The Logic of the Alterglobal Movement: Between Experiences of Exceptionality and Structures of Everyday Life*

BENJAMÍN TEJERINA

1. INTRODUCTION

For a little over a decade we have been witnessing the growth of a type of mobilization that had previously only expressed itself on a few occasions and around events of great social relevance. Seattle, November 1999, was the moment when this form of protest acquired planetary visibility, thanks to the social impact of the images of the demonstrators outside the World Trade Organization Summit broadcast by the mass media. This was neither the first mobilization against one of the bodies that best represents the tendencies of economic globalization, nor was it the most important in terms of its mobilizing capacity or social effect; however, it was the moment when a form of discontent and resistance, geographically spread in an uneven way, acquired public visibility and affected the consciousness of a civil society that was becoming internationalized.

It is not its relative novelty that interests us, but the rapid spread of this form of protest and its meaning (Della Porta and Tarrow, 2005). In order to contribute to the understanding of the social meaning of what has been defined as the 'movement of movements', we propose to answer four questions that we believe to be of key importance.

In the first place, I will briefly analyse the possible material foundations of the mobilization. One of the debates that has been the object of reflection by the social movements in recent years is related to the supposed structural foundations of collective action. While the roots of the workers' movement were to be found in unequal property structures, and social class became a supposition of its objective definition and an opportunity structure for subjective belonging, the social movements that are characteristic of the 1980s and 1990s reveal themselves to be interclass realities. In the majority of cases, they reflect a middle class radicalism that aspires to oppose the degradation of the conditions and quality of everyday life, as well the colonization of the space of privacy, pushing the social sectors most affected by these characteristic processes of late capitalism towards mobilization. We propose to answer the question: who are, and what are the characteristics held by, the activists who, proceeding from different sectors, come together in this movement in favour of global justice?

In the second place, I would like to know if there is compatibility or incompatibility between the different levels of identification—sectoral-global, particular-general—or if, on the contrary, these are watertight compartments without relationship between them. It is worth recalling that while the workers' movement, and the social and historical movements, drew their main issues from aspects of social existence such as exploitation at work, the relations of domination between persons of different gender, sex, ethnic condition, place of residence or threatened culture, as well as from more general aspects such as the defence of the environment or peace, the movement against neoliberal globalization shows an internal diversity so wide that it is presenting problems for the management of its kaleidoscopic reality of demands.

In the third place, we will consider what could be called the process of construction of the global and alterglobalization: how is the global to be defined and how does alterglobalization acquire concrete form? To this end, we will attempt to delineate a possible conception of the world that supersedes the plurality of political cultures present amongst the activists of the Alterglobal Movement.

In the fourth place, I want to delve deeper into the tension between the conditions of mobilization, which pass through periods of maximum visibility around counter-summits and global protest

actions, and the activists' conditions of existence, which involve very different living experiences that are, on occasion, distant from the more solidarity-based demands of globalization.

I will use the four sections of this communication to try and answer these four questions. The information presented here proceeds from a questionnaire that was answered by 166 activists, and the corresponding fieldwork was carried out during the spring months of 2005. The same questionnaire has been used in other European countries and will enable us in the future to compare answers and analyse similarities and differences. In addition, between the months of January and February 2006, 25 interviews were carried out with activists from different organizations, associations and groups that consider themselves part of the Alterglobal Movement, with the aim of analysing other aspects relating to identity, political culture and the movement's alternative proposal.

2. THE ACTIVISTS OF THE ALTERGLOBALIZATION MOVEMENT

In some social movements the fundamental source of recruitment coincides with a social category: job, ethnic group, gender, age, place of residence. Precisely those social categories that the social scientists use in their questionnaires as independent variables have become significant elements and the object of demands. In spite of the fact that many social movements recruit many of their activists from specific categories, we find in all of them individuals who do not proceed from those categories, while, on the other hand, not all the individuals who belong to certain categories become activists.

According to Claus Offe the characteristics

'of the nucleus of activists and sympathisers of the new social movements proceeding from the new middle class consist of a high level of education, relative economic security and employment in the sector of personal services […] Besides, they include elements from other groups and strata with which they tend to form a more or less stable alliance. Amongst these other groups, the most important are: a) the 'peripheral' or 'de-commercialised' groups and b) elements of the old middle class' (Claus Offe, 1988:195-6).

Ronald Inglehart has suggested the thesis that the emergence of new social movements is largely due to what he calls cognitive mobilizations, that is, 'the gradual increase in the level of political

skill amongst the masses of the population, which in its turn is due to the further spread of education and the intensification of political information' (R. Inglehart, 1991: 421).

I am interested in determining both the socio-demographic characteristics and the characteristics of belonging of the alterglobalization activists interviewed. Amongst the former, it has been pointed out that the new social movements respond to a new 'radicalism of the middle classes'. The origin of this radicalism would lie in the fact that the processes of structural change have contributed in different ways to weakening the foundation of the traditional social conflicts (Eder, 1993). Together with these transformations, we are witnessing the emergence of social groups that are notable due to their level of education and to their occupying a social position different from that of the traditional middle class (Della Porta and Diani, 1997: 65). These new middle classes would be the link between structural change and new social conflicts. Amongst some of the socio-demographic characteristics of the alterglobalization activists interviewed, we could point to their pronounced youth, 72.3 per cent are younger than 34 years; their high level of education, 70.5 per cent are educated, above the average level of the population, 70.5 per cent; more than 70 per cent have university qualifications; and a high level of use of new information and communication technologies, 60.8 per cent use a computer every day, 47 per cent use the Internet, and 51.8 per cent use email.

