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STO LET POTÉ: SNAHA O NOVOU UMĚLECKOU REVOLUCI V MEXIKU

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**ONE HUNDRED YEARS AFTER: A QUEST FOR A NEW ARTISTIC
REVOLUTION IN MEXICO**

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**ONE HUNDRED YEARS AFTER: A QUEST FOR A NEW ARTISTIC REVOLUTION
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Abstract:

The thesis focuses on the relationship between politics (political leaders) and art (artists) in the Mexico of the 21st century. Three presidents have been ruling Mexico during this period: Vicente Fox Quesada, Felipe Calderón Hinojosa and Enrique Peña Nieto, the three of them responsible for the bad situation the North American country is living; and the forth, Andrés Manuel López Obrador (AMLO), who is a current president of Mexico and who claims to be a change for good, and thus is becoming the hope for millions of Mexicans. By way of comparison, this paper will analyze the labor of José Vasconcelos Calderón, the first Secretary of Public Education, who was in charge of creating the project of a new vision of the post-revolution Mexico in 1920s, hiring national and international artists to achieve the task. Furthermore, two main characters of that period, whom Vasconcelos was working with: Diego Rivera and David Alfaro Siqueiros are going to be described. Their life and work will be analyzed and will work as a counterweight of Toledo and.

Key words:

Art, Politics, Mexico, Communism, Education, Globalization

Abstraktní:

Práce se zaměřuje na vztah politiky (politických vůdců) a umění (umělců) v Mexiku 21. století. Tři prezidenti vládli Mexiku během tohoto období: Vicente Fox Quesada, Felipe Calderón Hinojosa a Enrique Peña Nieto, tři prezidenti zodpovědní za špatnou situaci, v níž žijí Mexičané; a dále, Andrés Manuel López Obrador (AMLO), který je současným prezidentem Mexika a který prohlašuje, že je příslibem změny k lepšímu, a stává se tak nadějí pro miliony Mexičanů. Práce se věnuje zejména jejich umění, životy a jejich přínos k rozvoji mexické společnosti. Kromě toho bude analyzována práce José Vasconcelose Calderóna, prvního tajemníka veřejného školství, který byl pověřen vytvořením projektu nové vize post-revolučního Mexika ve dvacátých letech 20. století. Dále budou popsány dvě hlavní postavy, s nimiž Vasconcelos tehdy spolupracoval: Diego Rivera a David Alfaro Siqueiros. Jejich život a práce budou analyzovány a budou fungovat jako protiváha dílu Toleda.

Klíčová slova:

Umění, politika, Mexiko, komunismus, vzdělávání, globalizace

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Introduction

In 2018, Andrés Manuel López Obrador (AMLO) won the presidential elections after losing two times under unconventional circumstances. In his first speech, AMLO attacked the neoliberal system that has been ruling Mexico for more than 30 years, accusing this system for making Mexico one of the most corrupted, migrant and violent countries in the world.

In 1990, Octavio Paz, a Nobel Prize-winner, organized “Encuentro Vuelta” meeting with intellectuals. In one participation on the debate, Paz excluded Mexico from the Latin-American tradition of dictatorships. The Peruvian Mario Vargas Llosa, another Nobel Prize-winner, replied that Mexico was not just part of that tradition, but the North-American country had created the perfect dictatorship, not under the rule of one person, but one party: Partido Revolucionario Institucional (PRI), that governed Mexico for more than 70 years. The transition of the power was happening with the, for Mexicans, well-known *dedazo*, a way to pick the new president by pointing him with the finger (*dedo*), by the previous president. Ten years after that event, the PRI lost for the first time the power and a new party became to govern the country: Partido Acción Nacional (PAN). Two periods of six years governed by PAN followed by one more by the PRI mark the beginning of the XXI century.

More than one hundred years have passed since the Mexican Revolution. In those moments Mexico was living a period denominated as Porfiriato, the last one-man-dictatorship that happened in Mexico. In that time oligarch sector of Mexican society misprized and took advantage of its indigenous population, maintaining a system of discrimination, illiteracy, poverty, rejection and aspiring to a European model. The Revolution started with an armed conflict that lasted from 1910 until 1917 and continued at least until 1924 with Plutarco Elías Calles becoming the president, in this last period also an artistic and educating Revolution happened.

José Vasconcelos managed to create the bases of Mexicanness by emphasizing on the indigenous heritage, and artists like Diego Rivera or David Alfaro Siqueiros gave life to the project of the new identity of Mexico.

As the first director of the Secretary of Public Education, which lasted from 1921 until 1924, Vasconcelos understood that the creation of the new Mexico couldn't be complete without bringing education to the post-revolutionary country. He was actively making pressure on the government, leaded in that moment by Álvaro Obregon, to work with artists and creating a literacy campaign in this process. In his probably most famous book *La Raza Cósmica* (The Cosmic Race), Vasconcelos describes the fifth race: the mestizos, as a futurist and utopian society which live in a city called Universópolis, and where the essential objective is the extension of the culture and knowledge through all the world. This essay resembles the vision on the country he wanted to create.

One of the biggest problems of the post-revolutionary Mexico was the big analphabetism. The lack of education in the rural Mexico implied a task that was faced with the action of the art. Painters, photographers, writers and intellectuals joined Vasconcelos' mission, among them Diego Rivera, José Vasconcelos, Tina Modotti and Manuel Álvares Bravo.

Nowadays, Mexico is living a complicated situation. Inequality, corruption and poverty had lead Mexico to a civil war. Mexican government is fighting against organized crime, better known as Narcotrafic. Being neighbors of the United States, which problem with drug addiction is huge as big is their purchasing power, keeps México without many options. This year's election of a new president, resembles the situation that happened in the Revolution one hundred years ago. The past system is broken and the new society has to face the new era.

Francisco Toledo, plastic artist, activist, defender of the nature and cultural promoter is based in one of economically poorest, but culturally richest states of the Mexico. He has been supporting fights of the indigenous population as well as teachers and other marginalized groups in Mexican society. His artistic work expresses the roots of the State of Oaxaca, both in their colors and their motives. Having in his life great number of achievements, the most recent is the creation of El Centro de las Artes de San Agustín (CaSa). It is a center of artistic production with a big emphasis on

Oaxaca's local art and culture but compromise with sharing it with Mexico and the world.

When AMLO was elected, Toledo was one of the leaders that demanded the new government should pay attention on not only deal with economically problems but also cultural investments are needed on the construction of the New Mexico.

Gabriel Orozco, is probably the best known Mexican Artist in the world. Visual Artist whose vision is thematically wider and focused along the world, especially in the western society. He is well aware that politics and art are belonging together but he also describes that the strategies of political involvement were clearer in the second half of the 20th century and now the political positions of the artists are revealed not only in the work, but in "The way in which it is produced, the way it is distributed and the way in which the artist lives. And that changes over time."

The future of Mexico was uncertain but contemporary changes promise to bring improvements in the political, social and cultural situation. Art and politics need to work together to strengthen the weakened Mexican society.

Art and Revolution in the XX century

La raza cósmica

Aquel que no conoce su historia está condenado a repetirla
(The one who does not know his history is condemned to repeat it)

To understand this thesis I need to tell briefly a part of Mexican history, one century ago Mexico was experimenting the last big change of its history: the Revolution. José Vasconcelos was part of a movement of artists, philosophers and politics, who developed a new identity of Mexicanity. Mexico was entering the XX century in a dictatorship, the leader Porfirio Díaz stayed in the power for 30 years, and besides the process of industrialization that the country was experimenting, the clash of the classes was boiling and a period of reformation was about to happen. Porfirio Díaz improved the macro-economic situation of the country, the National Debt was paid and the big train system created was ease the productivity in the country. Situation for the poor people, who were the majority of the population was, on the other side really bad. Francisco I. Madero was the first leader that faced the dictator. 1910 was the first of many years where the bases of the new country were created. Madero defeated Porfirio Díaz. A counter-revolution leaded by Victoriano Huerta ended with Madero's life and raised new confrontations by Francisco Villa from the north of the country and Emiliano Zapata from the south. After seven years of fights, the arrival of Venustiano Carranza to the government and the creation of the Constitution of 1917 are the official events that concluded the Mexican Revolution. However, the country needed at least ten more years to get stability.

