

POLITICAL NEGOTIATION AND HARMONIZATION: THE STUDENT'S MOVEMENT OF PUEBLA 2020

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ABSTRACT:

Throughout the history of Mexico, the emergence and development of student movements have been present in the face of political and social crises. These movements have intensified in recent years, reoccurring with the most recent of them in the city of Puebla. After the assassination of an UBER driver and three students on February 24th, 2020, the event produced by the growing violence that Mexico lives today marked a point of no return in which thousands of students came out to manifest on March 5th in the largest university march ever seen in the history of Puebla. The purpose of this article is to analyze the history of Mexican social movements and the proposal of the consolidation of a "political harmonization table" from the experience of the student's movement in Puebla. The final objective is to publicize the impact of this event in the political and social sphere, as well as the harmonization strategies that arise as a result of the developments: the awakening of the different generations among society motivated by the university community has been led by the events of that tragic February 24th and the protests on the streets, that to this day, demands for peace and justice and articulate the movement of a walk that today fights for keeping alive.

KEYWORDS:

Students, violence, harmonization, security, negotiation, social imagery, transformation.

NEGOCIACIÓN POLÍTICA Y ARMONIZACIÓN: EL MOVIMIENTO ESTUDIANTIL DE PUEBLA 2020

RESUMEN:

A lo largo de la historia de México, el surgimiento y desarrollo de movimientos estudiantiles han estado presentes ante crisis políticas y sociales. Estos movimientos se han intensificado en los últimos años, presentándose el más reciente de ellos en la ciudad de Puebla. Tras el asesinato de un chofer de UBER y tres estudiantes el 24 de febrero de 2020, el acontecimiento producido por la creciente violencia que vive hoy México

marcó un punto de no retorno en el que miles de estudiantes salieron a manifestarse el 5 de marzo en la marcha universitaria más grande que se haya visto en la historia de Puebla. El propósito de este artículo es analizar la historia de los movimientos sociales mexicanos y la propuesta de la consolidación de una “mesa de armonización política” a partir de la experiencia del movimiento estudiantil en Puebla. El objetivo final es dar a conocer el impacto de este acontecimiento en el ámbito político y social, así como las estrategias de armonización que surgieron a raíz de los acontecimientos: el despertar de las distintas generaciones entre la sociedad motivado por la comunidad universitaria ha sido protagonizado por los sucesos de aquel trágico 24 de febrero y las protestas en las calles, que hasta el día de hoy, exigen paz y justicia y articulan el movimiento de una marcha que hoy lucha por mantenerse viva.

PALABRAS CLAVE:

Estudiantes, violencia, armonización, seguridad, negociación, imaginario social, transformación.

INTRODUCTION

On February 24th of this year, the city of Puebla and all of Mexico stopped before a painful event as a result of the escalation of violence that the country has experienced in recent years, resulting, in a particular way, in a huge loss for the Mexican youth.

Francisco Javier Tirado –22-year-old–, Ximena Quijano –25-year-old–, and José Antonio Parada (Coti) –22-year-old– were all students at the Schools of Medicine of two big Universities of Puebla: The Benemérita Universidad Autónoma de Puebla (BUAP) and the Universidad Popular Autónoma del Estado de Puebla (UPAEP). After having attended the famous and traditional carnival of Huejotzingo, on February 23rd the students boarded a car corresponding to the Uber platform, driven by Josué Manuel Vital, a young man of barely 28 years old. Their families did not hear from them again until the next morning, when their bodies were found wounded and killed by firearms, the three students and the UBER driver were lying on the fields and the dirt roads of the town of Santa María Xalmimilulco.

The events that occurred represented a loss that left a great wound in the universities that were home to these students, as well as for the families of them and the UBER driver, powerless before the departure of 4 young people whose dreams were taken away from them. But the tragedy

transcended in an awakening of the entire Puebla student community, which was joined by numerous universities throughout Mexico, under a legitimate claim that indicates the transformation of the reality of a nation that cries blood in the face of the violence that day by day, claims the lives of thousands of innocent victims. The students' response has been overwhelming: "ni una bata menos, ni un estudiante menos, nadie menos".¹ The situation of insecurity that has been living in the municipality and the state of Puebla, and at a general level throughout the country, has impacted the life of the university community that, representing the general social satiety among citizens, came out to manifest on March 5th in the largest university march ever seen in the history of Puebla and one of the most impressive in all of Mexico.