The activists interviewed have different occupations, with a considerable number (30.1 per cent) still studying, and 18.7 per cent carrying out work of an intellectual type or related to the scientific sphere. Those with jobs show a lower level of job insecurity (22.9 per cent) than the level of the employed population as a whole (33 per cent in 2006).

The most outstanding characteristic is the high level of mobilization, since 90.4 per cent take part in some social or political organization (Table 1).

TABLE 1: PARTICIPATION IN SOCIO-POLITICAL ORGANIZATIONS

Participation in socio-political orgs.	Absolute frequecy	Percentage
Yes	150	90.4
No	16	9.6
Total	166	100.0

Militancy in more than one organization seems to be another outstanding characteristic amongst those interviewed, with participation in 1.65 organizations per activist (Table 2).

TABLE 2: TYPE OF ORGANIZATION TO WHICH THOSE INTERVIEWED BELONGED

Type of organization	Absolute frequency	%
Political parties	26	17.3
Trade unions	18	12.0
Social movements	79	52.7
Associations	26	17.3
Voluntary orgs.	46	30.7
Others	15	10.0
No Answer	38	25.3
Total	248*	100.0

*The total does not add up to 166 because the answer is multiple

In relation to their political identity and their feeling of belonging to a global movement, the majority of those interviewed stated that their political identity lay in the social movements (pacifism, ecologism, feminism, autonomous or solidarity).

In the second place, were those who stated that their political identity lay in the workers' movement and, after that, we find those who felt they belonged to a global movement (Table 3).

Those who belonged to historical (neighbourhood, students), nationalist or religious movements had less weight amongst those interviewed, some 10 per cent of the cases. Paradoxically, the political

TABLE 3: POLITICAL IDENTITY OF THE ACTIVISTS INTERVIEWED

Political identity	Absolute frequency	%
Workers' movement	58	34.9
Social movement	127	76.5
Historical movement	21	12.7
Religious movement	11	6.6
Nationalist movement	18	10.8
Global movement	50	30.1
No answer	3	1.8
Total	288*	100.0

*The total does not add up to 166 because the answer is multiple.

identity situated in different social movements seems compatible with a more general and abstract identification, as 81.3 per cent of those interviewed stated that they felt part of a global movement (Table 4).

TABLE 4: FEELING OF BELONGING TO A GLOBAL MOVEMENT

P. 10 Do you feel part of a global movement?		
	Absolute frequency	Percentage
Yes	135	81.3
No	19	114
No Answer	12	7.2
Total	166	100.0

3. THE IDENTITY OF THE ALTERGLOBALIZATION MOVEMENT

The new social movements approach emphasizes those aspects of the social movements that are related to the process of construction of new collective identities, but it has not considered the personal sphere of identity in sufficient depth. The general tendency has been to study processes and social factors that determine the evolution and impact of the social movements. In this approach, the micro-social processes pass into the background.

Omi and Winant (1983), in an evaluation of the civil rights movement in the USA, have pointed out that beyond the legislative achievements or the spread of mass mobilization, the great success of this movement must be sought in its ability to create a new 'subject' and to redefine racial identity and race itself in North American society.

There is an unequal treatment of identity amongst the different social movements. The social centrality of the issues with which the social movements concern themselves is not always accompanied by the same degree of centrality for activists or sympathisers. While certain movements with a religious or nationalist character can involve a high degree of personal commitment for some of their activists, for others they can represent an identification that is transient or instrumental. Other social movements deal with aspects of social life that are directly situated in personal life experience, such as the case of the feminist movement or the movement of gays, lesbians, bisexuals

and transsexuals. With respect to personal strategies, the activists of any movement can commit themselves to a greater or lesser degree to the practices of their Organization. But the idea we wish to stress is that, from the viewpoint of the construction of personal identity, practices involving an intervention of gender or sexual relations appear to have, in general, greater social meaning than those that affect aspects such as relations with the environment, solidarity with the underprivileged. By this we do not wish to say that for any feminist, gay or lesbian activist his/her commitment involves the same identity. In cases like these, there are important differences in how commitment is lived and how homosexuality is experienced; there are even different ways of defining and becoming homosexual (Plummer, 1981; Bell and Weinberg, 1978).

Together with personal identity, groups also provide a collective identity. According to Melucci, collective identity is a process that contains three interrelated dimensions that can be separated analytically: a) it formulates systems of interpretation concerning ends, means and the sphere of action; b) it activates relations amongst the actors, who interact, communicate, influence each other, negotiate and take decisions; c) they make emotional investments that permit individuals to recognize themselves (Melucci, 1988: 343; 1989: 35; 1995 and 1996).