In 1925, José Vasconcelos was publishing his most famous text, la raza cósmica (the cosmic race). In this essay the author described an imaginative world, where all the knowledges and cultures of the world could cohabitated and coexisted. According to his view, the four greatest civilizations, separated by colors red as Amerindians, yellow as Asians, black as Africans and white as Europeans were on their rise of their power when their empires were growing, not just on territory, but also mixing themselves. In his essay he remembers Egyptians as the first greatest civilization and how the most significant period, time of the creation of big pyramids and conquests, happened when they were mixed as a new race. Moving forward, he also talks about

the Europeans, how they also merged together. Although, contrasts were not violent, because the mix in essential was European. In this thesis, Vasconcelos took the great empire of the United States of America as the last stage of that civilization, and observing the upcoming globalization, he place them more as a bridge than the ultimate society. The philosopher found in America the place for every culture in the world to merge, specifically in the Amazonas. No one was excluded but the imposition.

This essay as utopian as it was, is easy to generated many critics for the poet. The suggestion of an ultimate race was dangerous close to the worldwide cooking nationalism. Leaders among the world were claiming their reasoning was the correct and conflicts were imminent.

The vision of Porfirio Díaz to be a modern country was inspired on the European world, more precisely on France, therefore the creation of the great Palace of Fine Arts, and in ways of education the positivism was the ruling formation of the country. The rejection on the indigenous and the yearning on the foreign had created a broken country. *La raza cósmica* was the manifesto that Mexico was waiting for. In the book, he doesn't stay in Mexico, but he visualized a civilization: the Mestizo. Going from the south of the United States all the way down until Chile, Vasconcelos took the idea of Simon Bolivar of a united Latin-American. The essay questions the break of the Spanish America into several countries and compare it with the massive Brazil, who still nowadays remains united. To Understand this comparation is necessary to know that South-America was conquered by five European languages; the two biggest were Spanish and Portuguese. Excluding Mexico and Center-America, the merge size of the Spanish-speaker countries is 8 845 013 km just 329 246 km bigger than Brazil¹.

Nevertheless, Vasconcelos was not thinking on a division of Latin America, but a construction of a great identity, the mixture of the already mixed European with the indigenous population. The issue that Vasconcelos was facing during this period in Mexico was the analphabetism of the population. During the government of Alvaro Obregon, Vasconcelos worked as the Principal of the National University and became

¹Latin American Countries (2019) <https://www.worldatlas.com/articles/which-countries-make-up-latin-america.html>

the first Secretary of Public Education, where he started a cultural diffusion project. The big ambition of his stays until nowadays in the motto of the National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM by its initials in Spanish), where he proclaimed "Por mi raza hablará el espíritu" (For my people, the spirit shall speak).

The pursue of Vasconcelos to reformat the education in Mexico reached art. In a country where the majority was not able to write or read, a visual stimulation seemed to be the best idea. Characters as Francisco Goitia (1882-1960) with dark paintings, full of explicit dead (fig 1), reflects his conception for the world he was living. In paisaje de Zacatecas con ahorcados, Goitia combines the arid and unforgiving environment with the human cruelty also unforgiving and picturize how the horrors of the war becomes an everyday event; or José Clemente Orozco (1883-1949) who in the same but also different way describes the happenings on the Revolutionary Mexico, but contrarily than Goitia, Orozco creates an imaginary collective of the violence, were documenting as witnesses of the horrors the war had brought, Goitia with his powerful discourse about the suffering and Orozco with his persuasive effect on the closeness of the situation.



Fig 1 Francisco Goitia (Mexican 1882-1960). Paisaje de Zacatecas con ahorcados. Museo Francisco Goitia, IMBA, Zacatecas, Mexico

The pursue for the own had been looked from Mexico's being a Independent country, and it is nicely exhibited in Roberto Montenegro's *Árbol de la Vida* or Tree of Life that shows his style inspired on the Symbolists and it is one of the art pieces that better showed Vasconcelos will: the national spiritual renovation throughout the culture, trying to overlap the civil war that was happening in Mexico with figures of women representing the arts and sciences standing together under a tree that produces the fruits of knowledge. (Adele R. 2016). The mural was in charged to Montenegro by Vasconcelos to decorate the *antiguo colegio jesuita de San Pedro y San Pablo*. The incorporation of decorative scenario belonged to popular art is a way to discover the nationalist aesthetics. This modern Mexican aesthetics were mainly using a variety of symbols and themes such as the age before the conquest, the colonial, the indigenous, with the purpose of getting apart of the traditional Academy of San Carlos. Alfredo Best Maugard was another great example of this use of this symbols. In his painting *La empolvada* (fig 2), Maugard places a Mexican girl made up with dust both naïve and sensual, surrounded by colorful and exotic flowers, along with birds perched on the leaves, suggesting the natural environment of the rural Mexico and two colonial fountains. In the background is visible a city over a mountain. He thought that there was "something" that unites Mexicans referencing on a spiritual plane, and that "something" could be place on art. With this interpretation, Best Maugard developed a system of language to alphabetize the country but not with Spanish or Indigenous Languages but with drawings.² In *Bailarina Azul* (1919), for instance those symbols are quite observable; and again the use of the Mexican girl, mountains where a city is built and exotic flowers resembles the miscegenation of the country.

The construction on the indigenism started even before the conflict was finished, the necessity for a construction of an identity resulted as the Historian Rick Lopez assured to be a dual process of the dual process of creating the Mexican Indian and of ethnicizing the nation³.

² GARCÍA DE LA CRUZ, Aura. *Relatos e Historias en México*. <https://relatosehistorias.mx/nuestras-historias/el-extraordinario-alfabeto-del-arte-un-metodo-que-best-maugard-creo-en-1923>

³ LÓPEZ 2002. P. 293



Fig 2 Alfredo Best Manguard (Mexican 1891-1964). La empolvada. Lance Aaron and Family collection

The main objective on Vasconcelos concept was, on the other side, not a stupefaction on the indigenous, or the admiration on the European heritage but the blend of both and the concept of the Mexicanity. This concept of miscegenation responded a large process on the History, originated in the late VIII century of Mexico, of Resistance against the Spanish colonialism and an effort to create a identity based on the heritage on the Aztec civilization. A general believe on the European superiority dwindled the reach of the purposes. However the indigenous population in Mexico was at least included in the project of the Nation and used as the symbol of what Dr. Atl (Gerardo Murillo, Mexican 1875-1964) called a "true national culture". This concept is better expressed by Saturnino Herrán (Mexican 1887-1918), where instead of painting the chaos and tragedies of the war, he was manifesting the indigenous as free people dedicated to work their traditionally in a really introvertive way.

In the period of the revolution, with the liberalism ruling the world and a country that was trying to overpass the sad past, the project was closer than ever. Dr. Atl as the dean of the Academia de San Carlos was claiming that the revolution should be sociocultural created from the top, instead of a popular raise. He was calling for a movement where artists produce works whose purpose is the material, political and

moral regeneration of the nation. His period was short, everything happened within 1914, but his calling on a vanguard art continued influencing the aesthetics of the future.

In the 20, Mexico was in the way to become a modern country. Artists and Intellectuals saw the necessity of, not only the importance of the political reconstruction, but also forging new symbols. The working classes came to the National mind and the artists used them as models of the politic and social lives of the nation. Vasconcelos had the idea that Art and knowledge must serve to improve the conditions of the people.