The cry of the youth has been present in each demonstration and protest called by students who require better conditions for their environment: peace, security and social justice are the demands that are made, and to ask for them, the organization, order and union that has been seen in the student community has been an international example of citizen participation in search of the compliance of the responsibilities of those who represent us. The social imaginary, the feeling of hope and the aspirations of society have all been evoked in the capacity and determination of young university students from Puebla and from all over Mexico to achieve a change in the reality that is presented to them today, under the promise of A better future, a fact that many considered and still consider a utopia given the conditions that today seem to be worsening. But utopia does not always result only in an illusory and unrealistic desire for what it could be: "She's on the horizon", Galeano² once wrote of utopia. "I go two steps; she moves two steps away. I walk ten steps and the horizon runs ten steps ahead. No matter how much I walk, I'll never reach her. What good is utopia? That's what: it's good for walking". Today the university community has begun to do so.

This article will address the impact that the loss of Ximena, Francisco Javier, José Antonio and Josué Manuel has left on the history of Mexican social movements, as well as the response by the students of Puebla that

1 Some concepts and terms remain in Spanish due to the importance and impact in the understanding of the Mexican social imagery.

2 Eduardo Hughes Galeano was a Uruguayan journalist, writer, and novelist.

has shocked the country and the entire world for its exemplary organization and mobilization in search of a social and political transformation in the face of a government that, today, is required to behave and respond efficiently to the challenges that the State and the country face, especially that of those attenuated problems within the last decades: insecurity and violence. To do this, we will begin with a review of the history of student movements in Mexico, starting from momentous events such as the 1968 Student Movement to the analysis of the most recent events within the framework of the movements in Puebla in recent years, thus concluding with the analysis of the proposal for a “Political Harmonization Table” between students and authorities in the face of a panorama of closeness and empathy among society and government in the consolidation of governance mechanisms and active citizen participation of the youth.

HISTORICAL REVIEW OF STUDENT MOVEMENTS IN MEXICO AND IN THE CITY OF PUEBLA

Talking about Student Movements refers to a phenomenon linked to the social imaginary, in which, through strong demonstrations throughout history, youth have mobilized in defense of firm convictions and disagreements in the face of a panorama of what, as students, it is considered legitimate and fair.

The chronology of the Student Movements in Mexico, and the specific case of the City of Puebla, is an example of the gestation of a collective conscience among young people generated from situations of conflict and change that have had repercussions in the raising of the voices and the active participation of college students mainly, in addition to being decisive in the conditions of transformation of the social and political environment. To fully understand the aforementioned, we will present a review and historical analysis of 3 high impact Student Movements at the national and local level, which today are consolidated as antecedents of the “Movimiento Estudiantil Poblano (MEP)” that occurred during 2020.

THE 1968 STUDENT MOVEMENT

Since the 1950s and 1960s, Mexico has been the seat of a series of movements for different actors that included doctors, railroad workers, electri-

cians, peasants, and students, protests that, in all cases, were dissolved by the military and the police. In the words of one of the founders of what would later be known as the “Consejo Nacional de Huelga (CNH)”,³ these demonstrations were consolidated as antecedents of the 1968 Student Movement.

What was established years later as the direct precedent of this Movement, began as an antagonism between two of the most prestigious universities in Mexico City on July 22nd, 1968, which led to a violent conflict the next day with the repressive response from the Mexican authorities. The rivalry between the Instituto Politécnico Nacional (IPN) and the Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México (UNAM) led to a confrontation on the morning of July 23rd in which the so-called infiltrated “grupos de choque”⁴ participated, which ended up making the situation even more violent.

The anti-riot group of the capital’s police, known as the “Cuerpo de Granaderos”,⁵ intervened in this event to calm the conflict, but given the reputation of abuse they had, the aggression against the students ended up being excessive as a result of a strategy of physical abuse committed against them, even within the schools where, in the same way, they attacked teachers.