A similar definition has been made by Polletta and Jasper, according to whom collective identity is (2001:284):

'an individual´s cognitive, moral, and emotional connections with a broader community, category, practice, or institution. It is a perception of a shared status or relation, which may be imagined rather than experienced directly, and it is distinct from personal identities, although it may form part of a personal identity. A collective identity may have been first constructed by outsiders (for example, as in the case of 'Hispanics' in this country), who may still enforce it, but it depends on some acceptance by those to whom it is applied. Collective identities are expressed in cultural materials—names, narratives, symbols, verbal styles, rituals, clothing, and so on - but not all cultural materials express collective identities. Collective identities do not imply the rational calculus for evaluating choices that 'interest' does. And unlike ideology, collective identity carries with it positive feeling for other members of the group'.

Although we basically agree with both Melucci's and Polletta and Jasper's definition of collective identity, we would emphasize some distinctive aspects. 'Collective identity' is a concept by which we refer

to a feeling of belonging shared by the members of a group or several groups, through which reality is interpreted and defined, directing the actions of those who participate in that feeling. Collective identity can crystallize and objectify itself, but it is constantly subjected to the possibility of change and re-elaboration. Collective identity is not something purely symbolic—belonging to the world of signs and interpretations; it also belongs to the world of social practices (Tejerina, 1999).

Taylor and Whittier (1992) have noted down three analytical tools for understanding the construction of collective identity: frontiers, consciousness and negotiation. Now, from the point of view of ideological contents, the constitution of a sense of a differentiated 'we' (frontiers), the formulation of an alterglobalizing sentiment (consciousness), and the establishment of a shared (negotiated) collective action, the statements of the activists interviewed show a clear collective identity.

We asked the activists about motivations, the aspects most valued by the movement, the objective and interest in maintaining relations with other groups. Their answers are shown in Table 6.

With respect to the reasons why activists take part in the alterglobal movement, we asked them to answer a question concerning their motivations: 'I take part in collective actions against globalization in order to (…)'. The sentiment on which there was most agreement was opposition to economic domination (4.5 points and the least standard deviation). It was followed in importance by the transformation of political structures and democracy (4.45 points) and affirming moral principles of equality and justice (4.44 points).

With respect to the degree of solidarity amongst activists, those interviewed shared a broad space of solidarity that was expressed in a strong agreement with respect to the transformation of a social reality that they didn't like (4.66 points), building a feeling of solidarity against what they considered to be an imposition (4.45), sharing the same demands (4.24) and reaching understanding about common interests (4.16).

We also formulated a question on the aspects of the movement that were most highly valued, with the reply that the plural composition obtains the most positive assessment (4.18 points) amongst all of the proposed alternatives for assessment, followed by the horizontal and democratic character of the movement (4.10) and its reference to transcultural questions (4.04).

TABLE 6: MOTIVATIONS, OBJECTIVE, INTEREST

P. 12. 'I take part in collective actions against globalization in order to…'
(rank from 1 'total disagreement' to 5 'total agreement'

		N	Average	Standard deviation	Coefficient of variation (%)
P1201	Affirm moral principles of equality and justice	163	4.44	0.79	17.70
P1202	Oppose economic domination	163	4.50	0.74	16.44
P1205	Transform political structures and democracy	160	4.45	0.93	20.90
P1301	Share my demands	166	4.24	0.90	21.13
P1303	Generate solidarity in face of those who impose globalization	165	4.45	0.86	19.30
P1304	Change a social reality that I don't like	161	4.66	0.70	15.00
P1801	Plurality of components	161	4.18	0.90	21.56
P1803	Horizontal-democratic character of the movement	152	4.10	0.81	19.80
P1804	The fact they deal with events that cross cultural frontiers	162	4.04	0.96	23.649
P1902	Change the perspective on globalization	160	4.25	0.90	21.27
P1903	Raise awareness of the risks of globalization	161	4.35	0.83	18.97
P3001	Build the widest possible movement	162	4.12	0.98	23.86

With respect to the aim of the movement, the ideas of extending consciousness of the risks of globalization (4.35 points) and of changing the perspective on globalization (4.25 points) well the affirmations that obtained the highest level of agreement amongst those interviewed, in the double sense of perception of the effectiveness of mobilization and the progressive expansion of one's own awareness. Finally, the desire to construct a broad social movement obtained a high level of agreement (4.12 points).

4. THE POLITICAL CARTOGRAPHY OF ALTERGLOBALIZATION

According to the classical formulation of Almond and Verba, 'the term *political culture* thus refers to the specifically political orientations–attitudes toward the political system and its various parts, and attitudes toward the role of the self in the system. We speak of a political culture just as we can speak of an economic culture or a religious culture. It is a set of orientations toward a special set of social objects and processes' (Almond and Vera, 1965: 12) . This definition refers to a cultural corpus that is specifically political; a differentiated and separable set of beliefs, values, behaviours, symbols, discourses, memories, expectations, roles and manners that revolve around the political. Resounding within this is a type of universalist vision of the political that results, firstly, from a dissociation of politics and culture and, secondly, from the articulation of a specifically political cultural system that is characterized by a strong universal (transcultural) identification between the political and the sphere of activity characteristic of the institutions (Martínez de Albeniz, 2003).