Communist Party: Rivera and Vasconcelos

First time I thought of Communism in my life was when being bombed by the “great” television in Mexico named Televisa. They were supporting one of the latest presidents of Mexico, Vicente Fox Quesada in his rejection of Fidel Castro. It was 2002 and the City of Monterrey was hosting a presidential summit on development and poverty. The president of Cuba was invited and also the President of the United States of America, George Bush. One was a known Communist whose country was blocked by the government the other represented. Fox was the president who had defeated the government that had been in the power of more than 70 years in Mexico, and in his speeches, he was claiming to be the one who will bring Mexico to a new modernity. Neoliberalism was and is still the new modernity, therefore Mexican president didn’t doubt of being closer to the northern neighbor, at any cost. The history says that George Bush son built the third part of the wall between Mexico and United States. A wall that is creating a worldwide crimination on Trumps’ government was a reality since then.

Before the meeting, Fox called Fidel Castro to let him know that he expected him to arrive early, anticipate his speech and that, after lunch he would “do me the favor” of not staying at the dinner of heads of state and “you will be back”. “To the Island of Cuba?” Fidel asked. And the inexperienced Fox replied “yes or wherever you want”. Fidel came, had lunch far away from the meeting place with Hugo Chávez, and left the country.

One month later, Fidel call a press meeting and shared the phone call that he had experienced with Fox, and the world witnessed that in this period, Mexico was betraying the traditional brotherhood the country was known for.

Televisa called that action a great play from an old sea wolf and Fox was seen with pity, instead of, on my personal point of view, exposed him as a traitor of the Mexican principles. Years after, in one meeting of my collective, we realized that Mexico was about to become a communist country. Back in the 20’s decade, when Mexico was trying to find a new path in its history and with a great exchange on politics ideas all over the world, those from Lenin, Stalin and specially Trotsky were listened by some of the most of the hardest leaders in the country.

The creation of the Partido Comunista Mexicano or the Mexico's Communist Party (PCM) happened in 1919. Mexican Revolution started as a proposal for a change on the politics, but this politic revolution rapidly involves some other social demands, and these demands has to be related to the principal problem of the country which was the agrarian issue. The situation on the land was a proletarian system, where the majority of the population was under the domain of a small group of people with power. Unfortunately, the situation is far from changing in these days, but this is going to be exposed on following topics.

Diego Rivera and David Alfaro Siqueiros are probably the most famous exponents of Mexican Art, and not only for the majesty of their art, but also for the controversial lives they both had. Radicals, both of them were part of the PCM, both also were principal figures of the party, and both also were expelled from it due their behavior.

The labor of those two artists among others was to fight a reality where the country was immersed. Vasconcelos had pointed out with a dramatic gesture and incendiary words the scourges of literacy, in which more than half of the Mexicans were sunk. Daniel Cosío Villegas, journalist, and inseparable figure of Mexican culture, recalls how Vasconcelos "summoned them to fight the problem with the same zeal and equal disinterest that the old Spanish missionary who penetrated the most remote rancherías to save the soul of the pagan indigenous converting it to the Catholic religion".(Cosío V. 1976) Therefore with the poet Carlos Pellicer, he was part of the new project. They came together to parts of the cities and beyond the cities to promote and teach to read and write. Pellicer approached them reciting poetry and then when he had won their trust, he pulled out his alphabet and started to show them their sounds and how through them they can build words and sentences. Then they agreed on a new meeting to continue with their courses.

Vasconcelos himself, also contributed to the program, building libraries all over the country. He used to travel in his car full of books to fill the libraries. He was worried that the new readers didn't have books to practice and forget their new knowledge.

The few population who could read at this period of the history had a program to maintain their habit for the reading, however the great majority of Mexicans were unable to follow this program. They couldn't read or write. The concept that art should teach the central messages of the dispute in Mexico, belonging from the socialist realism, were main topics to the thinkers. Even though they didn't share a common nature of the revolutionary art, they did agreed that the art should be revolutionary. Therefore, like the Soviet Union, artists pursued the idea of marking understandable art to benefit the popular classes, instead of traditional paintings who just rich classes could afford and understand. The creation of the Taller de Arte Popular or Popular Graphic Art Workshop (TGP) urged a notion for the collective, and art produced on a shared workshop, creating in there posters showing the horrors of fascism. (MÉNDEZ, Bryant Foundation Brochure 127-129). TGP is formed after the dissolution of the Liga de Escritores y Artistas Revolucionarios or Revolutionary Writers' and Artists' League (LEAR) whose members looked at the Soviet Union, which according to them, was the only culture "where culture... is the Torch that points the way forward for the proletariat of the other countries of the earth.". LEAR pursued the idea on using emphasis on the culture in Mexico and contribute their artistic skills.

The artist associated to the PCM, often showed the uprising of the dominated over the dominator led by an organic intellectual. Diego Rivera painted in the main hall of the Rockefeller Center "Man at the crossroads". In the sketches that the Mexican presented, the composition, although provocative, pleased the audience. Scientific and technological progress, embodied in the central part, connected the left, where the oppressed people were represented, with the right, in which tyranny and despotism were symbolized. However, as the time passed and the mural was coming to life, Rivera changed some icons. Rockefeller was a great representation of the capitalism, and when art piece got more into the political than the philosophical, the mural was cancelled. Rivera changed the fight against the tyranny and ignorance for a choose between capitalism (exploitation, war, injustice) and communism (peace, justice, cooperation). The solid figure of Lenin joining the hands of all the razes the drop that spilled the glass. The committee members asked the painter to go back to the original plan, and even they will approved it if he removed the Soviet leader, but Rivera rejected the petition, saying that he prefers to die before mutilating his work. Rivera probably did this on purpose so the action would remain as a cultural vandalism

performed by capitalism. If that could be true, the play went well because his assistants found the way to photograph the mural, image that served as sketch to return to paint the work, now with the name of "the man controller of the universe"(Fig 3) in the Museum of Fine Arts of Mexico City.



Fig 3 Diego Rivera. (Mexican 1886-1957). El hombre controlador del Universo. (1934) 480x1145 cm Museum of Fine Arts, IMBA. Mexico City.

The mural has several leaders, being the main one a working man, who is controlling the Universe, he is surrounded by four ellipses that works as an atom a symbol of the life. This ellipsis show the cosmos, both micro (with cells) and macro (with the universe, sun and moon). The painting is divided in two main zones:

The left one represents the capitalism, or the vision of capitalism for the painter, in this zone it is visible the army of the First World War in the top, on sculpture of Zeus, with no arms but holding a lightning and with a Christian Cross hanging from its chest, police repression on demonstration for work and food, meanwhile a group of rich society is playing cards, drinking and dancing. Charles Darwin and the science is present in the left bottom. The cells on the capitalistic side are sick.

The right zone represents Rivera's vision of communism. The cells in this part are sane and alive. Lenin, the main figure who was the cause for the destruction of the mural in the Rockefeller hall, is in the main circle holding and joining hands of all the races in the world. In the top the Red Army is leaded by workers, a group of women are fighting side by side with the men. The arts are represented by a group of women dressed on white, as oppose to Zeus, is another sculpture, this one is a Cesar and it is holding between his legs a swastika. This representation of power keeps with hands

but is beheaded; the head is being used by workers who are attending the revolution. It is a symbol of the almighty power defeated by the worker class. Next to the Statue more leaders are visible: Leon Trotsky, Friedrich Hegel, Carl Marx and Bertram D. Wolfe are the most obvious. In the very bottom of the painting, are original plants of Mexico as opposite of the machinery who has the main role.

