

THE INTERCONTINENTAL YOUTH CAMP 2001-2005

**LINKING OPEN SPACE ACTIVISM, THE WORLD SOCIAL
FORUM, AND IMAGINARIES FOR ALTERNATIVE
WORLDS**

by

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Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of Master of Arts

at

Dalhousie University
Halifax, Nova Scotia

June 2006

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DALHOUSIE UNIVERSITY
DEPARTMENT OF INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT STUDIES

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by Daniel H.O. Morrison in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts.

Dated: June 29, 2006
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DALHOUSIE UNIVERSITY

DATE: June 29, 2006

AUTHOR: Daniel H.O. Morrison

TITLE: THE INTERCONTINENTAL YOUTH CAMP 2001-2005: LINKING OPEN
SPACE ACTIVISM, THE WORLD SOCIAL FORUM, AND IMAGINARIES
FOR ALTERNATIVE WORLDS

DEPARTMENT OR SCHOOL: Department of International Development Studies

DEGREE: MA CONVOCATION: October YEAR: 2006

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Dedication

This M.A. thesis is dedicated to all people and peoples in the world who believe in the cause of establishing alternative worlds, and who are making alternatives come into being in their own lives and in worlds of social activism.

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Abstract

The Intercontinental Youth Camp (IYC) has opened distinctive spaces of experience to link activist networks, the World Social Forum (WSF), and alternative imaginaries. It originated in reaction to the inaugural WSF in Porto Alegre, Brazil, although both initiatives emerged in 2001 in broader struggles to challenge neoliberal globalization. Some 80,000 campers from diverse backgrounds and mostly under 30 lived in the five Camps, which lasted from six to ten days. Four took place in Porto Alegre and the other (in 2004) in Mumbai, India. The IYC's central imaginary of horizontal self-management was largely shaped by Camp organizers and key volunteering onsite; the WSF and local political conditions were also crucial. While the Camps exhibited contradictions – such as those arising from hierarchical leadership and many participants more interested in apolitical partying than in social change – they cultivated exciting possibilities for an emerging new political generation of human agents.

List of Abbreviations Used

ABONG	Brazilian Association of Non-Governmental Organizations
ASF	African Social Forum
COA	Camp Organizing Committee of the IYC
CSMs	Civil Society Movements
CSOs	Civil Society Organizations
CUT	Brazilian Workers Central Union
ES	Economy of Solidarity of the WSF/IYC
Ecovillages	Ecological Villages
EZLN	Zapatista National Liberation Army
IBASE	Brazilian Institute of Social and Economic Analysis
IC	International Council of the WSF
IWG	Indian WSF Working Group
IYC	Intercontinental Youth Camp
MST	Brazil's Landless Workers Movement
NGOs	Non-governmental organizations
NSMs	New Social Movements
OC	World Social Forum Organizing Committee
PT	Workers Party of Brazil
PUC	Pontifical Catholic University
RRGN	Global Resistance Network
SAPs	Structural Adjustment Programs
WEF	World Economic Forum
WTO	World Trade Organization
WSF	World Social Forum

Acknowledgements

This academic work became possible because of countless people whose voices have informed my thinking on the subject. I acknowledge foremost the invaluable contributions and support given by Dr. John Cameron, my Academic Supervisor. I am very grateful to Dr. Lindsay Dubois, my Second Reader. I am very appreciative for the feedback given by Dr. Marc Doucett, my External Reader. I extend many thanks to the interdepartmental ethics committee that approved my research ethics for undertaking qualitative fieldwork at the fifth Intercontinental Youth Camp. I am thankful to both Dr. Rebecca Tiessen and Dr. Ian McAllister for letting me do a course paper on the fifth Intercontinental Youth Camp, especially since the research became the basis of this thesis. I am also thankful to Dr. Jane Parpart for helping me with the initial evolution of my research. I extend thanks to Dr. Caesar Apentiik for providing me opportunities to do research on social movements and youth associations. I extend gratitude to the Atlantic Centre of Excellence for Women's Health for providing me opportunities to do research on young caregivers, and for supporting my time to also work on my thesis.

Incredible thanks to Eduardo Sanchez for doing tireless translations of our interviews, and for sharing so much time with me in my own adventure in IYC 2005 and in Porto Alegre. Very special thanks to all the people interviewed for this study and to everybody I shared experiences with at IYC 2005. Special thanks as well to Júlia Coelho de Souza for welcoming me to the Camp before I arrived. Thanks to both Tatiana de Carvalho and Kiss Abrahams for handing me resources on the IYC's history and the Social Forum process in Africa, respectively. Big thanks to André Barsér for providing me with a place to sleep during my first night in Parque de Harmonia. I extend a most meaningful hello to all my fellow campers at our transnational campsite, in particular Marlize, Sergio, Raphael, and Johannes.

Thank you Dr. Janet Conway for all your amazing support in enabling my life interests to stay focused on the WSF. To Dr. Teivo Teivainen, thank you for your feedback on a Chapter 1 draft, for those interesting articles on the World Social Forum, and for inviting me into your seminar. Amazing thanks also to Andrea Browning. Many thanks extended

to Dr. Eric Helleiner for encouraging my initial research on the WSF. Further thanks to Dr. Jim Conley, Dr. John Hillman, and Dr. Lynne Davis who helped to focus my studies on social movements, while I was an undergraduate student at Trent University. Further thanks to Dr. David Black, Theresa Ulicki, and Pat Lane for feedback on my academic work. Tremendous thanks to Dr. Jennifer Clapp, Dr. Stephen Katz, Dr. Jacqueline Solway, and Adele Finney who encouraged and supported my research efforts on social change. Pike Wright and fellow activists based in Peterborough, Canada you all have been sources of inspiration to me.

I should be acknowledging my parents on their own page. Your support through the years has helped me realize many of my dreams, including being able to go live and learn in the Intercontinental Youth Camp. Cheers to all my friends in Halifax, Canada. Thanks as well to all my friends who heard me out about the IYC's significance. Thanks to the rest of my family. And thanks to everybody else who has inspired me in life.

Chapter 1: Introduction

Overview

At the dawn of the 21st Century, neoliberal capitalism dominated the international political economy without a coherent challenge from an alternative vision backed by any global power. However, activists worldwide were engaged in local, regional, national, and transnational initiatives that sought to move beyond simple critiques of neoliberalism to the construction of viable alternatives. The World Social Forum (WSF) has been an especially important initiative in this respect. It was established in 2001 in Porto Alegre, Brazil to facilitate the growth of civil society activism aimed at confronting neoliberal globalization and at counter-balancing the annual World Economic Forum of political and business elites in Davos, Switzerland. In turn, the WSF inspired the creation of the Intercontinental Youth Camp (IYC), which was first held from January 25 to 30, 2001 in a public park near the centre of Porto Alegre, the capital city of the Brazilian state, Rio Grande Do Sul. The IYC (in Portuguese, Acampamento Intercontinental da Juventude) took place at the same time as the inaugural Forum, which convened at the Pontifical Catholic University. WSF 2001 ended with a commitment to hold a second Forum in Porto Alegre. The initiative enabled collective actors around the world to further consolidate their networks and movements and to bring to life the WSF's assertion that "Another World is Possible".

The IYC was created by youth members of leftist Brazilian political parties who wanted to take part in the first Forum but were excluded from doing so, at least on their own terms. The project, however, broadened and evolved later that year with additional groups of organizers. As the Camp's two websites indicate, the term "intercontinental" was synonymous with "transnational", and denoted youth from any geographic origin. The "youth" who were encouraged to participate referred to anybody motivated to make social change and willing to approach politics in new ways, thus making the term very flexible and not directly related to the age of the participants. The underlying hope for all five Camps was to foster alternative social practices to challenge contemporary corporate-led neoliberal globalization and capitalist ideology (IYC 2004; IYC 2005).

Intercontinental Youth Camps unfolded in Porto Alegre's Parque de Harmonia or Harmonia Park in late January of 2001, 2002, 2003, and 2005 to coincide with the Forum

in the same host city. When WSF 2004 moved to Mumbai, the fourth IYC took place on the grounds of a high school on the outskirts of that Indian metropolis. The Camps lasted from six to ten days, and hosted some 80,000 resident campers from dozens of countries, especially Brazil.

In organizing for IYC 2002, the groups involved sought to influence the WSF to practice alternatives to neoliberal globalization instead of merely debating them. These youth activists imagined how to nurture ways of living in a communal environment that would present practical alternatives to capitalist consumerist lifestyles. They devised programs of activities based on self-organization and spontaneous interactions in anticipation that resident campers would relate personal and social identities, express cultural differences, and build on activist strategies (IYC 2004; IYC 2005).

Challenging Neoliberal Globalization

Many issues relating to the role of youth activism in the IYC and the WSF are discussed throughout this thesis. A key unifying feature has been the concern of the WSF and the IYC to confront neoliberal globalization. The global political economy took a significant turn after Margaret Thatcher and Ronald Reagan came to power in the U.K. and the U.S. in 1979 and 1980 respectively. Their administrations played a crucial role in launching the neoliberal counter-revolution worldwide by configuring the global market as the incubator of growth for capital accumulation. Deregulation of financial markets created unprecedented conditions for corporate imperialism and global conglomerates, while horrifying social inequalities escalated worldwide. Neoliberal economic policies became the mandates of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, which implemented structural adjustment programs (SAPs), first in Latin America and then throughout the “developing world”. Backed by Wall Street, the U.S. Treasury, the Republican Administration, and the G-7 nation-states, SAPs promoted privatization and denationalization of production and industry through deregulation of private economic activity and capital markets. These measures reduced trade barriers and promoted export-led development through foreign investments. They rolled back state social measures and regulatory powers in national economies, imposed strict rules for developing country debt repayment, and weakened the regulations and protections that labour movements had struggled for more than a century to secure (see Chang 2003; George 2001; Hewitt 2000;

Leys 1996; Parpart and Veltmeyer 2004; Peet and Hartwick 1999; and Rapley 2002 and 2004).

The neoliberal ideology is derived from the neoclassical economic perspective on capitalism. It celebrates private property, maximization of wealth, and belief in an “invisible hand” of a competitive self-regulated marketplace. It mechanizes the “natural world” and renders Earth as an inanimate externality to justify resource extraction, mass consumption, and capital accumulation (see Chang 2003; George 2001; Hewitt 2000; Leys 1996; Parpart and Veltmeyer 2004; Peet and Hartwick 1999; and Rapley 2002 and 2004). Throughout the 1980s and 1990s, countless human beings struggled against neoliberal globalization, and helped to challenge its legitimacy.

In common with authors such as Ponniah and Fisher (2003) and Klein (2004), this thesis rejects the label “anti-globalization”. Instead, I use the concept of “alter-globalization” to refer to the activities of millions of activists worldwide who are engaged in imagining and developing alternatives to neoliberal capitalism. For many of those engaged in this challenge and certainly for the World Social Forum, the global level is envisioned as an important stage on which to create alternatives alongside their collective engagements at local, regional, and national levels. Alter-globalization involves the work of many civil society movements (CSMs). This thesis uses the concept of CSM to refer to diverse social actors who have engaged in the WSF process as part of wider struggles premised on developing alternatives to neoliberal globalization.

Activism cannot be reduced to oppositional struggles against neoliberal capitalism. It is fundamentally about social relations of power and change. It is open-ended, experiential, and involves sharing moments and dreaming about making a difference in an unjust world. The concept of activism refers to a wide range of social practices and social actors. Generally speaking, social activism is reflective of lived experiences and is exercised by individuals and collective actors who seek to transform institutionalized sites of power, cultural norms, and social conditions. Activism and social change have several definitions in social science research. Other meanings have emerged from the activities of self-identified activists throughout the world (see Anand, Escobar, Sen, and Waterman 2004; Foren 2003; Goodwin and Jasper 2003; Notes from Nowhere 2003; Johnston and Smith 2002; and Alvarez and Escobar 1998 and 1992). I argue that

definitions of activism refer primarily to the practices, social relations, and historical location particular to activist initiatives. This thesis utilizes such a definitional lens to analyze the IYC.

The IYC project has responded to neoliberalism by prioritizing localized expressions of transnational solidarity through networking, creative exchanges, and alternative social practices. There have been several significant ways in which the IYCs have manifested alternatives. Each Camp has featured “bio-constructed” (biodegradable constructions) sites built by organizers and volunteers using bamboo, straw, mud, and recyclable materials such as plastic bottles and milk cartons. These activity spaces, in most cases called action centres, have been used mainly for popular education workshops. They have opened up whirlwinds of social life, cultural exchange, and creative expression. Fair trade practices with localized organic farmer cooperatives have been based on the concept of a solidarity economy for exchange and consumption inside the Camps. The main alternatives developed within the IYC process have been based on principles of horizontal self-management for sharing responsibilities to run the Camp. This form of organization has implied a cooperative division of labour and collective stewardship of the public environment. It has involved a commitment to consensus decision-making and active participation in both planned meetings and informal gatherings. Moreover, the IYC phenomenon has sparked the creation of several local and regional Youth Camps worldwide, just as the Forum itself has spread and decentralized since 2002.

The efforts of successive IYCs to imagine alternatives to neoliberal capitalism constitute a key focus of this thesis. “Alternative imaginary” is defined as an organizational and ideological process of envisioning how to implement collaborative alternatives through social systems of practical experimentation. This definition relates to the purpose of the WSF process. The Forum (like the Camp) has been established by CSMs to bolster civil society activism and, in turn, enhance the capacity of participants and movements to share in collective forms of imagination to both produce and build on alternative social practices (see Santos 2004a and 2004b). In this regard, one important precursor pertinent to the WSF and IYC was the Participatory Budget process initiated in 1989 by the Workers Party (PT) of Brazil, first elected in Porto Alegre in 1988. Inspired

by methods of direct democracy, neighbourhood councils and local civil society organizations appointed their own members to join elected PT members in consultations. At these city wide meetings, decision-making through consensus was practiced on how to allocate the municipal budget in ways that would improve the quality of life and access to social and health services of Porto Alegre's citizenry, especially people disadvantaged socio-economically (see Abers 2000; Bruce 2004; Baierle 2005). In practice, consensus decision-making and internal management systems with operating principles based on direct democracy have been far more important within the IYC than the WSF, even though both processes have been marked by hierarchy and unequal levels of involvement.

Writing for the Real Utopias Project – an academic debate on how radical social practices can transform contemporary social institutions and practices – Erik Olin Wright argues that the tensions between dreams and practices remain based in a pragmatic belief in possibilities (Wright 1995: ix). The IYC exemplifies practical attempts to resolve the tension between the imagination and actual practice of social and economic alternatives. Paulo Freire argued that hope and social struggle together demand tangible practices in order to become historically meaningful. He saw hope in ongoing critical education as both a consequence and an incubator for social struggle (Freire 1992: 9). The important point here is that Freire advocated an explicit and practical means for achieving social change. Moreover, socialism(s) (including socialist anarchism) and Marxism(s) have remained important benchmark visions for the early history and discourses of the IYC.

The question of how to realize an alternative imaginary is an overarching concern of this research study. For the IYC, the hope has rested on the human agencies of young people to run collective and cooperative systems of management in the Camp, as they spend time learning from each other while also having fun. The imaginary then sees these experiences in turn informing and reinforcing broader cultural, political, social, economic, and creative forms of social activism as campers return to their daily lives. However, the IYC has faced internal challenges to practice what it claims to represent. This research study examines this dynamic tension between theory and practice in the Intercontinental Youth Camp (2001-2005), with a case-study of IYC 2005 (Chapter 4) where I did primary qualitative research.

The thesis has two main objectives: First, it seeks to understand how the Intercontinental Youth Camp process has been shaped by internal and external forces. Secondly, it examines the meanings and implications of the IYC for the WSF process and the construction of alternative social practices.

Central Thesis Argumentation

The Intercontinental Youth Camp developed in relation to the World Social Forum from 2001 to 2005. It has been a creative effort by resident campers to turn a space for temporary living into a social world of alternative practices to challenge daily life under neoliberal globalization. Drawing upon transnational and locally-based forms of activism, organizers moved beyond the Forum's discussion of alternatives to an implementation of them in practice. The IYC's central imaginary of horizontal self-management and its laboratory of experimental practices were largely shaped by Camp organizers and key volunteering onsite. The WSF and local political conditions were also crucial in influencing the evolution of the Camps.

The IYC process has not lived up to its imaginaries. Organizers often exercised more hierarchical than horizontal leadership, thereby undermining their stated principles. The time spent camping together was short, many residents were more interested in apolitical partying than in social change, and there were incidents of anti-social behaviour. Nevertheless, the IYC has produced much learning about experimental social activism, the politics of collective self-management, and the celebration of spontaneous cultural expression.

Methodology

The methodology used in this thesis is based mainly on textual analyses, semi-structured interviews, and participant observation notes. This thesis is based on two course papers I completed after returning from IYC 2005 as a graduate student in International Development Studies at Dalhousie University, Halifax, Canada. I lived in Parque de Harmonia from January 20 to February 1, 2005. The fifth Intercontinental Youth Camp took place there between January 24 and January 31. This thesis derives from my initial research conducted for a Directed Reading course on civil society, taught by Dr. Tiessen, and a course called Development as Practice, taught by Dr. McAllister. I submitted a paper on the IYC to each of my professors in February, 2005. Later in the

winter term at Dalhousie University, I decided that the Intercontinental Youth Camp would become the topic for my thesis. I first became aware of the Camp in autumn, 2003, while researching the World Social Forum. The intrigue had not left me two years later.

I got in touch with a key organizer – Júlia Coelho de Souza – through emails two months before the fifth Camp. She connected me with a member of the IYC 2005 translation working group, Eduardo Sanchez, whose contribution as a translator made this research study possible. While in Porto Alegre, I conducted twenty-three semi-structured qualitative interviews with the help of Eduardo, who did consecutive translation for 14 of them. The other nine interviews were conducted in English. Twelve respondents were men and eleven were women. Twelve of the twenty-three were IYC organizers, eleven Brazilians and one from the United Kingdom, while eleven were resident campers. The national identities of interviewees were as follows: eighteen Brazilian, one British, one Canadian, one Italian, one Zambian, and one Zimbabwean. Most were between the ages of 20 and 26. Questions were asked based on their range of experiences and roles in the IYC, with different questions posed to organizers and campers. I asked all of my respondents questions about three main themes: 1) interpretations of the IYC and its meanings for activism; 2) main challenges and problems associated with the IYC; 3) roles in the Camp and knowledge about the IYC. The average interview lasted about 30 minutes. Ten interviews were conducted solely in Portuguese with consecutive translation, and nine in English. With Eduardo's assistance, four were undertaken in English and Portuguese. I interviewed a majority of the respondents onsite while the Camp was taking place. Two interviews took place off site and the last two were conducted after the Camp had ended.

The main distinction among interviewees, as in the Camp at large, turned out to be whether they were involved primarily as organizers, volunteers, or residents. (There were many vendors in the Camp, but I did not have the opportunity to interview any of them.) Narratives on the IYC varied in accordance with people's awareness of the organizational framework, their level of personal involvement, and their experiences onsite. As I expected, knowledge about the IYC came most importantly from living in the Camp. All respondents were willing to talk with me and contribute to this study. I did not sense any uneasiness among them because the topic was of interest and applied directly

to all of us. I also think that there was little distance between us because I was about the same age (24) as most respondents, and many of them were also university students. Many were intrigued to see a Canadian at the IYC doing research on it.

My position did of course differ from those of the interviewees, especially since I am a white male and I came from North America. I had an exploratory research agenda, which invariably relied on them. I was largely ignorant about the Camp and everybody there was a stranger to me. However, although I was an outsider to the IYC process when I arrived, I learned about it quickly through experiencing it with others and by talking with several Camp organizers. Since I arrived four nights and three days before IYC 2005 officially began when only a few hundred people were onsite, I witnessed its remarkable growth. After the Camp came to a close, I also saw the temporary population of Parque de Harmonia drop to a few hundred people by the morning of February 1, 2005 as tens of thousands of people departed.

Some information of particular importance emerged from a workshop called “Youth Camps around the world – Creative resistance is alive” held at IYC 2005 in Harmonia Park on January 25 at the Action Centre called Caracol Intergalaktica. It was facilitated by a few volunteer translators, including Eduardo Sanchez. (Information shared at this workshop is cited with reference to last names and the date. Interviews are cited the same way.)

As a researcher, I was interested to learn about what this IYC experiment actually involved as almost no one commenting on the WSF seemed to have any grasp on the Youth Camp. I also have a deep commitment to social justice and alter-globalization. I believe strongly in the need for alternatives, which is part of the reason why this research was undertaken. In a world where human and planetary life are at stake, the emergence of activism on a world scale also calls for more voices to enter in dialogues, especially people involved in social struggle. The objective of this research was premised on experiencing, understanding, and analyzing a novel experimental process of activism that was reaching its fifth year.

Why Research Intercontinental Youth Camps?

This thesis examines the Intercontinental Youth Camp as a social and physical site, as well as its relationship to the WSF process. It argues that the IYC has influenced

the WSF, yet has received scant notice from the organizers of the WSF or commentators on it. In addition, the thesis explores the significance of the IYC as a space involving alter-globalization movements, a variety of social movements, activist networks, CSMs, university students, and anarchist dynamics. Of particular interest is the role of the Camp in the production of alternative imaginaries, and their potential contributions to alter-globalization and daily life beyond the camping experience. Several alternative imaginaries practiced in the IYC and expressed through the WSF process are in very early stages. They face internal organizational problems, ideological and political conflict, and the huge challenge of going beyond critiquing neoliberalism to fashioning viable alternatives. This study adds to a growing body of literature that constructively criticizes the WSF, and introduces new insights by analyzing the IYC process. It shows as well that both the Forum and the Camp have been reflexive in at least acknowledging their internal problems.

The Intercontinental Youth Camp deserves greater academic and activist attention than it has received to date because it has involved so many people who have been engaged in exciting alternative social experiments and practices. In five years, tens of thousands of participants have come from diverse backgrounds ranging from members of local farmer cooperatives in Brazil to activists in transnational networks. A great deal of personal and social creativity and learning have been manifest in free software exchanges, independent media outlets, a Camp radio, documentary films, art exhibits, boycotts of multinational corporate commodities, and solidarity barter economies. Other distinctive aspects of the Camp experiences have included collective kitchens, protest marches, cross-cultural forms of music and dance, and countless campfires and other social interactions.

Another reason for exploring the IYC phenomenon is that there is much to be learned from understanding the organizational and political challenges that have emerged, as well as how the vision of fostering practical alternatives to capitalist lifestyles has been undermined by anti-social behaviour and wild partying. The experience also reveals the contradiction between the ideal of horizontal decision-making and the reality that Camp agendas have largely reflected the concepts and practices of the organizers. This study shows how IYC organizers attempted to mold the Camp

experience, and it explains why the large scale experiments were difficult to implement. It assesses cases of how organizers and residents alike utilized Camp spaces in applying or failing to apply collectivist principles. Organizers have shaped the Camps with very few resources, primarily relying on volunteers. The dynamics of the IYC have demonstrated many problems, which put into question how the Camp's premises of solidarity and human agency can be translated into genuinely collaborative practices. Historical analysis of the IYC reveals the diversity of meanings of youth and of the Camp, and illustrates relations to both transnational activism and the WSF. Such discussions also elucidate meanings of "open space activism", a concept central to this thesis that is defined in Chapter 2. They show how, despite the constraints that the Camps have faced, many of the participants have exercised agency to achieve alternatives through successful networking, creative expression, and social bonding.

Studying the IYC also highlights the importance of focusing scholarship on contemporary youth activism. Imagining and practicing alternatives in shared lived experiences have taken place in environments where most young people have lived their lives under the shadow of neoliberal globalization. A few decades ago, before the onset of neoliberalism, a newly politicized generation of youth activists was also determined to make cultural and social change. In the late 1960s, youth movements at universities in countries such as France, the U.S., Mexico, and Czechoslovakia became topics of academic interest in social science disciplines such as sociology and political science. Scholars in recent times, however, have paid insufficient attention to youth activism. Since the mid-1990s, young people have been key players in the waves of intercontinental protests and resistance against the dominant features of the contemporary global political economy (see Klein 2000; Notes from Nowhere 2003). Several protests have been instrumental in giving life to the WSF, the IYC, and transnational youth activism: the "Battle of Seattle" that helped the opposition from Southern countries at the negotiating table to shut down the Uruguay Round of World Trade Organization negotiations in 1999, the Quebec Counter-Summit to the Free Trade Area of the Americas in April 2001, and the Genoa demonstrations in July 2001 against the G-8. The World Social Forum and Intercontinental Youth Camp processes, in turn, helped to strengthen these movements of worldwide dissent.

The significance of the recent emergence of youth activism in the global arena has been observed by the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs:

Many young people have adopted a world view in which the whole globe represents the key arena for social action. Trans-world contacts have helped to create lasting bonds of global youth solidarity, a prime example being global protests (especially by anti-capitalist groups). Young people are actively using the global media to express themselves, and probably constitute the group that has contributed most to making globalization the political issue it is today (United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs 2003: 304).

An alter-globalization challenge has been a crucial component of the IYC agendas. Moreover, the issue of solidarity on a global level, a topic analyzed in this thesis, has been an imperative at the IYC. Many groups involved in the Camp have been engaged in, or have at least been aware of, the recent surge of transnational protest movements (IYC 2004; IYC 2005). The statement issued by the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs cited above reinforces why the IYC arguably emerged as one of the most important transnational venues involving youth activism in the world at the beginning of the 21st Century. It also speaks to a qualitative shift experienced by many young people who became political agents in an era of globalization that has been marked by information technology. This thesis discusses the role of generations and young people in transnational activism by situating the IYC within the WSF's history.

Yet another important reason for studying the IYC is that its organizers in Brazil and India helped to create and inspire others to establish regional and local Youth Camps throughout Latin America, Asia, Africa, Europe, and North America. This thesis discusses the decentralization of the Camp. It explores the future possibilities for regionalizing and localizing Youth Camps, which inextricably link to the IYC as a meshwork that has hosted and spread youth activism worldwide.

As alluded to earlier, a very important reason for studying the Intercontinental Youth Camp phenomenon is that there has been scant acknowledgement of its importance in English-language academic writing or in the media. At the time of finalizing this thesis, aside from two websites put together by the organizers of IYC 2004 and 2005 and three articles – Nunes, 2005a, Nunes, 2005c, and Oliveira, 2005 – no other substantial English written record existed on the IYC. I have consulted every document on the two websites. These have significantly informed the thesis as have the published

articles of Rodrigo Nunes and the article by Romualdo Paz de Oliveira. A few other sources about the IYC found on the Internet have also assisted this study. While at Parque de Harmonia, I learned from Júlia de Coelho de Souza that only two other researchers were doing academic work on the IYC. As of January 2006 on the English-language postings on the WSF website, the IYC was not discussed by anybody in more than a paragraph. This absence is remarkable (WSF website home page: Library of Alternatives & Memorials for WSF 2001-2005). If the WSF idea of “Another Possible World” is to succeed, it must involve youth activists and young people, and pay greater attention to the IYC project. WSF organizers started to pay serious attention to the Camp only just before the onset of IYC 2003.

Empirical research on the WSF and transnational activism has missed not only the IYC, but has largely ignored qualitative data as well. With the exception of the Open Space Seminar Series in India (see Sen and Saini 2005) and some Internet-based discussions, scarcely any writing on the WSF has taken note of the multiple voices of participants. To date, insufficient work has been done to theorize either the Forum or the Camp. Only Nunes (2005c) has addressed how the IYC has influenced the Forum and how WSF decisions directly implicated the Camp. This thesis contributes an assessment of how the WSF and IYC processes have been interlinked, yet operated in remarkably different ways onsite. It also demonstrates how the IYC became situated in contemporary activism and how its organizers developed their imaginative practices. It shows how both the WSF and IYC have learned to be reflexive but not necessarily constructive at all times.

Further Situating the Emergence of the IYC Phenomenon

It has been widely shown that neoliberal practices have ignored the planet’s carrying capacity and disregarded asymmetrical power relations. They have promoted technological progress and global conglomerates at the expense of biological diversity, culturally pluralistic worldviews, and the needs of billions of people. The imposition of neoliberalism in developing countries redefined local and global competition over resource availability, control over natural capital and energy, and ownership over property, production, and labour. At the same time, Western industrialized countries and corporate interests guarded their own trade quotas, comparative advantages, tariff walls,

and agricultural and military subsidies at the expense of petty commodity producers and farmers scattered throughout the “developing world”. The market-driven agenda undermined hopes for direct democratic participation and paid scant heed to ecological awareness in a context that promoted economic growth at all costs. Concurrently, the neoliberal counter-revolution produced informal market systems worldwide that have been marked by a devaluation of the reproductive and productive labour of women at household and community levels (see Chang 2003; George 2001; Hewitt 2000; Leys 1996; Parpart and Veltmeyer 2004; Peet and Hartwick 1999; and Rapley 2002 and 2004). Many historical forces shaped the neoliberal project, especially colonialism, industrialization, post- WWII economic systems, and international development regimes.

Other agents of human history such as social movements and civil society organizations (CSOs) played key roles in discrediting and challenging the doctrine before the WSF “Battle of Seattle” and immediately after, including some from the largest country in Latin America, Brazil. While the social and political history of the Brazilian state of Rio Grande Do Sul has been significant in shaping the WSF and the IYC, there have been important historical precedents based in utopian ideologies and revolutionary experiences. Historically situated struggles focused on stopping imperialism, colonial conquests, racial discrimination, and patriarchy have provided much impetus to contemporary forms of activism that address the exploitation of people, environments, and countries of the “developing world”. More recently, there have been hundreds of decolonization struggles, survival-based movements, and widespread resistance to SAPs aimed at displacing past and present forms of oppression.

Although the main focus of the WSF and the IYC has been to challenge neoliberalism, some commentators see a historical link between the youth and peace movements in the late 1960s and the rise of “new social movements” (NSMs). The term, NSM, refers to the displacement of older forms of collective action based on political parties and labour unions. The distinction is analyzed by the sociologist Charles Tilly, who observes that social movements have generally been conceptualized in two broad ways: as historically-situated rebellions or, more commonly in recent times, in terms of ideological orientations and collective identity construction (Tilly 1999, 257-258, 267). NSMs fall into the latter category of movements largely defined by identity politics. They

have tended to support guiding principles of organization such as horizontality and values such as diversity (see Buechler 2000: 45-48; Canel 1992: 32; Schehr 1997: 63, 67-69; Wallerstein 2004: 267-270).

Many kinds of NSMs have taken part in the Camps. For example, self-identified feminist, queer, and environmental movements have been present. Several groups onsite have advocated and practiced horizontal values in workshops. Three of these values/practices revolve around: 1) respecting people as equals, 2) upholding everybody's contribution, 3) facilitating discussions jointly to ensure that nobody assumes a leadership role. However, there have been many values and leadership structures in play at the Camps, which complicated attempts to practice horizontality on a mass scale. In addition to a wide range of people who have represented CSOs, social networks, or no activist movements at all, the Camp (like the Forum) has also hosted members of political parties and labour unions.

The WSF has crucial antecedents in histories of labour movements and leftist politics, especially in Brazil. In addition, as Ponniah and Fisher note, many young people who led collective actions during the 1990s in city streets and on university campuses were important precursors to the WSF. They arguably represented:

...a new group of young militants (anarchists, anti-sweatshop activists, anti-biotechnology, peace and human rights movements)...[emerging with pre-established activist movements] into a planetary network of networks, 'the movement for global justice and solidarity' or, as the mainstream media has inaccurately framed it, the anti-globalization movement (Ponniah and Fisher 2003: 8).

The terms "network of networks" and "movement of movements" are not only crucial concepts debated in regard to contemporary activism, but realities around the world. By the late-1990s, social movements widely affiliated into coalitions to challenge neoliberal globalization based on a cornerstone belief that they had to collaborate as social networks to contest the corporate conglomerations. In many cases, movements and networks have worked together on a daily basis and, through Internet communication and collective actions such as protests and campaigns, they have developed strategies for derailing neoliberalism. Many social actors have also become disillusioned with the failures of party politics. As awareness and involvement grew, movements around the globe increasingly became alarmed by the rapid undermining of national democratic

sovereignty. They became determined to act on behalf of the majority of people and even planetary life itself to make necessary social change (see Klein 2004 and 2002; Hardt 2004; Mertes 2004; Hardt and Negri 2003; Notes from Nowhere 2003; Ponniah and Fisher 2003; Johnston and Smith 2002; Diani 2002; Sen 2002; Tarrow: 2002; Mellucci 1998; Alvarez and Escobar 1998 and 1992). The network of networks or movement of movements dynamic was apparent in the initial Forum, at IYC 2002, and remained important in 2005. However, the movements and networks that have come together to struggle against neoliberal globalization throughout the world, and as part of the WSF process, do not necessarily represent collective unity in terms of their respective members, geographical locations, objectives, or means of struggle.

