequent on an intended shift of weight from the Brazilian Committee to the international Council. But whilst part of this discussion (actually more like an interesting experiment in online *consultation*, for which see http://www.delibera.info/fsm2003ci/GB/) is posted on a publicly-accessible website, the existence of this is known to few. Moreover, only a tiny fraction of Council members have taken part in this consultation, again suggesting

that their motivation for membership has more to do with a search for recognition and influence than with the advance of this—admittedly novel and complex—project as a whole. The centre, however, is not a monolith. On the contrary, it is itself in movement, under its own momentum, as indicated by post-Forum web updates (http://www.forumsocial mundial.org.br/home.asp) and reports of a post-Forum evaluation that was clearly addressing some of the criticism that had been publicly signalled (Vargas 2003). At the very least, however, it has signally failed to *communicate itself* to even an interested public. This is a matter to be returned to below.

The Porto Alegre Forum is an agora in which there are a few large, well-publicised and well-placed circus tents, surrounded by a myriad of differently-sized others (now around 1,700, implying some 3-400 events per *day*), proposed by social movements, international agencies, political organisations, academic institutions and even individuals. The Suburban/Peripheral events compete for visibility, for sites, for translators/equipment, often overlap with or even *reproduce* each other, and—whilst certainly adding to the pluralism of the Forum—have an inevitably minor impact. Whilst, again, the decision that the Forum is not a policy-forming body allows for pluralism and creativity, the result is, inevitably, domination by the Central programme—one which has been conceived without notable discussion beyond the governing committees. The concentration of power at the Centre is reinforced by the presence of our very own celebs—who themselves may have to choose between appearance in a hall seating thousands, or in a classroom seating 25 (one is aware of celebrities intending to take the second option, but the compass here clearly swings to the North Pole). Indeed, even the major Central 'themes' (sets of panels on specific problem areas), were somewhat marginalised this year, either by being placed away from the central university site, or simply by the attention focused on the celebrity events, the rallies and demonstrations.

This formula is out of control in different ways. FSM3, 2003, with maybe 83,000 Brazilian and 17,000 foreign participants, was too big for the hosts to handle: a number of experienced local organisers had apparently been recruited away to Brasilia by the new government, and the original PT local-government sponsors had lost influence in both the city and the state. Unlike last year, the programme was never published completely in either English or Portuguese. A well-organised North American left, internationalist, and pro-feminist group, *invited* to run a five-day

programme on 'Life after Capitalism', found itself without publicity, and then geographically marginalised in a recreational club unmarked on the Forum maps, unknown to the information booths, and a taxi-ride away from the main site (www.zmag.org/lac.htm). The Brazilian feminist tent, a major focus of attention at WSF2, had been moved to some anonymous site elsewhere in the city. Other radical groups, which consider themselves initiators of the GJ&SM more generally, likewise complained of marginalisation (check websites and lists in References below).

The Forum is also out of control in the sense that it is moving beyond the reach of the Centre, with regional, national, local and problem-specific forums mushrooming worldwide. Here the Committee/Council can give guidance and blessing (and even hypothetically withhold such) but little more. The Forum may slip out of the hands of the original inter/national NGO elite (I use this term loosely) as it is challenged by those who are demanding that its decision-making bodies consist of *regional/national* representatives (or elites?).

The Forum is in danger of losing its *social* profile, as major politicians and governments recognise the importance of this agora, and turn up invited (President Lula da Silva) or uninvited (President Hugo Chavez). It was hardly imaginable that a Brazilian-based and PT-oriented Forum would fail to invite Lula—or wish him well on his way to Davos. But even well-wishers might have been alarmed by such newspaper headlines as 'Lula is Applauded in Davos and Starts the Dialogue between Porto Alegre and Davos', and 'IMF Approves Financial Discipline of Lula Government'. This is not speak of Lula's conciliatory Davos speech itself.

The Forum's place as a focus for what I would call the 'new global solidarity' is being put in question by those who seek to give it not only a national but a national*ist* character. This is evidenced in the Indian case. Here a declaration of the Asian Social Forum (ASF), dominated by a major Indian Communist Party, attacked *imperialist* wars in Asia but forgot about the *nationalist* Indo-Pakistani conflict—in which nuclear threats were being issued by two opposed chauvinist regimes—both enjoying US imperial military cooperation! An informative report on the ASF, in India's left-leaning *Economic and Political Weekly* (Jain 2003), proposed that strong nation-states, and alliances of such, were the necessary answer to globalisation, this traditional—not to say archaic—notion being reinforced by an editorial sub-head that turned the writer's proposal into an ASF-WSF *conclusion*! An impressively open WSF3 event on WSF4 in India suggested that certain party-aligned leaders of recent Forums in India have

learned to 'talk the talk', but scepticism is in order about whether they can also 'walk the walk'.