The theoretical problem that is raised by considering political culture as a special case of Culture is that the terrain of the relationships and links between the two spheres is left unexplored, which affects a more exact understanding of their process of production and transmission. On the other hand, an important empirical problem arises, since anti-institutional or extra-institutional sectors, anti-system forces, groups of the disenchanted or incivility are not always found behind the new political cultures.

Political culture can be considered from another perspective. It can be understood as a set of attitudes, opinions and behaviours with respect to the norms that regulate processes of social conflict existing in society, as well as the cognitive, affective and practical elements involving the agents who intervene in decision-making processes. It also implies moral evaluations on the attribution of responsibility both to collective actors and to the institutions that intervene in managing and planning the future of a society. These include all those that compete for responsibility in decision making in the sphere of the state and supra-state regulations.

With this definition we are attempting to widen the narrow margins into which political culture—understood as institutionally orientated political culture, political culture of the national sphere, and the majority or dominant political culture–has been fit. In any case, it

would be preferable, and sociologically more appropriate, to talk of political cultures in the plural. However, on differentiating amongst the different components of political culture(s), we observe that this concept reveals itself to be unsuitable for rendering what has been taking place in the alterglobalization movement. Rather than seeking for a differentiated political culture, the question we must answer is whether the orientations and practices should be considered as part of the political cultures of the citizenry or whether, on the contrary, when studying political culture we should refer exclusively to opinions and attitudes facing institutionalized actors and political spheres.

In our opinion, the first option contributes elements that are basic to the analysis and understanding of political processes in advanced societies, and if they are not taken into consideration the latter remain opaque. Above all, they shed light on the social processes of production of new cultural dynamics that emerge on the limits of institutionalized politics, with which they compete for new definitions, contributing to their transformation.

Besides, the global and alterglobalization constitute a terrain in dispute in the process of redefinition, some of whose formulations are to be found in the alterglobalization movement, which is why any one-dimensional attempt at reification is highly unsatisfactory. At the same time, the concept of political culture is still too homogeneous, too compact, smooth and lacking in edges to be able to render the plurality of tensions enclosed by: a) the instituted and the instituting; b) the political and the cultural; c) the visible and the hidden; d) having and living. To speak of a political cartography of alterglobalization, instead of a political culture, has the advantages that: a) it represents a guide to different and differentiated times, places and practices; b) it permits a better understanding that similar practices can give rise to diverse trajectories and interpretations; c) it is better adapted to understanding a reality resembling an open world, one full of possibilities, but–at the same time–with well-trodden paths, which contains the new and the old, and is yet identifiable and discernable.

That is how we understand it and the construction of the questionnaire has been directed towards capturing this fluid and changing reality, with the interviewees questioned about those aspects that form a relevant part of the characteristic *weltanschaung* of technologically orientated societies undergoing a process of increasing globalization. The five spheres on which we have concentrated are:

1) the context of work; 2) the interests existing behind knowledge, research and training; 3) the models of consumption; 4) the relations of domination in the sphere of culture; and 5) the regulating role of the political institutions. We will briefly consider the views on these five spheres of society expressed by the activists of the alterglobalization movement.

It hardly seems unnecessary to recall that work has been, and continues to be, a fundamental institution of society. The majority of the evolutionary typologies of society refer to the dominant character of labour for defining each of its types and constitutive stages. In the questions we put to the interviewees we combined characteristic elements of the current employment situation, its expressive character, its conditions, consequences and agents (Table 7). What seemed to most concern the activists is the power of the multinationals and financial groups (4.75 points) and the labour conditions of globalization (4.64). The unequal distribution of power and its consequences for one of the sides—the workers—who intervene in global production thus appears as an outstanding element in the evaluation. This emphasis on, or sensitivity towards, inequality, the scarcity of justice and the opposition to economic domination had already appeared previously as an element giving cohesion to the movement. Lack of employment (4.43) and uncertainties surrounding

TABLE 7: EVALUATIONS ON THE CONTEXT OF WORK

P.43 'Evaluate the following features of the today's world'
(rank from 1 'it doesn't cause me any concern at all' to 5
'it causes me a lot of concern')

	N	Average	Standard deviation	C.V. %
P4301 Lack of employment	161	4.43	0.80	17.99
P4302 Uncertainty of professional life	160	4.11	0.91	22.17
P4303 Difficulty for expressing one's own creativity at work	157	3.83	1.00	25.98
P4304 Having to work as an employee or for the labour market	157	3.75	1.06	28.16
P4305 The power of multinationals and financial groups	161	4.75	0.53	11.1
P4306 Labour consequences of globalization	160	4.64	0.63	13.53

professional life (flexibility, mobility, insecurity, precariousness)—4.11 points—appear next as features of the present-day world of work that cause the greatest concern. The possible lack of expressiveness, or difficulty in expressing one's own creativity at work (3.83) and lack of independence (3.75), on having to work as an employee, cause less concern although it is still significant.