In the context of the WSF, divergent forms of organizing and a plurality of languages highlight complex differences and barriers to overcome in order to foster viable and inclusive alternatives. Diverse CSOs and survival-based struggles have had different purposes. It is indeed a daunting agenda to convince people across the world about the need to mobilize and create alternative visions in solidarity and at multiple levels or geographical scales. This becomes clear in considering the depth of conservatism and the strength of corporate power around the world. Many people are not interested in changing the ways the global economies operate and many others are precluded from doing so because of their marginalization and other life circumstances. Issues of youth lifestyles attached to consumerism and/or individualistic ambition further complicate the mobilizational efforts of activist groups to promote social change. Moreover, personal and social experiences of gender, religion, and culture further divide people of all ages across space and time. Historically speaking, most young people, especially girls, have had very few choices in life and have been subjected to circumstances such as poverty or hunger. Survival-based have been the most viable options for them and their families.

What limited sources there are in journalistic, activist, and academic literature on contemporary youth activism demonstrate that young people have exercised agency and practiced all sorts of collective experiments. For example, transnational music youth movements of hip hop or DJs (disc jockeys) have linked with protest demonstrations and cross-continental initiatives to reclaim public spaces and disrupt the “business as usual”

status quo. Great numbers of young people have engaged in popular education workshops and street theatre, despite being somewhat removed from those who speak or claim leadership at mass protest actions. Many groups have also clashed with police forces, making violence another key feature of protest movements against powerful institutions such as the World Trade Organization, the World Bank, and the International Monetary Fund. Following the “Battle of Seattle”, many youth groups started up alternative print and online media such as indymedia (see Notes from Nowhere 2003; Prokosch 2002; Barlowe and Clark 2001; and Klein 2000). A 2002 publication by the Global Youth Action Network indexed and provided brief descriptions for 252 global youth movements that were active throughout the world, including the “World Social Forum Intercontinental Youth Camp” (Global Youth Action Network 2002).

The notion of youth activism is another ambiguous term, as is the concept of “young militant”, especially in the context of the IYC where the label “young militants” has been used to denote youth members of leftist political parties in Brazil (IYC 2005). Youth activist networks across the planet have addressed different complex issues under highly diverse circumstances. While oriented toward separate projects such as stopping privatized university education or supporting their own neighbourhood concerns, youth groups have drawn from a repertoire of activist strategies, tactics, and human experiences. It is significant to note, however, that party-based “young militants”, especially students, have played a significant role in the historic development of the WSF. Also important have been groups centred around anarchist values and tactics. The anarchist paradigm of self-organization clashes, however, with “old” forms of labour organization, which typically were hierarchal (Ross 2003: 299) and sought alternatives to a capital-dominated system of production. This tension is one of many on a general level between the WSF and IYC visions of leadership and engagement.

The IYC inspiration from revolutionary ideals such as anarchism, whether carried out successfully or not, has interconnected with various forms of music performed onsite, and with several activist networks oriented to autonomy, horizontality, or principles of “low-impact” ecological social practices. An IYC 2005 organizer, Potira Preiss, explained that the IYC history has also been inspired by the ideas and practices of Zapatistas, ecological villages or ecovillages, and temporary autonomous zones (Preiss,

23/1/2005). Within primarily rural ecovillages, typically 500 or fewer people have lived together and collaborated in efforts to sustain community life on a permanent basis. With shared values and practices devoted to the environment, ecovillages privilege low-impact social life to avoid exploiting the environment. During 1996, the Global Ecovillage Network was established as a result of the work of some 25 transnational activists to coordinate information for linking ecovillages around the world. Since that time, ecovillages have taken root in five continents. They include some twenty national and nine regional networks (see Global Ecovillage Network 2005; Jackson 2004: 25-27). The idea of an ecovillage draws inspiration from Indigenous communities past and present in terms of valuing the environment instead of capitalism and industrialization, and seeking self-governance instead of accepting a political status quo. All such ecological and self-determined initiatives have aimed in one form or another to resist the dominance of state or corporate governed spaces on multiple scales, as the WSF and IYC would later do.

In his theoretical and historical study of temporary autonomous zones, Hakim Bey argues that they can only be understood in relation to their own respective activities, shrouded in mystery from everyone else. Social actors involved in temporary autonomous zones have drawn on anarchist ideals of self-governance to undertake brief social encounters, and to both imagine and develop radical practices intent on redefining mainstream spaces (see Bey 1985, 1991). Some examples of temporary autonomy zones include warehouses used for raves, independent musical festivals, or community living spaces based on principles of horizontality and localized autonomy. Social networks, word of mouth, and the Internet are important means for bringing temporary autonomous zones to life. Like the IYC, they can only take place because people imagine and practice the possibilities together. The IYC imaginary of localized and collectively-run communities goes further in experimenting with multiple forms of activism than many such examples. The timelines of the Camps are temporary, but the emphasis is on making social practices sustainable not only inside them but also afterwards in the daily lives of former residents. The anarchist belief in autonomous self-rule has been among inspirational antecedents of the IYC.

The EZLN (the Zapatista National Liberation Army) in Mexico has been one of the most widely recognized instrumental influences for transnational activist initiatives of

the mid-1990s and beyond. The Zapatista uprising of January 1, 1994 in Chiapas, Mexico and its subsequent institutionalization as a determined and vocal alter-globalization movement emerged from a history of hundreds of years of Indigenous Mayan struggles against Spanish colonization. The EZLN denounced the implementation of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), and contributed to a reinvention of historical struggles for land reform through armed resistance initially, and then increasingly by using the Internet. As a movement started in Chiapas during the early 1980s, the EZLN adapted to the times by rallying support from both inside and outside of Mexico. It effectively created a frame for collective social action. Leaders such as Subcomandante Marcos linked the plight of the Indigenous peoples of Chiapas not only to globalization, but also with other movements seeking alternatives to stop the marginalization of the majority and the dominance of the few. Marcos argues that networks can intersect diverse activists through intercommunication that can lead to the creation of new collaborative horizontal spaces defined by participatory social inclusion (see Marcos 2003). His definition is important to bear in mind in thinking about the possibilities of horizontal activism in “open spaces”. One of his widely-quoted statements resonates with the WSF project: “One No, Many Yeses”. This implies “no” to the neoliberal paradigm and “yes” to multiple alternatives.

In 1996, the Zapatistas hosted the Intercontinental Meeting for Humanity and Against Neoliberalism in Chiapas. Michel Osterwil notes that social movements from 43 countries participated (2004: 190). During the same year the idea of a counter-summit to the World Economic Forum was proposed at the twentieth anniversary of the Tricontinental Centre in Leuven, Belgium. Three years later, some of the same activists took part in a working group in opposition to the World Economic Forum (WEF). It was known as “The Other Davos”. Sixty activists from 20 countries came together in Zurich, Switzerland between January 27 and 31, 1999 in a meeting that coincided with the WEF that year. Four organizations coordinated the counter-summit. It is important to note that one of them was the ATTAC headed by Bernard Cassen, while Brazil’s Landless Workers Movement (Movimento dos Trabalhadores Rurais Sem Terra – MST) was one of five invited social movements (see Houtart 2001). Both Cassen and the MST would

take leading roles in the WSF project slightly more than one year later, while the MST would also contribute directly to the IYC.

The role of the Internet must be understood as an integral aspect of transnational activism, especially in the case of the WSF. The civil society coalitions that succeeded in stopping the Multilateral Agreement on Investments in 1998 contributed much hope to activist networking in cyberspaces, public spaces, and social spaces of critical education exchanges (see Foster 1999; Barlowe and Clark 2001). Cyberspace communications between transnational activist networks played a key role in coordinating counter-summits and the subsequent waves of protest demonstrations. Since the “Battle of Seattle”, mass actions such as the Melbourne demonstration on September 11, 2000 against the World Economic Forum (Leite 2005: 66) further informed the emergence of the WSF and the IYC.

This thesis argues that the implications of neoliberalism and transnational forms of activism vitally contributed to the inception of the World Social Forum and the creation of the Intercontinental Youth Camp at the turn of the 21st Century. These influences, combined with the role of Brazilian party politics in Rio Grande Do Sul and CSMs in Brazil, laid the groundwork for the defining characteristics of the WSF. The IYC imaginaries and social activism would also come to be based on both historical and contemporary alternative visions but with adaptations that in part reflected a response to the WSF itself. It is fundamental to both historicize and conceptualize the Intercontinental Youth Camp in order to build understanding and learn from its practices. The five Camps as a whole shed light on broader struggles led by young people and human beings of all ages and backgrounds who are actively seeking to implement alternative imaginaries. In a finite world dominated by the vested interests of powerful states and multinational corporations, the IYC’s brief time in existence has profoundly contributed to transnational youth activism.

Thesis Organization

The next chapter presents the theoretical approach. It discusses the six main approaches used in this thesis. Chapter 3 examines the history of the IYC from 2001 to 2004. It explores how the IYC has been imagined, and how the Camp actually developed in practice, both internally and in relation to the WSF, the Forum’s Charter of Principles,

the International Council of the WSF, the host municipalities, and the decentralization of the Forum and the Camp. The central questions posed are: Who were the organizing groups of the IYC? Why and how did they shape the IYC(s)? How were the Camp's collaborative imaginaries applied as each annual experience unfolded? What challenges faced the IYC process? Chapter 4 then explores further the themes of Chapters 1 and 3 by undertaking a detailed case-study of IYC 2005. It draws mainly on primary data obtained at the Camp.

Chapter 5 addresses ontological and theoretical implications of issues examined in chapters 1-3, and analyzes the IYC and WSF frames and phenomena comparatively. This chapter also assesses the contributions of the IYC to both an emergent political generation and meanings of social constructions of youth. It comments as well on Youth Camp decentralization. It examines the effectiveness of the WSF and the IYC in challenging neoliberal globalization, their alternative imaginaries, and their five year outcomes. In addition, it briefly describes the trajectories of both processes since WSF 2005. Chapter 5 concludes by offering suggestions for future research on and related to the IYC phenomenon, and explores the IYC in terms of a politics of the imagination. Chapter 6 presents a brief synopsis of the thesis and summarizes its main arguments.

Chapter 2: Theoretical Approach

Introduction

This thesis draws on six theoretical perspectives used in social science research for understanding social activism and young people in order to illuminate distinct characteristics of the Intercontinental Youth Camp 2001-2005. The conceptual approaches directly relate to the principles, practices, activities, and social forms of organization of the Camp. They also serve to deepen understandings about the World Social Forum itself. This research paralleled the IYC in the sense of being exploratory from the outset. As of 2005, English writings on the WSF left the Camp almost invisible. The theoretical debates and concepts presented here are reference points that help guide my own analysis. The empirical data collected for this research serve a similar purpose, as do the secondary sources. More importantly, they all help to achieve a rich understanding of the IYC phenomenon. This preliminary study on the IYC does not try to build theory for theory's sake. Instead, it seeks to contribute to literature on the WSF, alter-globalization, and youth activism. The theoretical perspectives contribute to an analysis of the complexities within the IYC that have aimed to make alternative imaginaries viable, inclusive, desirable, and applicable beyond the Camp itself.

This chapter begins by identifying the key self-reflexive theories particular to the practice-based IYC experience. It proceeds to outline the six approaches, explaining their relevance to the IYC and why they work well to address different aspects of a holistic picture. Chapter 2 ends by tying together the theoretical approach and the central argumentation of the thesis.

This thesis uses the concept of “open space activism” to refer both to the social constructs of the Camps and to the exploratory interactions onsite. Although IYCs were opened for youth activists and several forms of political engagement, the extent of openness was circumscribed by the ways in which the Camps' organizing groups shaped the open space imaginary and associated practices by embedding their prefigured principles into the organizational model. Additional constraining factors were imposed by the WSF process and the host municipality.¹ Besides self-reflexive theoretical analysis of the IYC's alternative imaginaries and methodologies (i.e, self-management,

¹ This concept of open space activism inspired by Nunes 2005a; 2005b; 2005c.

horizontality, and the laboratory of practices), this study draws upon: 1) socialist anarchist theory, 2) theoretical debates about generational differences and the social construct of youth, 3) framing, 4) social movement social constructionist theory, 5) Arturo Escobar's concept of meshworks, and 6) Paulo Freire's conscientization. While I argue that the self-reflexive theories are most relevant for guiding a holistic and historical analysis of the IYC process, all of the approaches in separate ways generate reflection and insight on IYC agendas and alternative imaginaries.

Socialist Anarchist Theory

Many IYC residents, including some organizers and members of transnational activist networks, have identified with anarchist worldviews. Many socialist anarchist values have informed IYC discourse – direct democracy, self-governance, decentralization, self-organizing, respect for diversity, and rejection of hierarchy. More generally, anarchist theories provide imaginaries of freedom achieved through creative innovations (Ross 2003: 283-284; see Woodcock 1977; Goodway 1989; Carter 1971).

The theory of socialist anarchy has also influenced contemporary activist projects such as the IYC because this form of anarchism blames perpetual social inequalities on hierarchies and hierarchical forms of domination. While the IYC could not escape dependence on the state to enable it to function, the anarchist critique of private market monopolies and property laws has had great resonance. Socialist anarchism shares with neoclassical and neoliberal economic theory a high priority on individual freedom, but it is seen as being achieved through cooperation rather than competition. In particular, the revolutionary creative spirit of socialist anarchism speaks to the IYC experiment of encouraging self-governing residents to manage alternative practices cooperatively. This study reflects upon the links between anarchist thinking and IYC imaginaries, and asks questions about how the day-to-day living challenged the visions that socialist anarchist values proclaim.

The Social Construct of Youth and Generations

The concept of youth at the IYC relates to organizers, campers, and the IYC project itself. It assists in examining social groups who are engaged in the process, and in discussing political ideologies, gender, race, class, and access to knowledge. However, the IYC's concept of youth is problematic as it equates with political activism and rejects

conventional understandings based on a demographic of adolescents and young adults. Pierre Bourdieu argued that the concept of youth has often been rendered hollow and ambiguous by the way it has been configured and manipulated. He himself conceptualized youth as social groups of young people who exercise agency. He expanded on earlier definitions emphasizing biologically ascribed and structurally inscribed determinants (see Bourdieu 1993: 94-96). His view informs my own, and assists in understanding the concept of youth in the IYC. Youth can be seen as a discursive category associated with social identities, roles, meanings, and places amidst intergenerational cultural relations (see Prasad 1992: 1-4). The diversity of youth is apparent as a matter of discourse, age, identities, culture or location in history. Generational cohorts also attain definition from shared historical experiences of phenomena such as war, economic downturns, technological change, or educational opportunities (see Ryder 1965: 843-846).

Karl Mannheim made a compelling case for viewing generational transition as a process shaped by historical continuities that is mediated by societal experiences, social and personal consciousness, and human cultural activity (Mannheim 1952: 290-292). In Mannheim's gaze, generations are not marked simply by age, but instead by cultural and historical transformation. One cohort of people can represent a generation, but those people often experience the same historical period differently (Mannheim 1952: 303-306). Philip Abrams argued that experience, rather than will power, has enabled youth to recreate social histories related to their cohort generations. Abrams viewed communication networks available to youth as catalysts to shape their cohesiveness as a generation (see Abrams 1982: 253-256). These authors rightfully suggest that conceptualizing youth requires great attention to specific historical contexts. They make convincing arguments that the dynamics between agency and structure are based in generational relations of power, cultural interactions, and change.

There is considerable ambiguity or even hollowness associated with social constructions of youth. The General Assembly of the United Nations proclaimed 1999 as the International Year of Youth, defining youth as a cohort between the ages of 15 and 24 (Gidley 2003: 3). In its 2003 annual report on youth, the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs reported that almost 40% of the human population was aged

24 or younger. Approximately 1.1 billion people were between the ages of 15 and 24, constituting around 18% of humankind. About 85% of young people aged 15-24 lived in developing countries; 60% of this global population was located in Asia, 15% in Africa, and 10% in Latin America and the Caribbean. The remaining 15% resided in developed countries (The United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs 2003: iii-5). In the contemporary world, it is critical to hear the voices of the young and their ideas for addressing concerns about contemporary capitalist globalization. The IYC has been a significant attempt to fill this gap.

Individuals called youth and categorical groups defined through this social construct exercise agency in reproducing cultural realities by expressing themselves creatively as social actors. I argue that the notion of youth represents a multifaceted stage of life based on sharing lived experiences and exercising human agency in ways that are shaped by personal background and social conditions at large. Increasingly the Internet is playing a role in creating global networks of young people, and it has been a useful tool for both the IYC and WSF. However, use of the Internet for activist purposes remains circumscribed by people's access to resources, socioeconomic backgrounds, identities, and spoken languages.

Despite viewing youth through a particular ideological lens based on experimenting in open space activism, the social experiences of IYCs shed light on how young people have been involved in alter-globalization movements. Moreover, this study argues that the WSF and IYC activities have differed markedly in terms of age and generational participants. For example, a large scale quantitative study of WSF 2005 and IYC 2005 that involved surveying more than 2,500 people (I analyze data from this survey in Chapter 4) found that almost 94% of all registered campers (35,000) were between the ages of 14-34, and more than 60% of them were younger than 25. In contrast, and only referring to Brazilians who made up 80% (73,856) of the Forum's registered participants, fewer than 65% of them were under 35. The survey found that 37.4% of Brazilian participants were between the ages of 14-24, and 26.5% of them 25-34 years old (see IBASE 2006: 9, 14, 16, 19). In addition to these data, it is noteworthy to report that the researchers "observe[d] how participation in social movements or organizations [was] distributed by age, [revealing] a clear tendency for the older

[activists] to participate in this type of organization/movement more than young people” (IBASE 2006: 32). These findings send a clear signal that young people are key actors in the WSF alongside established social movements and organizations.

It has been argued that the IYC represents “a new political imagination of a new generation” that draws upon previous and existing revolutionary movements and enables constructive expressions for new revolutionary possibilities (IYC 2004, see IYC 2004 – India, Newsletter: 2). The World March of Women, as part of a statement issued following WSF 2003, highlighted the importance of debates coming out of “the emergence of a new political generation signalled by the youth camp” (World March of Women 2003: 1). These claims are analyzed in reference to the first five IYCs by asking: Who defines political imaginaries for a supposed new generation? Who defines what such a generation is and what is being imagined? How do such expressions get made and why? What are the actual practices that signalled those assertions about the emergence of a new political generation coming out of the Intercontinental Youth Camp? Questions about the two conceptions of youth – one defined by age and the other by the IYC’s social construction that is not age-specific – are taken up in Chapter 5 in the context of a discussion of the so-called new political generation.

Framing and the Intercontinental Youth Camp

The concept of framing helps to understand how IYC organizers have depicted and mobilized youth to shape the Camps. Erving Goffman developed the concept of framing to explain how people make sense out of socially organized spaces of experience. He argued that frames guide interactions and mediate how people interrelate (see Goffman 1974: 10-11, 345-347). In social movement activity and activism more generally, frames have typically been statements articulated by movement leaders to seek out new members and maintain organizational commitment. Framing visions, objectives, and motivations are usually deployed to organize actual collaborative work to translate the framers’ messages from intended actions into social realities (see Snow and Benford 1988; Tarrow 2002; Buechler 2000; Snow 1986; and Goodman 2002).

Both the WSF and the IYC have generated frames for their concepts and practices that have been posted on their websites. Statements have highlighted the need to address certain social causes. Leaders have embedded within them underlying meanings and

ideological standpoints that place boundaries around open spaces of activism. In the context of the IYC, the concept of framing helps to assess how organizers have generated meaning for the Camp's causes and practices. It guides discussions on how organizational frames corresponded to camp life. In turn, framing helps to make sense of residents' perspectives on the Camp, particularly the fifth one. Framing has been useful in mapping and navigating my own research on the IYC. It provides a conceptual lens through which to comment on how resident campers, volunteers, and organizers have become involved in IYC processes. It also anchors analysis on how the meanings of social practice at the Camps have related to the frames deployed by organizers.

One way to conceptualize the IYC is to see it as promoting collective action frames to reach out to a diverse range of young political actors. Another way is to use the concept of master frames to better understand the practices aimed at realizing cultural and social changes. Sydney Tarrow (1992) argues that social movement organizers craft frames in language that will reinvent cultural imaginaries and resonate with the intended population's perceptions and values. In turn, available communications resources and associated frame resonance largely inform movements' successes (Tarrow 1992: 189, 191, 197). Snow and Benford (1992) argue that effective collective action frames tie together issues and involve actors in unifying collective interpretations of events, experiences, orientations, and actions (Snow and Benford 1992: 137-138).

Snow and Benford (1988) conceptualize master frames as overarching meanings premised on linking a wide variety of social movements. They are supposed to provide common calls for collective action. The authors argue that master frames must be practical and applicable. The master framers must both identify and validate a given set of social problem(s), solution(s), and reasons for motivating and gaining the active involvement of movement actors. Snow and Benford assert that master frames must speak to the intended audience's experiences and perceptions of the world, always projecting appropriate cultural norms and meanings (Snow and Benford 1988: 205, 208, 210). Theoretically speaking, this thesis argues that the IYC projected a master frame more than the WSF because the Camp evolved as a more practice-oriented process after 2002. Nevertheless, both processes (especially the WSF) promoted multiple ways to

coordinate actions against neoliberalism, primarily through effective mobilization of CSMs.

The initial WSF slogan: “Another World is Possible” exemplifies a collective action frame. It is based on a proactive and collaborative imperative to dismantle neoliberal globalization. The WSF has sought to involve CSMs and alter-globalization movements in the collective cause of building an alternative world. The IYC has developed a parallel purpose though its frame premised on the hope of fostering collective youth activism through shared lived experiences. In the pages that follow, I focus on how these frames developed. An even more important question examines the implications of the IYC frames of alternative imaginaries for the practice of early 21st century activism.

Social Constructionist Theory

The social movement approach of social constructionist theory helps to assess questions about the relationship between communication and social interaction at the IYC. The approach also expands the theoretical outlook of framing by analyzing the production of meaning at the IYC. The social constructionist theoretical lens focuses on how meanings, interpretations, definitions, and networks construct social worlds and especially collective action (Buechler 2000: 40-41; Snow et al 1986; Snow and Benford 1988; Goodwin and Jasper 2003). In describing social movements, theorists such as David Snow adapted Erving Goffman’s ideas on framing by adding conceptual understandings about how movement actors construct solidarity through processes of networking, mobilization, and motivation (Buechler 2000: 40-41). However, these theorists downplay external circumstances in their explanations of how actors come together and how movements are situated by multiple macro-level and micro-level political, cultural, and economic forces. Nonetheless, paying analytic attention to framing prioritizes processes of individual involvement, subjective perspectives, and ongoing interactions to sustain mobilization, networks, and momentum.

Analyzing framing in this way focuses attention on how movement leaders have tried to socially construct shared meanings in order to recruit people and deepen commitment and efforts on behalf of social causes. Subjective perspectives are indispensable in my view to understand collective actions and processes such as the IYC.

The organization of mobilizational efforts has involved many groups, especially organizers from Rio Grande Do Sul, Brazil. The productions of meaning and communication in the context of the IYC are central topics of discussion in this study. This sociological gaze on social movements requires further expansion to assess the complex dynamics of networks and mobilization in the context of the IYC project.

Arturo Escobar's Concept of Meshworks and the IYC

Arturo Escobar's concept of meshworks helps to assess how the Camps' interconnected geographically dispersed social movements and networks, on the one hand, and resident campers' social identities, on the other. It also helps in analyzing the Camp model as a space for alternative social practices, and as a catalyst for launching regional and local Youth Camps. In order to comment further on these subjects, it is worth quoting Escobar's (2005) definition of meshworks:

anti-globalization struggles are best seen as horizontal, self-organizing meshworks of heterogeneous sites/struggles brought together...particularly [by] NGOs and pioneering social movements....Meshworks can be seen as apparatuses for the production of discourses and practices....Meshworks create flows that link [a] site...with other sites and networks.... At their best, these movements thus enact, in a nutshell, a cultural politics of difference...meshworking enable[s] social movements to... drive the dynamic of self-organization (Escobar 2005: 7-8).

The concept of a meshwork signifies the physical, geographical, and cyberspace places where alter-globalization movements converge to produce new forms of social practice. The term suggests meanings different from a network of activists or a social movement because a meshwork offers opportunities for social actors from various networks and movements to join or mesh together to express their respective struggles and develop new dynamics. Escobar's concept does not refer to a network of networks or a movement of movements because a meshwork is neither institutionalized nor does it serve as a source of communication for other network or movement organizations. It can be thought of as a place without a command centre that people occupy and relate within to work on alter-globalization.

By examining roles of networks, mobilization, and camp social life from the perspective of meshworks, the plans and outcomes of IYCs can be juxtaposed. Furthermore, the Camps can be assessed for their capacities to link youth activist

networks and participants' social identities. The Camp can be seen as a meshwork that emphasizes horizontality instead of hierarchy, and that promotes alternatives to the political and economic status quo. However, it has also evolved with external dependencies on government agencies to put logistics in place. Organizers have played a key role in defining imaginaries and practices, but they have also interacted with diverse geographical networks of social actors and self-organized alter-globalization movements. Many networks have been involved in socially constructing the Camps, which has even led to the creation of smaller Youth Camp meshworks in several geographic sites.

The Theoretical Relevance of Paulo Freire to the IYC

The activity spaces of the Camp have seen alternatives emerging from a variety of sources and methodologies, especially from popular education based on participatory dialogue and politicization. This thesis theorizes the pedagogical dynamism of the Camps by drawing on the Brazilian educator and popular education theorist Paulo Freire. Freire's discussion of the roles and means of politicization and grounded social change within human relations applies to the IYC. He argued in his famous book, Pedagogy of the Oppressed (1970), that human agency and the politicization of human consciousness can take shape through a process of conscientization rooted in thematic popular education methodology and action-reflective dialectics oriented towards social transformation. Freire conceptualized conscientization as an interactive transformative process based on lived experience and group dialogue among oppressed people. In ideal terms, it provides a collective basis for liberation from their objectified status under their oppressors. Freire (1985) explained that through conscientization, the conditions of oppression can be deconstructed and then reconstructed to actualize new multiple vantage points and agency for collective/personal change (see Freire 1985: 84, 85, 89).

The concept of conscientization applies to women, men, and the IYC (2004 and 2005) definitions of youth alike. Despite the questionable notion that IYC participants have been among the oppressed, the process of conscientization illuminates programs of activities prioritizing thematic workshops and seminars that began in IYC 2002. The opportunities inherent in the Camps for participatory dialogues and group reflections were only brief and not necessarily life-long. But learning through shared experience opened a variety of unique social dynamics.

Theoretical Argumentation about the IYC Phenomenon

This thesis demonstrates that the IYC's own mesh of theories and activities provides insight on contemporary transnational youth activism. It also contributes to knowledge about how locally-based young people arranged ways for others from the same country, continent, or elsewhere to self-organize and engage politically and socially. This study documents how two urban settings were shaped into Camps premised on low-impact ecology and alternative ways of living. Conversely, it shows that, despite all the solidarity work between farmer cooperatives and organizers in Brazil to counteract consumerist practices, capitalist markets still arrived on the scene. Moreover, this thesis presents conceptual and analytical arguments about why and how it was impossible to make self-management viable, well functioning, and inclusive. This alternative imaginary depended on horizontality, which in turn, was beyond reach amidst massive scales of operation. Furthermore, many people were uninterested and or uninvolved in alter-globalization onsite.

This thesis argues that the IYC took place in vibrantly coloured environments based on "open space activism" and alternative imaginaries. It became inextricably linked to the WSF, and it also evolved because of highly successful mobilization efforts that brought together "youth" and politics into a meshwork of network encounters. Meanwhile, the political and financial support given mainly for infrastructure and logistics showed why there has been a fine balance between agency and structure in the WSF process.

Internal contradictions and unreachable organizational aims largely shaped a five-year history of great challenges and experimentation. Nevertheless, since 2002 the Intercontinental Youth Camp has blended creative forms of activism and has made a difference in challenging capitalist globalization. It has been part of a broader alter-globalization struggle that persisted or came into being after the fall of the Soviet Union and that continued to search for alternatives after September 11, 2001. At the dawn of the new millennia, the IYC would come into being as a response to the inaugural World Social Forum.

Chapter 3: The Intercontinental Youth Camp 2001-2004

Introduction

This chapter argues that the Intercontinental Youth Camp developed as a concrete reaction to both the World Social Forum and the global dominance of capitalism. The IYC evolved to advocate the human agency of youth activists and their engagement in experimentation with alternative social and political practices. The WSF and IYC have both been rooted in transnational activism. Their approaches differed initially, but came closer together between 2002 and 2003. Both were developed and coordinated primarily by their leadership structures. This chapter, like much of the rest of this thesis, focuses on the claim of the IYC to be a “laboratory of practices” within a horizontally self-managed space. In examining the Camp’s programming and social relations onsite from 2001 through 2004, the chapter illustrates how alternatives were put in motion, but against a backdrop of organizational challenges and pitfalls. These are issues that further clarify the meanings of “open space activism”. This chapter also briefly compares the IYC’s imaginary of self-management with the practice of collective self-management within Movimento dos Trabalhadores Rurais Sem Terra (MST) settlements. It examines as well other social experiments, which either inspired or have similar characteristics to the IYC model of self-management. The chapter addresses Brazilian politics and organizational decisions that impacted both the WSF and IYC during their initial four years. In addition, it discusses the changes that occurred with the shift from Porto Alegre in 2001-2003 to Mumbai in 2004.

World Social Forum: Origins

The emergence of the IYC can only be understood in the context of the historical development of the World Social Forum. Both processes took shape in part as a result of transnational activist movements that began to consolidate by the mid-1990s to challenge the implications of neoliberalism worldwide. The origins of both, and especially the IYC, are rooted as well in Rio Grande Do Sul, Brazil. While the WSF may well represent historically unprecedented civil society initiatives, it is clear in retrospect that many people were excluded in 2001, including youth activists. In response, hundreds of young people in Porto Alegre and Rio Grande Do Sul became excited about the prospect of the Forum. However, they had to negotiate with the municipality about how to take part.

The concept of a World Social Forum was first proposed by Oded Grajew, the coordinator of the Brazilian Business Association for Citizenship (CIVES). He collaborated closely with Francisco Whitaker of the Brazilian Justice and Peace Commission (CBJP). The idea took off in January and February 2000 and led to a meeting in March. Grajew and Whitaker went to Paris that month to meet with Bernard Cassen, who was at that time the director of the Association for the Taxation of Financial Transactions for the Aid of Citizens (ATTAC France) and Director and Chair of the newspaper *Le Monde Diplomatique*. This meeting brought together two key Brazilian civil society figures with an established French transnational activist, and launched what has become a cross-continental initiative for activism in the 21st century. They made three key decisions: first, the Forum should take place in the “Global South”, preferably in Porto Alegre, Brazil; second, it should be named the World Social Forum to highlight a countervailing vision to that of the World Economic Forum (WEF); and, third, it should occur at the same time as the WEF (see Ponniah and Fisher 2003: 4; Patomaki and Teivainen with Ronkko 2002; Teivainen 2004: 122-123; Whitaker 2005: 166).

Bernard Cassen first suggested that Porto Alegre should host the WSF because of its progressive participatory budgeting carried out by successive Workers Party (PT) governments at the municipal level since 1989, and by the PT at the state level in Rio Grande Do Sul from 1998 to 2002 (Sader 2004: 253). Soon after the Paris meeting, the World Social Forum Organizing Committee (OC) was established by eight Brazilian civil society entities. Six had headquarters in São Paulo, among them ABONG (Brazilian Association of Non-Governmental Organizations), CIVES (Brazilian Entrepreneurs Association for Citizenship), CUT (Brazilian Workers Central Union), and MST (Brazilian Landless Peasant and Rural Workers Movement). The other two based in Brazil’s biggest city included the one transnational organization on the OC – ATTAC (Association for the Taxation of Financial Transactions for the Aid of Citizens) – and the one activist network – Rede Social de Justiça e Direitos Humanos (Justice and Human Rights Social Network). The other members were CBJP (Brazilian Commission for Justice and Peace), based in the nation’s capital of Brasília, and IBASE (Brazilian Institute of Social and Economic Analysis), located in Rio de Janeiro (see Brazilian Organizing Committee 2002: 1-2). CUT was the country’s main trade union federation,

and it operated under the central leadership of the PT (Sader 2002: 92). While the initial WSF OC broadly represented Brazilian civil society actors, youth activists in Brazil and global cultural pluralities were not reflected in its membership.