Given all these problems, there *is* a danger that the Forum will be overwhelmed by the past of social movements and internationalism. This was one in which, remember, such movements were dominated by the institutions they spawned, by political parties that instrumentalised them, in which the movements were state-oriented and/or state-identified, and in which internationalism was literally that—a relationship between nations, nationals, nationalisms, nationalists. Proletarian solidarity turned into military aid to approved regimes. West-Rest solidarity came to be dominated by one-way, state-funded, 'development cooperation' (in areas, on problems, with funding, and to 'partners' determined by the North-Western one). And in which Rest-Rest solidarity could be reduced, for example, to slogans of solidarity with the revolutionary movement in El Salvador, in a tribal village of India, where any sign of solidarity with other tribals, or tribals in the neighbouring Indian state, were absent.

3 THE UNION–FORUM RELATIONSHIP: MOVABLE OBJECTS AND RESISTIBLE FORCES

WSF3 saw a growth and deepening of the relationship between the traditional international union institutions (TIUIs) and the Forum. There are already about a dozen inter/national unions on the IC, most of which are anti-*neo-liberal* but not *anti-capitalist*, and many of which are, due to globalisation, in considerable crisis. There is no evidence that they have tried to act as a bloc. With one or two exceptions, they may have been primarily concerned with finding out what kind of exotic animal this was.

The increasing interest of this major traditional movement in the Forum was demonstrated by the presence, for the first time, of the General Secretary of the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU). But top officers of Global Union Federations (GUFs, formerly International Trade Secretariats) were also present, either prominently on platforms or quietly testing the water. Present, further, were inter/national union organisations/networks from beyond the ICFTU 'family' (now formalised as Global Unions). This year there were, in addition to the radical union networks from France or Italy, an independent left union confederation from the Philippines, two left mineworker activists from India, and, no doubt, hundreds of

movement-oriented unionists from other countries. I noted also an increasing openness amongst even the most traditional of TIUIs. Whilst the first big union event was a formal panel with only gestures in the direction of discussion (here, admittedly, only reproducing a problematic Forum formula), another major panel saw the platform shared between the Global Unions, independent left unions and articulate leaders of social movements or NGOs identified with the Forum process. The unions, moreover, seem increasingly prepared to recognise that they *are* institutions and that it is *they* that need to come to terms with a place and process that, whilst lacking in formal representativity and often inchoate, nevertheless has the appeal, dynamism, public reach and mobilizing capacity, that they themselves lack but need.[3]

The question, however, remains of *what kind of* relationship is developing here. From the first big union event, patronised by the charismatic Director of the International Labour Organisation, veteran Chilean socialist, Juan Somavia, I got the impression that what was shaping up was some kind of understanding or alliance between 1) the Unions, 2) the Social Forum and 3) Progressive States/men. The latter were here evidently represented by the unconditionally-praised PT Government and President Lula. Somavia, who had just met Lula officially in Brasilia, made explicit comparison between the ILO's new programme/slogan of 'Decent Work' and Lula's election slogan 'For a Decent Brazil'. In so far as the TIUIs appear to have adopted 'Decent Work'—hook, line and two smoking barrels—what is here surely suggested is a global neo-keynesianism, in which the unions and their ILO/WSF friends would recreate the post-1945 Social Partnership model (or ideology), but now on a global scale—and with the aid of friendly governments! The model seems to me problematic in numerous ways. The main one, surely, is whether the role of the WSF, or the more general Global Justice and Solidarity Movement is going to be limited to reflecting (upon) a project aimed at making capitalist globalisation 'decent', or whether there will also be space here for labour movement projects that might be simultaneously more *utopian* (post-capitalist) and, under present conditions, more *attractive* (making work-for-capital an ethical issue, treating 'non-workers' as equals of wage- earners,

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[3] I did not attend all major union events at WSF3. And, notably, I missed a session on relations between old and new social movements, within which unions were represented and union-movement relations discussed. This was, fortunately, attended by Nikhil Anand (2003), who sets this matter within a discussion of social movement theory, and who develops a conceptual approach of considerable originality and purchase.

addressing the closely inter-related civil-social issues such as useful production, sustainable consumption). There surely needs to be a discussion about the political, theoretical and ethical bases of the two labour utopianisms, one within and the other beyond (Waterman 2003c) the parameters of capitalism.

When an old institution meets a new movement, 'somethin's gotta give'. Thus has the trade-union movement been periodically transformed since 1800. Bearing in mind that decision-makers of both the TIUIs and the WSF could have quite instrumental reasons for relating to each other, one cannot be certain that the openness within the Forums will guarantee that the principles at stake will be continually and publicly raised. Which of the two international leaderships, for example, is going to even *mention* the extent to which the other is dependent on (inter)state subsidies, direct or indirect—something which others might consider a significant problem?

