

Aurora Furlong
Facultad de Economía
Benemérita Universidad Autónoma de Puebla
zfurauro@yahoo.com.mx

Raúl Netzahualcoyotzi
Programa de Relaciones Internacionales
Benemérita Universidad Autónoma de Puebla. México
raul.netza@gmail.com

The Russian Revolution and the Utopia of Socialist Education in Mexico.

The experience of the Russian revolution brought great transformations in the world, many countries wanted to replicate the construction of socialism. Mexico was the first Latin American country to recognize the triumph of this historical project of the Russian proletariat in 1917 that eliminated Zarian absolutism, along with the war in 1910 in Mexico, coincided in a nascent capitalism and the need to transform political structures and social. The orientation to face the dominant theology of the clergy, and an anti-imperialist ideology of Lázaro Cárdenas, allowed the third article of the Mexican Constitution to be socialist in order to combat fanaticism and prejudice through a rational concept against structural authoritarianism. The existence of class antagonism made it possible for the petty bourgeoisie to appropriate the conquests of the revolution and eliminate this pedagogy until 1941, limiting the progressive and democratic reforms of Cardenismo. However, to continue, it was possible to create as an alternative project in that period the Federation of Socialist Peasant Students of Mexico who created the Rural Normales in mainly indigenous areas, a project that was encouraged by the socialist ideology and that subsists as a democratic and popular educational project.

Key words: Socialism, Third Article, Socialist education, Cardenismo, student's normalistas.

The influence of the Russian revolution in Mexico:

In Mexico the first revolution of the twentieth century was developed, from 1910 to 1917; with the signing of the Political Constitution. A relevant fact as part of the democratic tradition and of diplomacy among peoples, our country was the first in Latin America in 1924 recognized the triumph of the Russian Revolution as a historical project of the proletariat. Appointing Stanislav Petrovski as the first ambassador of the USSR. Later it was replaced in 1926 by Alejandra Kollontai, first ambassador of the world, she played a transcendental role in bringing the two countries closer to the cultural field.

For Oikión (2009: 62) if it is placed in a regional perspective: to overturn the mirror of history, one could deepen the degree of imbrication that the Mexican Communist Party (PCM) had, after its foundation in 1919, with social movements in some regions of the country, where he had more followers and had influence such as: Veracruz, Yucatan and Michoacan ... From this perspective, the possibilities of research are multiplied by opening new windows to gauge how far there were political encounters and disagreements between the communists and the radicalized local processes of social, worker and peasant mobilization, and how they responded to the directives and agreements of the Third Communist International (CI) (Comintern) that conceived as the world-wide battering ram for the destruction of capitalism , it was transformed with time (after closing the possibility of the revolution in the European scope) in an instrument of the Soviet Union to encourage communist influence in different countries of the world.

For Oikion, Mikhail Borodin -the emissary of Lenin-, who arrived in Mexico in October of the same year, as representative of the IC Bureau, registered the Party "... as the only one in Mexico, proletarian and revolutionary, affiliated and sure to be recognized by the Third International. "

Prior to the constitutive meeting in Mexico City, from August 25 to September 4, 1919; place where the Mexican Socialist Party (PSM) was formed, composed of trade unionists, anarchists and communists. Among the latter were the Hindu Manabendra Nat Roy (who would have traveled to Mexico with the supposed intention of promoting the independence of India under British colonialism), says Oikión (2009: 68)

Known as the "father of Indian communism," Manabendra Nath Roy was born into a brahmin family and was called Narendra Nath Bhattacharya. Roy began his political journey at an early age and as a nationalist militant. With a heart full of nationalistic fervor, politics and pain over India's failed struggle against the colonial powers, Roy was a freethinker who believed that the only way to truly liberate India was through a militant rebellion against the British. At the moment they were worried about the world. In search of weapons, he went to Java using aliases and false passports.

As a rebellious fugitive, Roy wandered from country to country, across East and Southeast Asia, in an effort to secure weapons for the Indian nationalist movement. It was around July 1916 when Roy arrived in San Francisco, United States. Feeling defeated and disconnected from his nationalist identity, Roy contemplated his position in the political struggle of his native land, but he met Lala Lajpat Rai and other American radicals with whom he began spending time in public meetings, and in the New York library where he began to read about socialist ideas.

He learned, wrote and spoke Spanish. He was a strong advocate of a socialist state, but the true turning point of his time in Mexico came when he met Michael Borodin, a prominent emissary of the Communist International, also known as Komintern, an international organization that was working on the deepening communism around the world.

