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**THE MAGISTERIAL
INSURRECTION AND
INSTITUTIONAL
INDOLENCE**

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Abstract: In this article, which is part of a broader investigation on public policies and the teachers' movement, we reflect -from critical thinking with a public policy approach- the most significant elements that sustain public policy and the rationality on which the Educational Reform (RE) applied in Mexico since 2013. It addresses the path of confrontations between the institutional discourse of the government in educational matters and the political practices of teachers in their claim to avoid its implementation in the classroom. It starts from a problematizing question that involves the two main actors, the government and the teachers of the National Coordination of Education Workers (CNTE) who belong to the National Union of Education Workers (SNTE): What is the intention of the Reform Educational that there is a lot of insistence from the government to impose it without establishing a dialogue with educators and why the resistance of the teachers to accept it and take it to the classroom?

Keywords: Public policy, educational reform, teachers' movement.

INTRODUCTION

This article deals with one of the nodal and most controversial issues of public policies in contemporary Mexico: the Educational Reform.

FROM INSTITUTIONAL DISCOURSE TO TEACHER RESISTANCE

With the cry of protest and the capacity for resistance, thousands of education workers have mobilized in different parts of Mexico against the Educational Reform (RE) approved by the federal government in December 2013 and executed since 2014. The teachers' mobilizations are a sample of the union political practice of the teachers of Chiapas, Guerrero, Oaxaca, Michoacán

and Mexico City. These mobilizations are not new or recent, they are part of the political scenario of the poorest, most marginalized and excluded societies of contemporary Mexico, of the Mexico of modernization and developmentalism; but also of the Mexico of the application of the neoliberal policies of the most atrocious and dehumanized capitalism, of the Mexico of the delivery of sovereignty and national wealth to the big capitals of the transnational consortiums.

From the Mexican southeast in 1979, education workers gave birth to the Chiapas Teachers' Movement (MMCH), organized and decisively confronted the institutional structures of the Ministry of Public Education (SEP) and the authoritarian verticalism of the Union National of Education Workers (SNTE); and they created in 1981 in Tuxtla Gutiérrez the National Coordinator of Education Workers (CNTE).

During this time, the collective expressions of educational subjects have been expressed in various ways: in meetings in workplaces, roadblocks, takeovers of public buildings, massive marches, and permanent concentration in the capital of Chiapas and Mexico City. Its present history is still in the process of being built, which is why it is so complex to know, interpret and explain it; which requires reflective attention from the rationality of critical thinking. Hence the analytical urgency of addressing their reality with a methodological approach (Zemelman, 2003).

Problem questions; Who are the democratic teachers of Section 7 of the SNTE who are active in the CNTE? Are they social subjects with historical power? What were the reasons that led educators to build a process of struggle that after 36 years remains in force, and that today, more than at other times in its history, is counting on solid support from parents, social organizations?

And civil society? What did they do during this time to resist the attacks of seven periods of national government?

Why has the government not been able to destroy them, even though it has implemented various repressive actions that oscillate between police repression of mobilizations and demonstrations, to the assassination of teachers' leaders, including the suspension of salaries, the dismissal of educational workers, the imprisonment of teachers and the co-optation by various means of certain union leaders? What have been the successes and failures of both the government and the Teachers' Movement?

The uncertainty of the questions leads to epistemic discussions that allow us to build knowledge of the Teachers' Movement (MM) together with the subjects and from the demands of their own social constitution (Zemelman, 2003).

Here is the importance of addressing the analysis of the collective behavior of educators as education workers, from four fundamental methodological categories to objectively understand the qualitative and quantitative data of the teaching reality. 1) Time/history makes it possible to understand the different periods of the teachers' struggle, as well as the coincidences, contradictions and differences that may occur; 2) The space/context/territory helps us to identify the geopolitical conditions where the strategies, actions and tactics of the teachers' struggle are developed; 3) The conjuncture/circumstance presents the most significant elements that are expressed with all their intensity in the different actions of the collective subjects, and 4) The totality/structure integrates each one of the elements that underlie the object of study, in this case the teachers' struggle against the Educational Reform. These four categories are not intended to be used schematically as a methodological

linear reproduction of traditional academic thought; but rather as dynamic possibilities of critical thinking to recover the social facts of the teachers' collective that are presented as alternative options to the institutionalized discourse of governmental power.