4   COMBINED AND UNEVEN DEVELOPMENT: GENDER, ETHNICITY, CLASS AND AGE

I was somewhat alarmed, in the hotels, on the panels, at the receptions and in the news coverage, by the number of people who looked like me: white, male, middle-aged and, evidently, middle-class. I suspect the bias applies to the decision-making committees. This does not, of course, mean that women, Africans, Indians, indigenous peoples, workers or the under-30s are *excluded* from these. But the youth were under canvas in the Youth Camp or in private 'solidarity accomodation', the international peasant movement, Via Campesina, had its own forum before the event, the Argentinean *piqueteros* were in the streets (sleeping who knows where?), and the women's movements were less visible than they had been at WSF2 (though this may have been an effect of the decentralisation and dispersal at WSF3).[4]

Amilcar Cabral, assassinated leader of anti-Portuguese struggle in colonial Africa, once suggested that after independence there would (or should) occur the 'suicide of the petty-bourgeoisie'. As the more-sceptical Frantz Fanon argued at the same time, however, the post-colonial elites were going to do everything they could to retain and increase their privileges. There are striking power/wealth differences

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[4] Via Campesina, and other such international solidarity movements and activities of the rural poor, suggest the promising reappearance of these on the international stage. For some relevant resources, see Waterman (2003d).

between Forum participants, particularly visible, predictably, in the case of the South. In two or three Latin American cases, the poorer participants travelled by bus—this sometimes meaning a 4-5 day journey, with entry obstacles at various border-crossings. There is no reason to assume that the existent Forum elites are suicidal, or even that they going to abandon the luxury hotels, without irresistible pressure from outside or below. In so far, on the other hand, as the WSF has declared certain principles relating to liberty, equality, solidarity, horizontality and pluralism, it might be possible to confront them (us) with the necessity of re-balancing the power equation. The elites could then put their efforts, in their home states/constituencies, into facilitating rather than dominating or controlling the Forum process.

The experience of women and feminists within the Forum might point here in different directions. Women have always been around 50 percent of the participants. There are powerful feminists and feminist networks on the panels and in at least the IC, quite capable here of making the Forum a Feminist Issue (Lagunes 2003). As, also, of making a feminist contribution to, and impact within and beyond, the Centralprogramme. There were regional and cross-regional meetings of feminists at Porto Alegre, an important one being concerned with planning for the next WSF. There were numerous panels on gender and sexuality in both the central and more marginal programmes.[5]

Feminists and feminisms at the Forum are, however, confronted with devising a strategy that combines working within decision-making bodies, making their presence felt within the Forum itself, and addressing a feminist and general public beyond the Forums. There remains, it seems to me, the problem of publicly confronting the decision making bodies (the shortcomings of which, with respect to women's representation, have been indicated above). Whereas leading figures might declare good intentions with respect to women and feminism within the Forum, the step from talking to walking has still to be taken here also.

It occurs to me that the power/presence imbalances within the Forum might be corrected by two measures. One would be quotas for under-represented categories. The

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[5] In common Forum parlance, there is a 'self-managed' part of the activities but no name for that which one would conventionally call 'official'. I am using in this paper such words as 'central', 'marginal', 'peripheral' and even 'suburban' to suggest the differential *power or weight* of events or people within WSF events. One further qualification: whilst there are in my understanding only one, or two, central instances, there are multiple peripheries (e.g. inter-governmental, religious/spiritualist, autonomist, liberal-democratic, anarchist, left vanguardist).

other would be a Forum programme structured according to collective subjects as well as major problems. Thus one could have major panels/programmes on labour, women, youth, indigenous peoples—even the aged (I hope to become such myself one day). At present, for example, labour may be represented in a series of union-sponsored or union-approved events, some within and some beyond the core programme. But this implies a dispersal of attention and impact where there should, surely, be concentration.[6] Alternatively, or additionally, imbalances can, could and should be corrected by autonomous forums. Or what about a re-invention, in the light of the WSF, of the World Youth Festivals, of Communist origin?

5   A SOCIAL MOVEMENT NETWORK: DE/CENTRALISED?

At two previous Forums there has been issued a 'Call of Social Movements'. The initiative for such has come from members of the Committee and Council, some of these being recognisable social movement organisations, others being recognisable NGOs. Both Calls have been publicly presented and then signed by 50-100 other organisations and networks. This year, the notion of a 'Social Movements World Network' (SMWN) was widely circulated on the web and subject to a two-session public discussion within the Forum. This eventually produced a declaration, proposing a continuation of discussion about the nature of such a network, with further meetings to take place during major movement events this year (Social Movements World Network 2003).

The Call—like other Forum bodies and initiatives—is surrounded by a certain amount of mystery. Given overlapping memberships, are we to understand the Call as a device for going beyond the Forum's self-limitation on making specific political declarations, taking specific political action? How come the *Secretariat* of the Call, in Sao Paulo, only came to this interested observer's attention 11 months after its creation? Why did it take seven or eight months for the signators of Call 2 to be identified (at least in an obscure corner of a website), when those of Call 1 were

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[6] Fisher and Ponniah (2002), which ignores all but the Central programme of WSF2, has but two contributions on the union movement as such, and the single one on feminism does not address the international/global at all!