He said of Borodin: "He initiated me into the complexities of the Hegelian dialectic and its materialist version as the key to Marxism." (Memories p.195) And that broke his resistance to the materialism of Marxist thought, Roy now became materialist in his thinking philosophical.

This was the first legitimate communist party to be established outside of Russia. Around September 1919, Lenin extended an invitation to Roy and the Mexican Communist Party to attend the Second Congress of the Communist International in Moscow. "At the end of 1926, Roy was elected as a member of the four official policymaking bodies of the Comintern: the presidium, the political secretariat, the executive committee, and the world congress".

Socialist education in the period of Lázaro Cárdenas

For Francisco Sixtos in the educational and pedagogical field, Lázaro Cárdenas, since he was governor of Michoacán (from 1928 to 1932) maintained an opinion on: "... the role of education and therefore of the rural teachers that would be, apart from teaching to read, to write and the elementary mathematical operations, to organize in peasant committees to the peasants ", with the purpose of orienting them to request the land from the landlords and large landowners, or as participants in campaigns with the aim of disappearing religious fanaticism .

In Michoacán, one of the first attempts to link the socialist education of the indigenous was the Carapan Project in June 1932, established in the Purépecha area of the Cañada de los Eleven Pueblos.

During his government as president (1934 to 1940) the first modification of the Constitutional article 3 was made, which indicated a clear influence of socialism, directed mainly to the peasants who were the majority in those decades, through diverse activities such as indigenous literacy of young and adult children, to link to the school as a national production process with pretensions to form an egalitarian society. And on the other hand, the redistribution of the goods with which nature endows humanity (land, water, oil, minerals, fauna flora, among others).

Implementing a socialist education system was a real challenge that does not arise at the time of designing the Six-Year Plan, but is conceived from the revolutionary ideas expelled by politicians, professors and leaders in the national life of the regions. The Sexenal Plan was a way or means for the inclusion of the amendment to Article 3 of the Constitution. Therefore and referring to the Cardenista era we can mention that;

"During the administration of General Lázaro Cárdenas the constitutional article 3 was modified, to give rise to socialist education and to compel for the first time the private schools to follow the official programs. This new orientation promoted education at all levels, with regard to primary education, communal boarding schools, soup kitchens and scholarships were created; schools linked with production centers, encouraging technical education and creating rural peasant schools to train rural teachers. "

And that the letter says: "The education that gives [the state] will be socialist and, in addition to excluding all religious doctrine will combat fanaticism and prejudice, for which the school, organize its teachings and activities in a way that allows to create in youth a rational and accurate concept of the universe and social life "

"Once elected Lázaro Cárdenas, reiterated its commitment to promote it, as it was an instrument that would contribute to the abolition of an individualistic economic regime and the creation of a collectivized economy for the benefit of rural and urban workers" the 1st. December 1934.

Federation of Peasant and Socialist Students of Mexico

Rural normal schools have played an important role in the processes of social construction since the beginning of the 21st century, both of an educational nature.

Normal rural schools have played a very important role in the processes of social construction since the beginning of the 20th century, both educational, political, social and cultural. They were built and consolidated as the backbone of the Mexican educational system. In the country there were 36 schools, founded to teach literacy and educate the Mexican peasantry. Of these 36, currently only 17 prevail, since the government has been responsible for closing them abruptly or gradually without any explanation.

Between 1922 - when the first rural normal school was founded in Tacámbaro, Michoacán - and 1934 the 36 rural normal schools were created. In that same year, the students of the rural normal of Tamatán, Tamaulipas, made a call to all the rural normals of the country, in order to create a student organization that defended their rights as children of peasants. Thus, in a first concentration, in the school of Santa Lucia, Durango, there were four normals. Because it was a minority attendance, it was not possible to establish the student organization. The following year, 1935, the call was re-launched. The concentration was prepared in the school of El Roque, Guanajuato. Attended most of the normal and founded the oldest student organization in the country: the Student Federation of Socialist Peasants of Mexico (FECSM).

The creation of rural normals was the response that Mexican society -especially the rural one- gave to a current need: education for all. Then, as today, illiteracy prevailed in the peasant and indigenous communities of the country. The rural normals had continuity and a new impulse during the presidency of President Lázaro Cárdenas del Río, when they were mandated to eliminate illiteracy and bring education from the coast to the mountains.

In the beginning, the rural normals were agricultural schools. After merging with other projects such as the agricultural centers, a new type emerged, that of the regional peasant schools. Since then, the students distinguished themselves from the other normals -both public and private- by a comprehensive curriculum based on five axes.