Most individual founding members of the WSF OC were middle-aged men (Teivainen 2003: 8). They successfully pitched the idea of the WSF first to the PT-governed Municipality of Porto Alegre and then to the PT state government of Rio Grande Do Sul (Teivainen 2004: 123). In July 2000, discussions with the municipal and state governments led to pledges of time and resources to assist the WSF OC in hosting the inaugural Forum in Porto Alegre (Whitaker 2005: 166; Teivainen 2004: 123). During the next month, acceptance of the WSF proposal at a world assembly of social movements prompted an organizational process that began a mere five months before the opening of the first Forum (Whitaker 2005: 166). Meanwhile, *Le Monde Diplomatique* was crucial in disseminating information on the WSF internationally (Leite 2005: 86). The transnational presence of Brazilian and French social actors was an important element in establishing the WSF process, but the location of the Forum was an even more central factor shaping its character. The plan for the WSF originated in 2000 as a result of historical dynamics between human agencies and social structures. Members of both transnational and Brazilian CSOs, who opposed neoliberal globalization, worked together to establish the inaugural Forum in light of recognizing and taking advantage of favourable political conditions in Porto Alegre, Brazil.

The Municipality of Porto Alegre and the state government of Rio Grande Do Sul have been pivotal actors in the development of both the Forum and the Camp. Some of the Brazilian social movements that had arisen after the military dictatorship (1964-1984) played key roles as well. One significant outcome of the struggles that led to a new era of national democracy in 1984 was the founding of the Brazilian Workers Party (Partido dos Trabalhadores – PT), which built a strong base of rural and urban support among social movements, CSOs, and trade unions. The leader of the Federal Workers Party in Brazil at the time of the founding of the WSF was Luis Inacio “Lula” da Silva, also the founder of the CUT. Many citizens of Porto Alegre, where the PT was first elected to municipal power, would play a significant part in defining of the WSF and the IYC. Transnational movements and networks also contributed, though many activists were unable to travel

from their home countries and countless others were not invited to participate or simply had no idea about the supposed world initiative.

The Forum was held from January 25 to 30, 2001 at the Pontifical Catholic University (PUC) of Rio Grande Do Sul in Porto Alegre. Its themes focused on a wide range of social justice issues and neoliberal globalization. The Forum attracted approximately 15,000 participants from all continents (though mostly South America and Europe), and was conducted in four official languages – Portuguese, English, Spanish, and French. Nunes notes that the slogan advanced in the opening march was “Against Neo-liberalism and For Life” (Nunes 2005b:18). The Forum involved participants who mainly stayed in hotels, but hundreds of participants travelled from a temporary campsite in Parque de Harmonia.

The Emergence of the Intercontinental Youth Camp

Ana Paula De Carli – an organizer of the IYC process since it began – explained the emergence of the Camp in the IYC 2005 workshop on “Youth Camps around the world”. The organizers of the initial Forum invited only established non-governmental organizations (NGOs), much to the dismay of many youth activist groups based in Porto Alegre and the surrounding area. Many of these groups demanded that they be allowed to participate in the WSF. Instead, a decision was taken by the municipality to set up big television screens in public spaces so that the youth could watch the proceedings at the PUC. By late December 2000, the screens had not yet been provided, and many young people who wanted to be in Porto Alegre for the WSF did not yet have places to sleep. At that stage, some of the excluded groups were already initiating alternative activities. They planned to set up a camp in Parque de Harmonia (De Carli, 25/1/2005). This park is a three square kilometre area located in Porto Alegre between three main city roads, one of which separates it from the shoreline of Guaíba Lake. It is a few kilometres from the downtown core and several kilometres away from the PUC.

The Camp’s organizing committee was called the WSF Youth Committee. Its major initial task was to negotiate with the state and the municipality for financial and infrastructural support (Nunes, 2005c: 282). It managed to secure backing from the City Council of Porto Alegre’s Committee on Human Rights and Citizenship Coordination (Oliveira, 2005: 319). The WSF Youth Committee was comprised of youth members of

Brazilian political parties. The majority of them represented the governing PT. There were also members of the Communist Party of Brazil, the Unified Socialist Workers Party, and the Socialist Youth Union (see Nunes 2005c: 282; Oliveira 2005: 319). The Youth Camp name was more relevant in Latin America than elsewhere because “youth” in many countries implied a political category for leftist party politics. The organizers were unaware that the term “intercontinental” would be an awkward translation in the eyes of many in the “Battle of Seattle” and/or other transnational protests in cities such as Prague (Nunes 2005c: 282) during the late-1990s. In light of uncertainty about the prospective number of campers and vagueness about what the WSF might entail, the Youth Committee members had to undertake their decision-making pragmatically (Oliveira 2005: 319).

There was considerable disagreement over what the Camp might achieve, and varying political visions vied for directing the program of activities. Eventually there was agreement that there would be an alternative space to the Forum in Harmonia Park designated for 800 youth who identified with the political ideology of socialism. However, at least four times as many campers ended up converging onsite (De Carli, 25/1/2005). Many were students from universities in Rio Grande Do Sul, and youth from Uruguay, Argentina, and Chile also had a noticeable presence (Leite 2005: 90). However, despite representation from Europe and the Americas (Nunes 2005c: 282), the Camp was mostly Brazilian and Portuguese was the dominant language.

IYC 2001 was largely just a place of social life and camping. The City Council provided a special bus service during mornings and afternoons between the park and the university, and many campers took advantage of it (Oliveira 2005: 320). The WSF Youth Committee ran a small political program in a “Youth Plenary.” However, only 70 or so people took part, most of whom were members of the youth wings of the leftist political parties. At night, there was a cultural program on a small stage in Parque de Harmonia, but most residents chose instead to check out the nearby Pordo-Sol Amphitheatre used for WSF 2001 (Nunes 2005c: 282). The Camp proved to be more popular than its organizers intended. It showed signs of cross-cultural interaction, but most of all it demonstrated that thousands of young people had a keen interest in participating in the Forum. Without the advent of the WSF, there might not have been an IYC. Aside from

the appeal of the WSF, Brazilian leftist political parties, especially the PT, were also crucial backdrops for the first group of organizers. The youth militants quickly managed to acquire legal permission from local and state governments to make the inaugural Camp into a living reality and an alternative space of activism linked primarily to the Forum.

An IYC Manifesto

As IYC 2001 came to a close, some of the youth affiliated with Brazilian political parties issued a manifesto (De Carli, 25/1/2005). The production of “We the Youth” was a remarkable outcome, especially in the somewhat chaotic context of the first Camp. It provides an important ideological benchmark for understanding later developments in the IYC and what shaped them. Issued on January 29, the second last day of the WSF, it contained a joint statement without indication of authorship (Authors Unknown 2001b). The manifesto noted that youth activists from around the world had converged as part of the WSF to dream and make possible another world. The writers acknowledged the WSF as a space for civil society actors to debate alternatives to the World Economic Forum. They noted that the WEF kept capitalism intact for the benefit of wealthy people to profit at the expense of everybody else. The document also flagged the brutal treatment of young protestors by the police in Davos.

The manifesto writers deplored contemporary capitalism for orchestrating the misery, hunger, and unemployment impacting billions of people worldwide, and they blamed the system for fostering global environmental degradation. Concerns also were expressed about the onslaught of privatization, the curtailment of public services and labour rights, and harsh measures for “Third World” debt repayment. The authors condemned contemporary corporate-dominated global market systems, speculative financial structures that generated out of control capital flows, and the concentration of military and economic power in the U.S. The manifesto argued that neoliberalism and American hegemony were in crisis and on the verge of collapse (though without any explanation or accompanying analysis).

The manifesto’s critique of global contexts particular to that time was supplemented by a discourse on the need for alternatives. It called for international campaigns and collective practices led by youth activists to displace contemporary global market systems of production, distribution, and private ownership. The manifesto was

written in solidarity with struggles located in and around Latin America and the Middle East. Its authors supported concerted efforts to stop the implementation of the Free Trade Area of the Americas (following up on the protests nine months earlier at the Summit of the Americas in Québec City, Canada). They urged new safeguards to foster social and economic equality and create a world without oppression of people or degradation of the environment. The writers sought alternatives for all youth to have access to free public education, health services, leisure time activities, and a choice of sexual orientation. Meanwhile, they encouraged collective struggle against xenophobia and racism. The document extended support to resistance against contemporary global political economic systems such as the convergence of social actors in the “Battle of Seattle”. It also extended support to peoples’ struggles for self-determination, and freedom of cultural expression for youth groups such as the hip-hop movement.

The manifesto portrayed youth as a global aggregate particularly affected adversely by contemporary globalization. It linked many different criticisms of neoliberal capitalism by identifying serious issues experienced by the great majority of people (of all ages) on Earth such as unemployment, low wages, the privatization of education, racism, gender oppression, and/or other forms of discrimination. In line with long-time Marxist analysis, the activists of the first Camp called on youth to collaborate in actions of resistance with oppressed workers. The authors even proclaimed that the alternative needed is a world based on socialism. The eleven-paragraph document concluded with a vision of a new century and a celebration of the WSF and IYC processes: “[in the 21st Century] mankind will have gotten rid of the capitalist barbarism once and for all. The youth claims and proposes the celebration of the II World Social Forum and the II Intercontinental Youth Camp in Porto Alegre.” In sum, this document highlighted some of the most pressing issues facing the majority of people on Earth at the dawn of the 21st century. In addition, it advocated a political ideology that in practice had required and would continue to need a strong nation-state. Its discourse identified widely voiced critiques of the global neoliberal project, and called for new methods of thinking, which the second IYC and WSF sought to bring. The depiction of youth as an aggregate category of oppressed people was insufficiently justified. However, the emphasis on

young people's human agency as a necessary tool in social struggle would evolve as an important aspect of the IYC project.

Implications of WSF 2001 & Questioning Leaderless Activism

The first World Social Forum generated great enthusiasm among both organizers and participants who had understandably been uncertain about what to expect. The experience prompted the decision of the Brazilian Organizing Committee (OC) to return the Forum to Porto Alegre in 2002. The WSF OC also encouraged the establishment of mobilizing committees to bring together CSMs in as many countries as possible, inviting them to propose thematic workshops and recruit more participants for the second Forum (see WSF website home page: Mobilization Committees, last consulted for this thesis, January 2006; Barlow and Clark 2001: 204). The impetus on CSMs to consolidate followed upon the "Porto Alegre Call for Mobilization" at WSF 2001, which led to the formation of the Assembly of Social Movements (see Leite 2005: 84; Waterman 2004a: 56; Waterman 2004b: 154). This Assembly would later create meeting spaces for social movements to convene, formulate positions, and plan collective actions within the WSF process and throughout the planet (see WSF website home page: Call for action agenda, last consulted for this thesis, January 2006).

Meanwhile, youth activists based in Porto Alegre and around Rio Grande Do Sul had their own plans for creating a second Intercontinental Youth Camp in Parque de Harmonia. Soon after IYC 2001, a broader Youth Committee was set up. It consisted of leftist youth political party members and new sets of actors, including "the student movement, street children's movement, hip-hop movement, community radio stations, black movement, and the free sexual orientation movement" (Oliveira 2005: 320). Another group that was to provide extremely important input was the Free Metropolitan Council of Architecture Students. Its members "brought with them the concept of the Youth Camp as a city" (Nunes 2005c: 283).

The WSF Youth Committee morphed into the Camp Organizing Committee (Comitê Organizador do Acampamento – COA) comprised of two interconnected bodies: the Rio Grande do Sul Youth Committee, run mostly by the autonomous social movements; and a National Youth Committee, dominated by leftist partisan youth (Nunes 2005c: 283). The establishment by the COA of Camp Organizational Commissions to

work towards the second Camp marked a commitment to practice consensus decision-making (De Carli, 3/2/2005). The executive office of the IYC Youth Committee stayed in Porto Alegre, while the WSF OC remained based in São Paulo (Nunes 2005c: 283).

A document issued during the spring of 2001 proclaimed that the IYC aimed to unify actions based on sharing a common space for creativity and collective expressions of human agency. The writers complained that the waves of global protests had not gone far enough to present viable political alternatives. They argued that such protests simply reactively contested capitalism (Authors Unknown, 2001a). The original WSF and IYC organizers wanted to launch new, more concrete phases of alternative struggles against neoliberal capitalist globalization. At the same time, these groups were neither democratic, nor transparent to most activists. In contrast to the founding members of the WSF, members of the IYC commissions lacked sufficient resources and networks to launch mobilization campaigns far beyond Rio Grande Do Sul, let alone Brazil. They relied on their own network affiliations in Porto Alegre, and were mostly limited to recruiting new people that had enough time and interest to work voluntarily on the project. Although both venues were developed through extensive consultations (especially the WSF), the establishment of each signalled the emergence of organizational hierarchies.

Stephanie Ross (2003) argues that many of the contemporary anti-corporate movements have rhetorically masked the issue of internal hierarchies. Debates over the nature of leadership have often been suppressed in a context where the ideal of self-leadership has been proclaimed. She posits that widespread denial of leadership renders organizers unaccountable, and has tainted the reputations of those who have taken up leadership roles. Without mechanisms to account for the actions of de-facto or ad-hoc leaders, shared agreements on how to evaluate leadership or movement processes have been largely absent. Thus, in debates within movement organizations and in scholarly and journalistic commentaries, the role of key organizers has been subjected to very little scrutiny. Experimentation on how to deal with this question has been minimal (Ross 2003: 294-295). This question of internal hierarchies raised by Stephanie Ross is a central predicament examined in reference to each of the five Camps. The question is also critical in relating the WSF's organizational structures to the IYC's, and in analyzing the

“leaderless” imaginary of the WSF as a whole. This thesis demonstrates why it is pivotal to focus foremost on the leadership apparatus of both processes to historicize the IYC.

I argue that the organizers of the IYC have gone further than the organizers of the WSF towards (but have still fallen short of) creating a horizontal and leaderless meeting space. I do not postulate or theorize about what such a space would look like, if it is possible, or how it could or would function in reality. Instead, this thesis merely examines claims and principles of leaderless activism in the context of the IYC and the WSF. It analyzes their organizational activities over the five year period and, in turn, demonstrates that the leaders of the IYC process between 2002 and 2005 often did practice their discourse of horizontality. However, several instances of hierarchical decision-making shaped the open space activism and activities of each Camp as well.

The WSF Charter of Principles and the WSF International Council

Following WSF 2001, the OC made two key decisions. Firstly, it sought to define parameters of the Forum space; secondly, it made a determination to move beyond an agenda of international civil society mobilization. The processes entailed fundamental consequences for the IYC trajectory.

The eight Brazilian members of the Organizing Committee drafted a Charter of Principles, which was adopted by the OC in São Paulo, Brazil on April 9, 2001. The Charter outlined how the WSF would facilitate its purposes and goals. The Brazilian organizers wanted to consult with other CSOs on the Charter of Principles, and also to create an international organizational body for the WSF process. As a result, they collaborated with civil society movements that were involved in organizing the first Forum in hopes of establishing a transnational meeting with dozens of other CSOs from several countries (Leite 2005: 97). The objective was to move the Forum beyond Brazil onto a world scale.

From June 9 to 11, 2001, some 70 organizations convened to establish the World Social Forum International Council (IC) (Whitaker 2005: 166). While the IC would play a role in developing policy guidelines and strategic directions, the OC made it clear at that stage that the IC would not be the main decision-maker in the WSF. It would not even determine its own composition: “[The] IC will not be an authority in a power structure, and will not have mechanisms for disputing representation, nor for voting”

(Brazilian Organizing Committee June 22 2002: 1). The move broadened the representation of regions from around the world, but many areas and forms of diversity were still missing, including the global arena of youth activism.

On June 10, 2001, the IC modified and approved the WSF Charter. One of the modifications altered Principle 9. The ninth Principle explained the Forum was open to pluralism and the diversity of cultures, generations, ethnicities, and genders provided their engagement abided by the 14 Principles. However, the same principle prohibited both military organizations and political parties from participating in the Forum. Instead of simply prohibiting political parties from the Forum, political party members were excluded. A clause was kept in Principle 9 for government leaders and members of legislatures. They were allowed to participate by means of invitation, provided that they committed themselves to the Charter. (To see both versions of the WSF Charter of Principles, see Anwur, Escobar, Sen, Waterman 2004: pp. 67-71. For an account of how the differing versions of the WSF Charter of Principles may have caused confusion, see Sen 2004b).

The WSF Charter also had ambiguities. For example, Principle 5 stated that the WSF sought to link only CSMs and CSOs from across the planet, yet without being an arena that would represent “world civil society” (see WSF website home page: Charter of Principles, last consulted for this thesis, April 2006). The sixth Principle stipulated that the WSF was a non-deliberative/non-declarative space without capacity to issue declarations on behalf of participants’ interests or proposals for alternatives. The WSF Charter of Principles intended the Forum to be an open venue for participating groups to express and build on their respective orientations and strategies, subject only to shared commitments to bury all forms of imperialism and to overcome oppression from contemporary neoliberal globalization. The overarching imaginary was to build societal alternatives around the planet (see WSF website home page: Charter of Principles, last consulted for this thesis, April 2006).

These provisions were somewhat contradictory and controversial because certain actors were to be denied voice in what was supposed to be an open and inclusive space, and the self-selected Brazilian organizers who drafted the original Charter defined boundaries around that supposed open space without clear definitions of civil society or

civil society actors. (For a range of debates on the Forum space, see Leite 2005; Wright 2005; Conway 2005 and 2004; Sen 2005c, 2004a, 2002; Escobar 2004; Hardt 2004; Mertes 2004; Vargas 2004; Hardt and Negri 2003; Ponniah and Fisher 2003; Waterman 2003; and especially Whitaker 2003 and 2004).²

A scholar on the WSF, Boa Ventura de Santos, is correct in arguing that both the Brazilian OC and the IC were self-selected. Neither body was elected by movements and organizations outside of the civil society organizers who largely shaped the first Forum. Nor was either body accountable to a broader constituency (Santos 2003: 11-12). The WSF structures had no democratic mechanisms for forming a collective will or reaching binding decisions since there was no body with legislative functions (Patomäke and Teivainen 2004: 150). The notion of constituting a body similar to the IC was discussed within IYC organizational ranks, but did not materialize (De Carli, 25/1/2005)

The IYC 2002 Commissions and Plans

Several commissions were set up to plan for IYC 2002. Cultural activities mostly evolved from locally-based hip hop movements, street kid networks, and movements for freedom of sexual orientation and black youth. Architecture students joined the Planning and Infrastructure Commission to develop environmental plans. The Communication Commission consisted mainly of PT youth and university communications students who got community radio involved in IYC 2002. PT youth also led mobilization campaigns with support from the WSF (see Oliveira 2005: 320). As WSF International Mobilization Committees spanned across continents to bring more people into the process, the IYC 2002 Mobilization Commission worked to mobilize youth groups inside Brazil. Several regional organization committees were established (Oliveira 2005: 321). Throughout 2001 in and around Porto Alegre, student activist engagement expanded considerably, encompassing individuals from most academic disciplines (IYC 2005). The new youth movements, university students, and IYC commissions advocated building local systems of alternatives. They prioritized culture, architecture, grassroots organizing, and multiple forms of communication. Already, the IYC was being imagined as a meshwork.

² Francisco Whitaker's work is cited and debated by many of these authors.

The IYC 2002 COA made an effort to promote spontaneity. Plans for provisioning infrastructure for Harmonia Park also had a basis in facilitating open programming of activities instead of centrally directing them. Thought was given to having many voices share in discussions onsite (Nunes 2005a: 301, 303). The participatory methodology advocated by the COA reflected socialist anarchist ideals of self-organization and it was hoped that the result would be heightened conscientization among Brazilian youth.

Some Rio Grande Do Sul government programs made important contributions to activities such as the “Popular Solidarity Economy, the Family Agriculture (dealing with agrarian movements, family-run farms and cooperatives), the Free Software and the Local Systems Development Programmes...the camp itself being defined as a local system” (Nunes 2005a: 304). Organizational support was given by social movements such as the MST and financing came from the WSF organizational budget (Nunes 2005a: 304).

Meanwhile, the Rio Grande do Sul Youth Committee took the lead in planning for the second Camp, while youth political parties continued to argue about how to use the second convergence for their own agendas (Nunes 2005c: 284). Organizers began to think of the IYC as a process with an origin and a future, and as an alternative within the WSF project (Nunes 2005c: 284). There was an implicit assumption that the Camp and the people onsite could be detached from capitalism. Paradoxically, the temporary space for alternative social practices was also supposed to foster unintended consequences through spontaneous actions, in part inspired by socialist anarchist thinking on the matter.

WSF: Shifts in Direction

The WSF OC suggested that the third Forum be held in India in 2003. A consultation about the WSF trajectory involving sixty people from 40–45 Indian and Nepalese CSOs took place in New Delhi, India on January 10, 2002. An Indian WSF Working Group (IWG) was later set up to promote greater internationalization within the WSF (India WSF Working Group 2002: 1, 4). The IWG decided that two years of planning were required, firstly because efforts were needed to achieve consolidation among Indian civil society networks, and secondly because 2004 was seen as a more propitious time for a mobilization campaign to create a nationally-focused secular civil

society project. The objective was to build up votes against the Hindu nationalist and right wing Bharatiya Janata Party in the 2004 federal elections. The IWG also called on the IC to conceptualize the Forum more as a process than simply as an annual event. It supported as well the idea to decentralize the WSF and plan a South Asian Social Forum to take place during 2003 (Sen 2005a: 14; Sen 2005b: 33). The IWG decision was ironic, given the WSF's explicit exclusion of partisan activists.

The Forum's significant turn to India reflected its objective to expand globally by heading to the second most populated country on Earth. Cultures of resistance had flourished in the subcontinent before and after 1947, the year India achieved its independence, and influenced waves of decolonization in Asia and Africa. The first South Asian Social Forum would take place in Hyberabad, accompanied by a Youth Camp. As Leite reports, an inaugural African Social Forum (ASF) had already taken place in Bamako, Mali during December, 2001 without direct involvement from WSF organizers (Leite 2005: 125).

The IC was enthusiastic about expanding and decentralizing the WSF. Its meeting in Porto Alegre on January 28-29, 2002, two days before the opening of WSF 2002, ended with a decision to encourage the creation of continental and regional Social Forums during the second half of the year 2002 (see Leite 2005: 107, 123-124). The IYC would remain a part of that project of decentralizing the WSF process and spreading it worldwide.

IYC 2002: Alternatives in Experimentation

The IYC 2002 took place at Parque de Harmonia at the same time as the WSF (January 31 – February 5). It was again a good time for Brazilian youth (at least students and unemployed) to take part as the Camp was held during the Southern Hemisphere summer holidays. The success of the IYC's mobilization commission was apparent when the Camp welcomed between 12,000 and 15,000 campers, greatly exceeding expectations (De Carli, 25/1/2005; Leite 2005: 106; Nunes 2005a: 304; Oliveira 2005: 321). Meanwhile, WSF 2002 hosted 50,000 participants, more than three times as many people as in 2001.

Parque de Harmonia was divided into three zones. The Residential Axis had campsites, picnic tables, and barbeque spots near toilet facilities. A sombrite cover used

in greenhouses to mitigate sun radiation served to protect campers from the summer heat (Oliveira 2005: 321). The Activity Axis for hosting popular education workshops contained the “Cultural Axis”, which was built out of biodegradable materials. A “Kaleidoscope Space” offered a place for testimonials, debates, chats, and musical shows. Residents could view documentaries at various locations scattered throughout Porto Alegre. There was as well a “Convergence Axis”, which was composed of the “Communication Factory”, the Administration Shed (the headquarters of the COA), the Recycling Shed, and the Sanitation Area (with showers and portable toilets). A huge bonfire was kept burning at a Central Square. The Food Court offered chemical-free products from agricultural cooperatives and from social movements such as the MST and the international small-scale agriculturalist movement, Via Campesina (Oliveira 2005: 321).

This second Camp launched radio broadcasts within the park through a large speaker system. The Communication Factory was installed as an area for exchanging free software and available technological knowledge. It was funded by Alternatives, an NGO based in Montreal, Canada (de Souza, 3/2/2005). The Communication Factory also contained the Youth City’s press room and areas for conversations. Workshops took place at sites called action centres focused on WSF 2002 themes and the importance of informal social spaces. Many organizations connected with one another, and multiple calls arose for a global network of social movements (IYC 2004; IYC 2005). An artistic initiative was launched to capture memories of IYC 2002 mostly through the medium of photography (de Souza, 3/2/2005). Multiple practices were tried out in architecture and waste management (Preiss and Genehr 2004: 1).

All of the “common spaces” were physically built as biodegradable constructions (bio-constructions) using materials such as mud and wood as well as recycled plastics and milk cartons (Nunes 2005c: 284). The waste “residues were separated at the Recycling Shed, built in partnership with DMLU (the City Hall’s Department of Urban Cleaning) and the National Movement of Gatherers of Solid Residues”. These initiatives also generated income for those involved (Preiss and Genehr 2004: 1). The milieu was more diverse than the year before, and there were more individuals unaffiliated with political parties, known in the Brazilian IYC as “autonomous youth”, than there were

leftist youth (Nunes 2005a: 302). A cultural program consisted of exhibitions and visits to MST settlements and settlements of the Brazilian movement of unemployed workers (MTD) (Nunes 2005c: 286).

Several autonomous groups engaged in an IYC action centre premised on horizontal self-management and decision-making, the Intergalactika Laboratory of Global Resistance. Later nicknamed the Caracol, it emerged out of joint ventures between local Brazilians and activists from around the world. Many participating groups identified with principles and practices of horizontality that had been promoted in their circles in countries such as Spain, Italy, Argentina, Germany, and the U.K. Intergalactika was also composed of people involved in independent media centres from around the planet (see Nunes 2005c: 286-287). The Intergalactika Project was established as “a space for independent movements and organizations” as well as an intercontinental meeting spot for building networks and consensus-based decisions (De Carli, 3/2/2005; translation made by Eduardo Sanchez during the interview). José Corrêa Leite – a member of the OC and IC – argues that the launching of the Intergalactika space was led by “diverse movements and mobilizations involving the new political generation that was emerging on a world scale” (Leite 2005: 107). It is important to keep in mind that this project did not involve everybody onsite, let alone a generation of political youth activists. It did, however, signal a commitment to horizontality, and it represented an autonomous zone of communal practices in the IYC 2002 meshwork. The Camp also welcomed a cooperative named “copyleft.” Ana Paula Stock – an organizer of IYC 2005 – explained that its alternative philosophy was already based in cyberspace called the “creative commons”, where common property rights prioritized sharing authors’ work (Stock, 31/1/2005); see www.Creativecommons.org).

The spirit of cooperation was, however, somewhat undermined by organizational tussles. The Camp Organizing Committee (COA) prevented members of the Union of Socialist Youth, the PT Youth, and the National Student’s Union from putting up their own marquees. The COA claimed that the large membership bases and resources pools of these organizations would be overbearing for other groups of campers. The claim referred to Principle 9 of the WSF Charter of Principles, which prohibited political party representation. Moreover, some groups in the Intergalaktika space were almost prevented

from carrying on self-organized activities since the COA wanted everybody to integrate and share the spaces (Nunes 2005a: 302-303).

As part of IYC 2002, the National Youth Committee initiated an International Youth Encounter at the PUC – where most WSF activities were again taking place – to bring together youth movements and leftist youth. As a result of the competing ideologies of these movements, the International Youth Encounter ended without resolution, unlike a year earlier when the manifesto had declared: “a socialist world is possible.” Furthermore, leftist political parties and the horizontal networks barely interacted in Harmonia Park (Nunes 2005c: 286-287). The visible leftist youth agendas present at IYC 2002 and the failure of the International Youth Encounter led to a decision by the majority of IYC organizers that the COA would take on exclusive responsibility for logistics, registration, and the allocation of space for self-organized activities in the next Camp (Nunes 2005a: 301). This decision reflected the emergence of a hierarchy led by the non-partisan autonomous individuals within the COA who were determined to prevent leftist party-based youth from organizing separate agendas in the Camp. At the same time, campers were encouraged to create their own activities and share spaces cooperatively.

Some local media portrayed the thousands of IYC residents as dirty and put the spotlight on campers who had tattoos, body piercings, and/or dreadlocks. Police patrolled inside the park intensively and drug use was widespread (see Nunes 2005c: 286-287). Clearly, the role of the state was an integral dynamic of IYC 2002. So too was a culture of partying, which has been present in many social activist circles and more generally on a daily basis in countries and social events around the world. However, despite the “negative” publicity and substance abuse, many social practices at the Camp reflected systems of collective communication, participatory workshops, and food provisioning.

The second Camp was symbolically dubbed the Carlo Giuliani Youth City to commemorate the life of the young Italian who was killed by police forces during anti-G8 protests in Genoa in 2001. Susan Ellis (2002) argues that this action spoke to the urgency of identifying problems facing youth everywhere, and the name put a human face on suffering at the hands of repressive violence. On the cultural front, Capoeira martial dance and folk songs were pervasive throughout the park. Many concerns of particular

relevance to contemporary youth were acknowledged, but those issues also affected older activists who could have extended supportive knowledge to their younger counterparts (Ellis 2002: 2). Indeed, many of the questions specific to neoliberalism and contemporary activism have affected everybody in the world and the planet itself. Dialogue between activists of all ages and other groups of people with a variety of cultural backgrounds is an important goal for bringing collaborative alternatives to life.

The WSF project in 2002 became focused more on alternative or other worlds rather than merely one possible global imaginary to displace contemporary neoliberalism, especially since thousands of different social actors entered the arena for the first time. The WSF and the IYC grew closer together that year, as the IYC used the WSF's Charter of Principles, remained in the same host city, and followed the same timeline. However, IYC 2002 was far less transnational than WSF 2002, shaped as it was mainly by several previously disassociated youth networks from Rio Grande Do Sul, Brazil. The Camp experiment was put into motion by residents who could network, express themselves creatively, and meet many like-minded young people and those who differed socially and even ideologically. The low-impact bio-constructions diverged in many respects from the academic lectures, panel sessions, and workshops of the second Forum. Many of these activities at the Forum involved thousands of participating delegates, several of whom were simply spectators who did not interact as intensively as campers.

The IYC experimented with an imaginary of combining various social practices in shared spaces of living to produce and reproduce cultures of youth activism. Still, Ana Paula De Carli's impression was that IYC 2002 ended without political resolve or a meaningful outcome. She thought that many foreigners were unable to understand the Camp (De Carli, 25/1/2005). Nonetheless, the organizing groups successfully moved beyond older forms of hierarchal organization used by labour unions and political parties. Instead of trying to recruit new members and strategically build unity to access more power, the Camp's organizers created a web of spaces where a variety of movements could participate on the basis of common life issues and still uphold their own autonomy and social struggles. Many horizontal links were opened (see Juris 2005: 2).

Generally speaking, the "older forms" of hierarchical organization characteristic of Latin American leftist politics and civil societies date back to the Cuban Revolution in

1959. These were shaped as part of larger struggles to overthrow oligarchic governments and to establish socialist forms of governance. These forms of organization have included armed guerilla warfare, authoritarian decision-making, and campaigns directed at acquiring political power. In the same vein, widespread coalition-building also took place involving peasant movements, lower and working class communities, and middle class citizens. Such practices relied heavily on socialist and Marxist ideologies and were inspired by leaders such as Fidel Castro, Salvador Allende, and Che Guevera (see Castañeda 1993; Roberts 1998: 19-78). IYC 2002 took place during a historical period when the leftist Workers Party held political power in Porto Alegre and Rio Grande Do Sul in the largest democracy in Latin America. Newer forms of politics could emerge only because of older historical struggles.

The Camp organizers and others onsite were inspired by socialist anarchist conceptions of decentralization and spontaneous interaction. The program of activities drew inspiration from conscientization and popular education methodology. The COA also presented ways to combine low-impact ecology and localized forms of food consumption. Moreover, the Camp was socially constructed by and for campers to affirm and exercise resistance to neoliberal capitalism in solidarity. Residents created their own meanings amidst open space encounters, and the setbacks in realizing the Camp's agendas still offered instructive lessons. Thousands of people shared experiences, which in any case resulted in creative efforts at the second and more expansive Intercontinental Youth Camp. Several alter-globalization movements combined with CSOs to live in a meshwork of human exchanges and cross-cultural expressions.