We frequently refer to present today society as a knowledge society. Although knowledge is not an aspect exclusive to this age, the central role of science and the generation of reflexive processes associated with its technological advances, has made it possible to generalize labels such as society of science (Lamo de Espinosa), information society (Castells) or knowledge society (Stehr). The capacity for social

TABLE 8: EVALUATIONS ON EDUCATION AND KNOWLEDGE

		N	Average	Standard deviation	C.V. (%)
P4307	Lack of relation between the knowledge acquired in the educational system and personal needs	160	4.11	0.95	23.16
P4308	Disconnection between the knowledge taught in the educational system and insertion into the labour market	156	3.78	1.16	30.74
P4309	Transmission of knowledge linked exclusively to the system of dominant values	156	4.43	0.80	17.97
P4310	Educational system too closely linked to the needs of the market	159	4.28	0.93	21.82
P4311	Policies of privatization of teaching and research	158	4.63	0.63	13.67
P4312	Educational system excessively determined by a neo-liberal perspective	158	4.41	0.82	18.64
P4313	Difficulty of access to knowledge	157	4.24	0.80	18.77
P4314	The fact that science and technology are not dedicated to resolving basic social problems	156	4.51	0.76	16.81

intervention in our own nature has reached levels that were unthinkable a short time ago (Melucci), which has spread the idea that science, knowledge and the educational system—responsible for the former two's transmission—occupy a central place in today's society. We asked the activists about the use and orientation that education, research, science, technology and knowledge in general should have. The element that caused the greatest concern was the policy of privatizing education and research (4.63 points), as well as the fact that science and technology are not dedicated to resolving basic social problems (4.51). The privatization of certain uses of research and dedication to basic social problems seem to be situated in the same evaluative continuum, almost a composition in terms of axiological antagonism.

A short distance behind, we find the answers on the transmission of knowledge linked exclusively to the dominant system of values (with a level of rejection of 4.43 points), and the existence of an educational system that is excessively determined by a neo-liberal perspective (4.41). Dominant values and a neo-liberal perspective appear to refer to the same sphere of evaluation. The fact that the educational system is too closely linked to the needs of the market produces a high level of rejection (4.28), as do the difficulties in access to knowledge (4.24), and the lack of relation between knowledge acquired in the educational system and personal needs (4.11). The idea that causes the least objection, although it continues to be significant, is the disconnection between knowledge taught in the educational system and insertion in the labour market (3.78). From the above, we can conclude that there is rejection of the privatization of research; of the fact that basic social problems are not its priority; that education and knowledge are directed by the market, by dominant values or by a neo-liberal perspective; as well as the lack of democracy in the access to knowledge and its dissociation from personal needs.

The drastic changes that have occurred in industrial societies have brought about a transformation in the structure of plausibility of that form of collective identity that was articulated around the world of work. The decline in the rate of trade union affiliation, the fall in the number of workers employed in certain branches of production, the dispersion of social enclaves that were culturally homogeneous in terms of class density are some of the factors that have resulted in class mobilization losing its political relevance, and class identity its social meaning.

The social conditions of work in post-Fordist society restrict the recourse to this source of identity. In the words of L.E. Alonso: 'the dictates of the new spirit of capitalism dissolve both the profession–vocation–and the collective consciousness of the Organizations, which become dissolved on the surface of the network society' (Alonso, 2000: 217). The point is being reached where this process could put an end to work as a source of collective identity, since in post-modern society '[this approach] announces the loss of social references by subjects in the place of production (…) and considers consumption as a form of adventure making possible plasticity and expressiveness; it always forgets that social subjects in this situation can disintegrate into pure individuals enclosed in an autistic and egotistic world filled with lack of commitment and disinterest for the group' (Alonso, 2000: 217).

The question we wish to pose in this respect is whether indeed the consumerist society transforms us into such malleable persons, into such autistic and egotistic subjects lacking in interest for the group, or whether amongst the activists of alterglobalization we can find traces of that culture of work that are not wholly individualistic. Solidarity is also present amongst those interviewed, although it has adopted other meanings. The search for a model of consumption that does not ignore ecological balance (4.68 points), abandoning consumption oriented towards economic speculation (4.62) and rejection of products elaborated under exploitative conditions in developing countries (4.58), are the evaluations that reach a higher degree of concern (Table 9). Other aspects appear that are related to unequal access to consumption, both between developed and non-developed areas (4.43) and within the developed areas between different social sectors (4.18), the instrumental use of consumption as a status symbol (4.35), and the relative lack of control over important aspects of one's own life (4.37). Justice, equality, solidarity, the non-exploitation of people, ecological balance and social control over life would be the constituent evaluative components of this political cartography of questions relating to the consumer society.

What is political about culture, or what political culture is to be found in the cultural and institutional models? This issue is raised by the questions in Tables 10 and 11. What most concerns the interviewees with respect to the cultural models is the excessive concentration of power by capital (4.71 points); they also share a pronounced sense of justice between women and men, strongly rejecting the absence of equity between the genders (4.69). The

TABLE 9: EVALUATIONS OF THE MODELS OF CONSUMPTION

		N	Average	Standard deviation	C.V. (%)
P4315	Consumption of products produced under exploitative conditions in developing countries	158	4.58	0.79	17.29
P4316	Unequal access to consumption in developed areas	156	4.18	0.85	20.24
P4317	Unequal access to consumption between developed and non-developed areas	156	4.43	0.79	17.79
P4318	Consumption of goods as a status symbol	156	4.35	0.82	18.80
P4319	Consumption oriented towards economic speculation	157	4.62	0.60	13.07
P4320	Consumption that ignores ecological balance	157	4.68	0.59	12.59
P4321	Lack of control over important aspects of one's own life	151	4.37	0.71	16.20

domination exercised by those who control information at the world level also generates a strong sense of concern.