Each higher level institution has an essence that characterizes it as unique. The one that differentiates the rural normals from the other normalist institutions -and from all higher education institutions, including universities and institutes- is based on an integral education of five axes: political; academic, cultural, production and sports modules.

The objective of a rural normal is not only to train teachers trained in primary education, but to meet the needs that are required in a rural community. In a derogatory way, but with very poor arguments, some have wanted to cross out the graduates of the rural normals of *todoólogos*, that is to say, those who say they know everything and nothing in particular.

With the political axis seeks to train critical, analytical and reflective people; informed of what is happening in the country and the causes of poverty and the material conditions in which rural communities live; It also seeks to develop the capacities of interlocution, management and organization of students.

The academic axis is developed with the formal curriculum and the curricular mesh established by the federal education authorities.

The integration of painting clubs, music, dance, clowning, theater, among others, covers the cultural axis. The clubs carry out caravans in the communities surrounding the schools.

The axis of the production modules, claims the rural and peasant character of the students, both in their origin and in their professional training. The aim is for students to train in

cattle raising and land production. As in the cultural axis, the axis of the production modules allows a close link with the surrounding communities.

As early as 1933, the National Revolutionary Party appointed a commission for auscultation of Article 3. Of the Constitution, and for December 20, 1933 the aforementioned article cited "... the education that is given will be socialist in its orientations and tendencies, fighting for the disappearance of prejudices and religious dogmas, and creating true human solidarity on the basis of a progressive socialization of the means of production. "Since then, although it was accepted to fight the clergy, with the absolution of religious fanaticism, socialist sectarianism was also considered threatening. For 1934, the reform of article 3 was approved in the Chamber of Deputies, and 73 fraction XXV, indicating "the State's education will be socialist and in addition to excluding all religious doctrine, it will fight religious fanaticism and prejudice for which the school will organize its teachings and activities in a way that allows to create in the youth a rational and exact concept of the universe and social life ".

Although Cardenas defended socialist education, "... will make men stronger, more aware of their responsibilities, and more gifted to act within a just social organization and an economic environment of accelerated evolution" in 1936, Plutarco Elías Calles pointed out "... I do not I agree with the communist tendencies in Mexico, "Manuel Gomez Morin, rector of the National University, made statements attacking socialist education and defending academic freedom.

In the period of Manuel Ávila Camacho, the reactionary ideology again appeared from a campaign against socialist education, and requested the repeal of article 3, since Cárdenas was not in power, the constitutional text was modified, and with Miguel Alemán as The president outlined another type of teaching, gave priority to private schools, and maintained close relationships with the church.

In the next six years of Ruiz Cortines, politically the woman for the first time gets the right to vote (1953) and to be voted, there is talk of planning education in the economic system.

With Adolfo López Mateos, the National Commission of free textbooks for basic education is created, school breakfasts are promoted for children and other educational institutions are created.

Gustavo Díaz Ordaz grants the vote to 18-year-olds, however his intervention against the 1968 movement culminated in the massacre of hundreds of students in the Plaza de las Tres Culturas in Tlatelolco, however in terms of the education project not it was given no importance, being a historical setback to education, in this period.

Little can be said about the influence of socialism in the later period since education has had a tendency towards privatization and regression, that is, it has been depriving the traditional education product of the capitalist ideology, the budget assigned to the rural normals is one of the lowest, education to be carried out in areas far from urban centers, racism and the abandonment of the rural environment, does not allow its better performance, even the official speech signals the disappearance of rural schools to be contrary to the state policy.

We consider that the influence of the Socialist Revolution in Mexico was decisive in some sectors among them in the rural normal education, while the young graduates as teachers, have a clearer vision of the social context in which they work, since they are They face the conditions of poverty and marginalization in which most of the poorest communities in the country are located.

Normal teachers work with young people and children, usually from native peoples, these communities are mostly expellers of migrant labor, in these populations, they face daily subsistence, where children and young people attend school, without have access to basic foods, in addition the conditions in which these teachers live are very poor, they have almost no elementary resources to teach in normal conditions, the schools are often improvised spaces, there are no chairs for children, blackboards, and didactic material , is the expression of the state policy has wielded structural violence in the different presidential periods, to be against the socialist ideas, once proposed not only in education but in the decisions of the economic policy of the governments in the country.

However, these teachers and public institutions, inspired by the revolutionary ideas of socialism, maintain a critical ideology with respect to the goal of education for transformation, that is to say, to promote changes in the consciousness of these oppressed peoples by the erroneous policies of capitalism and the over dimension from traditional education is carried out in almost all schools, on false values, who has more goods, is worth more than others who do not have.