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published instantaneously?[7] Doesn't discussion at specific events in specific continents automatically exclude from discussion those who can't afford to fly there? What, for the purposes of this new initiative, *is* a social movement? (Can it be a state-funded or foundation-funded NGO? Can it be a group of academics and, if so, how many makes such a

group? And: which trade unions qualify as social movements?) There is, here again, a serious lack of communication, which implies a concentration of crucial information amongst a limited circle.[8]

Some autonomists or libertarians see in the Call a conspiracy to centralise and control social movements internationally. But I am myself favourable to the creation of such a network. In part this is because there exists no such internationally. In part because it is going to provide information and ideas on a continuing basis—and to many people/places otherwise excluded from the periodic Forums. In so far as this will have an existence in 'real virtuality' (Manuel Castells), it may go beyond a WSF that remains largely earth-bound and institutional. The very experiment is going to be important for progress in this area. It is bound to provoke challenge. Apart from the issues raised above, certain crucial others remain—about which I may only have yet other questions.

Is the network going to be primarily political/institutional or primarily communicational? In the first case, communication is likely to be made functional to the political/institutional. In the second case, we may be into a different ballgame—or ballpark. In the first case, there is likely to operate a 'banking' model of communication, in which information is collected, sorted and classified, to be then dealt out to customers/clients in terms of power, influence or profit, as determined by the information-bank managers. In the second case, there can operate the principle of

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[7] Rumour thrives where transparency lacks. The rumour here is that one of the signatory organisations of Call2 was associated with the militarist ETA movement in the Basque Country of Spain. And that PT-supporters with influence had decided that any such tenuous association with an armed insurrectionary movement might damage the chances of Lula in the coming presidential elections!

[8] Influential amongst those promoting the Call are members or supporters of the Trotskyist Fourth International, associated with the name of Ernest Mandel. The most prominent here would probably be Christophe Aguiton (2002). A highly-talented activist within—and commentator on—the GJ&SM, Aguiton is also a leader of ATTAC (the 'Tobin Tax' network). Whilst the Fourth International lacks the sectarian characteristics of the much-criticised Socialist Workers Party/Global Resistance in the UK, it surely deserves as much attention as other political parties active and influential within the Forum.

the potlatch, or gift economy, in which individual generosity is taken to benefit the community, with most respect going to the greatest giver.

Even in the best of all possible cyberworlds, however, there remain questions of appropriate *modes* (information, ideas, dialogue), of *form* (printed word at one end, multimedia at the other) and *control* (handling cybernuts and our own homegrown fundamentalists). There do exist various relevant models of international social-movement, civil society, anti-globalisation networks—earth-bound or cyberspatial. Indy Media Centre (IMC) has got to be the most important here, and needs to be publicly reflected upon both for what it does well and what it doesn't (dialogue?). Finally, any Social Movements World Network is going to have to go beyond network-babble and recognise that even networks do not exist on one, emancipatory, model. In discussing the issue, Arturo Escobar (2003) has said that

> It is possible to distinguish between two general types: more or less rigid hierar-chies, and flexible, non-hierarchical, decentralised and self-organising meshworks … Hierarchies entail a degree of centralised control, ranks, overt planning, homog-enisation, and particular goals and rules of behaviour conducive to these goals. Meshworks … are based on decentralised decision making … self-organisation, and heterogeneity and diversity. Since they are non-hierarchical, they have no overt goals. It can be said they follow the dynamics of life, developing through their encounter with their environments.

In the end, however, it does not too much matter, surely, in which place/space, on which model, the SMWN takes shape. The existence of the web, combining low cost of entry, wide reach and high speed, provides the assurance that such a network will be supplemented or challenged by others.

6   FROM ORGANISATION TO COMMUNICATION IN THE GLOBAL JUSTICE AND SOLIDARITY MOVEMENT

We are here moving from cyberspace to communication, and from the World Social Forum to the Global Justice and Solidarity Movement. Whereas the movement-in-general has shown, at its best, an almost instinctive feel for the logic of the computer (Klein 2001), and has expressed itself in the most creative and provocative ways (in Quebec a man was arrested for threatening to catapult a counter-hegemonic teddy bear over the hegemonic razor-wire), this is not the case for the WSF in particular. The WSF *uses* the media, culture and cyberspace but it does not *think* of itself in cultural/com-

municational terms, nor does it *live* fully within this increasingly central, and infinitely expanding, universe.[9]

The WSF website remains problematic—promoting year-old ideas (chosen by whom?) in its meagre library. Trying to reach a human being on this site, to whom one could pose a question, reminds one strongly of Gertrude Stein (or whoever) on Oakland, California: 'There is no *there* there'. The site's own claim, that it was visited during WSF3 by X million, cannot deal with visitors, such as myself, repeatedly seeking for a there that wasn't there. The website perked up in the Post-Forum period, providing more useful information than it had during the previous year (http://www.forum socialmundial.org.br/home.asp), but it is difficult to have confidence that this improvement will continue.

The only WSF daily is *Terra Viva*, an admirable effort by the customarily unaccountable NGO, but which this year seemed to me to add to its space-limitations, delays and superficialities a heavier bias toward the Forum establishment. The major commercial daily paper in Rio Grande do Sul, *Zero Hora*, gave wide coverage but, unsurprisingly, in Portuguese. For background information and orientation one was this year dependent on free handouts of *La Vie/Le Monde* (inspired by French social Catholicism), and *Ode*, a glossy, multi-lingual, New Age, magazine from Rotterdam, with impressively relevant coverage (used in this paper). Other alternative, and non-Forum sites, provide better information and/or discussion than the Forum itself, for example, http://www.opendemocracy.net/debates/debate-6-91.jsp.