Four days later in response to the police violence, the students of the IPN and the UNAM organized a march to protest the abuses committed. On July 30th, representatives of the IPN met in a Coordinating Committee, hence the Consejo Nacional de Huelga (CNH) was born, made up of delegates elected in each of the assemblies of the striking schools. This gave it an indisputable representativeness and, at the same time, made the assemblies the platforms for organization and debate. The CNH even brought together representatives from 77 schools, including universities from other states.⁶

3 The highest instance of leadership of the Student Movement of ‘68.

4 Organizations that pursue different particular interests, whether political or economic, based on organized violence

5 A police group that in that time was used to disperse concentrations or riots.

6 Pérez, F. *El movimiento estudiantil de 1968*. N.D. Retrieved from: <https://relatosehistorias.mx/nuestras-historias/el-movimiento-estudiantil-de-1968#:~:text=El%20movimiento%20se%20extendi%C3%B3%20rapidamente,de%20las%20escuelas%20en%20huelga.>

It was not a surprise that the authorities, specifically the group of *granaderos*, once again suppressed the student demonstrations. It was from this moment that a generalized sentiment among young people against the government's repression began to be founded, beginning to unify under the same purpose what would be constituted as a Student Movement throughout the entire country. In the midst of this scenario, the UNAM, the IPN and multiple universities throughout Mexico went on strike.

On August 4th, in its first public statement, the contingent formulated a request form based on 6 fundamental points and a condition for public dialogue and called a new demonstration on August 5th. Faced with the growing demonstrations, the country's Army occupied the facilities of the 2 universities in order to contain the movement consolidated in the CNH, without any success. As a result, the principal of UNAM, Javier Barros Sierra, resigned in protest at the invasion of university autonomy by the authorities.

It was not until October 2nd of the same year that the Mexican authorities contained the demonstrations in a massacre of the students in an event that would be known as "La Matanza de Tlatelolco".⁷

That day a new protest march had been called starting from the Plaza de las Tres Culturas in Tlatelolco. Hundreds of soldiers surrounded the site. When the students announced that the walk was being canceled to avoid violence, he started a shootout against the crowd. Fifty years later, it is still unclear where the shooting started. It is also not really known how many people died or were injured.⁸

The tragedy of the event was consolidated into a symbolism for the whole country as a decisive moment in its history. Since October 2nd, 1968, Mexico, politically and socially, transformed into another.

THE BIRTH OF THE UNIVERSIDAD POPULAR AUTÓNOMA DEL ESTADO DE PUEBLA (UPAEP)

From their origins, BUAP and UPAEP share a common history. BUAP is the public academic institution of higher education in the state of Puebla

7 It refers to the events that occurred in 1968 during a protest carried out by students in the Plaza de las Tres Culturas, in which they were attacked by elements of the Mexican army.

8 Nájjar, A. *La matanza de Tlatelolco: qué pasó el 2 de octubre de 1968, cuando un brutal golpe contra estudiantes cambió a México para siempre*, 2018. Retrieved from: <https://www.bbc.com/mundo/noticias-america-latina-45714908>

and one of the most important of Mexico. Its headquarters are located since 1938, in the old school “Carolino” –founded by the Jesuits in 1578– with uninterrupted academic activity until our days. After the student movement of 1968 and as a result of it, they formed the “comités de lucha” in the main universities of the country. It was about a “cellular” organization with the idea of articulating a joint operation for the monitoring and the achievement of the main student demands. While through the committees intended the student union, paradoxically, in various places in Mexico and particularly in Puebla, resulted in a deep division between three different groups: the left, the government and the religious.

In Puebla, in the same way, if we give credibility to what Ortega says, in the sense that “the communist youth led the movement from the beginning to the end” and incorporated the main activists into their ranks, who gave a content of left to the struggle committees and, in addition, or as a consequence, the movement “made the students live a new experience in the popular struggle, questioning in its depth the ideology of the Mexican revolution and the capitalist system as a whole”, there are reasons to doubt the ideological-political orientation that the movement took. And, indeed, of the work and proposals that the Communist Youth and other left groups did, it can be inferred that both in Puebla and in the rest of the country the student movement of ‘68 implied a radical attitude of questioning the capitalist order and society.⁹

Perhaps for this reason, after the strong repression of June 1st, 1971 “on Corpus Thursday”, in Mexico City the clashes between left and government groups were up.