Oppression and violence can not contribute to the transformation of the learners' consciences, reflect the interests of groups in power, education in socialism stands as a mechanism of humanization, is a practice towards freedom, towards emancipation and equality.

The path of the oppressed class is the same as that which must be traveled towards liberation, it is responsible self-configuration, where socialist education endows students with elements of awareness, reflection, critical sense and transformation. This will allow them to discover and conquer themselves in a reflexive way, to appropriate their own destiny, empower themselves and transform their oppression in favor of their incorporation towards transformation as an individual and subject, that is, to recognize oneself as a class, to class for oneself (Marx) .

Socialist education postulates a pedagogy of the oppressed, not for the oppressed, the pedagogy of the oppressed is then the pedagogy of the oppressed and the oppressor (Freire) that for Hegel would be, the truth of the oppressor would be the consciousness of the oppressed.

Socialist education, fight ignorance, as a form of oppression and violence against the poorest population, this way since the Cardenismo, transformations were promoted in the rural normals, which today became a key point of confrontations against the government .

The normalistas, point out that: Through our integral education we demand the Marxism of Leninism, and we reject any type of dogma or superstition in the explanation of our environment. We endorse ourselves as allied students of the proletariat in their struggle for social transformation; but also because we are proletarians. That is why we are sure that the role of the student is not enclosed in the four walls of the classroom, and that it is not

enough to read books to understand the situation of the world: it is necessary to read the world through reality, to face the problems that affect to society and try to overcome them.

That is to say, the socialist education, makes consciousness in the students, through the conscience of the world, in the dinamiza and becomes aware with the other through the dialogue, the conscience with the world. They are dialectically constituted in the same movement in the same story, breaking with the anti-dialogue that is the product of power relations, the one that indicates that the poor have no word can not be expressed, it is the communication of one over the other , therefore it is a vertical dialogue, one on the other, where the class education and the values for the material are reproduced, reflecting the ideology of a class that owns the means of production.

Under this scheme dialogue is not encouraged as a form of understanding and communication between rational beings, since the groups possessing power do not consider it viable or with value, and for the proletarians it is unsuspected to open that perspective. The anti-dialogue does not allow a social relationship of harmony or solidarity, does not admit the coexistence between people, it is an anti-dialectic relationship that is reflected in the educator-educator relations proper to education in a capitalist environment.

The anti-dialectic restricts all types of rights, dignity and democracy, is justified from ahistorical apologies, simulations and epistemological deceptions, even resorts to violence in which intolerance rules fully. The best example is when the representatives of the government try to convince that only the opportunities for the powerful, the budget of the monopolies, the culture, the education, the dominance of the word, that the majority accept what indicate those who have the privilege of a few owners of money.

Today the teacher training institutions have suffered different and drastic transformations. The governments that have succeeded Lázaro Cárdenas have sought to train mercantilist students, submissive to power and without the ability to have a critical, analytical and reflective conscience. Now that the attack against critical and popular education is intensifying, the threat of the disappearance of rural normals increases, even violating the human rights of students and teachers.

The rural normal schools were born to train teachers to teach in the most marginalized places, generally peasant communities; the mission of all rural normalista, is to fight the ignorance in the towns, to fight against the illiteracy and to contribute to obtain a social and cultural change. That is why as long as poverty exists and exploitation continues, rural normals will have a reason to be and a leading role in the formation and transformation of students.

For this national organization: Rural normalism has been the alternative for the children of low-income peasants, that is, rural teachers. While poverty exists in our country, as long as the conditions of this do not change, the importance of a rural teacher will continue to be current and necessary.

Each graduate of a rural normal is committed to the society that paid for his education and is ready to undertake the most noble work of humanity: to bring knowledge to the most remote rural communities in the country; and to fulfill the arduous task that society has entrusted to them, because they are convinced that tomorrow humanity will be better.

Three years after the enforced disappearance of the 43 normalistas of Ayotzinapan, we want them to return to school.

Source:

1. Freire Paulo, (1980) *Pedagogía del oprimido.*, Ed. Siglo XXI, Pág. 6-175
2. Las razones y la lucha de los normalistas, en:<http://www.contralinea.com.mx/archivo-revista/2013/07/21/las-razones-la-lucha-de-las-normales-rurales>
3. Francisco Sixtos Niniz, 15/FEB/2010, en Revista: http://vinculando.org/educacion/lazaro_cardenas_y_su_legado_en_la_educacion.html
4. Oikión Solano, Verónica, De la revolución mexicana a la Revolución mundial. Actores políticos michoacanos y la Internacional Comunista en México, en: *Signos Históricos*, núm. 21, enero-junio, 2009, 60-103.