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## Notes on Ayotzinapa

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## SPECIAL ATTENTION

### Notes on Ayotzinapa

Bocafloja

The current affairs going on in Mexico are anything but new. Years of history that has been manipulated grotesquely finally induce the construction of the actual “narco-state” in power today.

My responsibility with you today resides in sharing a critical analysis coming from a decolonial perspective, from a body that has been made invisible, animalized and has no attachment to the constructions of identity under the framework of Mexico as a nation.

Mexico, as most countries in Latin America after their processes of independence from Spain, adopted a model of internal colonialism, in which predominantly white Mexican-born Spaniards, became the new benefactors and administrators of resources, wealth, and power. They elaborated an agenda in which the discourse of “miscegenation” and “a harmonic melting pot” was romanticized in order to create a false sense of inclusion and national pride that remains as one of the most effective instruments of normalization.

Even when Mexico is fully subordinate to the economic dynamics of the United States, when it comes to morality, aesthetics, cultural values and intellectual references, Mexico is still deeply influenced and connected to Spain and France. A permanent aspiration that seems to be the only legitimate standard for success, good taste, and ethics that is deeply rooted in the psyche of each person born and raised in Mexico.

Brown and black bodies are automatically conditioned to a process of inferiorization not only in tangible forms, but in the imagination of the people as well.

After the Mexican revolution, the political party in power, P.R.I., remained at the head of the country for 70 years as a disguised dictatorship with an infamous history of corruption, misallocation of funds and resources, state terrorism, and electoral fraud. They are also responsible for the murder and forced disappearance of hundreds of young activists in 1968 and 1971, thousands of women in Ciudad Juarez, the Acteal massacre---in which 45 people were murdered by the state because of their open support to the Zapatista movement,---and hundreds of other unfortunate violent events in which the government through its special agencies or paramilitary groups was the orchestrator.

By the year 2000, the political party that represented the interests of the conservative, right wing upper middle class citizens, P.A.N., took power and ushered the most violent era in the history of modern Mexico. One hundred and twenty one thousand violent deaths were officially registered between 2007 and 2012.

Symbolically, death acquired a different meaning. Images of decapitated bodies hanging from footbridges became daily figures in the landscape of Mexican streets.

Fifty three million people living in extreme poverty represents a platform in which the glamorization of the narco lifestyle, and the apparent easy engagement in it, represents an immediate possibility of access to money and power.

Ayotzinapa is located in the southern state of Guerrero, Mexico, in a small rural community in which the Raul Isidro Burgos Teaching School is situated. 42 students from this school are missing after police in the city of Iguala, Guerrero, opened fire on their buses and kidnapped a group of 43 of them. Some of the students dispersed and escaped, while many others were loaded onto police vehicles to be taken to an unknown destination.

The final communiqué of the police and government ensures that all the students were shot, killed and incinerated by a drug cartel. Forensic experts hired by the families of the missing students certified that the ashes founded at the site do not correspond to their bodies as the government asseverates.

The students were mostly from indigenous communities, campesino families, living in severe poverty, receiving academic training at a public institution that is considered an enclave of anti-capitalist activism with a history of years in leftist militancy.

The government strategy was clear; they wanted to manage the situation as an isolated episode, as a wrong decision and official misconduct from local authorities, accusing a drug cartel as the perpetrator.

A few months later, the local mayor was detained and incarcerated as the only responsible entity from the government in the whole case, again, avoiding the recognition of a structural problem.

Sending a scapegoat to jail was not a convincing action to the majority of the population, who took to the streets to express their dissatisfaction, turning the protest into one of the largest and most visible in the past years.

But beyond a journalistic analysis, our duty resides in deconstructing violence, systemic terrorism and the ulterior motives that instigated this and other incidents as part of this carnival of the absurd.

The way the body of the oppressed is portrayed in mainstream media is nothing but a disgusting exercise of animalization, and an efficient distractor that transforms genuine youth political organization into common criminality.

Mexico's first lady was strategically chosen by the power structure to sensitize the working class due to her career as a soap opera celebrity. Televisa, the number one media conglomerate in Latin America, which is based in Mexico, plays a fundamental role by partnering with the Mexican state when it comes to be the primary administrator of media outlet and information.

A combined agenda that intersects permanently creating a persistent low intensity bombing on peoples minds. Manipulation and control is guarantee.

What is the solution for this? What is the political agenda of participation that we are supposed to engage in?

In Mexican society amongst militant circles class struggle is considered "the root of all evil" , so it becomes almost impossible to open other routes for analysis and resolution. The Latin American average militant has some sort of a fetish with the Soviet Union, with austerity models that are

nothing but naïve rhetoric in today's geopolitical map. More than once I've been praised for my cultural production and work in the community while attacked for the use of Jordan shoes and for my love to R&B music. The same militants that call themselves internationalists don't hesitate to shout testimonies that happen to be profoundly anti-black hiding behind the excuse of U.S. imperialism. Positions of power within the left in Latin America are occupied by white Latino Marxists, that deep inside their own privilege are still uncomfortable with melanin and with the cultural, social and political practices coming from black and brown bodies.

*Some of us cannot relate to the processes or resistance articulated by the white left.*

I understand politics as a game of strategies in a historical moment like this. Assuming a divisive position wouldn't be beneficial to our cause at all, but it's also fundamental that we keep our critical posture towards the events in which the element of race has been absolutely ignored and dismissed as if it wasn't the most frequent pattern associated to systemic terrorism.

At this point Frantz Fanon's thesis on the end of the world and how the civilization as we know it would have to come to an end in order for us to really change the condition of existence of the oppressed body, starts making more and more sense in the back of my head. I already suffer from anxiety and stress disorders, so while I wait for the world to collapse I feel the need to keep finding ways to continue the negotiation with the power structure.

I believe that the work I do as an artist represents a micro-transgression to the hegemony, appealing to the possibility of replicate significantly and resignify its agenda, without fully compromising to the non-profit bureaucracy, the corporate world or the government cultural institutions.

There are several layers of negotiation; people in a place like Mexico find it really hard to believe in the platforms of political parties when none of them have helped improve their condition.

So, where does artistic expression fit in this equation, while detaching from "Latino and Mexican identity," and at the same time remaining critical toward leftist movements?

Probably nowhere, nevertheless, our mission is to keep developing the peripheral processes of resistance that we have created over the years.

By peripheral we are not only describing space and location in regards to power as the center, but our own bodies, acknowledging that no matter if we occupy centralized spaces, our condition will remain inferiorized, first as individuals therefore as artists or creators.

I remember having a conversation with a good friend of mine talking about what is to be radical today, and we came to the conclusion that in certain cases and conditions, it would be way more transgressive to produce an event screening a Richard Pryor comedy set, than a lecture on intersectionality.

In our case, based on our corporeal condition of existence, healing is not some new age weekend activity but an irremediable act of survival.