As in 2001, WSF 2002 was directed by the Brazilian Organizing Committee, though with increasing reliance on the International Council. Scores of additional CSMs entered the WSF meshwork of spaces. However, Emir Sader, a member of both the WSF OC and IC, observed that NGOs remained dominant at the first two Forums. He argued the WSF emphasis on civil society was due to NGO dominance in organizational ranks (Sader 2004: 253).

Financing WSF 2001 & 2002 in Porto Alegre

Tremendous infrastructural and financial support from various levels of the Brazilian government and external donors was required to physically build the WSF

venues. Local and state governments also supported the IYC initiative, while both projects still relied on a lot of volunteer labour to get off the ground. Players in Brazilian government, civil service labour jobs, or financiers, which helped to make the WSF possible, were distant from most participants and campers, though indirectly involved in the process to imagine and construct alternative worlds. The social spaces were brought to life by the participating delegates and resident campers. However, the expense of travel, vast distances, and poverty severely limited meaningful transnational representation from many developing countries, particularly in Africa and Asia in 2001 and 2002. As participation in the WSF was mainly self-funded, delegates who received financial support from European or American NGOs (Santos 2003: 5) were privileged as were the local Brazilians. Nunes notes that organizers of the IYC saw early on the potential impact of the Forum and Camp on the city's economy, and the prospect of channelling revenues into locally-based social movements (2005a: 305).

Both the WSF and the IYC relied on registration fees, and participating groups were expected to bring their own resources for activities. In the context of the Forum, where most participants stayed in hotels, many NGOs paid for the travel and accommodation of their delegates. The WSF accepted state support for infrastructure, security services, and facilitation to allow international delegates to enter the country (Sen and Kumar, 2005: 203). For the 2002 WSF, the Porto Alegre Municipality provided approximately U.S. \$300,000 and, at the state level, the PT contributed approximately one million U.S. dollars (Teivainen, 2003, 3). External funding opened spaces for the WSF and the CSMs involved. However, it raised issues about the autonomy of the Forum and the sense of collective ownership over the space. In turn, the IYC was shaped in part within a nexus of power operating through finances and service contracts provided by the WSF and the PT. Without external financial and especially government support, however, the Forum and Camp spaces would simply not have been available

The IYC Imaginary of Self-Management

Camp organizers played the largest role in developing the IYC project, although (as noted above) splits undermined the role of the original founding member groups. Nunes reports that, following IYC 2002, the National Youth Committee was dissolved in the wake of its unsuccessful attempt to coordinate the International Youth Encounter. The

Organizing Committee of the IYC remained based in Porto Alegre with an expanding membership. More autonomous youth groups became involved in the COA, marginalizing the influence of leftist youth (Nunes 2005a: 288). The planners of IYC 2003 sought to broaden mobilization efforts cross-continently and to expand the scope of issues informing the program of activities. They also wanted to introduce new forms of activism and direct action (De Carli, 25/1/2005). As Romualdo Oliveira notes, “The management proposal for the third Camp – named the City of Cities – involved self-management principles based on historical experiences dating back to the Paris Commune (1871) and the Barrios de Pie Movement in contemporary Argentina” (Oliveira 2005: 321-322).

The Movimiento de Barrios de Pie arose in December 2001 as a nationally-based movement of unemployed and low-waged workers. It responded to country-wide conditions of hunger, poverty, and privatization in the wake of structural adjustment programs implemented by the International Monetary Fund in collusion with successive governments. In 2002, Barrios de Pie spanned 12 provinces of Argentina. It fed children and families in neighbourhoods (*barrios*) and community centres, while carrying out other cooperative work linked to popular education, support for victims of domestic violence, and health (Barrios de Pie Movement 2002). The movement inspired some of the communal living projects of the IYC, particularly in relation to cooperative roles and responsibilities involved in horizontal self-management.

Another much earlier historical experience also provided symbolic inspiration for the IYC, particularly for the socialist anarchist emphasis upon developing localized revolutionary alternatives. The residents of the Paris Commune of March 18, 1871 sought to develop a locally-governed commune apart from regulation by the French state. The Paris communards were vague in their objectives and plans, and were themselves people without political power (Woodcock 1977: 226; Carter 1971: 60; Kropotkin 1895: 226, 228, 233-235). Similarly, the Brazilian organizers during the first two years of the IYC developed experimental and unstructured alternative imaginaries. The inspiration of the Barrios de Pie movement and the Paris Commune is that they asserted the need for popular self-management. Both also symbolized a rejection of the established state. In reality, however, the IYC’s implementation of self-management has relied entirely on a

public space sanctioned by a host local government. Socialist anarchist principles of spontaneity and diversity did indeed inform the IYC, but the Camp remained dependent on the local state, as well as the WSF. Thus, while positioning itself against capitalism and contemporary neoliberalism, the IYC emerged as a different kind of project from contemporary direct action movements led by squatters, factory occupations led by workers, university student occupations, or even mass protest movements. Several campers had at various times been involved in direct actions of this sort, but the Camp itself was a transitory experience where collective action was focused inwardly rather than outwardly towards political elites.

The dynamics of IYC 2002 were set in motion through a “laboratory of practices”, the term coined by the Camp Organizing Committee to conceptualize the spaces and activities of collective experimentation (IYC COA 2003: 1). The idea of the Camp as a practical laboratory symbolized a rejection of the Forum’s approach to programming. Instead of limiting themselves to activities based on debating alternatives, IYC organizers sought to create an alternative “low-impact” environment for the daily lives of campers (Preiss, 23/1/2005). In addition, the idea of alternative social practices emerging in the second Camp led to an IYC 2003 proposal for a system based on self-management. The quintessential IYC principle of self-management interwoven with the laboratory of practices became the guiding principle of IYC 2003. It conceived every camper as a human subject who exercises agency. It asked youth residents to be responsible for the public environment. It encouraged each one of them to assume a role in managing the Camp in mutually respectful ways. In the words of IYC 2005 organizers:

The concept of [the Intercontinental Youth] [C]amp is based on self management as a model for social organization, representation and resistance. The IYC is based on horizontal practices where all participants are agents of the spaces that use it. This presents the proposal that mobilizes all individuals to debate public subjects, develop solutions for the problems of the day-to-day running of the camp, as well as the political insertion of the IYC in the process of the World Social Forum. All the participants manage, take decisions and execute on a consensus non-hierarchical level. Thus, chains of construction are created that lead to new ways of making policy. The campers are not only residents but responsible for all the actions that promote a conscious and solidary occupation (IYC 2005, see “Self Management”: 1)

This self-management imaginary aims to generate critical self-reflection in daily life. It means that everyone shares responsibility for the day-to-day functioning of the Camp. This entails a cooperative division of labour and collective stewardship of the park. It reflects an underlying ethical commitment to participatory decision-making based on the principle of consensus. It is imagined as a horizontal system of representation because of its basis in a decentralized system of campsites. This form of social organization proposed to generate critical self-reflection among all campers about aspects of daily living. The belief was that some people would begin to embrace environmentally and politically conscious habits, while others would continue to exercise personal transformation. The system encouraged a pragmatic environment of open space activism.

The underlying logic of directly exchanging information in a decentralized social system resembles anarchist notions of affinity groups (see Bookchin 1974) and contemporary forms of affinity groups led by anarchist collectives, as well as youth activists and “youth militants” at large in protest demonstrations such as the “Battle of Seattle” (see Notes from Nowhere 2003; Johnston and Smith 2002; Barlowe and Clark 2001). The IYC system of self-management was an imaginary premised on youth political engagement. It implied that participants, who came from different places of origin and exhibited a variety of identity orientations, could socially construct the Camp on equal ground. However, the time available would be brief and many resident campers would come and go without getting to know each other. An underlying vision was that what they learned onsite would have an impact on their later daily living and, in turn, lead to ways of making social change in their home communities.

The alternative imaginary also assumes that youth participants would come to the Camp already politicized or seeking to be politicized, and would thus willingly partake in self-management. The reference of IYC 2005 organizers to making collective policy decisions in the quotation cited above contradicts the principle of a non-declarative space in the WSF Charter. It also raises questions beyond the context of the WSF about who can, should, or does make statements in a horizontal system on behalf of collective actors. Furthermore, to call the Camp of Porto Alegre an occupation ignores its government sanctioned environment. Self-management in the context of the IYC would become unique because it was embedded in the WSF history.

The ideal of self-management emerged as a highly proactive imaginary; however, it was complicated by the scale intended for the campsite. It was a colossal organizational feat to prepare for thousands of people with very different backgrounds, many of whom had quite different ideas of what to expect and/or do at the Camp. The brief timeline, compounded by the linguistic barriers within the imagined community of youth, added to the undeveloped theory of practicing a horizontal self-managed Camp. The self-management vision for IYC 2003 had no blueprint in practice. The system had not existed before and there was not any concrete way of informing prospective campers about it or how to build it onsite. It would come to rely mostly on peoples' involvement, particularly on those who proposed to implement it in the first place. Members of the COA developed the theory and would have to facilitate its practice. The IYC's imaginary questioned daily life under capitalism and, at the same time, challenged the ideological and political foundations of neoliberalism. But on a temporary basis at an intercontinental space of youth activism, are all these objectives even viable in conditions of voluntary experimentation?

An Outline of the MST's Approach to Collective Self-Management

Although the context differs, it is useful at this point to review one important source of inspiration for self-management as envisioned within the IYC – the experience of Brazil's Landless Workers Movement (Movimento dos Trabalhadores Rurais Sem Terra, MST). The MST officially began as a national movement struggling for land reform in Brazil early in 1984. Its aim was to transform the lives of millions of marginalized people in rural regions of Brazil who have been suffering under a grossly unequal system of land distribution and private property ownership that dates back to Portuguese colonialism. The MST has supported the livelihood-based struggles of peasants and small-scale farming families. As a movement of daily lived experiences, it has deployed direct action strategies to establish grassroots cultures through land occupations and land settlements on mostly uncultivated property owned by very wealthy and powerful landowners. The initial land occupations that marked the creation of the MST began in 1978 in the state of Rio Grande Do Sul (Hammond 1999; Robles 2000; Wolford 2003; Almeida and Sanchez 2003).

At the turn of the 21st Century, MST membership exceeded more than one million. It operated in hundreds of communities known together as Sem Terra. Each occupation, encampment or settlement is recognized as an autonomous space. Political units within Sem Terra have implemented a system of democratic decision-making, educational programs, and divisions of labour, albeit from a basis in internal hierarchies. For example, organizational efforts have relied on leaders and educated members to educate rural peasants about their land rights, and leaders have developed guidelines to promote cohesive community life and economically productive activity. The MST has run its own economic institutions, educational systems, farming cooperatives, and has forged networks with several rural- and urban-based organizations (Almeida and Sanchez 2003: 16-17; Ghimire 2002: 32; Hammond 1999: 473; Kane 2000: 30, 36; Lowy 2001: 33-34, 38; Petras 1998: 125; Robles 2000: 680; Wolford 2003: 501, 505, 509). Each MST community is organized into production units and, through a system of representation, each encampment has a management committee. Assemblies of men, women, and children have set up coordination teams to carry out specific tasks. The resulting collective management involves a defined division of labour of shared roles and responsibilities for daily life (Almeida and Sanchez 2000: 16; Kane 2000: 39).

The IYC imaginary of self-management resulted from leaders defining a systemic process onsite. The complex relations of actual daily existence and social integration developed within the encampments of Sem Terra offer insights into the dynamics of an alter-globalization movement that has inspired this IYC imaginary. Of course, there are significant differences. The MST's far-reaching impacts and contributions within Brazil evolved as a permanent process over more than two decades, unlike the brief and temporary experiments of the IYC. Moreover, activism at the IYC is not a matter of survival, but rather a social struggle to define alternatives based on volunteerism and social exchange. Nevertheless, the IYC remains situated at intersections of CSMs and alter-globalization movements, and has sought to become a meshwork for networking and exchanging social identities.

Towards 2003: Decentralizing the WSF and the IYC

Global transportability of the WSF was a key agenda item when the IC met in Barcelona on April 28-30, 2002. At that meeting, it was decided that Porto Alegre would

again be the host city in 2003 to coincide with the timing of the WEF (see Leite 2005: 107, 123-124). Some six months after WSF 2002, and following the WSF OC and IC meetings in Barcelona and Bangkok, the International Council was designated to play the leading role in shaping the internationalization and decentralization of the Forum process (Sader 2004: 261). Concurrently at the IC meeting in Bangkok in June 2002, it was decided “that the IYC was an integral part of the WSF, and should happen wherever the WSF went” (Nunes 2005c: 288).

The official link between the WSF and IYC coincided with their decentralization. As of early 2006, the IC remained both as an overseer of Regional Social Forums in various geographic sites and as a coordinator of Thematic Forums, which intend to deepen issues on prioritized themes. Local and national Social Forums also have taken place throughout the world but on their own accord without centralized direction from the IC or the WSF OC. The WSF website and bulletins (distributed through a listserv) have not provided updated information on Regional Youth Camps.

In 2002, the IYC organizers facilitated the creation of a number of regional and local Youth Camps. IYC mobilization committees were established in the Brazilian cities of Rio de Janeiro, São Paulo, and Fortaleza, and were aimed at enhancing social movement representation (IYC 2005). João Porella Sobral from São Paulo, a member of the IYC 2005 Mobilization Commission, said that the São Paulo Mobilization Committee became heavily involved in bringing the third Porto Alegre Camp into being (Sobral, 28/1/2005). Other important sites for mobilization were the Brazilian, Argentinean, and Uruguayan Social Forums (de Souza, 3/2/2005). The Argentinean Social Forum took place during August 2002, and the one in Uruguay during October of that year (Oliveira 2005: 321).

José Corrêa Leite (2005) notes that the first Asian Social Forum held in Hyderabad, India in January 2003 involved “800 people in a beautiful Youth Camp” (Leite 2005: 128). The four day Youth Camp in Hyderabad began January 3rd at the Bharat Scouts and Guides Camp. A total of 750 youth registered. They represented 21 Indian states, ten Asian countries, and sixteen nation-states in all. Their ages ranged from 15 to 35. In contrast to the IYCs where the Brazilian presence was dominant and people from the Americas and Europe had considerable representation, the inaugural South

Asian Youth Camp had quite a different mix of nationalities and cultural meshworks. Several ethnically and socially diverse groups were present, among them “Dalits, Adivasis, refugees, street youth, differently abled, sexual minorities, students” (IYC 2004, “Memories”: 1). The program of activities reflected their struggles, and gave voice to youth to discuss globalization and youth activism in plenary sessions, workshops, and film screenings (IYC 2004, see “Memories”: 1-5). The Youth Camp model transported to India continued to valorize personal worlds of difference.

The concerted efforts to decentralize Social Forums and Youth Camps coincided with some reconceptualization of the definitions of the WSF and IYC. A new definition of the WSF was influenced by a recommendation by the Indian Working Group to emphasize how important it was as a process. It characterized the Forum as a permanent process for civil societies around the world to mobilize towards the displacement of neoliberalism and imperialism, and the creation of a world based on social justice, human rights, ecological sustainability, and human diversities. It still conceived of the WSF as a place for debate (see WSF website home page: What is the WSF?), and emphasized, as did the IYC, the importance of an open and collaborative process of promoting alternative social change (IYC 2004; IYC 2005). However, the definitions also reinforce notions of leaderless activism since no group or names claim authorship.

Meanwhile, both the WSF and the IYC faced a changing political context in the fall of 2002. The pendulum of political power in Brazil swung as the PT lost its political stronghold in the state of Rio Grande do Sul to the opposition centre-right PMPD. At the same time, the PT achieved national power with the election of President Ignacio Lula da Silva. By the time that immediate preparations were being made for the third Camp, the IYC became officially recognized by the OC and IC as a legitimate space distinct from the WSF, and the Camp’s Organizing Committee was given a seat in Forum decision-making at OC meetings (IYC 2005, see “What is the Intercontinental Youth Camp?”: 2). The new status of the IYC in the WSF apparatus put greater onus on a new COA to craft a more inventive Camp, as for the first time WSF activity spaces were being set up near the campsite along Guaíba Lake.

IYC 2003: Experiments in Self-Managed Spaces

Originally planning for 13,000 people, the COA anticipated as many as 30,000 campers as the start of the Camp approached. (Nunes 2005c: 288; Preiss and Genehr 2004: 1). Thirty-four hectares were set aside, including some annexed land that the municipality officially declared as part of Harmonia Park (Nunes, 2005c: 289). The third Camp in Porto Alegre would officially run for ten days (January 19 to 28), the longest timeline among the five Camps. However, just as the COA was opening new spaces, it was continuing to close spaces to youth socialist and communist party members who had been its initial founders. Shortly before the Camp opened, youth members of the PT issued a statement that called for a separate space in the WSF for young people to coordinate their movements, and debate/develop strategies on how to create alternatives (Youth of the Left Block of the Workers Party (PT) 2003: 1-2).

The number of expected campers required logistical management systems of epic proportions, at least in comparison to IYC 2001. As one of many preparatory measures, a workgroup was formed on Environmental Administration under the auspices of the Commission of Infrastructure. The workgroup was created by “biology students, biologists, NGOs and social movements” (Preiss and Genehr 2004: 1). The logistical work was daunting. Fifteen pavilions had to be built for workshop activities. These were designed out of “light adobe” consisting of water, sawdust, and mud. Five large tents set up next to the Lake Guaíba were designated for various alter-globalization movements to conduct activities. Workshops in the action centres focused on the five WSF themes for 2003: Media, Culture and Counter-Hegemony; Political Power, Civil Society and Democracy; Global Democratic Order, Fight Against Militarized Combat and Peace Promotion; Sustainable and Democratic Development, Principles and Values; Human Rights, Diversity and Equality (COA 2003: 1-2). The activities explicitly linked the WSF 2003 program of activities with principles of critical education and low-impact ecology.

The IYC Environmental workgroup planned to distribute organic soap and information on ethical consumption of water to campers out of necessity because there were 150 portable bathrooms and 150 shower stalls designated for recyclable containers. A water treatment station was built to cycle the water from the showers. It was designed to recycle water from 40 showers at once and cycle the nutrients to feed aquatic

vegetation in the pond of Parque de Harmonia. That treatment would mix best with the residue from the organic soap, which the workgroup handed out with educational materials. Inorganic toilet waste was designated for the municipal waste disposal system, while organic products were planned for the park's drainage system (see COA 2003: 1-2; Oliveira, 2005: 324; Preiss and Genehr 2004: 1). The Recycling Shed was operated again as a joint venture between the municipality and the National Movement of Collectors of Solid Residues. They provided information on the environment and on managing waste residue. Moreover, a residue policy was developed to reduce the waste of plastics in the food markets, which included the production of 15,000 polypropylene mugs (Preiss and Genehr 2004: 1). These ecological imperatives showed that the COA was undertaking a leading role in key facets of self-management, and encouraging valuable alternative social practices based on low-impact ecology. The COA's efforts to be environmentally conscious directly resisted capitalist ideology and the wasteful and ecologically destructive practices of mass consumerism.

The Communication Factory returned from the previous Camp. It included 80 installed computers with Internet access both for accredited media representatives and alternative radio broadcasts. Again, a speaker system was set for a collective radio to disseminate information on activities to the entire camping population (COA 2003: 2). Meanwhile, the COA's Culture Subcommittee made plans for two stages on the riverbank to welcome established independent artists, as well as lesser-known bands, theatrical groups, and dance troupes. "Free Spaces" were built for artisans to improvise poetry, music, or other kinds of creative expression next to the lake. A reading room and spaces for testimonials were established on the lake front (COA 2003: 2). Horizontality was emphasized in this greater emphasis on cultural activism. Whether or not campers became engaged in political struggles at IYC 2003, the sharing of creativity opened possibilities of interlinking identities and forging new friendships and experiential exchanges. In this regard, the IYC meshwork deepened as part of the social constructions of IYC imaginaries in both discourse and actuality.

The COA dubbed the third Camp the "City of cities" (COA 2003: 1). The urban campsite was also envisioned as a laboratory of practices in which everybody's input was encouraged "to experiment with different forms of self-management, direct democracy,

solidarity consumption, consumers' networks, types of barter systems and popular economic solidarity, bio-construction (foregoing chemicals in building solid structures), garbage and recycling management, democratic forms of communication, spaces for culture, and popular protest" (IYC 2003 COA, 2003: 2). Estimates of the camping population ranged between 23,500 (Nunes 2005c: 288) and 30,000 (Oliveira 2005: 324). There was a significant increase in NGO representation and more diversity among residents than in the previous Camps (IYC 2004, see Newsletter: 2).

As previously indicated, the WSF was located near the Camp and it spread across the city. There were three main venues: the PUC, the Gigantinho Stadium, and the port storage facilities (Leite 2005: 117) The OC and the IC were again reliant for logistics and infrastructure on the cooperation of various Brazilian levels of government. The main organizers also had tremendous help from movements and organizations worldwide to piece together the colossal program of activities. WSF 2003 hosted a plurality of alter-globalization initiatives and more than 100,000 participants ended up coming to the host city from around the globe. This also meant that thousands of campers had greater opportunities than during the first two IYCs to engage in Forum activities and interact with a multitude of people.

Inside Parque de Harmonia, there was a serious attempt to practice self-management. Each of the 50 residential camping areas (known as *barrios* or neighbourhoods) had a coordinator responsible for tent placement, monitoring clean-ups, and resolving internal conflicts (COA 2003: 1). A management council based on spatial representation was set up to allocate activity spaces. A similarly comprised board of representatives from *barrios* and the COA tried to ensure that services and information were distributed equally throughout the campsites and park. Decisions were made in daily meetings and information was disseminated by members of the management council, posted on billboards, and transmitted through the speaker systems (see Oliveira 2005: 323-324). Ana Paula De Carli thought that only about ten per cent of campers actively engaged in self-management, however, as the camper population was so massive (De Carli, 25/1/2005). That still translates to an estimated 2000-3000 people involved in some capacity, even if contributions varied among organizers and the great waves of campers who arrived onsite later. According to Rodrigo Nunes, many people remained

passive observers unnoticed by organizers. He also reported that program planning failed in many regards as activities did not occur as scheduled, and there was confusion about the allocation of spaces for seminars and workshops (Nunes 2005: 290-291).

Nevertheless, even without everybody's direct involvement in self-management, IYC 2003 did exhibit a well-developed system of representation based on barrios, campsites, and groups. There was a serious effort to achieve self-management that was similar to MST encampment strategies for organizing into political units. The various subcommittees and working groups of the Camp Organizing Committee, like IYC 2002 commissions, were comparable in form to groups developed at assemblies within Sem Terra.

Food provisioning was again based on a localized solidarity economy. Most of the food in the park was provided and sold at designated vendor outposts by movements such as the MST and small-scale self-organized agricultural networks. Organizers also arranged meal deals at nearby restaurants (COA 2003: 1-2). In addition, these networks followed a waste reduction policy and used recyclable materials (Preiss and Genehr 2004: 2). Júlia Coelho de Souza worked with many of these groups in 2002 as a member of the Commission of Popular Economic Solidarity. She explained that, by the time of IYC 2003, the small-scale farm families were already integrated into horizontal networks to sell agricultural goods. In accordance with this cooperative set of practices, they distributed money from sales fairly amongst themselves. While another objective had been to ensure that food in the Camp would be organic, genetically-modified organisms (GMOs) and chemically-produced products were sold in the park. The GMOs were cheaper and reflected the daily reality of much of the export-oriented, monoculture agriculture produced in Brazil. The competing vendor economies of agricultural markets in and around Harmonia park prompted widespread reflection and discussion on consumption habits and alternatives to large-scale chemical production (de Souza, 3/2/2005).

Direct market systems run by and for family food cooperatives exemplified how the Camp attempted to practice the ideals of fair trade and to make a real (if short-term) difference in supporting the livelihoods of solidarity networks. The autonomies of the small-scale producers were respected in this process. The links between the solidarity

farmer networks and the IYC showed how theoretical perspectives of socialist anarchy and horizontality were put into practice, even if the resulting social relations or income generation meant very little in terms of challenging everyday transactions in the neoliberal agricultural markets in Brazil.

The Camp was also part of the Cultural Exchange Fair of the WSF. The Culture Subcommittee of the COA undertook a symbolic initiative by inviting resident networks to stitch together a flag merging the diverse symbols and colours of their respective movements. This initiative highlighted the Camp's diversity as well as the presence of new organizations that joined those in earlier IYCs (IYC 2005). The patch-worked flag of flags, was later paraded through streets of Porto Alegre (Nunes 2005c: 289). That youth meshwork of activist solidarity symbolized as well the emergence of a network of networks or a movement of movements in the context of the IYC. The question of a new political generation also surfaced. The World March of Women facilitated a workshop entitled "Feminism and the New Political Generation." It attracted 100 participants, who came to the Camp from various regions in Latin America and Europe. The workshop provided a space for young feminists to talk about their experiences, and reflect on the contemporary forms of feminism and women's movements (World March of Women 2005: 6).

Another significant innovation at IYC 2003 unfolded in a white tent put up at the outer edge of the Camp to house the Intergalaktica Laboratory of Global Resistance. Osterwil notes the Intergalaktica was named for the 1996 Intercontinental Meeting Against Neoliberalism and For Humanity in Chiapas. The action centre hosted self-identified anarchists, Marxists, and fellow activists who were influenced by the Zapatistas. They put together participatory workshops aimed at strategizing for political change and anarchist forms of direct action through self-organization and horizontality (Osterwil 2004: 185, 190). Ana Paula De Carli saw the Intergalactica Laboratory as promising, particularly since it was there that the Global Resistance Network (RRGN) was founded (De Carli 25/1/2005). The RRGN was conceived as a network to link young people from different countries in self-managed spaces and Youth Camps worldwide, with the Intercontinental Youth Camp as a blueprint. It would come to rely on Internet-based communication for its members to post information on protests and other events

against the neoliberal order (Bartholl 2005). The RRGN could form only at a site such as the IYC where people from different parts of the world met and discussed their ideas together. A central strategy of the COA for IYC 2003 successfully linked social spaces and communication technologies such as collective radio for networks of people to meet or even consolidate joint strategies at action centres such as Intergalactica. However, the Intergalactica experience also revealed disconnects among movements and the uses to which horizontal spaces were used. Nunes reports that this Action Centre was the preserve of in-groups (Nunes 2005c: 291).

There were other problems as well in 2003. While the IYC once again unavoidably relied on municipal support systems to deal with sewage and water consumption, the Camp mirrored its neoliberal setting by hosting competing food economies based on organic and chemical (including GMO-based) agriculture. Oliveira notes that the negative impact of Porto Alegre's urban violence and theft infiltrated the Camp (Oliveira 2005: 324). There was also a disturbing police action under the authority of the new centre-right state government:

On the afternoon of the penultimate day some policemen repressed an Indigenous girl bathing naked in the open-air showers, which led to a 'naked protest' later that evening. The police said they would not do anything to the protestors if they stayed within the park, but when around thirty of them tried to walk to the Por-do-Sol Ampitheatre they were charged at by policemen on horseback, leaving between 5 to 10 people wounded...WSF organizers and local PT politicians...[took] the problem in their hands. Nothing happened (Nunes 2005c: 287).

This report illustrates that open space activities inside Harmonia Park could erupt unpredictably even though the Camp remained tightly circumscribed by the state police, municipal government officials, and the WSF. Eduardo Sanchez recalled that there was much local gossip about the IYC in 2003, and that media in Porto Alegre referred to it as a place used mainly for parties (Sanchez, 21/1/2005). The reputation for parties was corroborated by observations inside Harmonia Park. Roberto Francisco – an organizer of IYC 2005 and camper at IYC 2003 – said that some organizers and activist groups were upset by campers who seemingly partied to the exclusion of all else (Francisco, 26/1/2005). These observations about partying persisted in IYC 2005, as documented in the next chapter.

Talking mainly about environmental issues at the IYC, Potira Preiss and Tiago Eduardo Genehr assert that there were administrative and technical problems. Many of the challenges faced by camp life and the people there had much to do with the everyday impacts of social and economic conditions and capitalist ideology. They add that many campers were not very aware of environmental issues. Many of the residents did not see that activities at the IYC and the search for alternatives themselves are meant for daily life. Instead some people have only searched for solutions through debating (Preiss and Genehr 2004: 2).

Self-management at the third Camp demonstrated concretely the challenges of realizing collaborative alternatives and involving everybody meaningfully in an onsite division of labour. The ideal of self-management differed from actual practice. The time was short and thousands of people were in the park. Most residents did not share either the knowledge and or the motivation to experiment with it on a solid footing. In addition, despite a strong rhetorical commitment to the idea of self-management, members of the COA themselves had difficulty with its practical application. However, their roles were critical in enabling the Camp to function. They surely appreciated the help from participating CSOs and of course from several government departments to construct a project of such magnitude.

Despite the enormous frustrations and difficulties of attempting to build this very ambitious system of social organization within the IYC, the experience in 2003 reinforced commitments to develop programs of solidarity and to promote alternative daily practices related to agriculture, ecology, and cultural activism. Moreover, even though the Camp was largely the product of youth in Rio Grande Do Sul, the laboratory of practices did facilitate the emergence of new transnational youth activist network that could carry on IYC-connected activities beyond the Camp meshwork. Some campers from Québec, Canada were so inspired by IYC 2003 that they returned their home province to establish a Youth Camp there later that year (Perreault, 22/1/2005). IYC imaginaries would also influence new organizers in India.

The IYC Leaves Porto Alegre & Enters India

In March 2003, the WSF IC chose Mumbai as the host city for the Forum in 2004, and decided to return Porto Alegre in 2005. In preparation for WSF 2004, the IWG and

the OC formed together the WSF International Executive Secretariat (see Leite 2005: 133; Patomaki and Teivainen 2004: 146). However, Brazilian and Indian organizers of the IYC did not communicate much with each other (Nunes 2005c: 291). As the Camp left its home park behind, the new organizing body based in India somewhat resembled its IYC 2001 counterpart in terms of ideology and affiliation to political parties.

According to Ana Paula De Carli, the 2004 organization was undertaken mainly by youth affiliated with the highly centralized Indian Communist Party (De Carli, 3/2/2005). Some of these organizers even initially questioned the purpose of recreating an Intercontinental Youth Camp.

Several issues were raised for debate at a preparatory meeting for IYC 2004 in May 2003. Skeptics asked whether an IYC in Mumbai would merely replicate an ineffective all-talk and no-action Forum. Nonetheless, the final decision to hold IYC 2004 was unanimously adopted because the delegates at the meeting acknowledged the Camp as a meaningful innovative process that needed continuity. It was agreed that the IYC would continue to foster global perspectives on youth-specific issues and network on problems for youth from around the world. Another justification was that, through the IYC, young people were encouraged to think deeply, act, and gain confidence through solidarity. It was also recognized that an IYC in Mumbai could raise awareness about realities of oppression by giving minority groups living in India serious attention in the program of activities (Report of the IYC Preparatory Meet May 2003: 1). The groups at the preparatory meeting discussed well-founded contradictions within the IYC, such as the tension between what the Camp was supposed to be and what it could become. They reached a consensus that IYC 2004 could be a significant space for youth activism that also recognized a need for including politically marginalized groups with differing life experiences and concerns.

Participants in the preparatory meeting also decided that IYC 2004 should challenge Indian political parties to become more committed to youth, especially by working with grassroots community-based organizations to mobilize greater youth involvement. Media attention was identified as an important means to cover issues of the IYC (Report of the IYC Preparatory Meet May 2003: 2). These decisions paralleled the strategies that emerged in the Indian WSF Working Group to more effectively integrate

Indian civil society and make a political campaign of it. However, the IYC organizers in India constituted a much smaller group of people with far less time to mobilize than the IWG. The organizational structure resembled instead the Brazilian Camp Organizing Committees of IYC 2002 and IYC 2003. The preparatory meeting culminated in the establishment of a Youth Assembly comprised of six Functional Groups. Members of the Youth Assembly in turn set up a Youth Organising Committee to facilitate bi-weekly and/or monthly meetings and implement the Assembly's decisions through consensus (see Report of the IYC Preparatory Meet May 2003: 1-2). Similar to what commissions, subcommittees, and working groups did in planning for the Porto Alegre Camps, functional groups negotiated agendas and practical logistics for the Mumbai Camp, including infrastructure, finances, media relations, and cultural programming. The Mobilisation Functional Group promoted the IYC in local areas by word of mouth and it made use of emails (Report of the IYC Preparatory Meet May 2003: 2). Meanwhile, in November 2003, the first African Youth Camp took place alongside the African Social Forum in Lusaka, Zambia. After it ended, the 100 youth campers provided their email addresses to keep a record of their participation (Abrahams, 25/1/2005). The Internet continued to be a crucial tool of communication for the IYC process.