A first theoretical approach to the subjects that constitute the MM in Mexico is to understand the characteristics that allow it to be identified as a social subject that has union militancy and activism. The first element of reflection is that the MM is a collective organization of education workers who are attached to the administrative structures of the Mexican government that depend on the Ministry of Public Education and the Education Secretariats of the federal entities. They are organized in one of the ideological apparatuses of the State (Althusser, 1988), the SNTE. Therefore, they are not part of the working class or of the productive forces of the economy. Their condition as salaried workers of the government bureaucracy does not place them in one of the two historically antagonistic social classes, the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. They are social sectors that belong to the lower middle class that do not demand the social emancipation of the marginalized sectors.

These collective subjects recognize themselves, with a political position without identity with any political party. In the collective organization of the MM and the CNTE they deny any link with the political parties; but individually its militants are involved with different political parties, whether left, center or right. Even when the collective practices and actions do not involve the political parties in the different actions and strategies of teachers' struggle; Personally, each education worker has the decision-making capacity to identify with any of the political parties and actively participate in electoral processes, as long as they do not

associate one practice with another, nor use their presence in the MM for party benefits.

The political party as an organizational structure that can guide and direct social mobilizations, has no presence in the organization process, construction of strategies and tactics of struggle, design of demands and definition of the stages of teacher mobilizations. This absence of the political party has a fundamental rationality. The MM has never considered participating in the electoral processes, nor conquering the administrative spaces of the government, much less governmental power. This explains the reason why the political party is not considered as another option in their alliance strategies.

This double identity assumed by the collective subjects, first within the MM distanced from partisanship and later, outside the movement as political party activists, has profound implications. On the one hand, they avoid their intervention, electoral manipulation and ideological penetration for purposes other than those of the teachers' struggle. On the other hand, this partisan plurality allowed individually is reflected in the electoral processes where each one of the militants defends the political party of his preference and ends up legitimizing the corrupt party system in Mexico. This double identity in the political action of the subjects is a contradiction in this social movement, because in fact it is precisely the education workers who, with their presence in the communities, have the possibility of guiding and influencing the parents of family to define their participation in the elections. Many of these electoral results with the presence of education workers have guaranteed the victory of political parties (PRI-PAN) that promoted laws that violate their labor, salary and social rights. That is to say, as social subjects of the movement they

confront the political parties, they discredit and discredit them; but as individual subjects, they become allies of those they consider to be their organic enemies (Gramsci, 1972) who are part of the governmental power structures. The party has not been conceived as the political vanguard leading the struggle of education workers.

This double political identity of the teaching subject has not helped make the MM an important factor in generating social transformations that improve the living conditions of the marginalized, excluded and exploited sectors; because by denying the collective participation in the electoral processes it is excluded in the incidence for the appointment of the rulers.

Another of the fundamental elements that identify the movement is its multi-ideological character. Nor, as in the case of political parties, has the teachers' social organization defined an ideological route that gives meaning to its existence as a reason for being, its presence on the national political scene and its capacity for organization, mobilization and resistance, beyond of their own expectations and demands of the union. Ideologically, they have not defined a critical path that allows them to identify whether it is a movement of the left, center left, center or right. This ideological condition allows the presence of different currents of political, union, social and labor thought, many of them antagonistic and contradictory to each other, but which are unified around the imposition of public policies and the affectation of the rights and interests of education workers. However, within the discussions in the grassroots assemblies for the definition of the teachers' struggle strategies and the conduct of the mobilizations, the activists of the groups that support each of the ideological positions, confront each other violently for the sake of impose them on other groups.

To be an eminently anti-partisan and multi-ideological trade union movement, with actions and strategies of struggle that depend on the solution of their specific demands, it does not have the possibilities and conditions to become an emancipatory movement. In addition, as educators, they have not only historically been involved in public policies that affect the rights of workers; they also – unfortunately– reproduce the dominant educational model. Their opposition falls within the context of the workers' struggle against the application of neoliberal policies in Latin America.