The FSM seems to me something of a shrine to the written and spoken word.[10] At the core of the Forum is The Panel, in which 5-10 selected panellists do their thing in front of an audience of anything from five to 5,000, the latter being thrown the bone of three to five minutes at a microphone. And these are the lucky ones! At the other end of the Forum's narrow spectrum of modes there is The Demonstration. Here euphoria is order of the day: how can it not be when surrounded by so many beautiful people, of all ages, genders and sexual options, of nationality and ethnicity, convinced that another world is possible? But here we must note the distinction made 30 years ago, between mobilisation and mobility, as related to the old organisation and the new media:

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[9] For more on this new and challenging area, see Cardon and Granjon (2003) and the Cyberspace panel within Life after Capitalism http://www.zmag.org/lacsite.htm.

[10] In so far as I worship both deities, I am throwing this stone from my own glasshouse.

> The open secret of the electronic media, the decisive political factor, which has been waiting, suppressed or crippled, for its moment to come, is their mobilising power. When I say *mobilise* I mean *mobilise*…namely to make [people] more mobile than they are. As free as dancers, as aware as football players, as surprising as guerrillas. Anyone who thinks of the masses only as the object of politics, cannot mobilise them. He wants to push them around. A parcel is not mobile; it can only be pushed to and fro. Marches, columns, parades, immobilise people […] The new media are egalitarian in structure. Anyone can take part in them by a simple switching process […] The new media are orientated towards action, not contemplation; towards the present, not tradition […] It is wrong to regard media equipment as mere means of consumption. It is always, in principle, also means of production […] In the socialist movements the dialectic of discipline and spontaneity, centralism and decentralisation, authoritarian leadership and anti-authoritarian disintegration has long ago reached deadlock. Networklike communication models built on the principle of reversibility of circuits might give indications of how to overcome this situation (Enzensberger 1976: 21-53).

There is, of course, also the Rally—a panel built on the scale of the Titanic.

The paucity of cultural expression at WSF3 is surprising, bearing in mind we *are* in Brazil, the country that brought down the corrupt President Collor by cultural-political protest. The WSF3 song, which has a complex lilt, is sung only in Portuguese, and did not seem to be available in written or CD form, even in this language. It was, in fact, the same jingle as that of WSF2. As in 2002 the teeshirts were not going to win any design prizes. And the most popular icon (no fault of the organisers) remains Che. I suspect there might be a market for Subcomandante Marcos, for Rigoberta Menchú, for Chico Mendes, for La Naomi, for El Noam, for Arundhati, and even for Frida and Diego, or a Beatle Giving Peace a Chance, but I may be wrong.

Something of an exception to the general Forum rule was, in 2002, the campaign against fundamentalisms of the Articulación Feminista Marcosur. I had and have doubts about the interpretation of fundamentalism offered by this campaign, but it was one which intimately combined the customary Forum modes with dramatic cultural expression of undeniable originality and impact: last year there were masks, an enormous hot-air balloon, hoarding-sized posters and more. This year activity was possibly less dramatic, but peaked with a packed-out book launch, at which was also projected a 10-minute CD production of considerable inventivity and power (Cotidiano Mujer/ CFMEA 2002). Lucy Garrido, the Uruguayan designer, opted for visuals, music and minimal words, in successive English and Spanish). We could have had, we should have had, a discussion around this. Even a panel…?

7   AN ACADEMY OF GLOBAL EMPOWERMENT

A review of the recent literature on globalisation reminds us of what happened in the US academy during the Vietnam War (Munck 2003). This proved to be a moment at which the academy, not only in the USA, divided between those either committed to or complicit with the existing power relations and those who challenged these. There were, no doubt, excesses on the left here (not yet free of the excesses of the right), but opposition to the war in Vietnam, to racism, to class-discrimination, to sexism, to corporatism in the university, gave rise to a wave of high-quality radicalism, some of it still alive—despite neo-liberalism—today. Consider only the US-based *NACLA Report on the Americas* (http://www.nacla.org/). What has happened in the intervening years is thus argued by Arturo Escobar (forthcoming):

> Social scientists in particular have been in retreat. If in the 1980s the social sciences were infusing the natural sciences with new idioms and ideas, today it seems to be the other way around. Metaphors of complexity, webs, networks, self-organisation, etc. are now being more actively developed in the natural sciences, although of course there are attempts to bring it all back to the social sciences again. The reconversion of the Humanities towards the production of critical inter-subjective knowledge for social transformation—while important in some fields such as cultural and so-called post-colonial studies, and feminist and critical race theories—has floundered in the persistent Achilles' heel of their engagement with extra-academic worlds. In this context, non-academic knowledge producers seem to have taken the lead...