The Youth Assembly created an innovative organizational strategy to establish program activities based on practicing participatory decision-making. The Virtual Camp was intended as a forum where online surfers, organizational representatives, and members of social movements interested in the Mumbai Camp could exchange knowledge about the process and discuss themes, ideas, and proposals for IYC 2004. This meeting space was intended to make the organizing process for the Camp more democratically inclusive, transparent, and successful. As it turned out, the cyberspace forum – www.wsfindia.org/youthforum/forum – was barely used (Guissepe 2003: 1-2). As a result, the contours of the IYC were once more mainly developed by organizers, despite claims about the Camp as a common space for youth activists.

IYC 2004: A Synopsis

The IYC again offered possibilities for youth activists to apply alternatives. The Youth Assembly imported themes central to IYC 2002 and IYC 2003, identifying the six-day Camp in Mumbai “as a laboratory of another possible world, based on different

forms of self-management, direct democracy, solidarity consumption, popular economic solidarity, recycling management, democratic forms of communication” (IYC 2004, see “Intercontinental Youth Camp – India” 2004: 1). Despite different youth organizers, the central imaginaries of the IYC process were again set in motion in an attempt to realize alternatives based on combining communal forms of anarchistic spontaneity and creativity with collective self-management.

As the Camp approached, the Youth Organizing Committee declared the value of human dignity and condemned discrimination and domination (IYC 2004). It also criticized corporate power by calling for boycotts of Coca-Cola and Pepsi-Cola (de Souza, 3/2/2005). The venue for the January 16-21 Camp was Don Bosco Catholic High School in Mumbai, India. As a space, it was more like the Pontifical Catholic University used by early Forums in Porto Alegre than Parque de Harmonia. The low-impact emphasis on bio-constructions in Mumbai relied less on volunteers than the earlier Camps in Harmonia Park. Most of the actual site was built by contract workers using mainly bamboo and cotton. In the school, ventilators were installed in the dormitory and activity rooms (Leite 2004: 4-5; Marshall 2004). While some youth lived in residence, others camped at designated tent sites near the school (IYC 2004 Brochure 2).

The high school was ten kilometres from the WSF venue in an abandoned textile factory. This distance between the two sites minimized the integration between the Camp and Forum (see Leite 2005 155; 2004: 4-5; Marshall 2004) that had been enhanced over the previous three years. Since the WSF Indian Working Group refused funding from the Ford Foundation and the Indian government (Sen and Kumar 2005: 203), the Camp’s financial constraints were severe. The IYC organizers invited residents to make in-kind “solidarity contributions” for the maintenance and “success” of the Camp (IYC 2004 Brochure 2).

The population of the fourth Camp ended up considerably smaller than in either IYC 2002 or IYC 2003, and was closer to the initial Porto Alegre Camp. An estimated 5,000 youth converged from several countries, especially from India and its Asian neighbours (IYC 2004). Five youth activists from Africa took part (Abrahams, 23/1/2005). The Brazilian branch of the WSF Secretariat financed four Brazilians from the IYC 2003 COA to travel to Mumbai – three self-identified autonomous youth and one

member of the PT youth (Nunes 2005c: 292). The disconnect between Indian and Brazilian IYC organizers, coupled with the fourth consecutive marginal showing of youth activists from Africa, led to another somewhat culturally specific and locally-based Camp. However, as an open space meant for dialogue, horizontal spaces, and networking, the Camp built on its two predecessors.

Although the Forum and Camp were far apart, the program of activities interlinked six themes: “Imperialist globalization Militarism and Peace, Racism, Casteism, Work and Other Descent Based Exclusions and Discriminations, Communalism, Religious Fanaticism/Fundamentalism and Sectarian Violence, Patriarchy” (IYC 2004). In this respect, the Mumbai Camp was like the Camp of 2003 in following the programming lead of the WSF. The IYC’s Youth Assembly also adhered to the WSF Charter of Principles. Organizers prioritized inclusiveness of minority groups and grassroots activism, and sought to include in the venue “workers, peasants, indigenous peoples, dalits, women, all minorities, immigrants, students, academicians, artisans, artists and the media” (IYC 2004, see “About Us: Intercontinental Youth Camp 2004”: 1).

Activities at IYC 2004 ranged from open unstructured activities promoting intercontinental dialogue and networking (such as “Thematic Dialogue Space,” “Open Activities” or “Intercontinental Square”) to India-focused activities (such as “Explore India Window”) (IYC 2004). The activity called “People’s Tribunal” was designed as a mock court to provide residents an opportunity to dramatize their personal politics, such as acting out disgust against U.S. President Bush and U.S. foreign policy. In return, the “People’s Tribunal” gave verdicts on plaintiffs’ cases. The activity was prepared in the Virtual Camp and onsite (see IYC 2004, “An Experiment in Justice: The People’s Tribunal”; IYC 2004, “Into the Issues Contd.”). IYC 2004 also created spaces of creativity and dialogue with a basis in context-specific cultural activism.

The IYC 2004 Cultural Program emphasized dreaming of alternative possibilities. The program invited self-proposed creative activities related to the idea of a “global village”, which could discuss linkages between Indian cultures and global issues. Forms of expression included painting, dance, documentaries, graffiti, music, theatre, and poetry. Other discussions addressed strategies for subverting the commercialization of

art, culture, and freedom of expression. Meanwhile, the cultural exchange based on ideas of revolutionary change included an activity called “Martyr’s Square” (see IYC 2004, “Culture Making Another World Possible: People, Art and Culture”). The multiple visions of participatory activities based on creativity were projected first by organizers. At the same time, such organizing entailed extending open-ended invitations to residents for self-expression, exercises of human agency, and group exchanges. Although a wide range of small-scale activities were available in English and Hindi, and facilitated intimate participatory dialogue (Marshall 2004: 3), it was reported that Camp activities were disrupted several times since the venue was monitored by WSF organizers and city officials (see Leite 2004: 4-5 and Marshall 2004). Preiss and Genehr reported that they were aware of environmental problems at the Camp as well (Preiss and Genehr 2004: 2).

The Mumbai Camp began and ended with a cultural show. Crafts were sold and football (soccer) matches took place every day (IYC 2004). The continuing emphases on spontaneous leisure happenings, cross-cultural and intra-cultural exchanges, and support for local vendors reflected continuity with the second and third Camps. The laboratory of practices remained a cornerstone, albeit on a smaller, more manageable scale than at IYC 2002 or IYC 2003.

Indian Camp organizers argued that the IYC “proudly disregard[ed] adult-dominated kinds of lecturing to achieve social change” (IYC 2004, see “Brochure”: 1). This statement implicitly criticized the origins and evolution of the WSF program of activities. It also suggested that the IYC’s communication and activities were more conducive to promoting progressive social change involving youth. However, this and other communiqués issued on behalf of the IYC produced the notion of the “other” by pitting youth against other segments of society. Moreover, the social construct of youth remained exclusively devoted to politically motivated social actors.

Conclusion

As this Chapter demonstrates, the IYC 2002 COA opened spaces of activism to a variety of social actors in the context of the WSF. Organizational principles emerging at IYC 2003 both deepened a commitment to self-management and the solidarity involved in practicing alternatives. The Youth Assembly of IYC 2004 went further into cyberspace to create the Virtual Forum to enable more participatory collaboration. New visions of

cultural activism emerged from the transition to India, and the laboratory of practices remained in motion. However, the domineering presence of organizers repeatedly called into question their own objectives. There were evident tensions over who would define the IYC project, how it would be practiced, and whether its internal dynamics and organizational contradictions would undermine its objectives. Nevertheless, in its first four years, the Intercontinental Youth Camp attempted to foster concrete processes of social transformation to move beyond reactive critiques of neoliberal globalization. Organizers, volunteer residents, campers, and other participants alike contributed to an inventive alternative imaginary. It remained far removed from typical everyday experience but still opened spaces for new encounters and exciting youth-led possibilities. The relations between the WSF and IYC, and the challenges of implementing viable alternatives to neoliberalism, remained pertinent as Porto Alegre once again became the host city in January 2005.

Chapter 4: IYC 2005 – Alternative Worlds of Experience

Introduction

This chapter is a case-study of IYC 2005. The main argument is that the ideals of the Intercontinental Youth Camp were not fully realizable in Parque de Harmonia in 2005 largely owing to the vast differences among campers in their involvement, knowledge of the IYC project and principles, and their use of the site. The chapter discusses the challenges facing the implementation of self-management, the dynamics of interactions onsite, the role of security, and the attempts to make alternatives come to life against a backdrop of apolitical partying (involving rampant sexual harassment against women and widespread alcohol and drug abuse) and limited organizational capacities. The organization of the fifth Camp is analyzed in terms of its continuities and divergences from previous IYCs, and a new set of relations among the IYC, the WSF, and the Municipality of Porto Alegre. The overarching focus is on what transpired in Parque de Harmonia between January 20th and February 1st, and especially during the official Camp between January 24th and January 31st. The critical questions raised relate to the construction and running of the fifth Camp, the composition of IYC populations, and impressions of it by respondents interviewed for this study.

On balance, IYC 2005, the largest Camp to date, was characterized more by problems than successes, largely owing to organizational constraints before the Camp got underway, but most importantly because of the differences among campers over how to apply the key Camp principles of collective self-management and horizontal decision-making. Despite the commitment of the IYC 2005 COA to these principles, decisions for the fifth Camp about agenda-setting, mobilization, strategy, and logistics were mostly determined by a small group of student organizers, and by the external support systems that they drew upon. The infrastructure was shaped largely by volunteer residents who arrived early, and who helped organizers with preparation and facilitation onsite to build the bio-constructions. These volunteers became more familiar with Camp principles and processes than the majority of campers who came for a week or less.

As the numbers of campers swelled, evidence of partying and mounting garbage conflicted with the promotion of applied activism inspired by the vision of collective self-management. This goal was further put into question by security problems such as theft,

fighting, and sexual harassment. The commercialization of food provisions also undermined the Camp solidarity economies, while much of the food sold with non-recyclable paper and plastics shortchanged the environmental agenda. Activist initiatives to challenge capitalism seemed to involve a minority of residents. These problems shed light on the impediments to creating an open, self-managed, and horizontally organized space run by thousands of campers. On a brighter note, the weather was supportive for the camping environment since it only rained once, on the night of January 31, 2005, after most people had left.

Much of what follows in this chapter is derived from the knowledge and perspectives shared by interviewees. My own field notes and observations offer supplementary insights on Camp life based on my experience as a relatively long-staying camper. However, I was a foreigner and a researcher who neither understood the Camp initially nor spoke the dominant language, Portuguese.

IYC 2005 Commissions Build on the Camp of 2003

Rodrigo Nunes contends that many members of successive Camp Organizing Committees, especially youth unaffiliated to Brazilian political parties, were politically motivated by the WSF and committed to practicing the WSF Charter of Principles (Nunes 2005a: 309). The agendas developed by the COA for IYC 2002 and IYC 2003, and by the Youth Assembly for IYC 2004, showed how to apply a politicized consciousness to programs of activities; they also attempted to instill participatory methods of self-management. The responsibility for assembling youth activists to bring IYC 2005 to life rested once more with the COA.

Ana Paula De Carli extended her previous involvement in the Porto Alegre IYCs by coordinating volunteer work for all eleven IYC 2005 commissions. She also took on the responsibility of managing onsite the facilitators who provided orientation to newly arrived campers, a primary function of the IYC 2005 Volunteer Work Commission. She pointed out that women had significant leadership roles in organizing and publicizing IYC 2005, unlike the previous Camps in Porto Alegre. She asserted that women and men worked well together in the Camp Organizing Committee (COA). Most COA members came from middle-class families and had university education. Most of them were young people aged 20-30 (De Carli, 3/2/2005).

Tatiana de Carvalho Soheira – a member of the Mobilization Committee for IYC 2005, a student at the Federal University in Rio Grande Do Sul, and a member of the Brazilian Communist Party – first joined the COA in May 2004. She reported that the Youth Camp Committee of IYC 2005 had 16 employees working part-time (Soheira, 22/1/2005). Approximately, two-thirds of the COA members were youth activists connected to autonomous social movements, while the rest represented political parties and other social groups (Olivieira 2005: 324-325). The efforts of old and new organizers were consolidated by July 2004 (De Carli, 25/1/2005). During the next six month lead up to the 2005 Camp, much of the work consisted of meetings that included people previously active in the COA, locally-organized movement representatives, and friends of COA members (Stock, 31/1/2005). At least one meeting took place each week, and most dealt with too many issues. Consensus decision-making was the norm, and some meetings lasted five hours. Considerable time and effort was put into keeping everybody aware of the organizational plans (Stock, 31/1/2005). The locally-based organizing of IYC 2005 integrated gender-based inclusion and horizontal decision-making. However, organizers had varying levels of experience with the IYC project.

Much of the detailed organizational work was undertaken by commissions that involved approximately 50 people for the six months leading up to IYC 2005. The number grew to close to 100 as the start of the Camp approached. Several students worked for the commissions and also separately on behalf of their own movements (De Carli, 3/2/2005). The commissions were mandated to define concepts, tasks, functions, methodologies, and work plans. They set up work groups to carry out specific projects as mandated in commission meetings. Meanwhile, the COA still had a place on the WSF Organizing Committee (IYC 2005).

Members of the IYC 2005 Mobilization Commission were especially active. They travelled to São Paulo during August, 2004, and successfully revived the São Paulo Mobilization Commission. They worked mainly with political parties such as the PT (Workers Party) and PCB (Communist Party), and with social movements such as the MST, Catholic Youth, street kid organizations, and other youth activist groups (Sobral, 30/1/2005). Universities around Brazil were also integral sites for mobilizing thousands of students (Francisco, 26/1/2005). Students from many Brazilian cities organized bus

trips to Porto Alegre through the “Students Representatives (Academic Directories)” in order to participate in WSF 2005. Almost all of them decided to stay in Harmonia Park while the Forum took place (Oliveira 2005: 329).

The COA office opened in Parque de Harmonia on October 25, 2005. There were three permanent structures in the park – two brick buildings containing washrooms, and the modest small stone building covered in graffiti that was used by the COA to conduct frequent meetings and operate five computers. Besides disseminating information about IYC 2005 through direct mobilization efforts, the COA posted information on the Internet. This included a newsletter called Occupation that was similar to the IYC 2004 brochure (IYC 2005). Beginning in November 2004, the Communication Commission published Occupation on a bi-weekly basis to inform readers about camping and engaging in the fifth Intercontinental Youth Camp. It framed the history of the IYC in relation to the “laboratory of practices”, reiterating the centrality of this concept at the fifth Camp, along with a hope for a global “network of networks”. The third issue of the newsletter explained that the Camp would start two days prior to the WSF to encourage social integration and collaboration in self-management (Occupation: December 17, 2005). Meanwhile, the Internet was also used as a tool of self-organization for WSF programming, somewhat reminiscent of the methodology used for the IYC 2004 Virtual Forum.

WSF 2005 Territory Encircles Harmonia Park

The IC indicated that it would play less a determining and more a facilitating role in establishing the official program for WSF 2005. The Forum website encouraged prospective participating organizations to self-propose activities. This process generated eleven thematic axes, and activities were subsequently registered under these themes. A team of facilitators was appointed by the IC to ensure that the themes would not overlap. The facilitators ended up steering the process more than intended (see Wainwright 2005: 2; Nunes 2005: 294; Nunes 2005: 298; 301). Another new WSF approach to registration followed the lead of the IYC. Autonomous individuals could register online or onsite without organizational affiliation, though also without an opportunity to initiate WSF activities (WSF Bulletin September 24, 2004 cited in Sen and Kumar 2005: 202).

Unaffiliated individuals again could register for IYC 2005 online or onsite, and were invited to run activities in “Open Spaces” and Action Centres.

Online collaboration played a role in defining the program of activities of IYC 2005. Open space ideals for programming arose from COA meetings, IYC cyber spaces, COA mobilizational campaigns, and the engagement of many CSMs. Themes were clustered within seven Action Centres focused on health, the environment, feminism, spirituality, social movement mobilizing, economic solidarity, and sexual diversity (IYC 2005). Following from the experience at IYC 2003, each Action Centre was devised with its own organizational base composed of the movements running activities. In addition, these alter-globalization movements were responsible for managing garbage and security. The WSF 2005 set up activity spaces along Guaíba Lake, enabling a much closer physical connection than ever before between the Forum and the Camp and campers and WSF participants.

Forum venues were scattered just north and south of Harmonia Park, and were composed of dozens of bio-constructions. Nunes argues that the contribution of environmentally conscious practices built into the Camp since 2002 in the form of bio-constructions was seemingly unnoticed by most Forum organizers. The IYC 2005 Planning and Infrastructure Commission collaborated with PK Das, an architect who designed the textile warehouses in Mumbai for WSF 2004, to establish the new and more expansive “WSF Territory”. IYC architects also contributed to two of the newly formed WSF IC Working Groups: Solidarity Economy and Communication. WSF 2005 was dubbed “a city within the city” and “the territory of a possible world”, again building on earlier IYC symbolism. The mayor of Porto Alegre and the Porto Alegre based head of the WSF Office both credited the idea of making bio-constructions at WSF 2005 to PK Das and others who built WSF 2004 (see Nunes 2005c: 292-294). Jeffrey S. Juris notes, however, that WSF organizers were probably aware of the IYC innovations (2005: 5). The WSF OC formed a sustainability workgroup with several NGOs and movements “such as Friends of the Earth, Greenpeace, WWF, FBOMS, [and] Vitae Civilis.” The workgroup “developed a solid residues management proposal with the DMLU (City Hall’s Department of Urban Cleaning)” in partnership with the Porto Alegre Recycling Units Association for the entire WSF territory. It also designed an education program on

sustainable practices to promote “low-impact” transportation, resource use, “and consumption of organic products, etc” (Preiss and Genehr 2004: 2

Popular Solidarity Economy & IYC Campaigns Return

This newly developed collaboration between the IYC and the WSF complemented the return of their work with Brazilian small-scale farmers. The WSF and the COA connected again with solidarity economies, but this time the Municipality of Porto Alegre directly competed with the IYC. It worked with small-scale vendors who were planning to set up stalls, but members of the Camp’s Solidarity Economy Commission were neither consulted nor brought into this process (de Souza, 3/2/2005). As a result, the internal dynamics of organization clashed with the host city’s decision-making about local economic systems.

Júlia explained that, five months before IYC 2005, the Solidarity Economy Commission worked with an institution for agricultural education, family agricultural cooperatives, and Brazilian solidarity networks that operate at local, state, and national levels. This networking led to the creation of more supply centres and market systems for small-scale farmers in Rio Grande do Sul. Many of them would also provision collective kitchens at IYC 2005. The IYC Solidarity Economy Commission sought to ensure that these family networks would sell food at the Camp alongside the MST, which would prepare free food for volunteers (de Souza, 3/2/2005).

The WSF 2005 Economy of Solidarity (ES), which encompassed the IYC Economic Solidarity Commission, was a collectively managed process led directly by more than 1,200 self-organized workers who produced goods locally and adhered to fair trade principles in distribution and sales. The WSF contracted the ES to build tents for activities. ES also organized its own information sessions, and systematized currency exchange operations inside the Camp and Forum spaces. The Solidarity Exchange Markets – one placed in the WSF Territory and one located in the IYC – were based on TXAI, the medium of currency for ES market system transactions. There were two ES shops for campers in Parque Harmonia open 24 hours a day. The ES slogan was: “Another economy is happening”. The self-reflexive slogan spoke of an alternative market system. However, it relied on the WSF since the ES was allocated approximately

R\$ 2 million³ by WSF organizers (Economy of Solidarity document 2005: 1). Moreover, it operated in an urban-based neoliberal economy where the municipality supported capitalist vendors.

The Solidarity Exchange Market inside Harmonia Park was designed so that campers would buy from the agricultural producers to support local farmers' livelihoods. The family cooperatives could then trade their produce and/or exchange accumulated TXAI for Brazilian Reals one to one. The TXAI, which literally translates as companion or friend, represented a friendlier way of conducting economic relations (de Souza, 3/2/2005). It followed two similar initiatives developed for IYC 2003 (see Nunes 2005c: 289; Oliveira 2005: 324; Preiss and Genehr 2004: 2). Since that time, a social network in Porto Alegre kept using a similar medium of exchange in their own neighbourhood (Preiss, 23/1/2005).

The Camp's capacity to build on its own initiatives and spawn new localized ones demonstrates the benefit of reflexive and collaborative approaches. Several campaigns were also carried over from previous Camps. These included collective actions intended to extend beyond the IYC timeline, such as the laboratory of free knowledge and the Memory Project. Another was the Library of Alternatives Campaign organized by Ana Paula Stock and her friend Jefferson. A 31 year old resident of Porto Alegre, Ana Paula Stock became involved in the IYC 2005 COA in May 2004, although she had participated in the second and third WSFs. She explained that her campaign, which was associated with both the Forum and the Camp, owed much to local residents in Porto Alegre who contributed books. However, most of the Library's literature on the Forum and the bigger collection of books related to WSF activities, were piled up in her house (Stock, 31/1/2005). The continued boycott of multinational corporations carried over from the Mumbai Camp was not expected to challenge big firms such as Pepsi-Co and Coca-Cola seriously, but it was seen as valuable in raising awareness and calling attention to the subsidiaries of each firm operating in Brazil. A boycott of national beer companies was another planned activity (de Souza, 3/2/2005). Independent radio was again developed locally by various groups (De Carli, 3/2/2005).

³ About \$U.S. 900,000.

Practical Preparations & Logistical Nightmares

Both the campaigns and the Camp itself ran into a serious political snag. The need to ensure sufficient sanitation and water for the anticipated influx of campers constituted a massive logistical challenge for organizers. The Rio Grande Do Sul government provided electricity while the municipal government undertook the installation. The city also provisioned water and sewer treatment. As noted in Chapter 2, there was already a centre-right administration at the state level. In November 2004, the centre-right PMPD was also elected in Porto Alegre, defeating the long-ruling Workers Party. As a result, the expected contractual commitments were cancelled. New service contracts had to be renegotiated starting on January 1, 2005, severely complicating the logistical challenge of preparing for tens of thousands of people (de Souza, 3/2/2005).

The COA already had to deal with tight finances. The budget of IYC 2005 totalled approximately one million R\$ (\$U.S. 450,000), roughly the same total as in 2003 but a substantially higher sum than in the first two years (de Souza, 3/2/2005). Allocations were needed for infrastructure, services, maintenance, and mobilization campaigns. The budget was divided among the commissions on the basis of need and circumstance. Tiago Eduardo Genehr – a member of the IYC 2005 COA – mentioned that about one-tenth of the WSF 2005 budget was allocated to IYC 2005 (Genehr, 28/1/2005). In turn, the WSF 2005 was co-sponsored by 23 donors, including many international development networks and businesses. For example, NGOs such as Oxfam International and Christian Aid provided support alongside large Brazilian corporations such as Banco Do Brasil and Petrobras (a state-owned Brazilian energy firm). Government donations continued as the Federal Brazilian Tourist Industry and the State Government in Rio Grande Do Sul offered logistical support (Programacao FSM 2005). ABONG – a WSF OC founding member comprised of Brazilian NGOs – was a significant funder of IYC 2005. Health projects tied to the IYC Health Commission received money from the Brazilian Health Ministry. The International Network for Sustainable Environment – a Belgium network – helped with composting and donated 2,000 Euros for Camp activities (Preiss, 23/1/2005). Some of the organizers provided money for various causes and most of them volunteered very long hours (De Carli, 3/2/2005).

The COA expected upwards of 25,000 people, including many new faces from a Youth Camp held in 2004 at the first Social Forum of the Americas in Quito, Ecuador (Occupation: Dec 17, 2005). Regional Youth Camps took place earlier in November in two Brazilian cities - Três de Maio and Estância Velha. On December 11 and 12, 2004 in Rio de Janeiro, the COA held its Second National meeting with the mobilization committees of Rio de Janeiro (Occupation: Dec 17, 2005). Security became a crucial aspect in preparing for the Camp. However, in the aftermath of “the unilateral decision of the WSF Porto Alegre executive office to cut down on the expenses in a very crucial area, security, a clearly unprepared and insufficient security team was hired” (Nunes, 2005a: 311). The WSF’s decision hindered the Camp’s security capacity. Ironically, the COA hired private security despite the emphasis on self-management. In December, two private security guards began rotating shifts to monitor the Committee’s office inside the park. They were part of the contracted company responsible for WSF 2005. The company did not do background checks and offered jobs simply if applicants showed their Brazilian IDs. A designated bus transported them before and after their shifts (Sobral, 30/1/2005). Would collective self-management work effectively under such a tenuous arrangement among security guards, organizers, and campers at large?

Organizing for Self-Management at IYC 2005

The major responsibility for self-management was to reside with sixty small barrios (neighbourhood centres). There were also elaborate plans for the deployment of volunteers. André, an organizer and member of the Volunteer Work Commission, explained that IYC 2005 facilitators divided up volunteers in accordance with the needs of commissions and Action Centres. Facilitators were also responsible for receiving new campers, assisting them in setting up tents and teaching them about self-management tasks of barrio cleaning, security, and ecological stewardship (Basér, 28/1/2005).

For the first time, Parque de Harmonia was entirely devoted to the IYC. The Environmental Commission carried out plans to minimize negative environmental impacts. For example, it was responsible for treating the soil and water that would come from the 106 installed showers by using plant roots and by recycling the water (Preiss, 23/1/2005; for a detailed account of environmental preparations for the fifth Camp, see Oliveira 2005: 323-331). Recyclable and non-polluting bio-constructions were again to

be assembled cheaply with solar panels. Tiago Genehr's affiliation with the Roessler Movement for Environmental Protection informed his place on the Environmental Commission as a first time organizer. He would deal with key features of daily Camp life such as showers, water treatment, waste management, and composting. The emphases on individual change to cut back on consumption and reduce waste, coupled with the application of sound alternative ecological technologies, were seen as ways to build activism subtly over time (Genehr, 28/1/2005). The residues collected would be divided among "recyclable material, organics, rejected residues, toxic residues – batteries, medical residues." The Recycling Shed was built and managed again by the Porto Alegre Recycling Units Association and the National Movement of Collectors of Solid Residues. A paper recycling factory was also planned and managed by homeless people who lived in Parque de Harmonia so they could create their own employment opportunities (Preiss and Genehr 2004: 2-3). The environmental imperatives for building the fifth Camp relied extensively on volunteerism.

Initial Resident Observation Notes: Impressions and Encounters

When I arrived unprepared at the Camp in the early evening of January 20, 2005, there were more or less 250 people already camping and three areas of the park were brightly coloured by tents. I did not have a tent, and I quickly learned that there were serious security issues, including thefts. I met Júlia Coelho de Souza, who introduced me to her friend André Barsér from Rio de Janeiro – a member of the Mobilization Commission and a volunteer for the Security and Facilitation workgroups. André put me up in his tent that night. Júlia had little time to talk with me until the end of the Camp. Like most IYC organizers, she was extremely busy. At that stage, I had little understanding of what was going on or how to think about it.

I paid \$30 Rais (IYC 2005 fee) to register as a camper from an OECD (Organization for Economic and Cooperative Development) country, whereas campers from developing countries were charged \$10 Rais. This discrepancy acknowledged social inequalities between developed capitalist countries and developing countries. Moreover, resident campers had free and open access to the WSF 2005 activities, but WSF participants had to pay for living in the Camp.

While walking around the public park, home to three previous Camps, I could see few completed bio-constructions. The Che Action Centre was being built by people using mud and straw, while a DJ spun records as one hundred people or so socialized. As my first night unfolded, I met people from Brazil, Europe, the Middle East, Latin America, and Canada. I was unprepared for Camp life, despite my familiarity with the principles and frameworks set out by organizers. I was one of perhaps four people who spoke English as a first language. Still, many Brazilians spoke English very well. I learned in conversation with some of them that many campers affiliated with the PT would soon be arriving.

A crucial encounter on that first night involved my meeting some people from Pelotas and Alegrete, Rio Grande Do Sul, who were members of an organization called Revolutionary Youth that was affiliated with the MST. They had been living in the park since January 15, 2005. I began camping with them the following night at a location that they picked out where no other campers had yet settled. We were joined by another fellow English speaker, Johannes. Late at night on January 20, Johannes and I saw two men chased out of the Camp. Sergio from Juventude Revolucionária (Revolutionary Youth), who spoke English quite fluently, told us that the incident had involved skinheads and theft. Sergio was well connected with existing park networks and understood better than us the divisions among Brazilian residents. The future of my interviews seemed doubtful at this point.

On the morning of January 21, a pre-arranged meeting with Eduardo Sanchez turned into a day-long excursion in the city where I bought supplies and a cheap tent that became a joke around the campsite because it frequently collapsed. Eduardo became my first respondent that day and we discussed how to carry out the interviews. The next day, I learned from Colin about the Youth Camp in Québec, Canada. He said that a common goal among campers was to build personal relations and alternative practices while learning through shared experiences (Perreault, 22/1/2005). During the night of January 22, music could be heard coming from many corners of the park. The Che Centre remained the main place for socializing. It was also the centre of health and safety – organized by the IYC Health Commission – where contraceptives were made available alongside a variety of holistic medicines. It was staffed by alternative health practitioners.

To my surprise, thanks to enormous voluntary effort, most of the site was completed in time for the thousands of campers who arrived on January 23. Both the ways people worked together to put up the bio-constructions, and the materials they used, effectively illustrated why the IYC relied on volunteerism. The majority of biodegradable resources were supplied by a few small-scale groups from Brazil and Argentina (de Souza, 3/1/2005). Meanwhile, a few hundred campers voluntarily built the big sturdy tents that would house the action centres, information booths, night life venues, and many other social spaces. The Environment Commission, with help from volunteers, placed three bin sets for garbage, recycling, and composting all across the park.

The social life in the Porto Alegre Camp unfolded – unsurprisingly – in Portuguese. Social groups were defined primarily by place of origin, movement affiliation, and language. Spanish and French were also heard frequently. Capoeira circles, acoustic guitar players, and venues for music and dance popped up throughout the park. Burgeoning campsites meant party atmospheres. Dozens of flags identified many social movements, political parties, as well as images of Che Guevara and music preferences for Bob Marley and The Doors.

The problem of theft continued to be discussed in many spaces I traversed. By January 23, 30 security officers were patrolling the park premises. During the official opening day, on January 24, 160 private security guards were supposed to arrive, but they did not (Sobral, 30/1/2005). The missing personnel and a few still incomplete bio-constructions coincided with the arrival by bus of ecstatic Brazilians through the night and day. Between January 23 and 25, thousands more people arrived on foot. The shower installations and portable washrooms were set up as people flooded in. This made lineups long and showering became a luxury that required patience. Scores of artisans and food vendors contributed to the rapidly proliferating consumer base. They all added to theatres of culture and music created by those already camping, defining together spaces with unpredictable outcomes. Systems of self-management were now overrun.

Self-Management: Operations and Challenges

Self-management roles at IYC 2005 were reminiscent of those played in IYC 2003. Both Camps consisted of facilitators, monitors, and campers. A monitor was a resident camper who represented a sector of the Camp. S/he was “the person who [was]

able to provide all information, resolve or forward problems to the local organization, help campers to organize the occupation of the lots and to find help for their local problems” (Oliveira 2005: 323). Sergio took on the voluntary roles of both monitor and facilitator. He said that self-management among 200-300 people had functioned well within Harmonia Park before January 24. The participatory meetings based on dividing up labour for tasks such as building the Action Centres consisted of facilitators, monitors, and organizers. However, these arrangements became more complex and overloaded once the Camp got underway. Sergio was involved day and night in meetings concerning self-management. Some sixty monitors served to spread information to each barrio. They reported to campsite representatives on what was happening in the bigger picture of Camp life, and in turn, they would channel news and tasks through each campsite to the residents. In some barrios, monitors helped to operate collective kitchens through self-management (Sergio, 31/1/2005).

Facilitators had to be confident that they disseminated correct information to new arrivals, and they needed to know the locations of various places and bio-constructions scattered throughout the park. Building Action Centres and getting food as a volunteer made one “feel like you [were] part of the Camp because you help[ed] to build it.” In contrast, those who came after the Camp got underway could not so easily feel part of the voluntary process of self-management. The collective mass of people posed a great challenge to viable self-management (Sergio, 31/1/2005).

The pursuit of self-management in constructing and running the Camp, meeting new people, and volunteering demonstrated how central was the role of this collaborative imaginary, despite being carried out by a minority of campers who were organizers, facilitators, and monitors. The first organizer I had the opportunity to interview was Tatiana, who had carried out mobilization campaigns for IYC 2005. She believed that the consciousness of self-management among the camping population was limited. Therefore, the biggest challenge for the IYC was to enable all campers to understand its central meaning and participate in it (Soihera, 22/1/2005).