In contemporary times, uncomfortable times for the government and the Mexican political class due to the difficulties of applying educational policies in society and RE in the classroom; and due to the resistance put up by teachers from various federal entities, as well as the debates and confrontations between the various actors that come together on the stage of the teachers' struggle, the disputes between both actors have focused on the educational field.

Contrary to what education workers had raised for many years as essential demands, which were limited to economic, union and labor demands; Now, the central issue of the opposition and the teacher mobilizations is political with strong implications for the present and future employment of teachers. The actions have focused on the rejection of educational policies; same as in the governmental institutional discourse, they were designed with the objective of "improving the quality of education" (SEP, 2016). The consensus and social legitimacy that the government expected for the application of policies has not been expressed as planned. On the contrary, even against an impressive media campaign of social conviction and discredit of teachers, every day the consensus of various sectors of society (parents, non-governmental

organizations, academics, intellectuals and civil society in general) has dedicated to supporting the teaching profession.

It is in this context that the application of the educational policies that the government tries to impose raises other questions: What is hidden behind the R.E. that is so obstinate and stubborn to impose it and little is available to discuss it, in such a way that, it allows find a path of magisterial consensus? Two analytical assumptions are essential to consider to try to scrutinize a possible answer to this question; one of them is the issue of free public education and another, the issue of pensions and retirements. The application of the RE has as a background to solve two essential problems for the government. On the one hand, expanding the participation of private capital in investment in basic education, which would justify the reduction of the budget allocated to preschool, primary and secondary education; and on the other, to mitigate the serious problem generated by pensions and retirements, given the government's inability to maintain a fair system and decorum; because they have irresponsibly used the workers' savings for other purposes.

Therefore, it is important to delve into what is the argumentative arsenal of the different political actors around it, both the defenders and the detractors of the RE? The government has assumed as a fundamental criterion in its argumentative thesis that, with the RE, the State will recover the conduct of education and fight corruption in the sale of places, which had been "kidnapped" by the teachers' dissent. Two rather ridiculous arguments. Is there a weak State in Mexico that has not been able to lead the administration of education derived from the Mexican Revolution of 1910? Is it not the educational authority that delivers the official documents for the allocation of places and their acquisition by

the teacher? If there has been corruption in the allocation of places by the SNTE; and if it currently exists on the part of the CNTE; if true in both cases as the SEP maintains; Who grants the legal document to the teachers to report to work at a workplace, is not the union or the Coordinator; but the educational authority of the federative entities; that is to say, the holder of the corresponding level of the secretariats of education of the local governments. Therefore, the corruption of places is an act of co-responsibility that directly involves the SEP. This argument of the institutional discourse of the government is diluted by itself and delegitimizes its expressions of administrative morality that it argues.

THE DISPUTE OF THE EDUCATIONAL REFORM

Education workers organized in the CNTE and united around the teachers' resistance have argued that the Reform is not educational, but administrative and labor; therefore, his opposition lies in rejecting it and denying it totally.

In the debate on the RE there are four political actors: the SEP, the SNTE, the CNTE and the MM. Each one of them follows different routes of action, strategies and tactics, with dissimilar perspectives and life horizons. But they all come together around the RE proposal, which from our analytical perspective is not an educational reform because it does not have pedagogical, psychological, sociological, philosophical, anthropological and economic arguments that guide the formation of present and future generations on a horizon long winded That is to say, he has not defined what type of woman and man he wants to form.

The SEP is directly responsible on the part of the Mexican government for the design of strategies and actions in the educational field

to offer quality public education, including the material conditions of schools, the design of theoretical, methodological and technical pedagogical proposals. innovative and significant for society; as well as the training and professionalization of teachers. It is also responsible for planning the allocation of financial resources to the different items that imply the delivery of quality public education. Therefore, in its field of action there are three of the fundamental elements of the educational system to guarantee that the education offered to citizens is of quality: the pedagogical model, the professionalization of teachers and sufficient financial resources to fulfill the task. granted by the Political Constitution of the United Mexican States. The logical and rational conjunction of these three factors contributes to improving the objective conditions of the education that is imparted in the classrooms of the public sector. Whether or not it meets these conditions is the subject of debate and reflection on the reality of the educational system in Mexico.