In *Adoración de la Virgen y el niño* (1912-1913), Rivera work with one of the greatest symbols that have been present in all the stages of Mexico: the brunette virgin, Guadalupe, Tonantzin, the Mother Earth. Mexico is one of the most Catholic countries in the world, but beyond Catholics, Mexico is *Guadalupano*.⁴ One of the most effective tactics for the spiritual conquest by the Catholic priests was to use the gods that the natives had and give them different names. It is easy to find relations between Huitzilopochtli and Jesus, Quetzalcoatl and Saint Tomas, and Tonantzin with Guadalupe. In the painting a couple is bringing her and her child a bread offering, both characters are rural. The virgin has the shape of a Pyramid and one of the mountains in the back has the shape of a watermelon. This fruit carries a legend of Iturbide and Guerrero, the leaders who ended the Independence of Mexico, they shared a watermelon and when they saw the three colors they decided to give it to the flag. This is a legend, the real significance is unity in the red color, religion in the white and independence in the green. However, the time allowed people to dream and built a reality through legends rather than being rational. Diego, and of course Frida, have this fruit in their artworks.

Diego was expelled from communist party, the party wanted him to be more focus in the politics, he on the other hand thought that thought art he could have more presence, and therefore he worked with the anticommunist government and ambassadors form the United States, and of course with big businessmen like Rockefeller.

4 ARNAL, A. 2010. La Guadalupe. Sociopolítica mexicana desde la iconografía religiosa. Retrieved on March 2019, from http://www.scielo.org.mx/scielo.php?script=sci_arttext&pid=S0185-16162010000300006

While Diego Rivera had formed and grew in Europe, David Alfaro Siqueiros stayed in Mexico. One of his mentors, Dr Atl was active in the process of revolution and urged Siqueiros along with other students and artists to become part of the revolution particularly in the propaganda spectrum. All this group collaborated in the political newspaper "La Vanguardia". Siqueiros participated in the Revolutionary war, being part of the Occidental Army, led by Manuel Diéguez. During the VI International Congress the Comintern adopted the position of the so-called "third period", which was a renew revolution and where the workers would unite and face together the capitalist system. Siqueiros predicted this idea faithfully in local scale but also worldwide. He tried to get control of the syndicates by the through the formation of worker-peasant blocks. In the Latin American Trade Union Congress organized by the *Comintern* and held in Uruguay, Siqueiros was chosen to represent Mexico. There he met the poet Blanca Luz Brum, whom he had a romance that lasted more than 6 years and was crucial for his expel from the PCM. The party members condemned his relationship and they were against him being so trustful on Brum because the information Siqueiros had was classified.

The armed revolution was over but the fight for the power was still active. Alvaro Obregón, the president who gave Vasconcelos the position in the Secretariat of Public Education, was killed and the successor ruler was Plutarco Elias Calles and with him the period called *maximato*, and the creation of the Party system, specifically the Partido Nacional Mexicano, the grandfather of PRI. With this period the PCM finished their public life and became secrecy, the government had unleashed a bloody political persecution against every opponent, and broke relations with the Soviet Union. Due to ideological differences and problems of discipline of the painter, he was expelled from the party in 1930.

His art, as it is with Rivera's, is a message for the Mexicans who weren't so sure what was Mexico. In the torment of Cuauhtemoc, (Fig 4) Siqueiros described the torture that the Spanish conquerors were propounding to the last Tlatoani. The painter uses also important characters to tell a tragedy that happened in the creation of the new civilization, he declared the day of its inauguration: "Siqueiros declared the day of its inauguration: "it is a song to Cuauhtémoc and an image of the struggle that weak peoples have to sustain". The mural captures the moment when the Mexica ruler is subjected to torture to reveal the place where the supposed treasures kept by the

great Tenochtitlan are hidden. The tlatoani endures stoic torture while the Lord of Tlacopan spills over in tears. An Indian figure shows in the background behind the soldiers, she is Malinali a slave given to Cortés as a tribute and who became his translator. In La plaza de las Tres Culturas (the Three Cultures Square) located in Tlatelolco, Mexico City, is shown:

ON AUGUST 13, 1521

HEROICALLY DEFENDED BY CUAUHEMOC

FELL TLATELOLCO IN POWER OF HERNÁN CORTES

IT WAS NOT TRIUMPH OR DEFEAT

IT WAS THE PAINFUL BIRTH OF THE MESTIZO PEOPLE

WHAT IS THE MEXICO OF TODAY

Nowadays, one of the most remembered moment of the conquest of Mexico in the cultural collective is the burning of the feet of Cuauhtemoc, and most likely is because of Siqueiros.



fig 4 David Alfaro Siqueiros. (Mexican 1896-1974). El tormento a Cuauhtemoc. (1940-45) 453x814 cm Museum of Fine Arts, IMBA. Mexico City.

Both artists along with others were thinking on building Mexico in a different way, despite their differences, that not were few, they were thinking on creating in Mexico a greater future. Their weapon was the art, and they used the principles of a system that was forming in the other part of the world, they were already noticing the dangers of the new rulers and were also trying to face them with an old weapon, the educative one.

Photography on Revolution

At a time when the great Mexican artists went hand in hand with the revolutionary movement, and in which the artistic currents were modernizing, and that modernity was not unique, which corresponded to photography? What will define the action of photography in this era is their shared search in a chaotic era. Experimentation is a recurring theme in the linguistic need of photography, visible in the constant use of collages, double expositions or photomontages.

Tina Modotti and Edward Weston visit Mexico, perhaps to get out of the American photographic tradition that dominated Alfred Stieglitz, associated with urban, mechanical and industrial life, to focus on local Mexican motifs such as cactus, handicrafts, pyramids and archaeological objects, in short the same iconography of muralism, in addition to coming to an open world for new art, an empty canvas existed in postrevolutionary Mexico in the world of photography. Modotti's artistic life is also full of ups and downs, her extroverted and liberal character in a Mexico that struggled to build her identity, filled her with prejudices that would accompany her for her brief instance in the country and would be one of the main causes of her exile . Modotti was also part of the Mexican Communist Party, and also like Diego and David, was expelled from it. Their struggle was more focused on gender equality, often leaving their art behind their ideology. While Rivera thought that his art would be more profitable than his political work, Modotti acted within the popular movements. For communism there were no nationalities, both she and Vittorio Vidali. It was his party, the same party that was in other parts of the world. She began her work in Mexico photographing for El Machate, the communist newspaper besides Javier Guerrero, after he went to the USSR, Modotti met Julio Antonio Mella, the Cuban leader with whom Modotti found her political force.

Mella was killed and Modotti was accused of the crime, after two weeks she was declared innocent. She decided to travel to Oaxaca to return to the photography. This period was the less political and more anthropological. She photographed the women of Juchitan (fig 5) and her common life. The women were proud and it was a contribution to show the outer part of Mexico, the south.

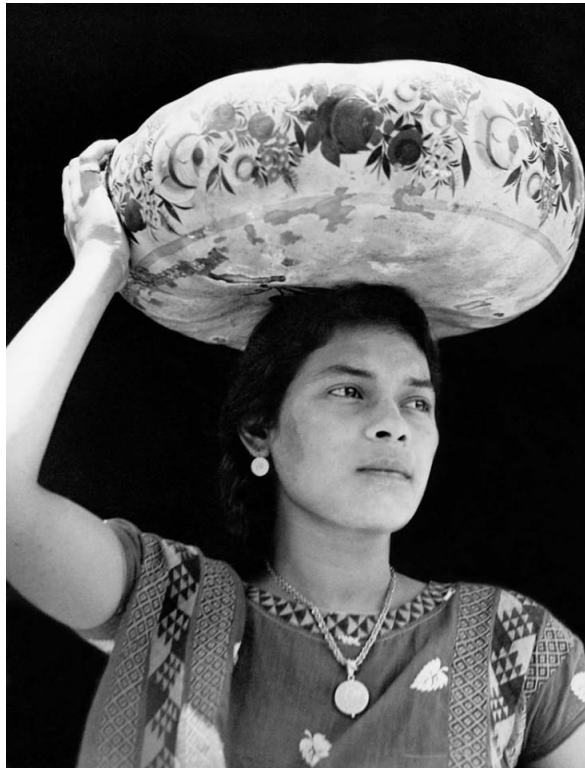


fig 5 Tina Modotti. (Italian 1896-1974). Mujer llevando una jícara yecapixtle.(1929). Tehuantepec, México.