Once again, a special feeling is expressed against those who have accumulated a great measure of power. In the second place, a series of items appear relating to the repression of alternative lifestyles (4.47), the lack of social control by individuals over the model of society (4.35), the programmed and planned spaces of life such as the industrialized production of the cultural artifats (4.34), imposition and lack of individual freedom (4.27), and recognition of cultural diversity (4.36). These indicate the existence of a culture of resistance and a search for cultural patterns as an alternative to those that, in the opinion of the interviewees, are being imposed by authorities with more power. Numerous examples appear in the interviews with activists, of experiences that attempt to construct, occupy and inhabit alternative spaces on the margin of the controls of economic, political and cultural power.

It is not clear whether the critique of the institutions that appears in this specific political cartography involves more or less politics. We

TABLE 10: EVALUATIONS OF THE CULTURAL MODELS

		N	Average	Standard deviation	C.V. (%)
P4322	Lack of control by individuals of the model of society	154	4.35	0.75	17.33
P4323	Repression of alternative lifestyles	158	4.47	0.69	15.50
P4324	Cultural production planned by the culture industry	152	4.34	0.71	16.34
P4325	Domination exercised by those who control the production of information at the world level	154	4.65	0.62	13.35
P4326	Excessive concentration of power by capital	155	4.71	0.53	11.34
P4327	Imposition of models of individual freedom	155	4.27	0.87	20.37
P4328	Lack of recognition of cultural differences	157	4.36	0.73	16.63
P4329	Absence of equity between the genders	156	4.69	0.49	10.45

are inclined to think that it is more a critique of failings than of excess, that is to say, what is desired is more politics and more intervention by the political institutions and not less, as would be demanded, for example, by a critique from neo-liberal positions, or from positions openly in favour of globalization. Once again, the use of force and violence, whether this take the form of military conflicts or the use of terrorism, reaches a higher level of concern (4.66 points), followed by the power of the developed countries (4.53) to which the interviewees belong (Table 11).

The remoteness of the political institutions or the inability to intervene constitute a second bloc of important aspects–in terms of critique and shortcomings–and of evaluations of the political role of politics and its instruments of regulation. Concern is expressed about the remoteness of the national institutions from the individual and collective problems of everyday life (4.31 points), a commentary that is extended to the ensemble of institutions when expression is given to the disquiet caused by the inability of the institutions in general to confront the effects produced by globalization (4.29), the alienation

TABLE 11: EVALUATIONS OF PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS

		N	Average	Standard deviation	C.V. (%)
P4330	Inability of the institutions in general to confront the effects produced by globalization	156	4.29	0.81	18.90
P4331	Power of the developed countries	157	4.53	0.63	13.82
P4332	Remoteness of the European institutions from the problems of everyday life	154	4.19	0.87	20.74
P4333	Remoteness of the national institutions from the individual and collective problems of everyday life	155	4.31	0.78	18.05
P4334	Secondary role of the State in political decision-making	151	3.96	0.96	24.19
P4335	Wars and terrorism	151	4.66	0.60	12.90

generated by the remoteness of the European institutions from the problems of everyday life (4.19), or regret over the secondary role of the State in political decision-making (3.96).

Rather than a withdrawal towards an anti-system political subculture, what we are facing is a space under political construction, an alternative to economic globalization and the injustices and inequalities that it produces in different social sectors and geographic areas.

5. THE GLOBAL, THE LOCAL AND THE GLOCAL

An element of tension within the alterglobal movement concerns the activities of the groups, collectives and Organizations of every type inscribed in the alterglobalization mobilizations, and which prepare and participate in those international gatherings that bring the movement its maximum visibility towards the exterior. We have grouped the testimonies provided by the activists interviewed concerning their participation in acts of global protest and in everyday activities. We are interested in determining the subjective meaning that both types of action hold for the participants.

Participation in acts with a global character (Prague, London, Paris, Barcelona, Genoa, etc.) for short periods of time, making it possible to compare experiences and to experience moments of a highly exceptional character, are described as follows: '[a counter-

summit] that's an isolated event', '[counter-summits serve] for being seen, I think that is what is positive, the movement becomes visible', 'it does leave its mark, people who, while being so different from you, are so similar', 'meeting those people you have so much in common with, without knowing anything at all about them until you meet them, that's what leaves its mark on you'.

A second group emphasizes other aspects, as we can observe in the following testimonies: 'a counter-summit is the festival of a movement, it's the moment of struggle, but also of enjoyment', and 'the anti-globalization movement has a playful, festive aspect, one of enjoyment and of making fun of the system, [...] the imagination of the people preparing for Prague, cardboard floats representing different figures, playing music, some people dressed as majorettes with a degree of sarcasm, desire for festivity, desire for enjoyment'.