The SNTE is the union political structure created expressly to defend the interests of education workers at the service of the government. It is one of the ideological apparatuses of the State (Althusser, 1983) whose function is to serve as a transmission belt between collective political practices, the demands raised by education workers and the response that the political class in power usually assumes. In theory, the responsibility of the union leadership is to attend to the demands of the defense of the labor, salary and union rights of its members and to guarantee the security of the work spaces; but in practical reality, this is not usually the case. Government policies have been disciplined and at various times in the history of teacher unionism it has colluded with the government to become one of the detractors of the teachers who are its members.

In the historicity of the SNTE there is no tradition of union struggle that has been identified with the defense of the interests and rights of education workers, nor union leaders that accompany them; what has existed is a collusion of the union with the institutional powers of the government and a historical relationship of political amasiato with the Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) and in recent years, with the New Alliance Party (PANAL) created expressly by the former leader of the SNTE to maintain the reserves of power and establish itself as a partisan political structure to participate in the electoral dispute for spaces of political representation.

The MM arose in 1979 in Chiapas as a response to the need to improve the living conditions of teachers and democratize the Executive Committee of Section 7 of the SNTE. The teachers of this union section have a direct administrative relationship with the federal government, since hiring and payment of salaries is a decision that is assumed from the center of the country. Subsequently, in the most recent years of contemporary times, the teachers of the Union Section 40 have joined the teachers' struggle, who administratively belong to the government of the state of Chiapas. The incorporation of the educational workers of this union section to the teachers' struggle was not the result of a level of political awareness of the subjects, nor of the orientation and induction of the union leaders; but of the concerns to guarantee job stability and the uncertainty that the RE has presented to him. The fear of unemployment and job insecurity embodied in the General Law of the Professional Teaching Service (Federal Executive Power, 2013) are the factors that have influenced teachers, not only to join the struggle, but also to join the CNTE.

It is the oldest movement and one of the most experienced in workers' struggles in the last forty years of Mexican trade unionism.

Since its foundation, the movement assumed itself as a union political position distant from political parties and without any connection to partisan ideologies, maintaining an opposition to partisan trade union affiliation and defending its heterogeneity and ideological and political plurality. Situation that, at times, has earned them strong criticism of their strategies of struggle by political parties, including those called "left."

The CNTE was created in 1981 in Tuxtla Gutiérrez, Chiapas (Rincón Ramírez, 1996) as a necessity to unite the various political union forces of the teachers that were dispersed in various states (Chiapas, Oaxaca, Guerrero, Michoacán, State of Mexico, Morelos, Tabasco, among others) and design actions and strategies of struggle with the same scheme of simultaneous mobilization. Its central objective is to strengthen the teachers' organization in joint actions to present a broader front for the defense and vindication of their demands. Its ideological conformation is heterogeneous, since the same converge leftist positions as radicals and center left; In fact, active members of the right-wing (National Action Party), center-right (Institutional Revolutionary Party) and "left" (Democratic Revolution Party) parties have been active in its ranks. The interest that unifies them around this union structure is not the commitment to a partisan political project, but the defense of the rights as education workers and the opposition to the imposition of educational policies, which were approved without their participation.

The struggle of teachers who are active in the MM is a field of possibilities for the construction of scenarios of human significance and redefinition of the meaning of the pedagogical practice of public education. It has also become a possibility of political rationality to face the onslaught

of the dominant structures of the Mexican State and avoid the imposition of educational public policies that violate the integrity of labor law and the expectations of a dignified and decent retirement; that in addition, they are putting at risk the public sense of education. For this reason, it is not only an issue that is discussed exclusively in the workplace. It is a field that involves other fields such as the epistemic, the social, the economic, the cultural, the ideological. It is not only limited to teacher training and teaching practices in basic and upper secondary education classrooms. It is also a strong opposition to the educational model imposed by the dominant social classes, which has demonstrated its inefficiency and ineffectiveness in responding to the problems and structural needs of education in Mexico. It is an epistemic debate in the broadest sense of construction of educational knowledge (De Sousa Santos, 2006). It is the strongest evidence of the failure of the post-revolutionary educational model that formed the generations that built Mexican nationalism; of the model that arose from the Mexican Revolution and that was rudely appropriated by the PRI.