Manuel Álvarez Bravo, is the most important and transcendental photographer that has left Mexico, unlike Modotti's photography that pretended to show the iconographic topics of postrevolutionary painting, Bravo focuses on looking for a modernity typical of Mexican photography, with a clean of form and a figurative minimalism that was not known yet in Mexico, more than in the work of Guillermo Kahlo in his images of domed interiors that he made between 1904 and 1910. Álvarez Bravo knows the painting of Picasso and abandons the Brehme style. His efforts to achieve a Mexican modernity in photography culminated in 1931 with the completion of the Toltec. When Tina Modotti was expelled from Mexico, Álvarez Bravo was in charge of photographing the works of the main painters of the time: José Clemente Orozco, Diego Rivera, David Alfaro Siqueiros, among others.

Alvares Bravo's work was a view of the modern Mexico, and its everydayness, on them he paints culture and life of the Mexicans. In "Los Agachados" (Fig 6), Bravo captures the moment when a group of workers stops in a dining room. Their faces remains hidden by the shade of a half-closed curtain where "comedor" is readable. The men are sit and the clothes and shoeshiner boxes tell the job of them. In a play

of words, which he often makes on the titles of his work, Bravo name the photograph the crouched as the posture of these workers have while the perform their work, as well as he saw the act of bend, as a mechanism of defense of Mexicans, "that can bend his body and soul in this humble position and still preserve his pride and integrity", according to Centro Fotográfico Manuel Álvares Bravo. Following the picture, in the bottom is visible that the chairs are locked with chains, giving the sensation both of slavery to the hard live in a big city and poverty, where those items could be stolen.



fig 6 Manuel Álvarez Bravo. (Mexican 1902-2002). Los agachados. (1934) 17.7x23.4 cm Form Motor Company Collection

The contemporary Mexico in the XXI century

Fall of Partido Revolucionario Institucional and uprising of Partido Acción Nacional

More than one hundred years have passed since the Mexican Revolution, at that time, Mexico was in a period remembered as Porfiriato. The last dictatorship of a single man, where the oligarch sector of Mexican society despised and took advantage of its indigenous population, maintaining a system of discrimination, illiteracy, poverty, rejection and aspiring to a European model. At present and after a century of struggles, the country does not see a real change to those problems. The perfect dictatorship, as Vargas Llosa once called it, was further perfected by mixing a series of political parties that are at the same time contrary. A war in Mexico is real, like the one that occurred in those times of revolution.

José Vasconcelos, managed to create the bases of a Mexican and great artists how Diego Rivera or David Alfaro Siqueiros gave life to the project of the new identity of Mexico.

The XXI century has not started in the best way for the Aztec people, corruption and blood is the reality that surrounds the North American country. Mexico has not stopped in the production of artists of great nature and the horizon opens an opportunity to generate a better country.

A couple of decades ago, as I recall, it was my first conscious perception of politics. It was the year 2000 and on television was a Mexican, big hated, with a prominent mustache, well-placed boots, deep voice and great charisma. He raised his hand with the symbol of victory, making a great black campaign against the PRI. His name was Vicente FOX Quezada, "It's enough of the PRI, we are not stupid" he emphasized.⁵ I was a preadolescent of 12 years and politics was not interesting to me. My mother and my family had a great influence on my very little political preference. She, like

⁵ Vicente Fox varios. Video de Youtube <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uzr3i82HVEY>

most of her social environment, knew everything little-in a moment without internet- that she had to know about the PRI: the massacre of Tlatelolco on the hands of Gustavo Díaz Ordaz, the new massacre of students in the 71 or the so called Halconazo implanted by Echeverría, the crises and devaluations in charge of Lopez Portillo and Miguel de la Madrid, the fall of the system and the great corruption of Salinas de Gortari and the massacre of Acteal in Chiapas in the government of Ernesto Zedillo. The new generation was talking, they were fed up with the PRI, but not yet dead, because in addition to some political traps, they still had a hard vote like my grandfather who, influenced by his experience in the years after the Mexican Revolution, never gave in his vote for someone more than for the Institutional Revolutionary. Vicente Fox figured as the savior of Mexico, a change was finally coming in the country, of course there was a method of corruption through Pemexgate and Amigos de Fox⁶, but what did a little act of corruption matter if the PRI could finally be defeated!

Vicente Fox Quezada, president of Mexico! Everyone celebrated, including me, not knowing exactly why. The government of Vicente Fox was facing a 70-year change from a country governed by a single party, a well-defined and practically perfect system, where by means of the well-known *dedazo*⁷ the representative was the only figure that changed, but a new century and a new ruling party marked the hope of the Mexican people.

⁶ CORDOBA L. MURUYAMA C. Elecciones, dinero y corrupción. Pemexgate y Amigos de Fox, Cal y Arena, 2006

⁷ AGUILAR, H. “El “dedazo” y la democracia Mexicana, 2017. <https://www.milenio.com/opinion/hector-aguilar-camin/dia-con-dia/el-dedazo-y-la-democracia-mexicana>

Presidency of Vicente Fox

The alliance candidate for the change had been the winner, but this might not have been possible without a historical event perpetrated by then-President Ernesto Zedillo, accepting the victory of the opposition. Vicente Fox came to power still with the mood of candidate, although his attitude is criticized by various means, it seems that the charisma and popularity that had, should be his letter of introduction.

President Vicente Fox came to power with a solid argument, ten commitments that foreshadowed a moment of transcendence for the country and for all its citizens. A well-argued 7% economic growth, blaming fiercely the Institutional Revolutionary for not having acted with transparency and legality in all their years in power, and therefore the historical growth of 6.8% would only be achieved by Díaz Ordaz several decades earlier. In addition, a promise to generate 1,300,000 jobs per year was included, as well as the elimination of Automobile Tenencia, a Tax that Mexicans had to pay since 1961 as a way to be able to host the Olympic games, and reduction of ISAN. Likewise, it was promised to end the insecurity, violence and theft.⁸

The results of the promises that the then candidate made to the Mexican people were not enough, the cause was largely the bad analysis done, the numbers dictated far exceeded the real expectations. The only country that managed to grow more than 7% in the first sexennium of the new century was China (9.61%). The creation of jobs also far exceeded the reality and even the coherence of what was promised. The goal was to create 100,000 jobs for each percentage point in economic growth, if possible, the true number of job creation would be 700,000 and not 1,300,000. Tenencia, which was one of the best promises that could be made, because the results would directly impact citizens, disappointed in the same way. When analyzing the hard data on the subject of violence, insecurity and theft, once again the exaggeration is reached when talking about finishing with them, however it is a fact that compared to their successors, the country lived its safer sexennium with "only(!)" 60 thousand 162 executions. Calderón counted a total of 120 thousand 935 homicides and the government of Enrique Peña Nieto the figure amounts to more than 146 thousand.⁹

⁸ S/A 2000. Diez compromisos de Fox y FOX V. 1999 Crecer al 7% anual
<http://www.mexicomaxico.org/Voto/4A/FoxCompromisos.htm#SIETE>

⁹ Jasso C. 2018. Peña Nieto cierra su gobierno con más de 146.000 asesinatos; el sexenio más violento en México. <https://actualidad.rt.com/actualidad/296665-pena-nieto-cierra-gobierno-asesinatos>

On the other hand on issues of economy could be seen how positive it turned out to be the government of the native of Guanajuato, when coming from an inflation left by the last president of 225.32% fell by far the figure to 30.41%; In the same way, and as a comparison with the previous sexennium, the devaluation fell from 205% to 13.45%.¹⁰ On the issue of external debt, the figures were also good, leaving a reduction of 11,669.20 million dollars with respect to the previous government. This drop in indebtedness, however, comes in conjunction with an increase to the domestic debt of 61 billion dollars¹¹, where by making the comparison, the results are not remarkable. In addition to this, other successes left by the government of Vicente Fox Quezada can be named. The control of the public deficit, increase in international reserves; increase in spending on social development.