The last point here is significant. Amongst the seven or eight major characteristics of the newest wave of social movements in Latin America is, according to Raúl Zibechi (2003), the capacity of popular movements to train their own leaders, to develop their own educational principles, to develop their own intellectuals. He mentions the Intercultural University of Indigenous Peoples and Nationalities, coming out of Ecuadorian struggles, the 1,500 schools of the MST (Landless Workers Movement) in Brazil…

But I wish to here begin with the growing alternative to such from within the academy.[11] Much of this lies, as one might expect, in individual academic staff and students turning their attention to either the Global Justice and Solidarity Movement in

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[11] I mention the latest such contribution to come to my attention, that of Stephanie Ross (2003). This is not simply because she is a young lecturer, still completing her PhD. It is also because she addresses herself to the problematic nature of democracy, as manifested within the events of protest rather than proposition, and more specifically to the anarchist or libertarian ideas and strategies revealed here.

general or to the Forum process in particular.[12] I will mention just a couple of new academic centres and recent initiatives. They may give an impression of what must be taking place on a much wider and more varied scale and, hopefully, spilling out from the social sciences to the academy more generally.

Here we might consider, first, the Centre for Civil Society/Centre for Global Governance at the London School of Economics in the UK. And, second, the Observatorio Social de América Latina (Latin American Social Observatory) in Buenos Aires. If the first is oriented toward, well, a liberal/social-democratic notion of global civil society, and inspired by the LSE's tradition of social reformism and social engineering, the latter is concentrated on social movements, protest and the global movement processes themselves. These two projects should not (for political reasons) and cannot (for epistemological ones) be set up in binary-oppositional terms. They rather represent two cases of academic response to the development of global civil society and global social movements. They are both worthy of closer attention than I can give them here.

Global Civil Society 2002 (Glasius, Kaldor and Anheier 2002) is the second of two weighty annuals, of which the first gave considerable attention to not only the title area but also to various global social movements and their dynamics (Anheier, Glasius and Kaldor 2001, reviewed Waterman forthcoming b). This project comes out of the presumably-globalised LSE, and with the blessings of its Blairite Director, Anthony Giddens. The current volume considers concepts, issues, infrastructure, and then has some 150 pages of records of GCS, in tables, charts, surveys and analyses. 'Concepts' considers the implications of September 11, 2001; limits of GCS, religion and GCS. 'Issues' include corporate responsibility, HIV/AIDS and the International Criminal Court. Under 'Infrastructure' comes a chapter on organisational forms (institutions, networks, etc). Under 'Records' comes Mario Pianta's useful update on his painstaking GCS 2001 chapter on Parallel Summits.

The Pianta update (Glasius, Kaldor and Anheier 2002: 371-7), consisting primarily of 10 charts, is largely dependent on a questionnaire addressed to relevant organisations, media and websites. Whilst the author expresses justified qualifications about his own methodology, he nonetheless feels capable of arguing that global civil

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[12] I had to actually *retire* in 1998, after 27 years of teaching about such, before this new wave began to approach shore. It is now threatening to take on the proportions of a tsunami.

society is maturing, that global movements are spreading, and that a development is taking place amongst them from protest to proposal.The Pianta contribution perhaps suggests the extent and limits of the project as a whole—at least so far. The limits may be suggested by his title, 'Parallel Summits', even if he actually goes beyond this, recognising the extent to which a dynamic is here developing that goes beyond paralleling something toward the invention of something else. But the extent of the GCS project is also revealed by Pianta's attempt to empirically chart a novel and inchoate process. The ambition is the thing because without empirical data, we live in a world of impression and speculation (a possible criticism of this very paper). An *excess* of such data—here one-third or more of the whole—can obscure interpretation and consequent identification of strategic options. But the GCS project, it seems to me, nonetheless sets a standard for such data collection and analysis that others are going to be challenged to surpass. And there is another aspect of the GCS project that likewise sets new standards. This is the *accessibility* of this work, both in the sense of its excellent printed and graphical layout, but also because it is available, free, for chapter by chapter download, from the GCS website, http://www.lse.ac.uk/Depts/global/Yearbook/.

The *Observatorio Social de América Latina* (OSAL, the Latin American Social Observatory), within the Latin American Council of Social Sciences, in Buenos Aires (CLACSO) is clearly a fish of a different feather. Sited within one of Latin America's premier research institutes, this bland-sounding project actually represents what may be the most-ambitious monitoring of social movements (under globalisation) anywhere. Although its basic publication form is that of a serial journal of the same name (nine since 2001), and although a large part of it is devoted to country-by-country reports, a 2003 issue also extends beyond Latin America, and it includes analysis and theoretical debates.[13] OSAL/CLACSO has also published a number of books about the current wave of protest. The OSAL website http://osal.clacso.org/ provides all this information and more. Indeed, it appears as if OSAL has high priority within CLACSO http://www.clacso.org/wwwclacso/espanol/html/fprincipal.html, to the extent that the extensive web and CD services offered by the latter clearly overlap in subject and orientation with the former. This orientation is clearly toward the new global social

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[13] For a Spanish annual that monitors movements in that state, see Grau and Ibarra (2001). In South Africa there is a another national monitoring project (Weekes 2002). All of these, and the many others that do or will exist, could obviously benefit from publication in one space and from dialogue with each other.

movements. Starting with a critique of the impact of neo-liberalism and globalisation on the region, OSAL declares that

> It aspires to stimulate analysis and reflection on the distinct forms assumed by social conflict in our societies and on the characteristics revealed by distinct social movement in the region. This task further assumes the desire to contribute to the renovation and revitalisation of Latin American social thought and, in particular, to studies on social movements. In relation to the cited theme the programme also aspires to construct a space of exchange between its own researchers and the social and political movements (OSAL Website).