What is in dispute in this new stage of the teachers' struggle is the conformation of the educational rationality on which the educational model and its theoretical, methodological and technical practice must be based, built from different, distant and opposed approaches and perspectives. On the one hand, the instrumental and pragmatic rationality of neoliberal economies, defended by the politicians of the current government and the big transnational capitals (Gentile, 2015), which base educational purposes on the formation of pragmatic and individualistic skills for insertion into the labor market in the shortest possible time. And on the other, the humanist rationality that defends the

meaning and social value of public, secular and free education.

The design of the current public policies of the RE in Mexico has been carried out with the participation of international experts who have based their decisions on the recommendations of international financial organizations (Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, International Monetary Fund, World Bank, Inter-American Development Bank), but with the absence of the main actors involved in educational work, teachers; which denies the historical recovery of the knowledge and pedagogical and educational practices of the subjects responsible for educational work (De Sousa Santos, 2012). Not only has there been no debate with educators on how to improve the quality of education, they have been denied the right to give their opinion and contribute their pedagogical knowledge for the transformation of educational results; The educator-community pedagogical relationship has been made invisible and the historical knowledge of the communities has been omitted as possibilities for the realization and application of authentic educational policies, socially agreed upon.

The teachers' struggle is one of the expressions of the workers who try to build a dignified and decent future; because the present is already conflicted and problematized by the imposition of educational public policies. They are the most significant social actors in the social construction of the State, because in them are the responsibilities of forming the present and future generations of each nation.

Therefore, any proposal for the transformation, modification or restructuring of the educational system or any of its parts will not achieve the planned purposes if teachers are not involved in the definition of educational public policies; simply, because they are the

direct assets of practice in the classroom and who will have the responsibilities of articulating the educational theoretical foundations with the methodological practice of teaching. The denial of their involvement is a normative legal fiction imposed by the government, because it is just in the daily reality of schools where educational policies are confronted and the ruptures between the pedagogical ideal and educational reality are expressed.

In this first framework of reflective ideas, it is necessary to ask two problematizing questions: what is the meaning and *raison d'être* of the teachers' struggle? What are the contents, political, ideological, social, economic, labor, cultural and union foundations of the teachers' struggle? These, in turn, lead to other questions: What is the epistemic foundation of RE? What is the logic that gave rise to educational policy? What is intended to achieve in basic and upper secondary education teachers with these public policies? What problems will be solved with the application of the legal foundations of the Reform? What is its educational and pedagogical meaning? How is its implementation explained and understood?

In order to answer these and many other problematic questions, it is proposed to incorporate into the reflection the four categories of analysis mentioned above. 1) time/history, 2) space (territory)/context, 3) conjuncture/circumstance and 4) totality/structure; same that are mediated by two analytical power categories: conflict and contradiction. This epistemic approach implies understanding that the teachers' struggle is analyzed as a social subject (MM) of knowledge of the problematic field of education; and not only as a simple research object of the educational, social sciences and humanities. Therefore, the recovery of their daily experiences, their passions and

aspirations in the constant resistance against educational policies and for the defense of labor rights, constitute the nodal elements to know, understand and explain the rationality that has given meaning to this collective expression of education workers.

THE BELLIGERENCE OF INSTITUTIONAL DISCOURSE

The capricious discourse of educational public policy, impregnated by the belligerence of the strategies to apply the RE and its faithful squire teacher evaluation, do not have deliberative arguments that support a convincing rationality before Mexican educators. The absence of analytical support that guarantees the acceptability of the educational policy proposal of the political group in power and the lack of a solid base that convinces the teachers, the political discourse becomes inconsistent, aggressive, violent, intolerant, causing the action to be repressive and bloody. This generates destabilization and rupture between the political sector (deputies and senators) responsible for legislating public policies, the officials of the education sector agencies (SEP and Education Secretariats of the state and federal governments) that put them into practice and, the recipients and users (basic and upper secondary education teachers) of these decisions.