The third group of testimonies emphasizes a more experiential dimension and the question of solidarity: 'people go to tell their experiences', 'the sensation of unity with all those people around you, that is, the friendships I personally made there, friendships with people you know for 3 or 4 days. Although you've only seen them again a couple of times, the truth is it's like you've known them all your life, because of everything you've shared in that short space of time', 'they serve to form networks, share experiences, and for returning home with new capacities for analyzing international reality', 'you come back with renewed energy, because you see people who are working better than you, doing really important things'.

From the statements of the interviewed activists it is possible to establish a triple conception of the global: (a) as an isolated, odd, strange, and extraordinary moment that displays a peculiar kind of time and space with specific social relationships, that is to say, in which experiences that have their own social logic take place; (b) as a festive, relaxed moment, or a moment for entertainment and pleasure in which expressing demands and lucid way go hand in hand, and (c) as an event with a meaning that transcends the limits of the exact moment in which it takes place.

The local appears to present a greater degree of coherence and unanimity, inasmuch as it is the place where interactions take place and where the structures that make it possible to build and maintain the movement are found: 'the most important thing is getting close to your milieu, the [activity] that's done on a small scale', 'it's getting involved in small projects, in small campaigns that you can see actually working, reaching people', 'it's not in the big summits where most of

the work of the alterglobalization movement is found, but in what's local', 'always starting out from the local, because of the closeness of people of your milieu, the people who live in your community', 'as the construction of alternative spaces of another sociality, of another type of relationships', 'your relationship with social change is not only standing behind a banner, or mobilizing. It's in your everyday relationships, starting with your friends, your partner, relationships of every type', 'the alterglobalization movement is nothing unless it has a basis of struggle and resistance at the local level'.

The local ambit appears as the original place where demands are made, the space of authenticity. It is an immediate, accessible, nearby, completely visible, and therefore apprehensible, kind of time and space. It also appears as the place of the concept of 'we', of the people, the space in which we meet everyday, the space of the real and the space of personalization (face-to-face personal relationships).

A third space is delineated between the local and the global; insofar as it is a space in the process of being created it is symbolic, a virtual architecture between both spheres of activity. It is a 'place' traversed by contradiction, tension and imbalances, but also by additions and superimpositions, although the transition between the two is not easy. Three meanings appear clearly prefigured. In the first place, as a way to define the movement: 'the feeling that the rebels from different issues, organizations, spheres of intervention seek each other out is, in my opinion, a fundamental key that differentiates today's processes from those of before', 'the fact of having shared many processes of struggle with many different people, in different countries, in different situations', 'meeting so many people from different continents who think the same way, has given me immense hope, an immense faith in humanity: we are capable of doing anything, and besides I believe it'.

In the second place, tension defines some of the testimonies gathered: 'there are two levels in the alterglobalization movement: a) there are some people who are paid workers, teachers or people who want to participate in this movement and this coordination at the international level that takes people by plane from here to there, and b) there is local coordination', and 'I wouldn't say it's plural, rather I'd say it's contradictory, it's clearly contradictory'.

In the third place, another interpretation appears around the idea of a necessary evil: 'one shouldn't make a legend out of summits. They are necessary experiences, but the work is at home, the work

lies in making proposals in your milieu, and in the end we live in a world full of micro-realities, which require micro-political actions', and 'integrating that solidarity and that spirit of cooperation in your everyday life, that is something that always gets through to people, because the very essence of action is that it's done with people'.

The statements about the glocal are structured around three meanings: (a) that which defines the movement and gives it a specific value and importance compared to previous mobilization processes, as a space of struggle and search, of meeting between rebellious and disobedient activists, resistance fighters, and as a space of re-signification; (b) as a space of coordination in permanent tension between the fixed (here and now) and the mobile (there and before-after); (c) as a necessary evil that connects the non-genuine, dispensable and non-essential macro-space (idealized/legendary) with the space of the micro, of the real, of the genuine and the truly essential.

6. CONCLUSION

The social characterization of the alterglobalization activists interviewed indicates some differences compared with those features traditionally attributed both to the members of the workers' movement and to those of the new social movements. In comparison with the latter, their profile places more accent on their youth, their higher level of educational training, greater contact with the new information technologies, a more pronounced presence of women and less exposure to job insecurity.

Everything seems to indicate that the old category of 'middle class radicalism' is being complemented by a growing presence of professionals of knowledge and people accustomed to managing information of both a general and a professional kind. However, it would be complex to elaborate further than we have here in presenting this conclusion, since a significant part of the alterglobalization activists also participate in what have been called the new social movements.

Militancy in more than one organization seems to be a frequent feature amongst the activists interviewed, with a small presence of affiliates of political parties and trade union organizations, and a massive presence of other social movements, voluntary associations and non-governmental organizations. Activism is subjected to frequent renewal and collaboration is limited in time, with a scarce presence

of activists having more than five years involvement, although the majority participate regularly and only a small percentage get involved at specific times. Ideologically they are situated on the extreme left, the great majority declare themselves to be non-believers and to be non-practicing in religious terms.