The whole year of 1971 was one of confrontations and mobilizations of the Struggle Committees with government groups, but also the consolidation of the Preparatoria Popular and the political leadership of the movement. On February 8th, the Comités de Lucha demand that Mr. Amado Camarillo¹⁰ sign his resignation and a document “For an education committed to liberation” is released. On February 9th, the university facilities and the Carolino building of the UAP are taken over by

9 Quiroz, A. *Las luchas políticas en Puebla 1961-1981*. Puebla, BUAP, 2006, pp. 136-137.

10 Ex – principal and member of the Administrative Board of the BUAP.

the Comités de Lucha and the unity of the student movement with the popular deepens.¹¹

On the other hand, in addition, the ideological differences between the communists and the student's religious leaders led to strong clashes between the committees of struggle identified as "Carolinos" and the "Frente Universitario Anticomunista (FUA)". Not just college, but Puebla as a whole was convulsed, and it is at that moment when broad groups from some schools and faculties organize themselves and decide to leave BUAP and form a new higher-level educational institution.¹²

THE DEATH OF MARA CASTILLA

The temporary transition of more than 4 decades between the birth of the UPAEP and the murder of one of its students in 2017, represent a long chronological line of considerations about the exponential increase of violence in Mexico and in the State of Puebla. Various chronicles, reports and analyzes have documented how the problem of homicides has been identified as one of the main concerns in the field of Security, given the alarming rates of violence registered in past decades.

The boom in criminal activity in the field of homicides that described the decade of 2010-2019 as the most violent in the country with an average of 1 death every 23 minutes, took a new line of investigation from 2012, the year in which the concept of "Femicide" was incorporated into the Federal Penal Code. Under this temporal scheme of an exponential wave of insecurity and new type of crimes, one of the most tragic events for UPAEP happened: in the context of a process of awareness and activism by women's groups before the apogee of the feminist movement in Mexico, the student Mara Fernanda Castilla Miranda was murdered in the early morning of September 8th, 2017.

With only 19 years old, Mara, who was originally from Xalapa, the capital of the state of Veracruz, was studying the 3rd semester of a degree in Political Science at UPAEP after having moved to the City of Puebla with her sister, Karen Castilla. After attending a bar area with her friends in the municipality of San Andrés Cholula on September 7th, the young woman boarded a vehicle from the Cab platform at approximately 5:00

11 Enrique Agüera, ed., *El 68 En Puebla* (Puebla: BUAP, 2008), pp. 61-62.

12 Consult Louvier, Díaz and Arrubarrrena, 2014: 109 and ss.

am, during which she never arrived home. After her sister Karen noticed her absence the next morning, she found in her email a receipt in which the trip of Mara's car was concluded, so that she asked to see the video surveillance cameras that corroborated that the vehicle had boarded home, but Mara never got off it. Despite the declarations of the driver, who voluntarily appeared before the Prosecutor's Office to expose his presumed innocence, Ricardo Alexis was arrested on September 13th in the state of Tlaxcala, to later be charged on September 15th by the current prosecutor, Víctor Carrancá, as the alleged culprit of the crimes of rape and "femicide" of Mara; according to the chronology of the events, Ricardo Alexis took the young woman to a motel to rape her and later murder her, culminating in the crime with the abandonment of the body in a section of the Puebla-Orizaba highway. Mara Castilla was found by the authorities the next morning.

The outrage of her colleagues and university students in conjunction with feminist groups was noted from the cry for justice for the "femicide" of the young woman. Groups of protesters throughout the country raised their voices together with different civil society organizations to urge the various universities to protest in multiple peaceful marches under the slogans #NiUnaMás, #JusticiaParaMara and #NiUnaMenos.

On the same day, September 16th, relatives, and friends of Mara demonstrated outside the building known as "Casa Aguayo", the seat of the Executive branch and the Ministry of the Interior of the State of Puebla. The next day, students across the country joined the movement in a sense of solidarity and empathy given the recognition of the vulnerability to which they felt exposed as young people and the courage unleashed in a class action lawsuit demanding justice and better security conditions in the country in the face of the terrible crime that occurred. Such was the case of Mexico City, and the states of Guanajuato, Coahuila, Guadalajara, and Veracruz that marched under the slogan #TodasSomosMara.