After years or decades in which social-movement studies, and commitment to social movements (as distinguished from NGOs), were somewhat marginalised in Latin America, this is a dramatic declaration of commitment to movement-oriented research. Whilst the audio-visual offerings are from CLACSO rather than OSAL, these include numerous complete books and other resources (all, I think, in Spanish/Portuguese), the subjects and authors of which are often related to the OSAL project. Furthermore, CLACSO runs a computerised distance-education project, making its courses potentially available throughout the sub-continent.

CLACSO had a well-equipped stall with several staff at a major WSF3 site. Additionally, however, it is represented on the International Council of the Forum. CLACSO is an influential member of the IC. And OSAL was well represented in the Core programme of WSF3. It was also active at a previous Argentinean Forum, organised at short notice, and held with considerable success, in 2002. I have warned against setting up OSAL/CLACSO as a polar opposite to GCS/LSE, as some kind of model for a university of global emancipation. But it is a challenging experiment. Of particular interest might here be the extent to which the commitment of OSAL to the movement is reciprocated by the movements themselves—particularly those closest to it in its home base.

Mention of a university of global emancipation brings us to the pre-Forum proposal of Boaventura de Sousa Santos for a Popular University of Social Movements (Sousa Santos 2003b). Launched with the blessing of IBASE, a key Brazilian NGO behind the Forum, the proposal was for the mutual self-education of both scholars and activists, with a particular focus on the South, and with a specific rooting in a proposed locale. One of many individual, even personal, initiatives arising around the WSF, this one was proposed for discussion at WSF3 and on the internet. This is not actually either a university—as it calls itself—or an academy, as in my subtitle. It is a proposal based on the author's argument that the genocides occurring under globalisation are

accompanied by 'epistemicide', and that a reversal of this requires that the dominant Western episteme, dominant also in Latin America—and amongst the global left—be challenged by others. Sousa Santos considers there is no global justice without cognitive justice, and that we need to find ways of 'translating' knowledges up and down the social scale, in and out of Western ones. The project draws on experience with a famous centre, CIDOC, in Cuernavaca, Mexico, itself connected with the names of Ivan Illich and Paulo Freire. The proposal is as much concerned with the empowerment of the 'teachers' as of the 'activists'. Not intended to be a university, it is also not intended to be a think-tank, nor a training school for activists.[14] This is a project relevant to a movement that considers itself less oriented toward institutions, ideologies or even a programme, more to collective self-education through dialogue. I would myself like to see such a project developed in network terms (an alliance of interested departments, courses, schools) and in terms of cyberspace (distance education). The reasons may be self-evident: cost, reach, flexibility, the dialectic of difference. Moreover, this would be an inclusive and expansive project rather than one which was exclusive, limited and authoritative. It further occurs to me that this project needs to take into explicit account both the history and theory of emancipatory education, and recent experiments in international consciousness-raising education intended to confront globalization. I have here in mind an experiment of the International Federation of Worker Education Associations in computer-linked 'study circles' on globalization.[15] The further development of this proposal, promised by mid-2003, should be worth following.

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[14] This paragraph has been extended following a further presentation of the project by Sousa Santos, Amsterdam, May 18, 2003. This was at the Transnational Institute (TNI). The TNI is just such a leftist think-tank, heavily engaged with the WSF. The presentation stimulated a lively and relevant exchange, during which one participant, a major thinker and activist within the GJ&SM, said, somewhat curtly, that since 'the poor already know who they are', she would continue to concentrate on analysing and critiquing the structures of domination. Another such person drew attention to the relevant practices of at least the early second-wave feminist movement. Yet other participants, whilst certainly challenging the speaker, repeatedly talked about academics 'providing a service' to the movement. The discussion, in part, seemed to be illustrating understandings of knowledge, education and the movement itself, that the Sousa Santos project appears intended to surpass.

[15] Despite considerable interest in this project, examination of materials, and glowing initial reports by both participants and those responsible, I have been unable to convince myself that these were a success. One reason is that, in its initial understanding of globalization and its impact on labour, the IFWEA seems to have accepted as its own parameters those of the Western-dominated international trade union institutions. Another is, simply, that the use of the internet here was not well thought out. In so far, however, as this represented a systematic effort to carry out an emancipatory distance-education project, that it has been at least internally evaluated, and that the project materials deal with such practical issues as budgeting, the experience deserves more serious attention. Relevant material can be found in print (International Study Circles 2000) and on the web http://www.ifwea.org.