On the issue of approval of laws, claimed by the EZLN, transparency and access to information, open to anyone who is interested in knowing the expenses that occur in the different agencies and government entities, in addition to the Federal Law to Prevent and Eliminate Discrimination and the creation of CONAPRED. Another great achievement that occurred in the government of the native of Guanajuato was the opposition to the war against Iraq in congruence with the traditional Mexican policy of non-interventionism.

It is quite complicated to find presumable acts of the Fox government if we compare them against the mistakes that occurred during the sexennium. That is why I will leave aside comments that made it a mockery image for many of its critics, I will focus on those that are more controversial.

Alfonzo Duarzo would be named his private secretary, this would be the first great controversy Vicente Fox, because his campaign focused on dismantling the stale structure of reigned in the Pines. Duarzo, although at that time he no longer belonged to the PRI, it was also true that he had his political career based on the tricolor. The private secretary would resign in 2004, when he had problems with the first lady

¹⁰ BOTELLO, M. 2017 (última actualización). "Súper Tabla Bicentenario".
<http://www.mexicomaxico.org/Voto/super.htm>

¹¹ RODRIGUEZ, I. 2005. "Fox disminuyó la deuda externa pero aumentó la interna en 61 mil mmd"
<http://www.jornada.unam.mx/2006/08/13/index.php?section=economia&article=026n1eco>

Marta Sahagún Jiménez, who was increasingly involved in Mexican politics. Mrs. Marta, as her consort called her, pretended to be the next president, the best example of this is when the communiqué that took 90% of the time that the State had spent going through, was published in an evening edition of the Official Gazette of the Federation. from 180 minutes a day to only 18. The unusual afternoon edition was due to the termination of Bernardo Gómez's management on October 10 as director of the Camara Nacional de la Radio y la Televisión (CIRT).¹² To imagine the size of the gift, we must remember that minutes on national television are not cheap. It seems to me that this alliance was what made me pay attention again to Mexican politics. Even without due interest in the political life of my country, I would begin to be aware that AMLO was a danger to Mexico.

One of the most punished events in the government of Vicente Fox was the alliance that formed with Elba Esther Gordillo when he was a presidential candidate. The illicit enrichment they had behind bars from 2013 to 2018, which could have been stopped since the passage of the PAN governments. Perhaps the most powerful woman in Latin America, successor of Carlos Jongitud Barrios at the head of the SNTE, would obtain from the Federal Executive the general direction of the Institute of Security and Social Services of the State Employees ISSSTE, later the National Lottery would also be hers .

A very sad fact on international issues, was the one that occurred in March 2002 when in a phone call with the president of Cuba, Fidel Castro, in which the Mexican president told him that once he attended the reception banquet and ate, he left the contry. Regarding misfortunes with criminals, the escape of Chapo Guzmán in 2001, the release of Raúl Salinas de Gortari and the return of Carlos Salinas de Gortari to national soil.

Perhaps the most regrettable event that occurred in his government was the one that occurred in the state then governed by Enrique Peña Nieto, where the new Mexico City airport was intended to be built. Forcing the settlers to sell their lands in some

¹² Canal seis de julio. Telecomplot parte 3. Ultra consciencia <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C2-UKtZOa3I>

cases up to 6 pesos, alleging that they were nitrous lands when in many cases they were found to be in full cultivation. San Salvador Atenco stood with machetes to protect his cause, expelling the police elements. It is incredible to see how TV Azteca news programs call on the government to take stronger measures as this fact is documented. The next morning the police forces stormed the center of the town, and with an excessive use of force, they imprisoned 290 people. The final balance resulted in 2 deaths and rapes to 26 people.¹³

¹³ MORALES F. 2012. ¿Qué pasó en San Salvador Atenco? <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XOVt16pIlnk> Video

Art from the Zapatista movement

In 1994, while Mexican government was signing the North American Free Trade Agreement, and cheering because thanks for this action Mexico will become a developed country, in the south a movement raised in weapons. They were Mayas complaining about different injustices they had been victims, they were predicting the dangers of the NAFTA and demanding more attention for the vulnerable communities. The army who was in charge of the armed mobilization was Ejército Zapatista de Liberación Nacional (EZLN) and their representative was Sub Comandante Marcos.

The movement is well documented,¹⁴ and the history is far from over. In a multinational country, home of more than 60 languages from uncountable pre-Mexican societies, and forced to create a great nation more than 200 years ago, it is easy to find diverse demands. Politicians and businessmen were thinking on economic improvements while in places like Chiapas, Oaxaca or Guerrero, the poverty is an everyday issue. NAFTA brought multinationals and bunches of products at better prices to Mexico, but took away small business of regular people. Those that couldn't support the onslaught had to migrate to the United States, a huge problem that is still a reality. One of the main promises that Fox made was to finish with the conflict in the South of Mexico, he claimed that he was able to solve it in 15 minutes, but the problems were, and still are, not solvable with a signature. The Zapatistas are still fighting their war against injustice. They have been active artistically, the great movement of them are the school of the past century. Muralists are shown with pride in their communities and most of them are attacking the Mexican government. And the EZLN is no longer staying in Chiapas, they are demonstrating, pushing and supporting other movements in the rest of the country. Gustavo Chávez Pavón is one of the most active painters who present the Zapatista murals. In San Salvador Atenco, Chavéz Pavón coordinated the communal mural (Fig 5) which works as a memorial on the happenings of the 2006. The use of Emiliano Zapata as the main character responds to the interest of the citizens of Atenco to reaffirm their conviction on the importance of defending their land and their ideals, as did the Caudillo del Sur.

¹⁴ 20 años después El alzamiento Zapatista. (2014) Edición Especial 43. Revista Proceso

Gustavo's work goes all the way down to Chiapas, place where the Caracoles, as the Zapatistas call their capitals, are built. The walls of the schools and government houses are full of colors of the murals. In there one of the most beautiful is work of this artist. The Mayan girl has an earth color on her skin, and her hair is painted in a shiny blue. She is reading a book where a emblematic phrase of the Zapatistas is written: Un mundo donde quepan muchos mundos (a world where can fit several worlds). She is not covering her face with a paliacate, instead she is using the book in the same way. For the artist, painting on walls is a way to integrate people, to show them that even without knowing art it is possible to create, it is possible to make a cold wall a proclamation. Because you do not have to think about decorative art. There is, he says, "that put concepts to the walls, you have to make them scream to the winds the truths of a people that does not have many channels of expression".¹⁵



fig 5 Gustavo Chávez Pavon. (Mexican). Oventic, Chiapas.

Muralism is still part of the big movement of Mexican art, still not enough. Art is evolving as the it is the world. New movements had come; Contemporary Art is the present and if I need to think deeper, maybe Contemporary Art is already past, still is the current place of art. It is also a reality that the government of Fox was not interested in art, even when they supported with money the target was more propagandistic than encouraging. Edgar Alejandro Hernández, described a 2006

¹⁵ MUSEO PINTOYANO (2015). Gustavo Chávez Pavón: Muralista Mexicano en LA Pincoya.
<https://museoacieloabiertoenlapincoya.wordpress.com/2015/08/01/gustavo-chavez-pavon-en-la-pincoya/>

exhibition the then president Fox went to Spain to be part of ARCO Madrid, where a Mexican art "invasion" was happening. Hernández was asking him about his opinion on Gabriel Orozco's work, "He answered two questions while leaving in a hurry and almost hit me..." excellent and I would like to have all the work at my place, were those answers, with a "tight smile" and then he went to get a picture with the king and queen of Spain, in front *Las dos Fridas* (1939) a paint of Frida Kahlo.