As people poured into the Camp, signposts, maps, and message boards went up around Harmonia Park. The Inscription (registration) Commission became swamped by long lines of people. The Communication Factory got up and running as the night life

music venues went into operation. The Free Knowledge Laboratory of computers involved growing numbers of software exchanges and alternative media broadcasts. The elaborate speaker system began blaring at 8 a.m. everyday in the four languages of the WSF to provide information about the Camp's services and scheduled activities. That was the only way of knowing what was going on as the arrival of activity programs and Camp kits was delayed. The Translation Workgroup had less than a dozen full-time workers, not enough to translate all the documents. Unsurprisingly, most printed documents were in Portuguese. It was the dominant language in workshops, while Spanish and French played secondary roles and English translation was next in line. Most other languages spoken at the Camp were only used privately.

The Camp kits and the program of activities did arrive soon after the IYC officially opened. Neither the program nor the Camp manual was printed in English. However, it was plain to see that there were hundreds of alter-globalization movements involved in the creation and management of Action Centres, whose knowledge-production under popular education formats contributed to countless dialogues on issues related to the seven themes. The program of activities showed the diverse range of youth activism inside IYC 2005 (Grade de Programação).

The Camp Manual outlined the main features of the IYC and explained self-managed and low-impact camping. It described the popular solidarity economy and the Action Centres, including the health care facilities located at the Che space. It listed contact information for places in Porto Alegre such as hospitals, the airport, police, and the public transportation authority. It also included the WSF Charter of Principles (Manual do acampado), and stated that the IYC was intended to "create a short-circuit in the old forms of political representation... to make resistance an act of creation" (cited in Juris 2005: 4). The IYC logo, the same one used for WSF 2005, could be seen on the manual's front and back covers and on the Action Centres. It challenged the usual configuration of North over South, instead symbolizing equality by illustrating a horizontal world of continents positioned side by side. This imagery reinforced the IYC 2004 and 2005 discourses on a new political generation of youth activists. The 2005 Camp Manual proclaimed that the IYC fostered political engagement that moved beyond "older" and less democratic forms of political organization.

The program of activities reflected remarkable creativity and a commitment to horizontal self-management. Horizontality, however, remained an obstacle at the Camp, especially since communication among all campers was impossible. The mobilization before the Camp that remarkably attracted thousands of youth to Porto Alegre, mostly from Brazil, translated into a mess for facilitators and volunteers. This was compounded by delays in providing campers with registration accreditation and supplies for showering, a reusable plastic mug, the Camp Manual and the program of activities. The movements and individuals who defined activity centres would see many cancellations and delayed start-times. The problems of running the Camp to its full potential compromised the capacity of the self-management systems to take hold of fluid camping populations with different lifestyles and inexperience with self-management.

It also became clear that collaborative imaginaries for alternative worlds required cross-linguistic communication to integrate cross-cultural and cross-continental youth groups. Ana Paula De Carli remarked that the foci of the IYC 2005 planned workshop and seminar topics had become overly nationalistic, thereby undermining the spirit of intercontinental movements and issues (De Carli, 25/1/2005). Macdonald Lewanilca from Zimbabwe took part in IYC 2004 and a Youth Camp in Zimbabwe during that same year. While commenting that IYC 2005 focused on a broad range of relevant issues, he too questioned the lack of perspectives reflecting genuine intercontinental representation (Lewanilca, 28/1/2005).

Living in the Camp offered a variety of options to come and go, especially where thousands more people gathered for the World Social Forum. The WSF opening march took place on January 26, 2005. Thousands of campers took part. Roberto Soares Francisco, who participated in IYC 2003 when he was 17, was a facilitator and member of the Mobilization Commission for IYC 2005. His role was to train new volunteer facilitators on how to receive new arrivals from buses, and to work with fellow facilitators on registering new arrivals, explaining the Camp (and Forum) principles, and (if not too swamped) showing new campers where to set up camp. Roberto mentioned that the Mobilization Commission had responsibility to provide security for the opening march. It also coordinated youth groups onsite to head straight into the march (Francisco, 26/1/2005).

At the WSF opening ceremony, there was a ramp set up for people to donate books to the Library of Alternatives located on the stage, but no spotlight or introduction was given, as previously promised. People could not easily find the location. A central venue for the Library was located at the main entrance of the IYC, but it was not cited on Camp or Forum maps. Information booths did not provide directions either, while volunteers there kept rotating. Ana Paula Stock was particularly frustrated about these difficulties. She asserted that disorganization could destroy the IYC (Stock, 31/1/2005). Clearly, the Library campaign required more than two overworked people and a series of volunteers to generate substantial change.

Once the WSF opened, Camp organizers had to deal with many other internal challenges to integrate campers into an open space environment. After most residents had registered and set up tents, dynamics inside the park kept changing. People moved along the dusty park pathways under mostly sunny skies against the colourful backdrop of thousands of tents. Many campers walked back and forth between Camp and Forum activities during the following days, which further constrained collective self-management opportunities. Residents journeyed into the city, others came back from it, while many kept walking to nearby stores or vendor stalls for supplies. Meanwhile, residents of Porto Alegre entered and exited Harmonia Park. There was constant movement day and night. It was difficult to obtain reliable information about who lived in the park or where they came from.

Tiago brought people from the Forum to the Camp to share in dialogues (Genehr, 28/1/2005). Luiz Fernando Galversen, aged 51 and self-identified as autonomous, was a facilitator in 2002 and 2003, and again in 2005. He complained that collective kitchens and bathrooms were less well maintained than in the previous two Porto Alegre Camps.⁴ Moreover, there was not enough lunch or dinner provided for all of the volunteers (Galversen, 26/1/2005).

Logistical problems intensified for the COA, which did not have enough resources or sufficient help from well-integrated volunteer labourers. It was difficult to

⁴ Collective kitchens involve joint efforts to prepare food and do clean up afterwards. At IYC 2005, some collective kitchens were run by barrio members while many campers did not share in such tasks.

make systematic connections among alter-globalization movements onsite, political groups, or apolitical campers who arrived after the Camp opened. The garbage that was piling up, offered evidence that many people did not share the collaborative visions of ecological stewardship advocated by organizers. Most residents and groups appeared largely self-organized and self-regulated but somewhat detached from the collective experience sought by Camp organizers.

A Survey of WSF Participants and IYC Residents

IBASE, a co-founder of the WSF OC and a research centre, undertook a large-scale survey at WSF 2005. It was distributed in the four official languages to a sample of 2,540 people who participated in the Forum or resided in the Camp. The respondents were categorized in four groups, one of which referred to the IYC: Brazilian participants, Latin American participants, foreign participants, and campers (IBASE 2006: 9-10).

The 35,000 registered campers accounted for 22.6% of the total Forum population of 155,000 (IBASE 2006: 14). The survey results estimated breakdowns by nationality as follows: Brazilians 61.2%, Argentineans 10%, Uruguayans 4.9%, Canadians 3.4%, Chileans 2.2%, Americans 2%, Spaniards 1.8%, Peruvians 1.6%, Paraguayans 1.3%, Italians 1.2%, and others 10.4% (IBASE 2006: 17). For the purposes of this thesis, it would have been helpful to have more information on the regional distribution of Brazilians to see how well areas other than Porto Alegre, Rio Grande Do Sul, São Paulo, and Rio were represented. It would have been fascinating as well to see a list of the countries from which the estimated 3,700 “others” came, although the survey numbers might have been too small to capture accurate projections.

In terms of age cohorts among Camp residents, the survey suggested that more than 20,000 were between the ages of 14 and 24 (63.4%). More than 9 of 10 were younger than 35, since 29.5% were estimated to fall in the range of 25 to 34. People aged 35-44 accounted for 4% of the resident camping population, those aged 45-54 made up 2.4%, and 200 or so accounted for the 0.7% older than 55 (IBASE 2006: 19). It is evident that age was not a prerequisite for the IYC in a social environment of intergenerational relations, but the overwhelming presence of campers in their teens, twenties, and early thirties confirmed that the Camp world consisted mainly of adolescents and young adults, particularly those born in Brazil. The survey failed to account for campers younger than

14 years old who were clearly onsite. Many were from families of the vendors (and may or may not have been camping), and others were in campsites with their parents (including several single mothers), siblings, or seemingly in their own small groups.

In terms of educational background, the survey found that 74.2% of the campers had entered and/or completed university, 21.2% had 5-12 years of schooling, 3.6% held a Master's or a PhD degree, and 1% had fewer than five years of schooling (IBASE 2006: 20). The high proportion of university educated residents demonstrated how the camping population was skewed towards relative privilege and how it under-represented marginalized youth groups such as street kids, Indigenous peoples, and rural dwellers, many of whom had fewer opportunities to attend university.

Results by sex showed a Camp population comprised of 52.4% men, 46.7% women, and 0.9% unknown (IBASE 2006: 22). By occupation, 57.6% of campers were students, 9.2% were civil servants, 7.4% were private employees, and 25.8% other (IBASE 2006: 24). On the question of partisan political involvement, the survey found that 78.3% of campers were unaffiliated to political parties, compared to 19% who identified links (IBASE 2006: 30). In terms of social movement membership, 44.9% self-declared as members, while 54.9% said they were not (IBASE 2006: 31). This is a surprising finding in a Camp space constructed for learning about critical life issues related to globalization and daily social struggles, and for seeking collaborative alternatives. Of those who identified themselves with "public social movements", 32.6% represented social movements compared to 25.3% who were active in NGOs. Political party representation accounted for 19.2% of these people, 7% of movement actors belonged to trade unions or trade associations, and 15.9% of people were labelled other (IBASE 2006: 34). The problematic term of "public" used by IBASE to denote social movements blurs very real distinctions between diverse groups of people and CSMs. In addition, the figures suggest general trends without acknowledging or at least recording the plurality and multiple identities of campers.

The question of participation in events related to the WSF process revealed that 50.5% of campers had never taken part in the WSF process compared to 22.9% who had participated in previous WSFs. The survey reported that 13.6% had engaged in Local Social Forums, 9.3% had reportedly taken part in preparatory events, 6.2% had been

involved in Regional Social Forums, and a further 3.5% had participated in international forums (IBASE 2006: 56). The presence of some 18,000 campers who had not taken part in an earlier WSF-related venue reveals a striking feat of successful mobilization for IYC 2005 by activists and university-based organizing in Brazil as well as through alternative media, the Internet, and word of mouth. In this respect, it would have been fascinating to see the results of a question that was missing from the survey – how people learned about the Camp. Among the 12 campers interviewed as part of this small/unrepresentative qualitative study, only three people had never experienced either a Youth Camp or a Social Forum. Also missing from the large-scale survey were any questions asking campers to reflect on their own experiences and impressions of IYC 2005.

Networks & Networking at IYC 2005

The park showed a patchwork of astounding diversity of alter-globalization activism and networking. Tatiana underscored that the IYC aimed to make impacts at global levels, and that it was open to all organizations positioned in ideologically leftist standpoints and in opposition to neoliberalism and capitalism, provided that they adhered to the WSF Charter of Principles. The Camp continued to attract two main categories of youth groups, those based in autonomous networks and those that were affiliated with political parties (Siheira, 22/1/2005). Tiago told me that organizations at the IYC represented the Workers Party, the MST, ecological movements, university students, and a whole host of social movements and autonomous groups (Roessler, 28/1/2005). Rodrigo Lentz – also a member of the COA of the IYC 2005 – identified the MST, the movement for unemployed workers (MTD), street kids movements, university student activists, and autonomous individuals. Ideological perspectives included socialism, communalism, and anarchism, among many others (Lentz, 23/1/2005).

Several of the Brazilian youth movements and other youth groups from countries such as Argentina and Canada did not appear to be part of a network of networks or a movement of movements. The “flag of flags” did not make an appearance either. The wide range of ideologies, group affiliations, and language barriers hindered coalescence, and many campers did not participate in the planned activities. Nevertheless, as time went on, the Camp kept opening social spaces for new and seasoned youth activists to interact and express themselves creatively. They dialogued and learned together in Action

Centres, socially experienced the night life, and exchanged ideas intra-culturally as well as cross-culturally.

As in the earlier IYCs, Africa was badly under-represented. The Secretariat of the African Social Forum paid for two Africans to come to IYC 2005: Kiss Abrahams from Zambia and another participant from Cote d'Ivoire. They engaged in the Camp and stayed at a hotel near the park. Four other activists from Africa took part in the Camp, MacDonald from Zimbabwe and three from South Africa (Abrahams, 23/1/2005). The striking lack of youth from India also deepened discontinuities between the historical linkages of the Camp, much as had been the case with a parallel under-representation of Brazilians at IYC 2004.

While far from being a representative meshwork of intercontinental diversity, IYC 2005 welcomed a significant plurality of people and movements. Some groups shared their experiences directly, while others never met. The organizing role of youth groups such as street kid movements of Rio Grande Do Sul showed why the Camp was an important space of inclusion for many young people who could exercise their agency. Autonomous youth and politically partisan youth were not as polarized as they had been in previous IYC encounters.

The fifth Camp remained a very important arena for interaction among university students, especially youth members of political parties. This became evident during my interview with Rodolfo Mio Ruira, a high school student and self-identified youth militant of the PSU (Socialist Party of United Workers) from São Paulo. Rodolfo explained that student activism at the IYC had focused since the beginning on struggles to stop the government's privatization of universities, resulting high tuition fees, and the exclusion of people who cannot afford private universities. Rodolfo said that the IYC meant for him and the PSU a reunion of militants from national and international levels that opened communication and awareness of each others' situations. They also had big meetings outside of Harmonia Park during the IYC's timeline (Ruira, 28/1/2005). It was clear that many youth viewed the IYC as a springboard for political party activism. For many other residents, the Camp was a new experience.

One Brazilian female respondent had come to the IYC for the first time from a small state university. The university organized the trip. Self-identified as autonomous,

she had heard about the Camps and wanted to deepen her consciousness, awareness, and learning. She said that the IYC created a good opportunity to communicate with fellow university students and learn about approaching politics in new ways. She was committed to progressive social change and the project of another world (Tape Recorded Interview, 26/1/2005; consecutive translation by Eduardo Sanchez).

The role of youth activist networking was visible once more at the Caracol Intergalactika, where several photographic and artistic exhibitions depicted various aspects of social struggles and globalization. Nunes noted it was the Action Centre that was most independent from the COA, and a space that continued to evolve with a commitment to horizontal dialogues. Its programming for IYC 2005 was developed mostly by networks based in Europe through email exchanges (see Nunes 2005: 310-311). Kim Bryan from the U.K. was a member of the IYC 2005 Translation Workgroup and a member of both the U.K.-based Dissent Network and the Spanish-based Escanda. She had lived onsite for about three weeks. She was involved in the Caracol and had previous experience in similar kinds of autonomous spaces. She explained that in the Caracol space activists discussed ways of mobilizing against the WTO, the FTTA, and the G-8 Summit that was scheduled to take place in Gleneagles, Scotland in July 2005.

Kim spoke of Caracol 2005 as a space having a very good dynamic among intercontinental campers, who predominated within it. She added that Caracol nevertheless had an informal hierarchy based on the length and depth of participants' experience within it. Since Kim had been more connected than the majority of people, she had more responsibility and knew more about what took place. She observed that in Caracol, experience, presence, and personal connections could undermine adherence to horizontality and consensus decision-making. Some seasoned activists found it tedious to have to explain to new people how the space operated, a process that tended to dominate the first hour of sessions that took place early evenings on a daily basis (Bryan, 26/1/20).

Critical Impressions of IYC 2005: Commercialism, Racism, & Sexism

Kim Bryan's initial impressions of IYC were very positive, but she became more critical amidst the chaos that ensued with the convergence of thousands of campers. She was appalled by the spread of capitalist practices in advertising on stalls and the aggressive selling of food, drink, and jewelry. She also saw much partying as well as

committed political activism in barrios and Action Centres. She observed that “a kind of segregation of people” pervaded the whole park, however, as most spaces were not very intercontinental and there were disconnects between many Brazilians and foreign nationals (Bryan, 26/1/2005). All those dynamics were visible to me as well.

Kim noticed that campers were mainly served by black people, who did the dirty work of picking up garbage and cleaning toilets. The environment was one of mostly black working class people providing services for predominantly white middle class youth. Moreover, it was clear to her and many people including myself that verbal harassment of women was rampant (For accounts of sexual harassment at IYC 2005, see Mueller 2005: 275; Nunes 2005: 311; For a brief discussion on gender violence and the WSF, see Butalia 2005: 114-117). Kim was correct that explicit sexism was not adequately addressed. For example, the ongoing broadcasts on the speaker system did not address this matter. This critical issue became the focus of discussion in some spaces such as Caracol where groups used a document – developed in Europe – that outlined steps on how to deal with sexual harassment and strategies for conflict resolution. Gender violence and physical fights were not well dealt with owing in large measure to the uncontrollable magnitude of the Camp (Bryan, 26/1/2005). This lack of capacity to deal with anti-social behaviour also reflected a lack of foresight in practicing self-management. Furthermore, as the World March of Women (2005) state:

[i]n a workshop at the 2005 WSF, many [young women] expressed their deep concern about the constant sexual harassment inside the Camp that made them feel they were at risk when they walked alone, especially at night, went to the bathroom or took a bath. In the workshop they decided to organize a march to the shower area, where many episodes of harassment had occurred, reaffirming that it was women’s territory also, and that sexist violence wouldn’t be tolerated (World March of Women 2005: 6).

These issues need to be addressed within the IYC context. It is necessary to hear from the women and men who experienced physical and verbal abuse, and they need a safe environment to speak out. More discussion and compassionate mechanisms of conflict resolution are needed to counter such forms of discrimination and abuse of power. Gender relations always require full attention, and the challenge is greater in a shared living space of thousands of people. The differences between movements and

people onsite that stirred tensions cannot be ignored either. Any world of alternatives must be based on respect and dignity for all human beings.

Security Problems

The 160 hired security officers were supposed to arrive on the opening day (January 24), but they only began patrolling on January 27. Their presence was visible to any camper because checkpoints were set up and scattered throughout the park and their home base was near the main entrance. It was also close to the kiosk of Telecom Brazil, which served as the hub for phone calls and sales of cell phones and phone cards. The presence of tighter security transformed a park environment almost completely filled by campsites and where visible commercialization was displacing previously established family vendors.

João Portella Sobral from Sao Paulo was a member of the Communication Commission, the Volunteer Commission, and the Environment Commission. He mentioned that, once one is involved in the IYC, there were many opportunities to help organize – as his own case clearly exemplified. However, he became completely immersed in matters of security to the exclusion of his other tasks. João also observed that organizational work was compromised by frenetic socializing. Security concerns arose mostly as a result of people doing drugs, drinking to excess, and committing thefts. Between January 24 and up until mid-day on January 30, there were reports of 200 to 300 robberies. The security work of volunteers was further complicated by state police; though not antagonistic, some officers were unfriendly (Sobral, 30/1/2005).

The Camp was also marred by violent incidents involving skinheads with two by fours and metallic pegs who beat up some women and black people. Private security guards managed to put a stop to this behaviour by January 28th, and sent the skinheads to the state police. There were also a few fights between groups of people affiliated with different political parties. To compound the situation, the private security officers on morning rotations were usually not given lunch until 3 pm, and many of them left their posts without being fed or doing their jobs. Some guards also overstepped the mark and abused their power, making wrongful accusations and assaulting small-scale vendors, whose materials were sometimes confiscated without explanation (Sobral, 30/1/2005). The tiny minority of people who engaged in these violent acts were unrepresentative of

the IYC. The vast majority of campers behaved respectfully and in solidarity with one another. Moreover, the COA and many volunteers in the barrios went to great lengths to deal with security issues in daily meetings and through direct lines of communication. The attempts to ensure basic security for all campers reinforced norms of self-management.

There were daily meetings on safety, and walkie talkie contact was very useful in keeping the commissions and barrio representatives in touch with one another. André commented, however, that the meetings were overshadowed by the insufficient attention paid to measures to ensure safety (Barsér, 28/1/2005). João went on to say that campers generally worked well in their own rounds, and many of the private security guards were nice guys who talked freely with campers and cooperated with state police. However, he thought that the whole security network required more dialogue and more rapid responses to address situations that spun out of control. Many barrios were dysfunctional and some IYC organizers did not appear for their designated rounds. João identified as a key challenge the need to make self-management function more effectively in terms of security. There needed to be greater inclusion of facilitators in meetings, and more effort to make everybody fully aware of respect as a foundational principle of self-management. There was no coherent security plan for IYC 2005. Next time, he said, it would be important to be better prepared (Sobral, 30/1/2005).

Competing Vending Economies

The security problems reflected a lack of effective divisions of labour among all actors involved in the system. This was also the case with arrangements for the sale of food and drinks, which reflected conflict rather than collaboration between the Municipality of Porto Alegre and the COA. Júlia reported that the dozens of commercial vendors who were licensed by the city, or who simply showed up without permits, undermined the ideal of a solidarity marketplace. The IYC Popular Solidarity Commission was upset about the way some merchants engaged in price fixing for beer and soft drinks. Meanwhile, most small-scale jewelry vendors had come on their own terms. The localized currency exchange markets opened only on January 27, and closed two days later without the expected financial benefits or network building among the agricultural producers (de Souza, 3/2/2005).

The COA lacked sufficient clout to persuade the Municipality to stop the informal profit-driven food and drink vending economies. However, this commercial economy consisted primarily of small-scale vendors who were also striving to make a living. As Júlia underscored, many of them were poor and engaged in their own struggles for survival (de Souza, 3/2/2005). Moreover, the IYC took place in a city and country embedded in a global capitalist system that made it difficult for organizers to uphold fair trade principles.

IYC 2005 Subcultures & Volunteering

Most people who have not lived inside the Camp would have a difficult time making sense of it from a distance. Within the boundaries of Harmonia Park, most IYC residents themselves were considered outsiders at a closed campsite alongside Guaíba Lake. Andre told me that this “Peaceful Village” of around 200 people was based on the Mayan calendar and associated spirituality, and that its members decided who could and could not join (Barsér, 28/1/2005). It was a very different place from the rest of the Camp, despite being comprised of tents, because it was exclusive. The “Peaceful Village” was located close to the most widely used “Open Space” of IYC 2005 that had a music venue and a lively night life. The two smaller “Open Spaces” were inside the park. All three open spaces – much like the rest of the Camp – were characterized by vibrant socializing, all kinds of live music, and ongoing consumption of food, drink, and shared experiences.

On another side of Harmonia Park, the hip hop area seemed to be in constant motion by day and night, unlike any other cultural venue of IYC 2005. Malik Rima – an organizer of “Hip Hop City” in Harmonia Park – explained to me that the Brazilian hip hop movement was much more organized and better represented in IYC 2005 than in previous years. The hip hop groups saw themselves as integral to the IYC. Their movement sought both to stop racism and to create progressive social change. The hip hop activists were also very involved in community projects throughout Brazil (Rima, 28/1/2005). Ana Paula De Carli expressed regret that the hip hop movement was somewhat cut off from communication with other social movements involved in establishing IYC 2005. She added that the COA had asked hip hop activists to participate in IYC 2005 but the Camp Organizing Committee did not give anything in return (De

Carli, 3/2/2005). While the hip hop movement manifested a vibrant self-organized and autonomous arena of diversity, this organizational disconnect between it and the COA revealed some fragmentation within the IYC.

Many of the movements represented in the park had constituencies with divergent interests in promoting social change in Brazil, in the Camp, and beyond. The COA had an interest in consolidating them through networking, and also in coordinating volunteerism. Ana Paula De Carli, the coordinator of all volunteering, estimated that IYC 2005 had 350 volunteers who were given lunch as the Camp got underway, and at least 400 others who helped later on (De Carli, 3/2/2005). The provision of lunch for volunteers showed how the MST and the IYC could integrate collective forms of self-management to get the Camp up and running under the COA's cooperative lead. Romualdo Paz de Oliveira estimated that there were some 1,000 official volunteers, but he also acknowledged that an accurate figure is unknown (2005: 332). Roberto, who served as a facilitator, saw more volunteer involvement in IYC 2005 than in IYC 2003. Furthermore, many volunteers just arrived on the scene without making prior arrangements online (Francisco, 26/1/2005). Rodrigo was a volunteer for the third time inside the Porto Alegre Camp, and in 2005 he helped out at the Health Commission, the Che space, and the COA office. In IYC 2005, there were more resources and food for volunteers than ever before (Rodrigo, 26/1/2005). The role of volunteering was crucial in building the bio-constructions, and in facilitating new friendships and denser kinds of social networks based on activism. Volunteerism also illustrates how the IYC process has evolved more as a grassroots initiative based onsite than through cyberspace or advance planning.

Volunteering shows how self-management and cooperative actions materialized onsite, but in other ways the process was mismanaged. Ana Paula Stock was less sanguine about the division of labour: "everybody's work [became] nobody's work." She observed that most volunteers were simply directed to perform specific tasks within spaces of IYC commissions. Many had marginal voices and were afforded minimal opportunities to carry out constructive work aligned with their own interests. Collective distribution of tasks and decision-making took place but deviated from the imaginary of self-management. Ana Paula remarked that, without full-scale coordination of volunteers, the talents and abilities of many people were lost, while others were excluded and

undervalued. This added to her disappointment about receiving only 2,000 instead of the expected 20,000 books for the Library of Alternatives Campaign (Stock, 31/1/2005).

Self-Management & Ecological Footprints in Harmonia Park

The failures of such IYC-backed campaigns, coupled with inadequately coordinated volunteerism, were accompanied by adverse ecological impacts. A Camp in a city is not a city unto itself. The ecology of the public park was a complicated arena bound to municipal permissions and services, and marked by thousands of footprints. Tiago – who remained focused as an IYC 2005 organizer on ecological issues – remarked that the Camp was “completely artificial, not a city in any sense.” Most ecological practices involving the use of bamboo and solar energy remained inside the Camp, in search of the political will needed to make broader ecologically-based social change (Genehr, 28/1/2005). Macdonald was positive about IYC 2005 as he stated that it was a “community of living” filled with politically-conscious people determined to make alternative imaginaries into realities, especially in environmental practices (Lewanilca, 28/1/2005). Nevertheless, at a very practical level, the facilities in the two brick bathrooms inside Harmonia Park malfunctioned at times, and some rows of portable toilets were left unattended for days at a time. Romualdo Oliveira reports that bio-construction centres for prescreening recycling were all but abandoned as garbage was strewn across Parque de Harmonia. However, the experience was mixed. Many campers were attentive in using the main recycling shed on a regular basis (Oliveira 2005: 327, 330-331). Still the inconsistency reflected the enormity of the challenge to secure committed engagement from all campers.

In contrast to the turmoil that characterized security and environmental problems, the self-management apparatus had some successes, such as the regular meetings that were held between barrio representatives and members of the COA. The COA dutifully promoted the role of self-management on its website and in the Camp Manual, and through its logistically-focused meetings with volunteer monitors and facilitators. It put bins for garbage, recycling, and compost all over the park. However, many people seemingly came to party, while others spent most of their time in Forum activities, making it impossible for self-management systems to effectively operate in the park. Sergio observed that most people who came after the Camp was under way tended to

enjoy the experience and use or abuse the Camp as spectators (Sergio, 31/1/2005). The colossal amount of garbage left by countless unaccountable people spoke loudly to the minimal commitment to park stewardship exercised by vast numbers of campers.

The imaginary of self-management is about respecting people and the environment. It starts by way of choices such as how to dispose of a cigarette or discard paper (Sergio, 31/1/2005). Colin – who had experience within the Québec Youth Camp – said that the philosophy of self-management necessitated direct participation in order to foster people’s development, boost their confidence, and inspire them (Perreault, 22/1/2005).

Horizontal Organizing & Exclusions

The roles played by facilitators, monitors, security, and organizers in the self-management system at the IYC in 2005 showed that hierarchy was practiced alongside horizontality to disseminate information to campers and to make pragmatic decisions. Nevertheless, the social and political organization of the Camp made innovations to contemporary and anarchistic forms of affinity groups. Ana Paula Stock explained that the COA and its associated commissions were organized into small groups, which based decisions on consensus and horizontality. This model was effective for planning and shaping the agendas of the IYC process. However, it only worked when people were involved in the whole process. Many potentially interested Brazilians lacked the necessary time or money to become engaged. Ana Paula would have preferred to have seen the COA seek out a greater range of involvement from local communities instead of making so many decisions centrally. Members of such communities might then have experienced deepened engagement in the IYC since they would then have felt equally a part of decision-making processes (Stock, 31/1/2005).

As the Camp got underway, the style of organizing reflected a hierarchy of experience. The context changed when a few hundred people committed to carrying out consensus decision-making faced thousands more people with lesser commitment. Experienced organizers and campers knew the systems differently than most people who were much less knowledgeable about, and in some cases completely ignorant of IYC objectives. Looking back, Ana Paula said that the COA should not have waited for everybody to come before pushing the principles of self-management and horizontality.

The influx occurred in ways that thwarted the Camp's potential to foster alternative social practices, as evidenced by the problems of garbage and the disrespect exhibited towards women. She added that too many people came to the Camp thinking of it as a party-place (Stock, 31/1/2005). Partying, sexual harassment, and capitalist profit-making appeared in microcosm as reflections of the environment in which the Camp existed. Kiss Abrahams commented that IYC processes were not collectively owned, and that made it difficult for many people to believe in them. He was critical of the lack of organizational transparency and continuity, and the failure to include more youth activists from Africa and more representation of youth to mirror the world. He also pointed out that it was unclear how the budget was administered and by whom (Abrahams, 23/1/2005).

Looking Back at IYC 2005

The story of the Camp presented on the IYC 2005 and IYC 2004 websites is incomplete. The official versions highlight the idea of a laboratory of practices but omit mention of the partying and security issues that have also engulfed camp life. Moreover, despite the potentials of youth activism in the Camp's cultural venues and Action Centres, IYC 2005 did not escape – as the IYC 2005 website suggested – from everyday capitalist life. Commercialization was rampant in the Camp premises, albeit to a lesser extent than in the WSF where dozens of vendors sold t-shirts and other commodities inscribed with the words “Another World is Possible”. Commodification was further apparent in the WSF Territory in some social movement marquees displaying their paraphernalia, and in the huge information booths of donors to WSF 2005 such as Petrobras, Banco do Brasil and the Brazilian government. These displays were located in the same vicinity where many Camp residents and Forum participants denounced such commercialization and where alter-globalization movements asserted their respective agendas for change.

The Call of Social Movements issued a comprehensive statement on the WSF website nearly one month after WSF 2005, condemning war, neoliberalism, social exclusion, and the exploitation of people and ecology. However, it made no reference to youth activism or youth-based struggles (Call From Social Movements 2005). This was a strikingly odd oversight since inventive youth activism was visibly connected to WSF 2005 through both physical presence and alter-globalization representation. The

document outlining the WSF closing ceremony posted on the WSF website did mention the Camp twice. It documented the camping population of 35,000 and more importantly stated “[In 2005], for the first time, the Youth Camp was inside the Forum’s Territory, innovating the communitarian practices and the self-organization and going further in the defense of Human Rights” (Closing ceremony, 2005: 1). This statement acknowledged that the Intercontinental Youth Camp had moved beyond the World Social Forum to practice alternative social practices. It recognized that the fifth Camp was a socially constructed world of self-organized communities that defended the human rights of its constituents in more innovative ways than the Forum’s working models.

Juris is partly right to point out that WSF 2005, in turn, “moved closer to the grassroots, network-based model of the Youth Camp” by decentralizing organization over the territory and coordinating practices in self-management and horizontality (Juris 2005: 5). For example, many grassroots networks ran the solidarity economy, and many more participated in both the Camp and Forum. However, the Camp was not simply based on grassroots activism and horizontal networks. The IYC (like the WSF) received external funding and crucial support was given by Brazilian government departments. Moreover, a wide range of social actors affiliated to a variety of political identities advocated as well as practiced different kinds of social organization.

Hierarchies of experience and involvement shaped many IYC patterns of activity and social life, thus diverting intended cooperative principles from actual practices. The objective of translating the knowledge systems of self-management into camp-wide applications largely failed because of unequal power relations, compounded by the limited time available to integrate an unmanageable numbers of campers in a finite space. While many campers had little interest in Camp principles, others lacked knowledge of self-organization and issues pertaining to global or local social activism.