The last initiative is the most marginal in terms of recognition and power. This is less a specific project than the general orientation of a new feminist network, NextGENDERation (2003). NG is a Netherlands-based network of young feminists in academia, which appears to combine the enthusiasm of 1970s feminism with orientations and concerns of both post-modernism and, well, post-capitalism. What is of particular interest is its concentration on the transformation of the university itself:

> The NextGENDERation network wants to stand for a type of feminist knowledge politics, deeply concerned with the democratisation of higher education. This concern relates to different, although interconnected, dimensions. The *access to higher education*, and the way in which power mechanisms such as gender, ethnicity and class structure this access on different levels (with horizontal segregation according to disciplines, and vertical segregation according to academic hierarchies), are of primary concern to us. The *production of knowledge* is a second dimension on which our attention is focused: the brands of critical and situated knowledges produced from feminist, anti-racist, post-colonial and anti-heterosexist points of view have already began to transform the old curricula and canons. We are committed to continuing this transformation. Both of these dimensions are related to a vision of what the university, and higher education in general, stands for. From our feminist perspectives, we start from a critical distance towards the classic conception of the university as an ivory tower. At the same time, we don't buy into the current neo-liberal ideals of higher education as a training-place in function of the needs of the labour market. We are invested [sic] in a vision of the university as a place for the production of critical and socially relevant knowledge, and want to work towards that ideal in our specific historical time and space. *Another university is possible!*

In so far as many left intellectuals connected with the Forum consider *their* prime task to be telling others 1) what the other world is, and how to achieve it, 2) that they are the privileged persons or category to do so, it is refreshing to see these young feminists reminding us that changing the world begins in one's own backyard or workplace.

These rapid sketches may give some impression of an academic fermentation either caused or stimulated by the Forum. The conclusion here must be that, after serious reflection on the rise and fall of post-1968 academic radicalism, we need to think of sites and forms of research and education that could survive the next equivalent of the neo-liberal backlash.

8   CONCLUSION: THE SECRET OF FIRE

I am concerned about the future of the Forum process but not worried. Pandora has opened her box, the genie is out of the lamp, the secret of fire for emancipatory movements is now an open one. This secret is not unrelated to that of Hans Magnus Enzensburger: it is to keep moving. In other words: a moment of stasis within a movement (institutionalisation, incorporation, bureaucratisation, collapse, regression)

requires of activists that they make ready to move to its periphery, or to move beyond it, or to create a new movement to advance, again, the potential represented by the old movement during its emancipatory moment. Already in Florence, young libertarians were mumbling, discontentedly, 'Another Forum is Possible'. This possibility is not only a matter of information and communication technology (which, remember, has yet to produce a computerised English/Spanish translation programme with an appropriate vocabulary). It may be the combination, precisely, of this with youth—given that at least urban kids are growing up with mobile phones, playing arcade computer games, and therefore with an affinity for other computer technology (and a healthy disregard for attempts to coral such).

For the rest, socially-engaged intellectuals will find themselves energised by: innovative social protest, and original analyses of the local-national-global dialectic in Argentina; by the belated appearance in Peru of a network, Raiz (Root), which clearly has some feeling that the WSF is more than an NGO jamboree; by the Kidz in the Kamp who were discussing under a tree, and with informal translation, how to ensure that the emancipatory and critical forces have more impact on the Forum process; by the struggle, against all odds, of the US ZNet people to mount 'Life after Capitalism', an event of post-capitalist proposition within the Forum; by the massive global anti-war demonstrations of February 15-16, 2003—something that puzzled even radical specialists on the new social movements; by the increasing number of compañer@s, of various ages, identities, movements and sexual orientations, who believe that, in the construction of a meaningfully civil global society, transparency is not only the best policy but the only one.[16]

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[16] In an effort to ensure that this should be the case, I am collaborating with Anita Anand, Jai Sen and Arturo Escobar on a collection, with the working title *Are Other Worlds Possible? The Past, Present and Futures of the World Social Forum*. Additional contributors include a number of people mentioned in this paper, such as Nikhil Anand, Boaventura de Sousa Santos, Teivo Teivainen, and Gina Vargas, as well as many others. It is hoped to publish this in New Delhi in December 2003, one month or so before WSF4 in Mumbai/Bombay. Contact address: Anita Anand at anandanita@vsnl.com.

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Life after Capitalism, Zmag/Znet www.zmag.org/lac.htm

Network Institute for Global Democratisation http://www.nigd.org/

Next GENDERation,http://www.nextgenderation.let.uu.nl/

North American Congress on Latin America http://www.nacla.org/

Open Democracy http://www.opendemocracy.net/home/index.jsp

OSAL http://osal.clacso.org/

Peoples Global Action www.nadir.org/nadir/initiativ/agp/ free/wsf/

Radio Fire www.fire.or.cr

Raiz, Peru http://www.iespana.es/movimiento-raiz/www.tni.org.tat

Reinventing Social Emancipation http://www.ces.fe.uc.pt/emancipa/en/index.html

The Commoner http://www.commoner.org.uk/

Voice of the Turtle http://www.voiceoftheturtle.org/

Web Community of Social Movements/Comunidad Web de Movimientos Sociales
http://movimientos.org/

WSF International Committee Consultation http://www.delibera.info/fsm2003ci/GB/

WSF http://www.forumsocialmundial.org.br/home.asp

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