In addition to this, we must add the famous expenses that were made by the administration as towels with a value of 4025 pesos a piece, remote control curtains for 17 thousand dollars and sheets of more than 4500 dollars. It is certainly possible to know this thanks to the openness of transparency to citizens, a fact with which Vicente Fox defended himself, without denying it. The information led to many other expenses.¹⁶

The PAN governments are spreading the notion in the minds of public opinion that science and culture are irrelevant, or at least that they are not a public issue. Cultural area in the Fox government by Sarai Bermúdez. Lourdez Arizpe tells him how incoherent it is to citizensize culture, means that culture is a thing and uneducated people who think themselves educated, pretend to say that the poor have no culture and you have to take them.

Andrés Manuel López Obrador as head of government of the Federal District

As Eduardo Galeano expresses it in his perhaps most celebrated work *The Open Veins of Latin America*, Latin American governments have a large monopoly in their capital and Mexico City is no exception. Being one of the largest city in the world, besides being beautiful and majestic, the former Federal District has great challenges to meet. The historic son of General Cárdenas would be the first person to occupy the position of head of government, replaced by Rosario Robles at the end of his government. In the year 2000, AMLO became the second head of government elected by popular vote and first to have 6 years of government, which at end would become four and a half for his nomination to the presidency of the Republic in 2006, defeating the PAN Santiago Creel and representing PRI Jesús Silva-Herzog Flores.

¹⁶ SIERRA, S (2001). La Guerra de las Toallas de Fox. <https://www.eltiempo.com/archivo/documento/MAM-483168>

Mexico City is also a city that greatly excels in any other Mexican city in terms of technology, education, culture, art among others, competing in this new millennium with the most advanced cities in the world.

Forty were the commitments made by the then militant of the PRD. As promised by Vicente Fox, many of those commitments were badly analyzed.

López Obrador promised to build 20,000 homes a year in the city, and as head of government promised to make 150 thousand shares of housing, at the end of the sexennium, already in charge of Alejandro Encinas, the 150 thousand shares were made, of which only 31 651 They were new homes.

Also, the then Head of Government promised to put an end to the water problem that still exists in Iztapalapa these days, an obviously unattainable commitment.

In a review of their commitments, it can be seen that in contrast to the presumed at the end of their government, the 40 commitments were not fulfilled. Mexico City did not achieve its own constitution until 2017. Revocatory referendums to put its mandate under consideration was only partially fulfilled, since it was done by telephone, excluding those who did not have a telephone device. Neither were the neighborhood governments carried out.

As for the achievements obtained by the former president of the D.F. They highlight the social programs that he created especially for the elderly. The increase in private investment for works is also a success for the Tabasco: for each peso invested by the government of the D. F., entrepreneurs invest 24 pesos. In general, the works were a great success, achieving the first stage of the restoration of the Alameda Central, the construction of the Plaza Juárez and the arrangement of several streets of the Historic Center, as well as the construction of the San Antonio and Zaragoza road distributors and several bridges In addition, during its management, the first Metrobús line was created, a project that included the construction of 6 lines. The seventh in the Reforma corridor is currently under construction. In terms of education, the AMLO government is responsible for the construction of 16 high schools and founds the Autonomous University of Mexico City.

López Obrador has been, in the last millennium, the politician most guarded by the media, mainly by Televisa, in its various presentations. In them, a series of scandals have been published which reveal links with acts of corruption. The most serious aspect of this matter is that the new AMLO media campaign is based on the fight

against this evil that affects Mexico so much. In 2004, López Obrador is a clear contender to fight for the 2006 presidential elections. That year, videos began to appear on television, involving characters close to the then head of government, among them René Bejarano, Gustavo Ponce Meléndez and Carlos Imaz. Among other related and noted politicians include the former government of the Federal District and PRD Rosario Robles, the former presidential candidate in 1994 and Diego Fernandez de Cevallos PAN and former president and PRI Carlos Salinas de Gortari. In the videos it is possible to see officials receiving or spending money in stratospheric amounts. The complainants asked for answers and citizenship as well. Television showed the hard blow against the government of the Federal District almost as a political campaign. The head of government counterattacked saying that everything was a plot.

That same year, a decision to open a way in San Juan, which included private properties, the government of the Federal District was held responsible for violating a court order that demanded the suspension of the construction of a street on land expropriated years ago by previous governments. . The result was an impeachment process against the owner of the D.F. In his defense in front of the chamber of deputies, AMLO called incongruity to prosecute him for "having tried to open a street to communicate a hospital ... in the country of impunity, in the country of FOBAPROA, friends of Fox, Pemexgate ..." . Failure to comply with a court order should always be brought to justice. No one should be above the law, and again the media was responsible for reminding us every day.

The construction of the second floor of the peripheral may have been the largest work done in the government of the Federal District. Defended as the only section that can be traveled without having to pay, the second floor is also criticized by some journalists for having irregularities. The total investment found in public works contracts of the Federal District is 2 thousand 157 million 196 thousand 714 pesos without VAT or additional costs of both stages, almost double the investment in the wake of light, thousand 304 million 917 700 pesos, which is a building. The above is the official data and there are opinions that the information could be incomplete. Another of the scandals more sounded and still remembered in the government of Andrés Manuel López Obrador was that of Nico, the driver of the Tsuru in which the head of government was transported, since Nicolás Mollinero Bastar received a

monthly salary of 62 thousand 997 pesos only three thousand 877 pesos less than that of AMLO himself.

The news portal Nación321 conducted an investigation with official sources such as the Ministry of Economy and the INEGI, to know the results of the government in the period 2000-2005 in the Federal District in which it is appreciated that in terms of crime the rate of homicides Injured for every hundred thousand inhabitants, it decreased from 9.01 in 2000 to 7.77 in 2005, likewise the kidnapping rate had an improvement by lowering its rate from 1.65 to 1.15. The extortions, however, were not attacked correctly and rose, going from 2.27 to 5.22 at the end of their period. In economic terms, both foreign investment and public debt had a negative outcome, falling in the first aspect from 10 211 to 6 239 million dollars and rising in the second from 32,788 to 41,439 million pesos; however, the gross domestic product had a favorable result, going from 1.17 to 1.61 trillion pesos. Unemployment in the Tabasco government also had poor results, going from 3.9% to 5.6%. Food poverty in the country's capital improved from 5.8% to 5.4% while the equity did not have the same result going from 28% to 31.8%.

Francisco Toledo, the artist

"Toledo's work is a setback, an invocation to return the soul to what history has literally turned to dust. The matter of Toledo is the earth, the clays and their color, the colors of the earth, reds, browns and ochres, the substances of the organic."¹⁷ Francisco Calvo Serraller describes this way the work of Toledo and nothing closer than the reality is this fact. Toledo is an artist that has been working for his love of Mexico and his culture, specially Oaxaca and Tonantzin (our little mother a.k.a. Mother Earth). Because of this circumstance, the work of Toledo does not stop on his great ability on the visual and plastic arts, he goes into the social justice, supporting both a emancipation of the PRI and a resistance against a neoliberal attack in his home state.