The asymmetrical contributions to planning and running the Forum and the Camp undermined a sense of collective ownership. However, networking provided yet other opportunities to share the open spaces provided by the organizational efforts of the COA and its commissions. All of my respondents highlighted networking as an indispensable aspect of the IYC. Residents lived interconnected in mazes of tents and campsites where groups of people forged joint experiences and friendships, whether new, old, or brief.

Networking occurred as volunteers helped to construct the venue. Marching side by side in public demonstrations inside the park or as part of WSF 2005 added to casual get togethers along pathways where conversations also included artisans and vendors. Socializing among youth activist groups constantly took place. In short, many new forms of interaction resulted from connections made on site. With widespread access to the Internet and cheap phone calls, many people who met at the Camp could remain in contact, and also share their experiences upon return to their places of origin throughout the host country, continent, and planet.

Evaluating IYC 2005: A Fundamental Paradox?

The paradox of IYC 2005 was that, in spite of all of the internal problems (noted above), it did provide many encounters for networking, mutual learning, cultural exchange, and social activism. Residents learned a great deal about each other while living together. Popular education workshops, art exhibitions, and documentary films conveyed knowledge about the harsh impacts of contemporary globalization. Campers also learned much as well about the social struggles of fellow activists from around Brazil and other parts of the world. A lot of young people appeared to enjoy their time with each other. However, many respondents interviewed for this study were critical of many campers who appeared to prefer apolitical partying over engaging in attempts to put alternative social models into practice. Nonetheless, there was recognition of the incredible opportunities the Camp offered as a space for networking among people who otherwise might never have met. The spontaneous festivities of camp life were both visible and audible at all hours as thousands of young people shared moments of experiences in crowded spaces. Campers constructed a great deal of knowledge about the awesome challenges to envision desirable alternative worlds. They camped in a public space where a mesh of activities and struggles combined to exhibit many lessons. Ultimately, most learning resulted from personal and collective experiences in face-to-face interactions.

There were lots of discussions at IYC 2005 about the need for alternatives, but the focus for many became more one of how to organize actual collaborative practices onsite. There was much reflection on the construction of the Camp and the ways in which all of the Action Centres, cultural activities, and informal socializing unfolded in the open

spaces of the laboratory of practices. While horizontal management has been difficult to achieve in the Camp, the idea of a laboratory of practices was inclusive of everybody onsite. Spaces for alternative social practices such as the “Laboratory of Free Knowledge” of computer software sharing, the “Communication Factory” of independent radio broadcasting, and alter-globalization workshops were accessible through their close proximity in the same venue.

While IYC 2005 was a party for many campers, there were lasting impacts on some people’s lives and personal politics. Sílvia Leindecker Sileider – a 25 year old philosophy student at Universidade Do Vale Do Rio Dos Sinos who self-identified as autonomous – said the Camp gave people freedom to have courage, share their differences, and freely express themselves (Sileider, 25/1/2005). Free expression defined a variety of exchanges between resident social actors in shared spaces where they could contemplate the human condition and how alternative practices could be imagined. The fifth Camp experiment opened up possibilities for blending “youth” identities. Personal histories linked to produce new memories and networks of social life in the meshwork actor/site embodied by the Camp. Sergio rightfully pointed out that IYC experiences of any kind could always be kept as part of oneself and importantly contribute to life-long learning (Sergio, 1/3/2005). I spent a great deal of time learning from my fellow campers around our campfire during night and day even if I could not communicate with many of them in their own languages. The self-management ethos applied to the interactions and habits of all people moving around the barrios in Parque de Harmonia.

Self-Management & Horizontality: Theoretical and Practical Issues

Within the IYC, were there new political practices of an emergent generation of youth activists? Was horizontal self-managed experimentation with creative ways of living and learning viably practiced? Camp organizers had not yet systematically planned to implement the principles of self-management and horizontality at IYC 2002. A deep concern about reproducing hierarchical oppression became both a motivation and a challenge for the organizers of IYC 2003 to establish these principles, especially since there was unease about hierarchical behaviour in the contexts of both IYC 2001 and IYC 2002. However, the kind of self-management systems envisioned for the IYC did not evidently materialize at the fifth Camp. Rodrigo Nunes argues the normative

understanding of horizontality is conceived on an assumption that the necessary material conditions will be in existence (Nunes, 2005b: 3). These conditions have been largely absent in the Camp context where the resource base was limited and there was only a short time available for campers to live together. The vast number of people and their varied timelines for engagement further constrained the practical possibilities for effective self-management.

Nunes conceptualizes horizontality as both a goal and a means. He argues that organizing in horizontal ways is premised on creating practical models for social life. It requires commitment and shared political values. Personal belief in its ideal and the collaborative methodology itself are part of the same process of organizing it as social practice (Nunes, 2005b: 3). Thus, horizontality is both ideology and practice (Nunes, 2005b: 5). The contradiction in the IYC was that the ideology was not shared by many campers and the organizational practices did not include everybody who came onsite. Nonetheless, the Camp experience revealed how horizontal practices can take place as an organizing process, as an ideological frame of organization, and as a set of open space practices. Horizontality was explored by perhaps thousands of people in barrios, Camp spaces such as the Caracol Action Centre, and in management council meetings involving monitors, facilitators, commission representatives, and other volunteers.

The idea of self-management practiced among a community of youth activists at the IYC was inspired by the Paris Commune, the Barrios de Pie Movement, and the momentum from protest movements against international institutions such as the World Trade Organization, the International Monetary Fund, and the World Bank. It was helped along by movements such as the MST as well as youth activists from India, Western Europe, Brazil, and beyond. It was informed by an anarchist vision of a utopian alternative to state repression, defined by April Carter as “a self-regulating social order” (Carter, 1971: 60). There is an explicit relationship between horizontality and self-management. Both concepts are interdependent principles rooted in an ideology that is meaningful only if practiced through self-organization and consensus decision-making. Conversely, if self-management fails, then so too does the principle of horizontality because horizontal organizing would not have occurred. Thus, on both theoretical and practical levels, the viability of self-management and horizontality at the IYC needed to

rely first on being applied in organizational processes (which was carried out in several ways) and then on shared practices by all residents (which did not occur during the second, third, fourth, or fifth IYCs). Moreover, even without the contradiction inherent in dealing with large numbers of transient and cross-cultural campers, self-management was constrained by a dependence upon government services and contracts.

Participatory self-management unravelled without delivering alternative systems of living or ideal social practices to critically challenge neoliberal capitalist daily life. Nevertheless, many people respected the social causes embodied in cultural expression and other forms of creativity, politics, and ecology promoted by the IYC. The Camps demonstrated several ways of socially constructing transnational youth activism and networking, as well as many challenges and difficulties. The question of a generational transformation remains to be seen, but the IYC has been an important incubator for such a possibility.

Conclusion: Reflecting on the Ingenuities of the IYC

Since 2002, IYCs have sought consciously to balance ecology with solidarity and cooperative youth activist engagement. The IYC reality has opened spaces for people to dream about and develop alternative worlds based in localized expressions and cross-cultural exchanges. At the same time, it has derived inspiration from its residents. Relations among intercontinental youth networks have informed how IYCs operated; they have helped frame opposition to neoliberal systems of domination from the standpoints of youth agents. Resident campers have also danced and exhibited a great deal of creativity in Harmonia Park and Don Bosco Catholic High School. Together they created multicultural and multi-ethnic campsites, although they also lived in a variety of ways onsite that reinforced social differences.

Despite the IYC's objectives of facilitating a decentralized horizontal organizational framework and endowing campers with collective responsibility to carry out the guiding principle of self-management, this alternative model has been constrained by internal and external factors. The limited money and resources available for organizers to mobilize and then run the Camp have posed challenges, as have inequalities in sharing the responsibilities of voluntarism. A huge population of transient campers from diverse cultural and social backgrounds introduced a wide array of anti-social behaviour. It had to

be dealt with pragmatically by interlinked security systems. Sadly, issues of sexual harassment were not well addressed and racial divides pervaded throughout the park. Alter-globalization movements and CSMs expressed multiple forms of activism in a shared arena of class, power, and identities.

The intercontinental space, characterized for the most part by all sorts of young people from Brazil, reproduced many aspects of apolitical partying common to adolescents and young adults around the world. Campers experienced a few days in which they excitedly negotiated new meanings for themselves and for the open spaces all around them. Thousands of people listened to music composed by independent artists from dozens of countries as they enjoyed a night life hardly imaginable anywhere else on the planet. They had perhaps once in a lifetime opportunities to engage in a World Social Forum that was largely shaped by tens of thousands of people from differing cultural backgrounds who were actively constructing alternative imaginaries. The Camp again became an alternative in itself because of its meshwork of possibilities. Activities and interactions that took place inside Parque de Harmonia could only become viable social practices if people went on to apply them elsewhere in the world. Neither the practices nor the social activism started or ended inside the Camp. It was the participants of the experiment who could exercise the multiple forms of transnational and local activism in daily life, and in their own lives. Much learning took place from mistakes and through experiences in the temporary communal environment.

While the breakdowns of self-management have to some extent undermined the IYC vision for viable alternative social practices, the variety of interactions have created distinctive camp social worlds as well as personal changes and new activist networks. Many activities developed as part of the IYC process have had an impact on the WSF. On the second last day of IYC 2005, an interesting dialogue took place in Caracol Intergalactika called “The Future of the World Social Forum.”⁵ The participatory workshop included 82 speakers speaking in brief time slots. One of the speakers was Chico Whitaker – co-founder of the WSF – who began by apologizing for never setting foot in the IYC. He then presented a brief history of the origins and evolution of the

⁵ The dialogue was published in *ephemera: theory & politics in organization*, Volume. 5 Issue. 2, May 2005: “The Future of the World Social Forum”.

WSF, which omitted any mention of the Camp (see Whitaker 2005: 166). This workshop held in the Camp marked a crucial convergence and an initial dialogue between key people involved in developing the Forum and the Camp. Comparative analyses of the IYC and WSF are long overdue. Chapter 5 makes a contribution in this respect and offers further analysis of the IYC phenomenon.

Chapter 5: The Intercontinental Youth Camp – Building Alternatives amidst Internal Contradictions

Introduction

This chapter reviews further aspects of the IYC process from 2001 to 2005. It assesses the experience of Intercontinental Youth Camp as a laboratory for transforming alternative imaginaries into living practices around the world. As we have seen in Chapters 3 and 4, the Camp came to life through socially meaningful experiences informed by this quest. However, it is a main argument of this thesis that it unfolded without facilitating genuine self-managed horizontal activism. Its potential was limited by internal problems of leadership, incomplete collective engagement, serious anti-social behaviour, and the brevity of divergent encounters onsite. Members of Camp Organizing Committees, the Youth Assembly, IYC Commissions and Functional Groups constituted a small minority of the campers. A highly uneven division of labour between these activists and other campers, as well as unequal knowledge and awareness of IYC purposes, undermined the collaborative imaginaries. The huge resident population, especially at the fifth Camp, made it even more difficult for people to connect onsite. As a result, organizers led the process at each step, even as their own agendas remained dependent on the World Social Forum and on Brazilian politics and government services.

Both the Forum and the Camp have promoted open networking among civil society movements that seek alternatives to neoliberal globalization. The IYC has engaged residents in even more active participation than the WSF. By emphasizing the agency of youth and dynamic cross-cultural interaction, the Camp has been in the forefront of attempts to create a new generational politics based on efforts to imagine and to put into practice alternatives to neoliberal globalization. Paradoxically, by fostering smaller localized Youth Camps, the IYC process may be crystallizing more feasible possibilities for inclusive and committed activism than the original Camp.

This chapter draws further on the voices of interviewees. It deepens the analysis of the IYC and compares the experiences of the Camp and the Forum. While arguing that the IYC plays a significant role in promoting global youth activism, it questions claims that the Camp embodies a new political imagination representing a new political generation. The chapter then outlines recent developments in the IYC and WSF

processes. It makes the case for why research on the IYC is important, and suggests possible future research agendas. It concludes with an assessment of the IYC phenomenon as a meshwork where alternatives have come to life in the context of the WSF and alter-globalization struggles.

The IYC: Expressions of Prefigurative Politics?

The efforts of youth activists in successive IYCs to produce alternative ways of social living by approaching politics in new ways were guided mostly by a methodology of horizontality. The Camp model was inspired by anarchistic initiatives (as noted in Chapters 2 and 3) to combine local and transnational forms of activism. In this process, imperatives inspired by socialist anarchy were developed not only to spread horizontal politics to various parts of the world, but also to stimulate new kinds of anarchist experimentation as well. The forms of leadership and principles embedded in the IYC organizational apparatus drew conceptually from socialist anarchy. Since 2002-2003, Camp activities also reflected the MST model of collective self-management, and continued to derive inspiration from popular education methodology.

The popular education theorist Paulo Freire (1970) argued that the objective of improving the lives of oppressed people was best accomplished through applying the four main principles of popular education and conscientization: inclusiveness, participatory awareness, experiential learning, and collective mobilization. He added that, through conscientization-based communication processes, social actors could enhance possibilities of egalitarian cultural change as leaders become learners and learners become leaders. The IYC's laboratory of practices was shaped with the aim of encouraging campers to exchange their ideas and strategies in non-hierarchical ways, and learn actively from one another. Organizers took the lead to prefigure a politics of experimental social activism for a Camp premised on collaboration and political engagement.

Paulo Freire (1970) envisioned solidarity as an interactive project of daily life based on ongoing cooperation and learning. He argued that this ideal of solidarity was embedded in conscientization and could be consciously developed by compassionate leaders who seek to include oppressed people in the transformation of cultural, socioeconomic, and political circumstances. Freire (1985) asserted that desired

consequences of proposed action can follow from the conscious identification of clear goals. He understood these goals as possibilities conditioned by historical and cultural contexts (Freire 1985: 68-71). Both the IYC and the WSF were opened to provide spaces for the articulation of collaborative alternative imaginaries. They were set up at a time when alter-globalization was emerging as a worldwide phenomenon. Many of the activities reflected strong beliefs in creating a world based on human dignity and compassion for others and the environment. Besides the Charter of Principles and the self-management model, neither the Camp nor the Forum was defined by overarching goals about how alternatives to neoliberal globalization could come about onsite or beyond, let alone what those social practices might be. This raises two questions: to what extent were alternative social practices actually developed or further put into motion onsite? To what extent did the leaders of each process guide the imaginaries?

Both questions remain somewhat open-ended much like the Forum and Camp initiatives. The measurement of activism or activist practices relies on subjective interpretations and relates to group objectives. I think that it is far too early to speculate on the impacts that the WSF or IYC may have had on the construction of social practices. Each site has hosted many activities specific to their historical moments, but those moments were mainly shaped by individuals and members of organizations who came on their own terms. Struggles of many kinds persist all over the world premised on transforming aspects of neoliberal capitalism and other systemic forms of domination.

The IYC in particular attempted to put socialist anarchist principles into practice to enhance transnational youth activism, and to bolster resistance to capitalist ideology and neoliberal globalization. It, like the WSF, also grew in response to a previously established world assembly of social movements. The alternative imaginaries attempted over the five years were most pertinent outside of each venue in the day-to-day lives of the experimenters and in their own respective networks. Many participant groups did not take part in all five Forums or Camps, but those who took part brought with them their own life stories. Resident campers linked experiences onsite, and built the laboratory of practices by creating worlds of social life and a distinctive youth camp culture.

The relocation of the Camp from Brazil to India in 2004 attested to the resiliency and vibrancy of the Camp concept for implementing experimental forms of social

activism. Despite the Camp's reliance on the WSF, its organizing groups have themselves assumed much autonomy, establishing programs of activities and their own creative systems of experimentation. These have been enriched in turn by contributions from many alter-globalization movements from various parts of the world.

A goal of the IYC has been facilitating "the free development of differences and diversity" (Barsér, 28/1/2005). IYCs have been composed of diverse compassionate people who seek solidarity (Rodrigo, 26/1/2005). Other positive aspects have included tolerance and shared living (Galversen, 26/1/2005) and lively cultural expressions through music and art (Rodrigo, 26/1/2005). Moreover, social living has created opportunities for deconstructing negative stereotypes and seeing people for who they are. Groups could link and build common strategies of resistance to sources of power such as the G-8 and the World Bank. João added that energy from the Camp kept the belief in its project real, despite the difficult work. Being part of the process could be very enjoyable because the work was carried out collaboratively (Sobral, 30/1/2005). Macdonald was optimistic about the potential of the IYC for transnational activism and the expansion of networks:

[The IYC] presents itself to me as a platform where people who are fighting similar struggles in a lot of different parts of the world are able to come and share strategies and tactics on similar matters, which is something that obviously adds value to the struggles that we are fighting in our own countries and also enhances our capacities to be able to resist some of the more common problems that we are facing collectively as young people of the world....The sense of community that comes with [the IYC]...is different than anything else, and something that can be shared back in Zimbabwe (Lewanilca, 28/1/2005).

The IYC reality has provided residents with shared learning opportunities both to better envision and practice the world that they desire. Residents have been able to prioritize what mattered most in shared living, informing the meaning of: "local action for global change" (Perreault, 22/1/2005). Being part of the IYC is being part of something meaningful in history, something bigger than one individual, and something that seeks to change the world (Lentz, 23/1/2005).

As the previous chapters showed, however, the ability of the IYC to meet its objectives was mixed. Much time and money have been devoted to an IYC venue that functioned for only eight days or so at one time (Preiss, 23/1/2005). Nadia said that the IYC required greater organization to overcome the monumental challenge to organize,

mobilize, and link movements effectively (Feeôncio, 26/1/2005). Still, it became an important and integral part of broader global struggles, and it merits supportive recognition both on its own accord and as part of the WSF process.

The WSF and the IYC: A Comparative Analysis

The World Social Forum emerged in the first five years of the 21st Century as perhaps the most important and dynamic site of activism for growing numbers of CSOs, alter-globalization movements, and people opposed to neoliberal globalization. Since its beginnings, the Intercontinental Youth Camp has operated in the shadow of the WSF, and its trajectory has remained bound to the Forum. Their dynamics were inextricably linked late in 2000, but almost two years passed before the WSF formally recognized its key collaborator.

Both the IYC and WSF have moved around the globe. The IYC's organizers have been more locally-based than organizers of the WSF. A more diverse range of WSF organizers have planned activity spaces for the much larger Forum. Whereas many Camp organizers prioritized consensus decision-making and self-management (even as hierarchy remained a reality), it was only in 2005 that the Forum began to open up programming decisions more in consideration of the IYC. In 2004, the Youth Assembly created the Virtual Forum before a similar Internet-based strategy was adopted for WSF 2005. However, organizational processes in both have been closed to most groups when it came to establishing methodological approaches and negotiations for setting up the venues.

In conjunction with the WSF venues, the Camps were established as meshworks for residents to reaffirm resistance to all forms of discrimination and domination entrenched in global capitalist systems. Issues of social justice and critiques of neoliberalism have been important in both venues. Both have hosted self-organized activities, solidarity economies, independent media, and free computer software exchanges. Both have supported independent creative works from many cultures through multiple expressive media. Vibrant parties, festive celebrations, and protest marches have taken place in the social worlds of both the Camp and the Forum. Capitalist relations still pervaded both arenas as well, particularly in 2005.

The Forum has featured panel discussions, conferences, and academic lectures, while the Camp has privileged informal discussions, participatory popular education

workshops, and spontaneous group activities. In contrast to WSF programs that featured notable leftist academics and activist leaders, the IYC has not sought out big name presenters. Nor has it had contact with key figures associated with leftist party politics in Latin America and elsewhere. President Lula of Brazil and President Chavez of Venezuela both made speeches at WSF 2005, though these were not sanctioned as official activities. The two political leaders also spoke at WSF 2003 alongside President Castro of Cuba (see Klein, 2003). The IYC has valorized efforts of youth activists to actively change the world in comparison to the civil society mobilization campaigns at a centre stage of the WSF. Both meshworks have, however, fallen short of providing ideal spaces for experimental social activism.

The appalling level of thefts, gender discrimination, and violence evident in IYC 2005 showed how ideals of tolerance were far from universal. Paradoxically, within the IYC, the socializing inherent in partying enhanced personal exchanges among Brazilians, Indigenous peoples, and international campers, but also heightened the risks and realities of gender harassment and violence. Serious and unresolved internal conflicts and differing ideological perspectives also undermined the collective forms of leadership required to implement the original COA vision of horizontal self-management.

Between 2002 and 2005, the self-managed laboratory of practices went further than the WSF programs, however, in engaging activism onsite. Campers could work and learn together while living side by side. However, these experiences were limited mainly to youth activists who understood the Camp's aims (Siheira, 22/1/2005). IYC residents were generally younger people developing their personalities who had greater capability to change over a longer period of time. Unlike the Forum, where ideas received priority in a context involving people who were already converted to being critical about the world around them, the IYC had greater potential to change people as they learned together from sharing lived experiences as campers (Lentz, 23/1/2005). At the IYC, people could practice living in another possible world, unlike in the WSF where space was laden with theory and discussion without practice (Francisco, 26/1/2005). The IYC organizational structure was also more transparent than its WSF counterpart (Genehr, 28/1/2005), especially since IYC organizers lived and practiced in the open shared spaces with other campers. It was also cheaper for people to stay at the Camp than at a hotel

(Morira, 28/1/2005). Many of these perspectives on the IYC, offered by individuals interviewed for this study, juxtapose it to the WSF in an oppositional way, and identify primarily differences in how the spaces were imagined, created, and used. They point to a significant difference, but it must be emphasized that these views were voiced by campers, not independent observers. More empirical research is needed to better understand differences in terms of theory and practice between the Camp and Forum.

Since the origins of the WSF, key roles have been played by Brazilian CSOs and the disproportionately large representation of Brazilian participants. The journey to India created spaces for many new movements and faces, which included those who participated in IYC 2004. The World Social Forum evolved in many respects between 2001 and 2005 through its mobilization campaigns and systems of cyberspace communication. The “leaderless” WSF stated in 2002 that the “central tool in the world social forum process is the internet site” (Translators Peter Lenny and Silas McCracken 2002, 1). Its website has evolved considerably since I first encountered it in 2003. As of January 2006, it provided a thorough summary of the overall WSF process, and what was happening worldwide throughout the year. It continued to be readily accessible in the four official languages. Hundreds of commentaries on WSF could be read, although few documents in the memorials of the Forums were accessible in all four languages. More languages are needed to further pluralize the process, but the lack of translators and finances remains a constraint. Still, the WSF has kept subscribers well informed through monthly email updates on regional, continental, and thematic forums. In contrast, as of January 2006, IYC websites were not being regularly updated.⁶

The availability of resources and funding has been instrumental in developing the Forum’s website and fostering worldwide mobilization. However, over the five year period, the organizers of both Forum and Camp were under-resourced and unprepared to receive an estimated combined total of 440,000 people (IBASE 2006: 11). Over the five years, the IYC held between 78,200 and 88,200 people, as cited in this thesis. It is evident that the idea and establishment of each venue have been attractive to many, and this measure of success has much to do with framing.

⁶ When this thesis was completed, the IYC 2005 website could not be found on the World Wide Web.

WSF and IYC Frames for Engagement

Most IYC statements since 2001 have been directed at youth activists, and have used the undefined term “We”. It is not clear whether “We” refers to the writers, the Camp residents, youth involved in activism and alter-globalization protests or movements, youth who challenge capitalism, or youth worldwide who are affected adversely by corporate-dominated globalization. The statements have suggested that youth could come together at the Camp to carry out collective actions in their own ways. This has turned out to be paradoxical, especially in considering the prominent self-organization in opened spaces and the great differences among campers in exercising roles, responsibilities, and contributions in self-management. Nevertheless the IYC frames underpinned commitments to human agency, dignity, and horizontal organization as the crux of what was needed to make another world of alternative social practices.

IYC organizers in Brazil and India identified common problems for youth and issued calls for global struggle against neoliberalism. The two websites framed the Camp as a place for youth activists marginalized by the capitalist system to attain necessary opportunities to voice their concerns, and to link up with other like-minded groups (see IYC 2004; IYC 2005). Emphases on collective actions and solutions have played a significant part in IYC imaginaries, and were applied in a meshwork of identities and alter-globalization. By and large, the WSF and IYC agendas have been framed in optimistic and positive terms. Many CSMs have taken part in response to a strong case for tackling problems of the contemporary world. The framed statements emphasized self-organization, plurality, and the belief in actualizing another world. The frames were successfully deployed since the intentions were embodied by participants and intrinsic to the activities performed onsite.

Organizers, whether transparent or not, have been crucial in mobilizing groups and devising the logics of activism for each arena. During the four years since WSF 2001, both venues welcomed and then hosted culturally and ontologically diverse alter-globalization movements to devise collective imaginaries and solutions. Both spaces were imagined as appropriate sites for cultural forms of resistance. Clearly, the WSF has gone further than its smaller counterpart in mobilizing participation by a greater range of CSMs. Much of the success of the WSF and the IYC lies in the creation of conditions for

consolidating CSMs and alter-globalization movements and encouraging active networking among them. Both have launched projects to promote alternative imaginaries and modes of corresponding practices.

The following statement, which partially describes “A Model World,” one of the main activities at IYC 2004, attempted to convey why the Camp was different from the WSF. It also encapsulates a collective action frame and a master frame (as outlined in Chapter 2): “In short, IYC 2004 is not just a talk shop, but a multi-sensory experience dedicated to expressing the alternative world that is possible if we all build it together. We need your support, your energies, your emotions, your expressions, and most of all, your participation in creating the utopia that we would all like to see. So let’s mobilize in thousands” (see IYC 2004, Brochure: 2). (There has been a strong utopian vision in the WSF project as well; for a commentary on this, see Santos 2004a and 2004b). For utopianism to be convincing, it has to be presented as a “doable” alternative vision. This has been especially important at successive Camps for mobilizing activist-oriented and apolitical residents alike. In the case of the IYC, there has been a promise of doing collaborative politics in open spaces. This master frame suggests that utopian dreams can be actualized through horizontality, collective self-management, and the laboratory of practices.

It is too early to speculate about whether any utopian dreams or alternative imaginaries will be applied or become viable options in daily life as an outcome of Youth Camp activism or as a consequence of the original meshwork in Porto Alegre. The WSF and IYC have mobilized collective actors in part by means of a master frame premised on celebrating a multitude of human possibilities to imagine, exchange, and build alternative social practices. They have differed in that the role of age and generations has marked important distinctions between the visions and dynamics of the Forum and the Camp.

New Generational Activism?

WSF organizers were slow to acknowledge the contributions of youth activists in working to create possible alternative worlds. The generational dimension of activism is an important and underexplored issue in the relations between the IYC and the WSF. It is left absent in much contemporary writing on activism as well. The WSF process is an extremely important arena to consider these matters due to its increasingly global

significance to social movements, CSOs, and alter-globalization. After five Camps and five Forums, old and young participants still remained fragmented in terms of organizing agendas and activities. A great deal of networking had nonetheless occurred, and the IYC offered certain linkages that the WSF sought out. Rodrigo Nunes argues:

[IYC 2002] was the first time that the historical link between Seattle and the WSF was explicitly made from within; it also pointed to new ways of practicing politics that seemed increasingly at odds with what the Forum had been so far. The second IYC wholeheartedly embraced the ‘prefigurative politics’ of those new movements, trying to ‘be the change it wanted to see’...It was by then that the concept of ‘new political generation’ started being used by people in Porto Alegre. What it meant did not have much to do with age as such: it referred to new ways of organising and practicing politics, to that new political sensibility that had made itself visible in the late 1990s (Nunes 2005c: 287).

The IYC opened an arena of linkages among “youth-led” CSMs and alter-globalization movements, but were their politics reflective of a new political generation? Nunes (2005c) demonstrates that the “prefigurative politics” applied in the IYC went much further than those in the WSF. Certainly, the IYC inspired the Forum agendas in 2005 to deepen practices relating to the principles and values of ecology and politics. In 2002, the IYC had already become an inspiring experiment for alter-globalization and “prefigurative politics”, despite internal contradictions arising from mismanagement and anti-social behaviour. The India Working Group made a much more significant contribution in this respect as it developed the fourth Forum between 2002 and 2004. The Mumbai WSF welcomed a great diversity of participants, and expanded the breadth of movements and themes that were addressed. However, participants in the “Battle of Seattle” and other demonstrations, WSF activists, and IYC campers alike reflected marked differences in terms of race, language, ethnicity, class, age, life circumstances, and reasons for engaging in political activism.

Roberto Savio, a member of the IC, argues among others that the WSF has been important in consolidating the work of countless dedicated people who have struggled over many years to build a fairer and more just world. However, he is wrong in asserting that the WSF succeeded in three to four years in connecting two generations of organized activism to form one global civil society:

[the World Social Forum has served in unifying] two generations of civil society: the NGOs that emerged in the 1970s to fight for human rights, sustainable

development, full participation for women, etc...[and for] a sustainable environment ... [and] the indigenous movement, and the movement that arose in the 1990s as an opposition force to the neoliberal globalization process. The "older" and "younger" generations would not have met and combined to form a global civil society if it weren't for Porto Alegre (Savio 2003: 1).

These generations as Savio presents them are social constructs unrelated to age successive birth cohorts and youth. Moreover, it must be remembered that most social movements engaged in social struggle for change are not actors on the global level. Most have not been invited to a Forum, nor in any case have they had the financial means to attend one. Much activism around the world is locally-based, though still relevant to the kinds of globalization that civil society actors have expressed through the WSF. However, while the WSF has been a key space for activist movements from the 1960s to the 1990s to converge, it has not fully embraced and unified them. Otherwise, the Intercontinental Youth Camp would not have reacted as it did to the elitist project of the WSF, which initially privileged international CSMs and NGOs as well as civil society in Brazil and India.

Moreover, neither the IYC nor youth activism was brought within the gaze of the WSF during the first two Forums. Reflecting on the gulf between the WSF and IYC, Nunes argues:

Despite all its innovations, even at the time of its incorporation by the WSF, the Youth Camp remained invisible to the main actors in the International Council and the Brazilian Organising Committee. This could be understood in either of two ways: that there is an important part of the post-1990s political scene (the 'new political generation') that remains largely unseen by these actors; or that there is a deliberate effort to ignore it...and [these two ways] are probably both true to a certain extent (Nunes 2005: 295).

Many disconnections between the WSF and the IYC have been evident. For example, Chico Whitaker – a co-founder of the WSF – only entered the IYC for the first time on January 30, 2005. The vast majority of commentaries posted in English on the WSF website between 2001 and 2005 omitted any mention of the Camp. Forum organizers and commentators on the WSF have seemingly reinforced one another's ignorance of the IYC. As Nunes rightly points out, there are generational and political divisions within and between the WSF and the IYC.

In January 2006, the International Council of the WSF consisted of 135 members associated with various regions, labour sectors, civil society organizations, regional social forums, and thematic or issue oriented social movements. Only two student organizations were represented – the Union Internacional de Estudiantes and OCLAE, the Continental Organization of Latin America and Caribbean Students – and there were none from other youth movements or the IYC (see WSF website home page: Who organizes it: International Council, subsection: Composition of International Council, last consulted for this thesis, January 2006). Much greater efforts could have been made to incorporate youth-identified networks in order to address generational and other divisions more directly.

Juris notes in the context of the WSF, that one view on youth has seen them “as active political agents, but [this view] still projects their agency toward the distant future.” He observes that others have simply romanticized youth by transforming them “into a symbol of future hope and potential....” He adds that “many younger activists see themselves as part of a new way of doing politics, potentially involving people of all ages” (Juris 2005: 2). These social constructions of youth need to be deconstructed by people of all ages and across a wide spectrum of movements if horizontal practices, cross-cultural learning, and creative forms of collective participation are to take centre stage within the WSF. Much learning can take place in mutual engagement between young activists and seasoned ones. The world cannot be changed without such dialogue and collaboration.

Writing in the Guardian Weekly, Gary Younge asserts that young activists have once again been in the forefront of making political change, albeit in a very different context than in May 1968. He notes that halfway through 2006, university and high school students in countries such as Chile, the U.S., Slovenia, Iran, and especially in France had taken charge of their own life circumstances. To varying extents, young people in these countries have been able to gain public support, make their governments, and even change proposed labour policies. Younge also notes that young people demonstrate greater awareness of racial politics than the generation of the 1960s. He raises a crucial point about generational activism by arguing “[w]hatever the gains of the 1968 student revolts – and there were some – it has been the generation forged in the

crucible of those times who are responsible for these circumstances.” Although I question whether there is such a generation, Younge raises important points about nostalgia and historical divisions. Younge quotes one of the “old” leaders, Daniel Cohn-Bendit. Cohn-Bendit argues that “Young people [now] have a negative vision of the future... May 1968 was an offensive movement with a positive vision, but today’s protests are all against things. They are defensive based on fear of insecurity and change” (Younge 2006).