On Monday, September 18th at 11:30 am, the students of the State of Puebla joined in a contingent for a single cause: the outrage over the loss of Mara Castilla. The tour in the capital of Puebla from the central campus of the UPAEP, where the young woman was studying, concluding to the Plaza del Barrio de Santiago. The weight of these protests was noted with the apprehension of the perpetrator, that until today, continues in a criminal process, causing that the Government of Puebla in that year

withdraw the operating permit to the Cab company; also, on October 20th of the same year, it was made a reform to the Transportation Law to regulate private companies in the entity, this as a result of the murder of another student, now from BUAP, just 14 days after finding Mara's body, an homicide in which it was specified that one of those implicated was a driver of the UBER platform; in this case, the young woman was identified as 20-year-old, Mariana Fuentes Soto.

The femicide of Mara Castilla was established as a benchmark in the Student Movements in the history of Mexico, which was joined by institutions such as UN Women and UN-DH, who spoke out condemning the crime. The impact and relevance of this event generated a collective memory in university students, especially those belonging to the UPAEP, an institution in which the trace of violence was marked and under which its character was firmly consolidated in the face of the insecurity of the State. All this was founded as the pillars of what 3 years later would lead to another loss for the university community that led to the largest Student Movement in the history of the State of Puebla.

THE 2020 PUEBLA STUDENT MOVEMENT (MEP)

On the morning of February 24th, 2020, four lifeless bodies were found in Santa Ana Xalmimilulco, Puebla: two of them were Ximena Quijano and José Antonio Parada, Colombian medical students from the student exchange between UPAEP and the *Fundación Universitaria Sanitas* (UN-ISANITAS). Another was Francisco Javier Tirado, a student at the Benemérita Universidad Autónoma de Puebla (BUAP), with whom they had attended the Huejotzingo carnival. The fourth corresponded to the operator of an Uber transport vehicle that they had boarded to return to their residence. After this unfortunate event, the university communities of the city undertook the task of integrating the committee "Universidades Unidas por la Paz" to demand from the authorities a definitive halt to the state's security problems.

The way the movement impacted both locally, nationally, and even internationally, was the result of its amazing organization and the freshness, originality, and veracity of the demands. All kinds of actors participated in its organization and development: academics, social, political, religious and citizens; however, its leadership –from the finest and most

detailed aspects to strategic decisions— was always found in the hands of the “kids”. Contrary to the traditional development of social expressions and demands, and particularly the youth, this movement stood out, in addition to its magnitude, for its order, positivity and respect for both institutions and citizens in particular, in the case of the monumental mega-march March 5th. All this generated in the participants, the media, the spectators in general and even the authorities an image charged from a hopeful content.

The UPAEP is the result of a split within the BUAP of nearly half a century old. The division has lived through different levels, tones and nuances during that time, where the 2020 MEP is going to become a decisive turning point. As soon as the death of his partner was reported, the students of the BUAP medical school suspended their academic activities and organized a march to “Casa Aguayo” with three simple, concrete, and decisive demands: Peace, security, and justice. The UPAEP students joined the march sharing deep pain and discomfort; despite their history, the communities of both institutions walked together.

On the same Tuesday, February 25th at UPAEP, Don Felipe Pozos -auxiliary bishop of Puebla- celebrated a mass for the students, in the presence of their families, pointing out in an emotional homily: “José Antonio, Ximena, Francisco Javier and Josué Manuel, we promise you do not stand idly by, do not fall into indifference, we want to improve, we want to build, we want to build a state, a city, a country where there is peace, where there is security, where evil does not have the last word”.¹³

The following noon the principal of the UPAEP made a request, from the main entrance of the university,¹⁴ in memory of the young people: “Let us offer this minute of silence, this moment for the lives of these four young people, because we are the voice of those who have no voice, because above all we are capable of assuming the historical, critical commitment to social solidarity”.¹⁵ In the afternoon, as a result of the manifestation of March 5th, the student representatives, accompanied by the principals of the two institutions, met with the state governor. In this event, three aspects converge that, in our opinion, contribute to the con-

13 *Misa En Memoria de Tres Estudiantes y Chofer de UBER Asesinados En Huejotzingo Puebla*, 2020, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aq0EaOf9i8>, 0:16 to 2:20.