Probably his first approach to this claim was in 1974 with the creation of the COCEI in Juchitan, Oaxaca; the most vehement movement of the local history, fighting for expel the authoritarian PRI, and to cancel the dispossession of the communal lands. His duty along with other two intellectuals was to rebuild the cultural and historical legacy of that municipality. The movement lasted less than 10 years; the most valuable achievements were the construction of La Casa de la Cultura and the triumph of the elections in 1981. By 1983 the PRI had taken back the power with violence and authoritarianism. That same year Toledo, with the writer Victor de la Cruz and the photographer Rafael Donis, were attacked by a group of PRI members, among other assaults to members of the COCEI.¹⁸

In the capital of the State, Oaxaca city, Francisco Toledo inaugurated the IAGO, an institute of graphic arts. This city and region is the home of great traditions in Mexico, going from Zapotecas, Toledo's roots, to Mixteco, Mazateco among others. With this diverse population, Oaxaca carries with one of the greatest cultures in the whole country. Creating IAGO was not just fair but also necessary to keep the ethnicity rising and being proud.

¹⁷ CALVO, F. (2010). *El paisaje abismal de Toledo*. Retrieved on 28 December 2018 from <https://www.jornada.com.mx/2010/12/05/sem-francisco.html>

¹⁸ MONSIVAIS, C (1983). *Crónica de Juchitan*. Cuadernos Políticos, Número 37, México, D.F., Editorial Era, pp. 46-55.

McDonalds one of the better known faces of the modern system came to Mexico in 1985, nowadays the multinational has more than 500 points of sale with more than 200 millions of clients every year, spreading every year all over the country. The fast food brand tried to build a restaurant in the centrum of the city in 2002.¹⁹

Fancisco Toledo kept working with the State of Oaxaca and in 1993, he created with a group of artistic entrepreneur, the Patronage Pro Defensa y Conservación del Patrimonio Natural y Cultural del Estado de Oaxaca (Pro-Oax) with the commitment safeguard the estate of that southern entity. Since then this organism has been active on the pursuit of the justice in the State and supporting other fights in the country.²⁰ Pro-Oax fight and defeated Mcdonalds, Toledo and the organization organized the city and with the help of the Mexican cuisine, by installing "una tamaliza" (a celebration where the main dish are tamales, typical Mexican dish made from cornmeal and stuffed with chicken or pork meat). Mexican former societies are as variables as their gastronomy, each State of Mexico has their own diversity in the way the prepare the food.²¹²² Mexican cuisine is as large as the diversity of cultures that exist in Mexico, part of the culture that represent this country. Confronting McDonalds with something else than Mexican cuisine will not just result in a failure, but will be even unwise. The outcome was the gathering of around 10 thousands protest signatures and the support of the governor. The fast food multinational was not built in the main plaza of Oaxaca.²³ . As mentioned before the problem grew from the 90's. In 1994, the NAFTA was created which is considered one of the principals causes.²⁴ The organization also won a historical building that was given to a Hotel chain and worked on the salvation of the Atoyac River. Besides the State of Oaxaca, Pro-Oax was part of a movement to resist another giant of the consumerist system: Walmart tried to

¹⁹ MCDONALDS MEXICO (2017). *¿Quienes somos?* Retieved on January 3th 2019, from <https://www.mcdonalds.com.mx/compania/sobre-mcdonalds>

²⁰ CAMACHO, F. (2005). *Pro-Oax se ha convertido en referente crítico en la política cultural del país*. Retrieved on January 3th, 2019. from <https://www.jornada.com.mx/2005/09/30/index.php?section=cultura&article=a05n1cul>

²¹ N/A. *Platillos Típicos de los Estados Mexicanos*. Retrieved on January 10, 2019 from <http://viamexico.mx/platillos-tipicos-de-mexico/>

²² CRIS, C (2017). *Platillos típicos de los 32 Estados* Retrieved on January 10, 2019 from <http://www.lahosteriadelpueblo.com/platillos-tipicos-los-32-estados-mexico/>

²³ LLANO, M. (2005)

²⁴ JACOBS A. & RICHTEL M. (2017) *A Nasty, Nafta-Related Surprise: Mexico's Soaring Obesity*. Retrieved on January 5th, 2019 from <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/12/11/health/obesity-mexico-nafta.html?ref=nyt-es&mcid=nyt-es&subid=article>

build one store on the C area of the Teotihuacan archeological zone and damaged historical vestiges. After a win of corruption Wal-Mart was built.²⁵

²⁵ BARTSTOW D & XANIC A. (2012). *How Wal-Mart used playoffs to get its way in Mexico*. Retrieved on January 5th, 2019 from <https://www.nytimes.com/2012/12/18/business/walmart-bribes-teotihuacan.html>

The entry of Mexico into the 21st century can be seen as a moment of political boredom, with a city that exceeds 20 million inhabitants, in a country of 130. The rulers do not know their country, nor their culture, do not pay attention to art and the brain drain is a daily issue. Several solutions are outlined in the minds of critics, but to abide by one turns out not to accept ten more. Art and culture has been presented as a latent exclamation to which attention has not been given. The media is a very important control system in Mexico and adapting to new technologies can dictate the direction to follow. The communicators of the main media have migrated to social networks, having thousands of followers, and what is equal a great media force. The great powers, both political and business, manage to use more than they support contemporary art; They remain active campaigning without even understanding what happens, the art remains in the background in Mexico. The North American country continues to be rich despite the looting it has suffered in the last 500 years. The magnates know this and do not tire of exploiting it. The population is tired and poisoned with apathy. It is a moment of survival rather than freedom, the path is not clear for the bronze race. 2018 was the year when a new change enters the political life of the country. Andrés Manuel López Obrador and his party Morena reach power. They claim that they are not the same. The beginning of the millennium shows AMLO with the experience of having run one of the largest and most complicated cities in the world. The country takes the name of the once glorious Mexico-Tenochtitlan, a name that may not be able to contain and represent the great diversity that occurs in the territory. Obrador managed to get ahead and the city dwellers, for the most part, prove it. The country is a much more diverse and large entity than the metropolis, and we will have to wait to evaluate its results. Mexico has the experience of Vicente Fox and the much-acclaimed change of power, which was nothing but a violent and sad beginning of the century for the Mexican people.

Vicente Fox was the beginning of the 21st century, the successor defeating, tightly and controversially AMLO, would be Felipe Calderón Hinojosa, who ten days of his government would dress as a military, historical fact as the period where the military had ruled Mexico, had ended 66 years ago with Manuel Ávila Camacho, last president of military origin that the country had. The event would unleash a war that has resulted in thousands of deaths due to violence. Critics say that Calderón Hinojosa wanted to legitimize his presidency through a show of force. His defenders claim that

he had no choice. They look like numbers but they are people, fathers, mothers, brothers, daughters. Research shows that Mexico is one of the most violent countries in the world²⁶²⁷, being compared to countries that have been in active war for years and currently maintaining military bases of the most powerful countries in the world inside or outside their borders.

At a time when the political has demonstrated its lack of solution to the demands of the people, education and art can and must take a leading role. Contemporary photographers and artist are expressing the situation in Mexico, but is it enough to do it that way? Can it possible for artists to work with politics as they did it a century ago? is it too late, and the order of the world is dictated and the depredation of the past is unavoidable? Or can México take a different path on the construction of its future? Giving more power to the Earth, to the culture. Mexico will be able to listen to its past, knowledge of millenary, sustainable and self-determining cultures, which have been governed long before the current models of governments.

²⁶ FISHER, M. & TAUB, A. (2017) *Análisis El récord de la violencia en México es una crisis que comenzó hace 20 años*. The New York Times. <https://www.nytimes.com/es/2017/10/28/violencia-mexico-interpreter-homicidios-record/>

²⁷ BBC News (2018). *Los seis países donde se producen la mitad de las muertes por arma de fuego en el mundo (y la mitad son latinoamericanos)*. BBC. <https://www.bbc.com/mundo/noticias-america-latina-45323859>

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