This inability of the government's political discourse to convince citizens of the "benefits" of the RE, as well as its own educational and pedagogical weakness in its contents, has provoked negative responses and rejection not only from the teachers. Civil society has also publicly expressed its opposition to the forms and mechanisms that have been used to put it into practice. The inefficiency of political conviction and the belligerence of the intolerant discourse have resulted in repressive actions and acts against any act

of opposition rebellion. The turbulence of uncomfortable times for the politicians of the educational administrative structures, weaken the options for agreements and pacts between the government and civil society; and the gap between consensus and dissent is widening every day. The possibilities of agreements and arrangements between both actors are increasingly remote.

This discourse, which was not constructed in the abstract or devoid of ideological sense, responds to another, more complex discourse that represents the interests and goals of the Mexican State. This is the discourse whose fundamental purpose is to impose on society a neoliberal model of economic growth and social development. The risk of radicalization and rupture in the democratic systems of dialogue and communication between both positions that are in confrontation can be very high. On the one hand, a position that wants to impose at any cost a proposal for an alleged RE, even against the teachers, who are directly responsible for its application. And on the other, the one that resists the abrupt and shameless imposition, which has raised the dialogue as mechanisms of détente and understanding between the subjects in conflicts.

No educational project like this has solid support in the fields of politics, economics, ideology and the social, has the potential to translate into reality and guarantee its purposes, if it is not with the conviction, consensus and acceptance of teachers, because all The educational proposal, translated into a pedagogical reality, only has two direct actors: those who teach and those who learn (Bauman, 2013). And in the case of Mexico, neither of them have been considered for its design and definition of the actions that must be undertaken in the daily life of the classrooms. The RE is a proposal for administrative modification of teachers'

working conditions, therefore, it cannot even be considered a teaching policy.

What in Mexico today; of Mexico of impunity, corruption, manipulation of the electoral processes, the lack of accountability of the political class, of the total impunity in the different levels of government and of the political parties, of the violation of human rights and of the privileges of powerful men and women, but essentially, of being fed up with the abusive use of power, tiredness and uncertainty in society; of Mexico globalized and subordinated to economic, financial, labor, energy, social and educational policies is the definition of two absolutely opposed society projects. On the one hand, a political project that is violating the public meaning of education and handing it over to national and transnational capital; and on the other, the irrevocable defense of the public content of education and the construction of scenarios that avoid the social increase of those affected by these decisions.

The polarization of relations between the government and teachers as active actors in civil society, but fundamentally as those responsible for training future generations of citizens, has reached its highest point of confrontation and belligerence. The closure of the educational authorities and the degradation of the political discourse of the Secretary of Education and the President of the Republic himself to dialogue with the teachers of the four federative entities (Chiapas, Guerrero, Oaxaca and Michoacán) that are in mobilization against the RE strips authoritarianism and the resurgence of classic political practices of anti-democratic governments. Given the inability of the educational authorities to address, through responsible and constructive dialogue, the rejection of educational policies; wrongly, the government has mistaken its strategy to achieve the imposition of this reform.

The governability of the Mexican political system is in a crisis of legitimacy and recognition of civil society. The repression as one of the expressions of the authoritarian State, has generated in response to this type of political behavior, greater violence, breaking relations between the government and the citizenry, and the discredit of the political class. However, in the face of this increasingly problematized situation between the State and one of the most belligerent and combative social sectors in the last forty years in Mexico, the institutional response has been one of hardening towards the MM and the CNTE.

The opposition and resistance of education workers is not a trivial or superficial collective attitude; nor is it a superficial or spontaneous contradiction to educational policies. It is part of a historical tradition of struggle that has been present for 36 years in Chiapas, Oaxaca, Guerrero and Michoacán. It is an expression of mature and sensitive rationality of the collective subject that has opposed the arbitrariness of the Mexican political class and its entire administrative legal structure.

This collective subject, which is made up of education workers, is one of the best organized in society and has an organic structure capable of mobilizing more than 80,000 teachers and more than 50,000 parents. of family in a single political action. Its convening capacity is due to two fundamental factors. First, they are working in the majority of communities that have the highest rates of poverty and social marginalization in Mexico; and second, as a consequence of this, they work in the basic education schools (preschool, primary and secondary) and upper secondary (high school) with the greatest educational gap in all of Mexico. Many of these communities are inhabited by indigenous societies.

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