14 Calle 21 Sur #1103. Barrio de Santiago CP 72410 of the City of Puebla.

15 *Rector de La Upaep Pide Mantener de Duelo*, 2020, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mJ-F4lxEKkLk>, 0:01 to 0:24.

solidation of the movement: firstly, a few months before the first joint academic activity in the history of both institutions had taken place with the participation of their highest authorities at negotiation table, within the framework of an international congress of humanities;¹⁶ secondly, the march took place in a surprising order clearly recognized by the citizens which, due to the growing insecurity in the city, viewed the mobilization with sympathy, and finally as a result of the meeting with the governor, it was agreed to deepen and legitimize with the communities the nature of the demands to be presented on March 5th at 11:00 hrs. in a new meeting, giving a greater dimension to the movement.

At the end of the meeting, the media approached the principals who in their statements highlighted two surprising facts. Dr. Esparza, principal of BUAP pointed out: “The voices of the students were concentrated in 52 representatives of all the faculties [...] there is a means of communication that they chose which is the student assembly through networks. It is the only option that [...] are using to be able to make their communications known. They are organized in this way”.¹⁷ And for his part, Dr. Baños principal of the UPAEP added: “We want to make a comprehensive proposal that encompasses all communities in the state [...] according to what the student communities are proposing. You know that they are the ones who suggested that we come to this meeting and we gladly agreed, but they bring their voice, they bring their organization”.¹⁸ By this time, the students had already assumed responsibility and consequent leadership of the movement. From that point on, and due to its consequent results, his work became an obligatory reference for the generality of social movements.

On Thursday 27th, in a massive assembly at the central campus of UPAEP, Paola Jurado said: “on February 23rd, murderers took the lives of three of our colleagues and a worker. That is why many of us decide to stop being silent and start acting. Yesterday, thanks to the assembly that we held, we listened to your demands, which will be presented at future worktables together with the governor of the state of Puebla and his work team. May the indignation, the sadness we feel today due to the death

16 The event took place at the UPAEP under the theme: “Political and Educational Institutions in pursuit of the Common Good” on October 25th and 26th, 2019.

17 *Rectores de UPAEP y BUAP - Encuentro Con El Gobernador*, 2020, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tu-rz_FnQgc, 0:46 to 1:55).

18 *Rectores de UPAEP y BUAP - Encuentro Con El Gobernador*, 4:21 to 4:31.

of our comrades, motivate us to remain [...] in which we seek peace and security in our society”.¹⁹

At that time the formation of the movement was evident and, consequently, it was emerging as a very attractive instrument for authorities and powers of all kinds. There were surplus interests to be linked to the demands. This was, in our opinion, the first true test that the students were subjected to, from which they will come out gracefully thanks to their ingenuity, determination, consistency and above all to the truthfulness, simplicity and clarity of their demands for peace, security and justice.

The first methodological step consisted in the integration of the inter-university action committee to articulate the activities of discussion and design of proposals among the different educational institutions. Even from the beginning, its responsibility for the subsequent follow-up of the claims was foreseen. One of its members pointed out:²⁰ “We are interested, not only in the student community but in the general public [...] our strength lies in this, in following up today as students, but tomorrow as professionals”.²¹ The result consisted of a totally simple and pragmatic organization as well as original: “In the beginning [...] a page was created on Facebook [...] each of the universities [...] elects a representative, in our case it is Paola Jurado. She executes the decisions made in the committee and [...] coordinates with the other relatives [...] to form the largest committee, which is the UUPP”.²²

For her part, Itzel Montiel, President of the board of directors of the International Relations Alumni Society added: “in the demonstrations on Friday, here at the university when we continued and continue to receive more universities [...] the university committee was created with the objective to show society [...] that the colleges are united, that they are not only BUAP and UPAEP but many more”.²³

The second methodological step was characterized by the respectful and harmonious integration of all kinds of student demonstrations. Par-

19 *Acción Simbólica de La Unidad*, 2020, <https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=574371163158976>, 0:15 to 1:17.

20 Carlos Moreno, Law student at UPAEP.

21 *ULTRA Noticias Con Fernando Canales*, 2020, https://www.facebook.com/watch/live/?ref=watch_permalink&v=3000561723321623, 1:55:01 to 1:55:22.

22 *ULTRA Noticias Con Fernando Canales*, 1:57:02 to 1:58:13.