A minority situate their political identity in their belonging to a global movement (17 per cent) against a majority who prefer to situate themselves in other types of movement (83 per cent). Does this mean that the majority do not consider themselves to be part of a global movement? Is it possible to make both feelings of belonging compatible, or for them to be considered the same thing? Only 11.4 per cent rule out belonging to a global movement, 30.1 per cent affirm that their political identity is linked to their belonging to the global movement, and as many as 81.3 per cent feel themselves to be a constituent part of that movement. In terms of belonging, there is a terrain that makes it possible to make political identification with a sectoral movement and belonging to a wider movement compatible.

If Melucci is right when he says that collective identity is a shared definition, produced by interaction amongst individuals, which makes reference to the orientations of their action as well as to the opportunities and limits within which this action takes place, then we would be facing a collective identity with a very clear, precise profile that is widespread amongst the interviewees. The activists appear to be conscious that: a) through their action they want to build the widest possible movement; b) that they personally mobilize to oppose economic domination, to affirm moral principles of equality and justice, and to transform the political structures and democracy; c) that their interest in uniting with others rests on the possibility of altering an unwanted social reality, generating solidarity, constructing common interests and sharing demands; d) that the alterglobalization movement is effective because it is contributing to raise awareness of the risks of globalization and to change the perceptions held of it; and e) that the most problematical aspects of organizing a movement (pluralism, diversity) are what appear to make it most attractive to the activists: the plurality of its components, the horizontal and democratic character of the movement and the fact that it deals with questions that transcend cultural frontiers. But is this possible? Can such dissimilar components and political perspectives coexist

without resulting in disintegration? Can they inhabit the same terrain?

The cartography sketched by the answers of the alterglobalization activists delineates a three-dimensional space resulting from the intersection of two planes: one horizontal (the plane of what should be), which indicates the desire for egalitarian comparison, from which the second (the plane of what is) is judged. The latter indicates and denounces the structures of social and economic inequality (power of the multinationals, absence of scientific and technological knowledge for the resolution of social problems, absence of ecological balance, economic exploitation and speculation, concentration of power and absence of equity).

The evaluations of the alterglobalization activists structure a social space, a space which is at the same time symbolic, a cosmovision making it possible to define globalization and its malcontents around three axes: the first refers to the spatial, the second to the relational, and the third to the practices carried out by the different participating agents.

a) Inside-outside, inclusion-exclusion as can be seen in the items: 'Lack of employment', 'Labour consequences of globalization', 'Difficulty of access to knowledge', 'Conditions of exploitation', 'Unequal access to consumption', 'Domination exercised by those who control the production of information', or 'Absence of equity between the genders'.

b) Up-down, imposition-repression corresponds to the items: 'Uncertainty of professional life', 'Policies of privatization of teaching and research', 'Educational system too closely linked to the needs of the market and determined by a neo-liberal perspective', 'Consumption of goods as a status symbol', 'Lack of control over important aspects of one's own life', 'Lack of control by individuals of the model of society', 'Repression of alternative lifestyles', 'Excessive concentration of power', 'Imposition of models of individual freedom' or 'Lack of recognition of cultural differences'.

c) The practices, agents and institutions that shape the space of conflict: 'the unemployed', 'multinationals and financial groups', 'scientists and technologists', 'developing countries', 'developed countries', 'alternative lifestyles', 'models of

society', 'cultural industry', 'capital', 'national institutions', 'States'.

All of this gives shape to a cosmovision, and also to living spaces, spaces that are habitable, or that are at least intended to be habitable, on the basis of another way of understanding globalization and anti-globalization practices.

Such agreement around the diagnosis of globalization that we have found amongst the alterglobalization activists is truly striking if we recall the great constituent diversity of its structural support; above all because the first identification in the majority of cases does not occur as members of a global movement but as actors of other movements and organizational forms. Both elements, globalization and alterglobalization, with their multiplicity of living spaces, on the one hand, and the structural plurality as the material support of an excessively coherent diagnosis, on the other, pose a paradox that we cannot elucidate here, but that we cannot resist stating: How is it possible, out of the fragmentation, plurality and diversity of a 'movement of movements', to affirm a common belonging to a global movement? Is the global movement formed by a series of homeomorphic expressions (definitions provided with proximity and continuity) or is the 'global' an empty signifier in which all demands are possible, a signifier that makes it possible to articulate very different demands, a type of ecumenism of demands?

From the standpoint of the movement: 1) the global is viewed as an unreal space for simulation, visibility, entertainment, sharing, talking, and meeting with everybody; 2) the local is defined as a real space of the genuine, for invisibility, seriousness, and the place of the making, building, and the space of the 'we'.

From the point of view of the social logics: 1) the global is defined with the following concepts: the isolated, the momentary, the discontinuous, the space of desire, the space for building networks, telling and sharing experiences, mutual recognition, and to sharing with strangers; 2) the local is identified with: small, near, communal, sociability, everyday life, concrete, continuous, returning home, carrying out experiences, face-to-face relationships with your friends, your colleagues, little by little building, your milieu.

NOTES

1. We do not fully agree with Polletta and Jasper's assertion that collective identity is the perception of sharing the same status or relation (cognitive,

moral and emotional connections with a broader community) which is or can be imagined rather than directly experienced. There are numerous testimonies by activists that narrate how they have directly experienced those connections with other activists at times of mobilisation or of carrying out massive actions of resistance or opposition, and how their effect has stayed alive in their consciousness for a long time.

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