I think that Cohn-Bendit’s characterization of all young protestors in such harsh words reflects unfortunate ignorance and cynicism. The IYC has been proactive in putting forward visions for positive alternatives for the present and future. Many of the issues and struggles today remain similar to those of the late 1960s. Young people are exercising their human agency and articulating their histories as well. It is evident that student activism in Porto Alegre and elsewhere in Brazil has made phenomenal contributions to political engagement since 2001. The IYC has especially contributed to the WSF, which has blended many forms of contemporary and historical activism. The IYC has been part of broader alter-globalization campaigning and an ongoing qualitative shift in social activism. Generally speaking, the newer forms of activism (many of which have been reconfigured in the Camps) have emerged for three interconnected reasons: 1) the Internet has been instrumental for communication and mobilization purposes, 2) the worldwide conditions of neoliberal globalization and decolonization have prompted the cross-cultural expression of many forms of collective action, and 3) the historical continuities of social movement activities and civil society activism have generated many lessons and experiences to learn from and build upon.

This thesis argues that the IYC has not been historically unprecedented. Rather, it emerged in 2002 as an innovative space of creative action. The Camp has evolved as an alternative space of social experimentation that has shaped new possibilities for transnational activism. It has produced an alternative imaginary of locally-based political engagement based on the camping experience to realize alternative worlds. Organizers have drawn on concepts of socialist anarchy such as self-organization and spontaneous forms of direct democracy. The Camps have also been inspired by previously established approaches to fair trade, the principles of low-impact ecology, and decision-making based on affinity groups, consensus, and horizontality. They have required permissions

and services from governments. From the beginning, the ideals of the Camp linked to the WSF project to realize another possible world based on social justice and civil society collaboration.

In its first five years, the IYC offered both a conceptual and a practical model of transnational youth activism that can potentially facilitate expressions of alternative ways of learning and living. Nevertheless, the claim on the IYC 2004 website that the Camp has hosted a new political generation expressing a new political imagination is somewhat unfounded. It is difficult to conceptualize such a new generation without a clear definition of what a generation entails. Organizers who framed meanings of the IYC experience offered no such definition. Nor have they addressed the contradictions inherent in self-organizing in public spaces that are marked by unequal power relations among organizers, resident campers, and CSMs. The organizing groups, however, have recognized the need to open spaces in hopes of generating new possibilities for young people to practice politics on an intercontinental scale.

Successive camps have interconnected creative forms of cultural expression with projects to construct alternative social and political imaginaries. By creating opportunities for transnational networking among alter-globalization movements, they have bolstered youth activism in the early 21st Century. IYC apparatuses created a politics of alternative imaginaries to invent social transformation. Potential outcomes lie with countless reverberations from social experiences developed amongst thousands of campers who have come to the Camps and returned to different parts of the planet. Many of them believe in practicing change as a new way of life. However, are they actually a new cohort of social actors?

Socially Constructed Experiences of Youth

Within the IYC world, definitions of youth have clustered around two concepts – age and outlook. Camp frames have characterized youth along the lines of the United Nations and the IBASE survey (2005), and as people who are motivated to engage in socially transformative politics. Luiz, aged 51, viewed youth as people who were dissatisfied and wanted to make change (Gaevorsen, 26/1/2005). Sergio said that youth was an abstract concept rather than a demographic one, and suggested that it connotes energy, action, and dedication. It is a state of mind not contingent on being a young

person (Sergio, 31/1/2005). IYC leaders constructed a definition mostly attuned to ideas of horizontal forms of political practice. Nonetheless, many people have lacked the qualities of “youth” emphasized by the IYC, and many campers did not engage in self-management. IBASE’s survey (2005) demonstrated that the “youth” in the camping population were not all young. Inter-generational families sold food, camped, or even volunteered. Thousands of people exchanged life experiences in Porto Alegre and Mumbai without self-identifying by age. Moreover, the apolitical partying that occurred, at least at the third and fifth Camps, showed that sexual harassment against women and the consumption of alcohol and drugs reproduced patterns that are part of daily life in most regions of the world.

Even if age is a defining criterion of IYC communalism, youth should not be conceptualized as a unified entity. Nor should the concept of youth serve as a political tool to taint young people as social problems or group them into a category of policy-making. There are vast differences among younger people in terms of culture, nationality, gender, class, race, rural-urban location, and other bases of identity. A generation, whether defined in terms of birth cohorts and historical location, is made up of people with vastly different lived experiences. The concept of youth defies simple categorization. As Bourdieu (1993: 94-96) rightfully argued, it barely has any clear meaning at all.

Between 2001 and 2005, the IYC developed multiple systems of communication to connect various youth groups and open up spaces for the sharing of experiences. However, those interactions were shaped by social groupings with particular histories and motivations. The meanings of youth were partly constructed by the political and economic forces that helped to shape the Camps and Forums, as well as the actual identities and circumstances specific to the individuals who ended up participating. The IYC has provided important spaces of interaction for young people, but these spaces were created by many human agents and structures that did not meet the criteria of the central definition on youth that the IYC frame advanced. Besides, the original meaning referred most to youth members of Brazilian leftist political parties.

It is evident that the IYC has not come close to producing a new political imagination of alternatives for all adolescents and young people in Brazil or in all

continents. It would have been next to impossible to do that in a brief five-year moment in time. Although the IYC became a meshwork early on that has facilitated Youth Camp decentralization, the intercontinental distribution of campers was skewed such that only a minority of participants came from the Middle East, Africa, and many parts of the “developed” and “developing” worlds. Reality fell short over five years in achieving a dream of inclusiveness. That dream remains an important ideal, however, for the IYC in attempting to seek out people from all movements. It cannot be stressed enough that considerable learning can take place between people of all ages, especially since worldviews and experiences of the world are partly shaped by age and personal background. This logic applies to relations between seasoned activists and younger social actors who have been members of youth movements with practices differing from older more established forms of activist strategies.

Youth is a heterogeneous category that has various meanings for young people and consumer lifestyles. When the category is used to refer to adolescents, young adults, or politicized activists, it must reflect life experiences. Such concepts of youth both wrongfully imply gender neutrality and assume a web of activities that are specific either to age or activism. However, youth activism and people aged 15-24 transcend the limitations of those categorizations. It is problematic for the IYC, or the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs for that matter, to imagine youth as an entity related simply to demographics, to political motivation, or to some combination of the two. The social construct of youth must be deconstructed. The meanings and implications of youth are most relevant to those who have been defined by such a label. Their perspectives can provide much needed insights about the category, provided that definitions refer to the historical and contemporary contexts in which the concept of youth has been constructed and applied.

Decentralization of Youth Camps

While debates about the meanings of youth and generational transformation will continue, it is important to report that the Youth Camp phenomenon has taken root in different continents and has become more geographically inclusive. The WSF has been an overarching catalyst because it began to regionalize in 2002 as a result of energetic national and local initiatives that were encouraged by both the OC and IC. In some ways,

the prospects for Local and Regional Youth Camps to achieve IYC imaginaries are better than for the IYC itself because mobilization can be undertaken more easily by word of mouth, and activities can be developed that address local concerns. In turn, global issues can still be debated and explored in terms of people's own experiences and initiatives. Inclusivity and horizontal decision-making are also easier to achieve when smaller numbers of people are involved. In contrast, it is much more difficult for intercontinental gatherings to include everybody adequately, let alone to involve a majority of campers in conceptual and physical planning and construction.

Sergio, aged 19 and a member of PT youth, was unprepared when he took part in IYC 2003, though he had a sense that important things were going on. He later participated in the Pampas Social Forum and Youth Camp in Uruguay, which brought together campers from the border areas of Brazil, Argentina, and Uruguay. He remarked that this experience was better than IYC 2003 and IYC 2005 because the gathering was smaller and locally focused. A majority of those who attended established an organization to coordinate PT youth in the West Frontier region around the border of Rio Grande Do Sul and Uruguay (Sergio, 1/2/2005). Potira said that Youth Camps should be smaller, more focused, and based entirely on ecological principles with local materials that can serve as a model microcosm of a sustainable city (Preiss, 23/1/2005). Timo, the facilitator of the workshop I attended in Caracol as well as a fellow researcher and organizer of the IYC, agreed that Youth Camps smaller than the IYC were preferable on account of more open and localized spaces (Bartholl, 25/1/2005).

Kiss Abrahams added that convergences of some 50 to 400 people open up more intimate spaces for exchanging information and ideas and therefore produce better political outcomes (Abrahams, 25/1/2005). Júlia too preferred to see the emergence of small localized Camps. She thought that IYC 2002 was much better than the larger later versions in terms of achieving consensus around collective actions. It was in 2002 that she became emotionally attached to the IYC. She too was disappointed that so many people came to the Camps in 2003 and 2005 just to party (de Souza, 3/2/2005).

Júlia said that "the Camp is not one end. It's a process, a way to do things. IYC is a place" where people have met and deepened commitment with social movements (de Souza, 3/2/2005). Macdonald agreed that the way forward was with smaller localized

Youth Camps that can contribute to feeding the meanings and efficacy of the larger IYC. Alternative ways of living are movable and should be transported as serious alternatives throughout the planet (Lewanilca, 28/1/2005). Alternatives such as the Camp's laboratory of practices, green technologies, and the principles of self-management can complement arts of experimentation where youth agents co-inhabit worlds of their own making. It is also possible to fuse the IYC and WSF models. This was done in the Regional Social Forum in London, Ontario, Canada (June 23-26, 2005) and (June 1-4, 2006) where dozens of people including myself constructed the site and camped out. The main invited speakers were academics and well-known activists.

Nevertheless, as Tatiana remarked, it has been the WSFs and IYCs that have inspired myriad social groups to take their experiences in Porto Alegre and Mumbai to apply elsewhere, contributing to the worldwide spread of Social Forums and Youth Camps (Soheira, 22/1/2005). Júlia mentioned that some of the Porto Alegre-based organizers of IYC 2005 planned to keep in touch, and support other Youth Camps (de Souza, 3/2/2005). Poitira said that many of the members of the COA were taking a break after IYC 2005 (Preiss, 23/1/2005). The enormous amount of work devoted to IYC 2005 and to previous Camps is commendable. As this study has shown, many of the features of the IYC were imagined and applied by leaders and their directives. It is not surprising that "activist burnout" has been an unfortunate outcome of intense political and organizational engagement. This outcome nonetheless pales when compared with the personal growth and collective learning generated by hundreds of youth leaders over the five years.

The experiences shared among social groups that otherwise might not have come into contact demonstrate the critical importance of the initial IYC experiment. Its meshwork has shown how multiple youth networks can converge and encourage people to learn from one another. The open conditions of free expression helped to foster new social relations onsite and afterwards in cyberspace. They also opened many new avenues for youth activists to engage in transnational networking. The Porto Alegre based IYCs were instrumental in directly influencing a particular kind of transnational youth activism, and in inspiring the rise of Regional and Local Youth Camps as well as the shift to Mumbai in 2004. At the same time, the tremendous growth of the main Camps in Porto

Alegre troubled IYC organizers and problematized the original conception of an intercontinental site. The unfolding dynamics and contradictions in somewhat chaotic and unsafe environments called into question the feasibility of collective self-management and the prospects for effectively promoting agendas for social change. Decentralization reconceptualizes the Camp as more of a manageable and potentially useful arena for committed activists. This same logic continues to underlie the WSF project and history.

As of 2005, observer status at IC meetings was granted to the “councils” of Regional Social Forums, and there was some overlapping membership between the IC and the “councils”. Social Forums emerged in twenty-five African countries only five years after the WSF process began. There have been calls for greater recognition of locally- and regionally-based Social Forums at the international level (Conway 2005: 6).

Future Trajectories of the WSF and the IYC

On January 24, 2005, the Brazilian OC issued a six-page strategy document proposing a WSF trajectory towards Africa in 2007 without even mentioning the IYC. The document also proposed a polycentric WSF for 2006 that involved multi-sited venues for the Forum (see Brazilian Organizing Committee 2005). The next day, the IC held a meeting where it was decided that one of the polycentric World Social Forums in 2006 would be held in Caracas, Venezuela and timed to coincide with the World Economic Forum. The IC also affirmed that the Forum of 2007 would take place in Africa, with the IC supporting the organizational process, but African CSOs taking leadership roles (International Council of the World Social Forum 2005: 1). This news from the IC meeting quickly travelled inside IYC 2005 since that decision on January 25 also challenged camp organizers to think about the future of the Camp as a distinct yet integrated part of the WSF process. A new page in the history of transnational youth activism was about to open.

A WSF Asia consultation meeting took place in Colombo, Sri Lanka, on June 4-5, 2005. Some 150 people representing CSOs from 14 countries came together to start the organizational process for the Karachi site of the Polycentric WSF 2006, and to expand Social Forums in Asia (WSF Bulletin, June 17, 2005: 1). Two weeks later, the IC convened its regular meeting in Barcelona, Spain and confirmed that the third host city

for the Polycentric WSF would be Bamako, Mali. A consensus was also reached that Kenya would host the WSF in 2007 (WSF Bulletin, July 19, 2005: 2).

Funding and financial stability are fundamental for the sustainability and viability of the Forum and Camp processes. WSF 2005 ended with a debt of \$US 1,529,145 owed to material and service contractors and five NGOs that provided loans. The IC called upon organizations engaged in the WSF to donate \$200 or more, according to their respective financial situations, payable to Banco do Brasil (see WSF International Council Resources Commission 2005: 1, 2, 7, 8). Some fascinating data were subsequently published about the fifth, the largest, and the most costly Forum to date:

[WSF 2005] was the biggest gathering of indigenous people in the world....Around 10,500 people were directly involved in the organization, 160 at the Executive Coordination...4,985 services performed by outside bodies...2,300 workers from the public service...1,700 jobs in civil construction...Over US\$ 60 million of income was generated to Porto Alegre's, Rio Grande Do Sul's and Brazil's economies...203 different kind[s] of auditoriums were built...295 tents for other activities: 14 stages...150,000 [metres squared] of temporary constructions...60 information stands...720 institutional stands and 280 marketing stands; 1 bus for public transportation; 12 adapted regular van lines; and 4 permanent taxi ranks...21 km of electrical supply system; 16 km of logic array; 140 tons of garbage generated...533 voluntary interpreters from 30 countries (WSF International Council: Resources Commission, 2005: 3-4).

Clearly, the WSF required extensive local and state government support. Private donors and contractors, whether sympathetic or not to the WSF project, also made significant contributions. At the same time, there were considerable benefits for the local economy, hotels, restaurants, taxi drivers, and local merchants and artisans. The data also highlight the extent to which the WSF and the IYC in 2005 were embedded in a capitalist economy, and depended on supports from both public and private sectors in Brazil.

The Need for Further Research on the Youth Camp Phenomenon

The IYC should be better acknowledged in academic disciplines such as international development studies, anthropology, sociology, geography, environmental studies, and political ecology. This thesis demonstrates that neglect is unwarranted, and that there is a compelling basis for greater attention, documentation, and interpretations of the Camp. Research can also help to overcome the IYC's problems and contradictions. It can contribute to a process that Kim Bryan advocated – more inward reflection whether in meetings, on the radio, in documentaries, or written articles. Reflective analysis of

Youth Camps contributes to ongoing dialogue and information sharing, but it is essential that these be documented and made accessible (Bryan, 26/1/2005). Nadia suggested that the IYC requires academic expression in order to get heard (Feeônio, 26/1/2005). Eduardo said that research can assist efforts to spread awareness of the Camp to those who have not been involved (Sanchez, 21/1/2005).

In helping to build knowledge on the Intercontinental Youth Camp, this study has benefitted from the seminal work of Rodrigo Nunes and other authors, most notably Romualdo de Paz Oliveira. Documentary films (by, for example Asselin and Cadorette 2004-2005) have contributed as well, as has a growing documentation on the IYC in Portuguese, Spanish, and other languages. More research is needed to document the narratives and impressions of resident campers, as well as Forum participants who took part in IYCs. A comparative analysis of the fourth Camp at Don Bosco Catholic High School in Mumbai relation to the Camps of Parque de Harmonia would also broaden the body of literature. There is great scope for continued learning about the IYC phenomenon across continents and across social as well as academic divides.

Beyond what this thesis and other sources have presented, future research could assess the IYC as a historically situated process engaged in utopian politics. More questions remain about the kinds of “older” and “newer” forms of political organization in which horizontal networks and others deployed onsite. Further research could examine the extent to which IYC activities (both formal and informal) have exhibited effective approaches for combining camping with political activism. A case-study could examine alter-globalization movements that led thematic-oriented workshops, or analyze relations between organizers of each Camp and locally-based networks and social movements in Porto Alegre or Mumbai. One could draw comparisons between “Reclaim the Streets” initiatives and the IYC and the way they use public spaces to articulate social change. It would be useful to assess the roles of independent media, music, theatre, and art involved in IYC processes. Research could focus as well on the comparative political and cultural dimensions of Carnival and the IYC, and how they deal with external pressures.

Another key research agenda could focus on the reciprocal impacts of Youth Camp activism and other evolving youth sub-cultures and youth activist initiatives, on the one hand, and alter-globalization movements, on the other. Greater attention could be drawn

to theoretical linkages between multiple forms of anarchism and the IYC. It would be fruitful to learn more about the role of conscientization among campers in the IYC. More analyses are needed on notions of a new political generation considers that considers race and ethnicity as well as gender and sexuality. Sharper focus in these debates is required on other social differences such as age, language, technology, and class or socioeconomic background.

It is critically important to examine gender relations and ways of implementing conflict resolution for upholding respect and dignity in the spaces of Youth Camps. Serious thinking and fundamental actions must also address relationships between low-impact ecology and the reduction of consumerist practices. The IYC has involved exciting architectural experiments, but it has also revealed highly unsustainable relationships between camping and ecological stewardship. The role of self-management and horizontality in contexts of social activism could well produce fruitful analyses too. More research is needed on the IYC and regional and local Youth Camps. To what extent are they coordinated? Do they learn from each other? What are the connections, similarities, and differences among Youth Camps across continents and in varied cultural contexts? What are their outcomes? How do they relate to the IYC or Social Forums?

More interviews could be carried out with past Youth Camp organizers and residents who have participated in Brazil, India, and regional and local settings. It would be desirable as well to assess the impacts of Youth Camps on campers both at the point of their departure and subsequently. It would also be interesting to interview politicians and members of service providers, solidarity economies, or artisans who have had some connections to the Camp. The IYC has fused several theories and practices. Its history and future trajectory offer researchers lessons about human relations and about the imagining and practicing of alternatives.

Towards a New Politics of Social Activism?

The IYC has provided communal space for alternative worlds to emerge through transnational networking and the promotion of new collaborative ways of doing politics. Fruitful encounters onsite have engaged organizers and committed campers in efforts to articulate new imaginaries for social change and pathways for living them. Between 2002 and 2005, Camp activists sought to foster alternatives through self-management,

horizontal decision-making, solidarity economies, ecological sustainability, and other experiments in a laboratory of social practices. These agendas emphasized the need for human agency and collective responsibility. They also focused on the importance of social inclusivity, respect for diversity and solidarity among all people, and the need for better stewardship of the biophysical environment. Their dreams and hopes were for making another world reality. Paulo Freire said “hope is an ontological need” (Freire 1992: 8). He contended that hope required practice to become historically meaningful as part of social struggle and ongoing critical education (Freire 1992: 9). In his view, hope links to dreams which open possibilities for historical change. Thus, Freire conceptualized history as opportunistic, made intelligible by the ability of humans to proactively dream of another world (Freire 1992: 91).

Can the IYC’s experiments to transform practices in daily living and its support for global and local strategies of survival and change strengthen the politics of social activism? Can they contribute to shaping an as yet incomplete imaginary for a new generation? Intercontinental youth camping is unlikely to solve any worldwide problems, but many of the people involved and their practices represent opportunities and many possible futures. The development of viable working models of social change requires ongoing learning from personal and collective experiences. There is much practical knowledge that can be derived from the experimentations that shaped the Camps. The decentralization of the WSF and the IYC can add effective ways of putting alternatives into practice, while moderating and learning from problems apparent at each massive human gathering in Porto Alegre, Mumbai, and beyond. Intercontinental, regional, and local camps can all contribute to collaborative skill-building and the creation of new activist networks. They could well deepen alter-globalization and contemporary forms of activism.

However, the reconstruction of daily life based on alternative imaginaries requires much greater involvement across the planet. More networking is needed among the WSF, the IYC, and alter-globalization movements if shared spaces of learning from inside temporary mass gatherings and encampments are to project outwards and begin to have a lasting impact around the world. Perhaps a web of collaborative spaces shared by activist networks and movements can in time contribute to the reconstruction of neoliberal

globalization and other forms of power and domination to make a world of greater compassion and harmony for people and life on Earth. However, a fundamental contradiction transcends the binary contestation between global elites and alter-globalization activists. The majority of people in the world do not have the time, education, resources, power, and other means to enable them to engage in alternative social practices. Those who can experiment with alternative imaginaries must also consider the ethical complexities embedded in their social actions. Even more importantly, people in positions of power must be held accountable for their actions and they must also acknowledge how their decisions affect the daily circumstances of others. Human history has been shaped by social forces of agency, structure, and change. There are billions of reasons why survival- and ethically-based commitments to change the world are imperative today.

New imaginaries are essential for approaching and practicing collaborative politics in new ways. The objectives of the IYC and the WSF to facilitate the creation of another world is based on living efforts to keep imagining and practicing ways in which change can be brought about. That has been a beginning. The transportability of concepts and key new ways of living (albeit temporarily) have then occurred, but they must always take place in a context that encourages open and non-hierarchical decision-making as well as low-impact ecology. They must also open up to the voices and needs of the marginalized, and the disadvantaged, and they must recognize biological and ecological diversity.

Neoliberal policies have largely dismantled the Keynesian welfare state and left most nation-states and their citizens indebted. Harsh and brutal capitalist practices have privileged capital over productive and reproductive labour, exacerbated climate change, and undermined a wealth of alternative forms of knowledge and practices. Many social actors have responded by demanding greater voice, and have combined in new social movements and networks to struggle against the greed, lust for power, and exploitative practices of political and corporate elites. Tensions between “haves and have-nots” are age-old, but they have taken on new resonance, thanks in part to the World Social Forum and the Intercontinental Youth Camp. They are in the forefront of creating spaces for millions of people to transform a world of corporate oligopolies, mass consumerism,

rampant inequality, environmental degradation, widespread violent conflict, and unaccountable political structures. In a world of passions, creativities, and fun, interlinking dreams and possibilities for realizing alternatives are coming to life each and every day. Many of these seek to displace misguided and exploitative projects of patriarchy, colonialism, capitalism, imperialism, and the industrial revolution. The courage to honour life and to practice dignity lives on. The growth of alternative imaginaries is what must ultimately flourish on the uncertain horizons ahead.

Chapter 6: Conclusion

This thesis has analyzed the Intercontinental Youth Camp's history from its start in 2000 up to 2005. It documents the IYC's purposes, challenges, and practical and theoretical implications. The Camp's ideological and activity-based orientations have sought alternatives to corporate capitalism, neoliberal globalization, and many kinds of discrimination and exclusion. The IYC project has opposed hierarchical decision-making, and supported fair trade movements, creative cultural expression, sustainable ecology, and open space interactions emphasizing horizontality and human agency.

The Camp has been shaped in large measure by its relationship with the World Social Forum. Since the turn of the 21st Century, the WSF and IYC have together created new opportunities for collective actors to network, learn together, and better challenge the dominance of neoliberalism. The IYC has become a significant arena of youth activism as part of the WSF trajectory. Its imperatives of horizontal self-management and low-impact ecological practices have in turn influenced the WSF methodologies and the Forum space. Since IYC agendas were first prefigured to situate Camps in Parque de Harmonia, groups located mostly in Porto Alegre and Rio Grande Do Sul took on leadership roles in planning the objectives and inspiring the eventual experiences and social constructions of the five Camps.

The IYC was depicted by its 2004 and 2005 organizers as a communal experience that provides common symbolic references to unify diverse groups of young people committed in achieving collective change. Organizers encouraged youth activists who oppose corporate-dominated globalization to come from anywhere in the world and converge within the Camp's spaces to share perspectives and experiences. It was hoped that campers concerned about an unjust world would, in turn, discuss together the issues that mattered most to them, reflect upon their own daily ways of living, and carry forward new approaches upon leaving the Camp. This objective was part of a broader vision focused on promoting life-long expressions of political autonomy and cultural change (IYC 2004; IYC 2005).

Beginning in 2002, the Camp Organizing Committees in Porto Alegre and Mumbai conceived of the IYC as a space for connecting a transnational population of youth agents to new interactive and experiential ways of camping. These questioned

individualistic ideologies and practices, and promoted alternative ways of daily living. Social actors who played key roles in developing the IYC process, assisted by other committed participants in the Camp meshwork, interacted to invent new forms of multi-scaled activism that, in turn, added to previously established cultures of youth activism. The visions of self-management, horizontality, and the laboratory of practices have been implemented and tested, despite the evident lack of full-scale involvement of all campers.

Successive Camps were shaped by youth-led initiatives, and included many of the same alter-globalization movements and alternative ideas that permeated the WSF and intercontinental protests against neoliberalism. In addition, the IYC has involved lesser-known manifestations of youth activism, and has made it possible for these to be expressed through the collective application of principles and methodologies that many other protest movements and the Forum itself have lacked.

The Camps have fostered exciting possibilities of alternative worlds, while at the same time being shaped by forces of neoliberalism, state support systems, and some but certainly not all contemporary youth activist networks. They welcomed young people who wanted to express their creative instincts and talents, and to share experiences of constructing alternative ways of living and learning. The framework developed for IYC 2002 began to articulate a hopeful generational imaginary of social solidarity that would be all-encompassing for youth activists around the world. Setting the stage for successive Camps, it facilitated engagements with direct action networks and independent media voices coming out of transnational demonstrations (e.g., the “Battle of Seattle” in 1999 and Genoa in 2001). This second Camp also launched efforts to encourage pluralistic cultural expression of youth movements such as Brazilian hip hop. many campaigns launched in 2002 and 2003 had a continuing successful existence in 2005, among them agricultural cooperatives selling food in the park and the “Communication Factory” of independent and alternative media. The biodegradable constructions and ecological alternatives in architecture have potential applications around the world in locales with a warm climate. Youth Camps, based on the IYC, have proliferated in several areas, showing the viability of the IYC as a model that can cross vast distances.

Initiatives have reflected ingenuity intermixed with the agencies of youth, cooperative principles, participatory learning, hands-on construction, and many historical

antecedents. Some important inspirations were the Barrios de Pie Movement, the Paris Commune, temporary autonomy zones, ecovillages, the MST, and – most of the all – the WSF. However, the majority of IYC residents have played no role in planning the program of activities or directly running the Camps. Moreover, thousands of the young people who converged in successive IYCs, have had little sense of the principles and purposes espoused by organizers. As a result, many youth who have taken part have not abided by the principles of solidarity. Many instances of camp life reflected social problems ubiquitous worldwide, such as substance abuse, threats to personal security, gender harassment, and mass consumption/waste. As a result, the IYC’s distinctive collective principles have clashed with normative social patterns of youth lifestyles from around the world such as partying, social discrimination, apathy, or even contempt for serious efforts to actualize social change.

The IYC’s genealogy reveals a hybridization of civil society and alter-globalization struggles that informed the Camps’ social life and socially constructed meanings. Pluralities of difference have arisen in cultural programs, campsite living, informal get-togethers, and activist exchanges aimed at achieving cultural and political alternatives both in daily Camp life and more broadly at intercontinental levels. As this research has demonstrated, it is a monumental challenge to achieve solidarity amidst profound diversity and divisions over activist tactics, ideologies, and multicultural identities. Hosting tens of thousands of social actors has presented a similar conundrum as has the idea of “diversity of tactics”, deployed by contemporary social movements that are countering the status quo of corporate globalization (see Notes from Nowhere 2003; Ross 2003). It is extraordinarily difficult to ensure that proposals for alternatives are crafted inclusively and for inclusive ends in terms of participation in decision-making and visioning alternatives. In the case of the IYC, coherent alternatives to the contemporary global political economy have been very difficult to coordinate, especially in the context of inadequate resources and disconnected coalitions of groups involved in imagining, constructing, and recreating the Camps. Furthermore, organizing groups within the IYC built up their own hierarchies of experience and knowledge that directly affected the ways in which the Camps functioned. Nevertheless, their initiatives opened compelling worlds of historical change.

Campers have come from developing and developed countries, but especially from Brazil and the surrounding South American countries, India, and countries from Europe and North America. The IYC has provided open spaces for voices that might not have secured other opportunities to share experiences, network, or find concrete ways to challenge dominant power structures. Still, it has not yet hosted many people from the continent of Africa or countries such as Russia, Indonesia, or China, let alone most youth activists worldwide. It has been quite secular as well, making it very difficult to connect with ethnically and spiritually diverse young people from the Middle East, many regions of Africa, and elsewhere.

The rapid expansion of the IYC processes throughout the world has included many youth movements. This has happened in a historically brief period of time because it has built on various social struggles, including transnational alter-globalization activism from the mid-1990s onwards. Another significant factor in its success has been contemporary globalization, and how it has shrunk the world through Internet-based and other communications technologies. Email lists linking activist networks have already been part of the initial planning stages for IYC 2007. These are being developed and disseminated mainly by African organizers (including two people interviewed for this study). Following upon the WSF's polycentric experiment in Bamako, Caracas, and Karachi in 2006, the decentralization of both the Social Forum and Youth Camp phenomena will be reconfigured on a world and intercontinental scale for the sixth time during January 2007 in Nairobi, Kenya. With hundreds of thousands of people already engaged in the WSF process, questions remain in the balance about how it will unfold and how it will reshape past initiatives into possible futures.

It is important to be aware of why people from only some regions of the world have taken part in the Camp, and that many other youth activists have not been able to afford the trip. Most young people have been unaware of the IYC, and may not have consciously decided to participate even if they were given the chance. Theories and, more importantly, practices of activism cannot overlook human divisions arising from race, gender, age, sexual orientation, belief, and personal involvement in alter-globalization movements and in processes and spaces such as the WSF and the IYC. These kinds of

human differences are visible in issues specific to macro-level and micro-level contexts based on people's social locations, interests, or objectives in life.

Despite the differences among resident youth groups, and the geographical and social barriers to engage, human agency has been a crucial factor in the expressions of intercontinental cultural alternatives that have taken root in the IYC. As this thesis has documented, the IYC has projected important visions for practicing alternatives. For social struggles, a major challenge in displacing neoliberalism and undermining various forms of domination and discrimination apparent in the contemporary world is to popularize values and practices that will better meet the needs of people, biological diversity, and ecosystems in all parts of the world. The asymmetrical power imbalances currently tilted towards military power, corporate conglomerates, and national security apparatuses require colossal and imperative efforts to bring about new transformative forms of political engagement.

Do the waves of transnational activism during the past decade signify a new political ethos and hope for the human imagination? How will leftist party politics turn the geopolitics of capitalism? What impacts will the rise of China and India have on international affairs, biological diversity, and resource scarcity? What role will global trade regimes and the U.S. play in a century already marked by wars and global warming? The production of alternatives is complex in any arena at local, provincial, state, regional, national, intercontinental, intergovernmental, international, or global levels. The realities of climate change now demand the most profound ethical commitments of people everywhere to act as conscious consumers and citizens. The entire planet in the decade ahead will also depend on international pledges to implement environmental action plans to regulate corporate exploitation over resources and labour. The United Nations Millennium Goals must also remain a focal point of the alter-globalization struggles to dismantle the fossil fuel-based economic order and seriously address inequitable circumstances that negatively impact human and biological communities on Earth.

The political will to make change is not only an expression of state power, but also of personal and collective forms of active engagement. These are embedded in circumstances, choices, and caring. As history shows, generational dynamics are

responsible for the world we live in today. If people young, old, and those living in between the lines are to have a voice – and an opportunity to collaborate – in addressing the issues of planetary survival, dignity, peace, and love, the inclusion of many more people and peoples is indispensable.

The living proof that the Intercontinental Youth Camp has existed at all speaks profoundly about youth and human beings as protagonists of their own lives to bring to life dreams of making a fairer world for all. The experiences shared by intercontinental youth campers live on alongside the linkages that they have generated. Their relations of power and identity were forged in friendships and differences as part of the Camp dynamics and in relation to the World Social Forum. The living moments experienced in each Intercontinental Youth Camp presented alternative imaginaries and practical meanings about human relations and worlds of change.

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