23 *ULTRA Noticias Con Fernando Canales*, 1:58:16 to 1:59:15.

adoxically, this point excluded all types of participation in the work of the interuniversity committee of any proposal outside the academic communities. “Within the committee and with the support of the university, we have been very careful with that aspect, we understand the policy, but we are also very clear that we do not want other people to take over this matter that is very painful for us [...]. If any statement is released by the student community is through our official pages”.²⁴ At that point Itzel commented: “On Wednesday, after the demonstrations that took place here outside the university, there was a work and scholar strike for that day and, at least in our case, the university continued with normal work since Thursday, however, that does not mean that we do not support our colleagues who continue in the strike, we accept any of their expressions of demonstrating against this [...] at the university we continue working and supporting everyone”.²⁵

The third and last methodological step focused on the specification and adoption of clear and simple means, actions and measures: “We are working on the logistics part [...] we are asking that you do not go with your face covered, that you go with your credentials, it is a student march and from time to time we will ask for: *credencial arriba*”²⁶ and, Itzel added: “we want to call more students to attend[...]. Let them know that we are organized, that we are supporting them and that we hope to see you all on Thursday”.²⁷

Thus, on March 5th, 2020, the most shocking student expression in the history of Puebla took place. From 7:00 a.m. students gathered in an orderly manner in different parts of the city to start three simultaneous columns that, along their respective routes, joined forces to arrive at the government house at 11:00 and accompany their representatives. Despite the number of participants,²⁸ a glass was not broken; not a single wall was painted or stained; at a certain perfectly determined distance there were supply booths, especially water booths and medical aid points. Each contingent had a group responsible for its organization, security, and protection.

24 *ULTRA Noticias Con Fernando Canales*, 1:56:05 to 1:56:59.

25 *ULTRA Noticias Con Fernando Canales*, 2:03:02 to 2:03:39.

26 *ULTRA Noticias Con Fernando Canales*, 2:09:25 to 2:09:51.

27 *ULTRA Noticias Con Fernando Canales*, 2:08:44 to 2:08:49.

28 According to the reference medium, the figure ranged between 35,000 and 200,000 participants. We believe that the reality could have been around 100,000 people.

With a difference of 20 minutes, pairs of students passed with bags to avoid leaving garbage; the protesters wore their university IDs to prevent anonymity and, as a result, the sympathy and support of the citizens was evident. But these were only details, the most important was the requirement of the three demands for peace, security, and justice, perfectly legitimized by the student communities and accompanied by strategic lines and specific proposals, which impacted the state authorities.

POLITICAL HARMONIZATION TABLE

Now that the panorama has been established, we consider that it is necessary to stop looking at the past for one moment and provide solutions that might help students and authorities to create a proposal that contributes with the creation of a plan in order to enrich the students' movement of Puebla. For this reason, the proposal is a "Political Harmonization Table".

According to the *Guía para la Armonización Legislativa con Perspectiva de Género al Derecho interno del Estado de México* of Elizardo Rannau-ro Melgarejo, harmonization is defined as the coordination of different juridical norms applied to the regulation of different juridical relations, focused on achieve adequate solutions; in other words, a space were people, institutions, organizations, and other actors reunite to dialogue and achieve an agreement.

The topics considered on harmonization tables are related with the citizens' needs; that's why harmonization has been chosen as a central concept, and so, take on count the different juridical systems, attempting to achieve more juridical security and justice on its results. According to Elizardo, harmonization is not a synonym of unification, but the structure of a much bigger process that makes compatible the different normative perspectives, which might be accepted by the majority of the people.

The success of any activity, including the dialogue tables, reside in its careful and detailed planning. Because of that, it's needed to take forecasts based on criteria such as:

1. The organizers: For preparing the activities of citizen participation, it is convenient counting with a group of people that as-

sume all the identified tasks in each phase. For that, the first step will be defining this component.

2. Topic and objectives: The second step is a moment to define the central topic and the main objective.
3. Range: With the third step, the people we want to reach must be defined to adapt the program to it.
4. Definition of dynamic and structure of the dialogue table: Is fundamental to establish the structure that will be chosen and followed. Yet it is an action, and needs to follow a series of specific requirements to be part of the plan, and have a designated team of people
5. Promotion and announcement: Depending on the proposed objectives, a dialogue table may require some mechanisms of promotion, announcements, or both. It can be published by institutional resources of communications, being helpful to do so, as in external media too, so this is a needed cell of the organization.
6. Conclusions:
 - All of the elements that compose the planning, must be reflected and defined from who are organizing.
 - Remember that the planning of an activity requires more time than the implementation.
 - Always have times in mind, for it's better that the activity is not canceled or moved after being promoted. Before giving a release date, check on the required time of planning.
 - The puzzle of planning is solved according to the needs, the reality, and requirements. Because of that, the steps needed in planning are suggestions that can be changed or modified if the circumstance requires it.

The violent reality of the country has created the necessity of looking for mechanisms that go farther than repressive measures, going to dialogue and confront the problem. In this context, harmonization tables emerge as participation spaces, in times formalized by the government, and informal instances that appear impulse by initiative of actors involved in the conflict.

In the last decades, the government harmonization tables have been part of mechanisms to board conflict, and try to solve it, most of them installed in crisis situations, without previously establishing the necessary conditions to take the idea to a good end; most of the time it's a graduate instituted figure, and incomplete, so it has lost credibility as a choice.

Trying to recognize the needs to comprehend the conflict in all its dimensions, as the better way to board them, from the *Oficina Nacional de Diálogo y Sostenibilidad* (ONDS), documents with the purpose of understanding and analyzing have been produced to find strategies to solve and transform the needs. Because of this in the fifth edition of *Informe de Diferencias, Controversias y Conflictos Sociales: Willaqniki. Mesas de Diálogo, Mesas de Desarrollo y Conflictos Sociales en el Perú*; an article that reflects the thinking of ONDS it is presented as an article based on their experience in dialogue tables oriented to prevention of conflicts based on dialogue as the main strategy to avoid a problem.

The idea presented of the harmonization table goes allied to this: a formalized mechanism of dialogue in which opinions, proposals, initiatives and perspectives of whom live on a daily basis on the planted circumstances, can reach the ears of authorities, making able to work in an organized and united way for giving an answer and solution to every single crisis, specially to the problems that have involved the university community.

One of the main questions that must be taken into consideration is, how to ensure the efficiency of this harmonization table? It is known that most of the time, attempting this idea has failed to consolidate its objectives, which is why we find the necessity to have order, and know where to act on the plan. The proposal must be clear, established, needs precision so actors can act accordingly and achieve the goals established.

In this sense, the efficient functioning of the table is proposed as a point of inflection due to the fact that it constitutes a significant advance in the projects, as well as in the policies of dialogue and citizen participation with the different groups of actors and with the government. The effectiveness of the actions and strategies that will be developed in the harmonization table, has the objective of constituting a platform that strengthens the rule of law of our State, while reactivating its presence and generating an adequate environment for governance that leads to concrete actions to control insecurity and violence.

The success of the political harmonization table contributes not only to generate a joint work among the different actors and to give solution to the problems that are approached in the proposal, but to generate citizen legitimacy, as well as to a democratic exercise that strengthens the networks of citizen participation, which in a long term consolidate strategies that might prevent possible future conflicts that would include a much wider panorama towards other areas of interest for the citizens.

CONCLUSION

The committee “Universidades Unidas por la Paz” was the tangible result of the coordinated action of the students in the face of the need to integrate a group representing student interests in matters of security, and which today is legitimized as a national and international benchmark for protest and political negotiation to which the authorities must face according to the reasonableness of the demands that are made with him and to which a space for participation must be opened due to his capacity and determination in the search for better conditions and a better country.

As a conclusion, we can establish that to make work a political harmonization table it is necessary to include all the actors involved, because the main objective of this type of negotiation is to construct a solution in order to create a commonwealth. The integration of all the different actors can be considered as governance since each person provides ideas and becomes integrated into decision-making.

It is important to take into consideration that the political harmonization table is not based on ideologies if not in facts. Ideologies in most of the cases are useful to understand the world and to adopt a posture about it; but in negotiation and political harmonization tables, ideologies just radicalize and polarize the postures, making as a result that the creation of solutions become harder.

On the other hand, the participation of the different actors is indeclinable, which means that each person must be aware about every single event in order to contribute to the modifications of the proposal and to be an active member of the organization.

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