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ARTURO ANGUIANO

**MEXICO: THE CONTRADICTIONS AND
UNCERTAINTIES OF A TRUNCATED
DEMOCRATIC PROCESS**

JUST A FEW YEARS since the historic election in 2000 in which Vicente Fox Quesada, the candidate of the National Action Party (PAN) was elected as president of the Republic, it has become evident that it has failed the famous democratic transition that supposedly would end with political alternation in the government and with the rule of the transfigured regime of the Mexican Revolution. The votes that piled in then, with the sole aim of putting an end to the domination symbolized by the Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI), were soon proved useless and a bad bet when an openly corporate government was formed, as this government repeated the same neoliberal policies, impregnated with a religious fundamentalism that has only reinforced the conservative line. The consensus that was built then has crumbled and the disenchantment, anger and even polarization and despair in society is manifest in all sectors (from the businessmen to the ecclesiastical hierarchy, with all types of political parties and civil organizations in between). The economy, which the first president of the post-PRI era had promised to expand, has barely managed to keep afloat, constantly thrashed and battered by the fluctuations in

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the US economy, on which it has become more dependant than ever since the North American Free Trade Agreement came into effect.

With Carlos Salinas de Gortari's government, Mexico had already tagged on to the first world through NAFTA, which basically meant the Mexican economy's total subjection to the rhythm, demands and weaknesses of its US counterpart. The so-called government of change headed by Fox –a former Coca Cola employee– continued with the same actions, encouraged and reinforced the same economic, social and political trends, and as a result, sooner rather than later it began to lose the credibility that it had won thanks to the votes and, in particular, to the defeat of the PRI's candidate, which at that moment was seen as a historic turning point.

THE FIRST PROFOUND CHANGE: CREDIBLE ELECTIONS

The mere respect for the votes for the election to the different offices, principally that of president of the Republic, even though it represents a significant novelty that marks the beginning of the twenty first century in Mexico, has in no way opened up channels for an in-depth change in the political regime and its workings. The fall of the PRI has loosened some of the corporate and patrimonial ties that for decades had deprived society of political space, ways to participate and democratic life. But all over the nation the patronage and hierarchical relationships, oppression and subjugation, injustice, lack of freedom and the persecution of those who are different or dissatisfied have been repeated, even increased, as have all the authoritarian reflections of an exclusive regime that never tolerated diversity, equalitarianism or democracy.

In a very short time the government of change turned into a grotesque caricature of the PRI government, ultimately showing the deep-roots and power of the methods, practices and conditions that the former regime had turned into a political culture that not only hasn't disappeared but has defined and impregnated the PAN government and all of the institutional political players. Furthermore, Vicente Fox will end his term with a terrible year in which, with ostentation, he has managed to reproduce the worst traits of the PRI regime: attacking the fragile autonomy of unions with the vertical imposition of leaders in the unions, repressive violence against social movements such as that of the miners in Lazaro Cárdenas, Las Truchas, Michoacan and the generalized violations of human rights with the excessive use of force used to punish the rebellious inhabitants of San Salvador Atenco in the State of Mexico. Even more, the last presidential elections on July 2nd, 2006, are reminiscent of the State elections run by the PRI, with the illegal use of vast state resources, the overwhelming presence of the media, elections that, as in the past, appear to be marked by fraud.

In fact, everything that existed before still exists but –as tends to happen in historic processes of change– it is degraded, decaying, obviously with new elements (democratic, federative, still weak), which even so fail to crystallize, despite the fact that (however much) they are presented as the democracy so much desired by everybody. Although weakened and with little negotiating capacity, the corporate machine keeps on rolling and its aging operators swing between past and present loyalties, but basically they remain subordinate to the presidency of the Republic. The so-called state party regime tumbled as soon as the president ceased to personify the undifferentiated amalgam of state control and the mechanism for the control and reproduction of the political class and consensus by means of a fictitious electoral processes.

However, the end of the state party regime that represented the PRI-government has not put an end to the partisan State, that is, the Party-State that is being reinvented by the PAN at the federal level and by the governing party itself and the other parties in the states. All over the country, the amalgamation of the state machinery and the party is being repeated, even if it is a different party. The illusion of a diverse, plural state community consolidated in its contradictions by the State and the intended universal representation this expresses with regard to the set of social relationships, are completely destroyed. On the contrary a thriving specific ratio of powers can be found that is biased towards the actions of the state machinery as a whole and redefines power in a mafia way. Rather than representing the society as a whole, the State subjugates and disintegrates the subordinate social nuclei and promotes the interests of globalized financial capital more than ever before.

Corporatism and presidentialism continue to move the Mexican political regime with its wealth of patronage and hierarchical relationships, permitted and repeated thanks to the corruption of all kinds, which is now more diversified and generalized than ever. Perhaps what is new is the fact that presidentialism has not been able to reinforce the characteristics that made it omniscient and all-powerful, and, on the contrary, it is incurably losing the almost mystic aura that characterized it. Its authority and capacity for action, mediation and negotiation, are gradually crumbling. For this reason, power seems to be fragmenting, regionally and locally, where, however, the presidentialist, corporate and patronage mechanisms and relationships are still being repeated. Institutional centralism is still in operation, although weakened, while the nation, as at the beginning of the last century, is fragmenting into regional and even autonomous powers. Although the “PRI-government” formula no longer exists centrally, all over the country –and regardless of which party it is– truncated mo-

dalities are being repeated, which are a new, updated version of the partisan, exclusive, abusive management of power.

In reality, the different parts of the perverse institutionality that articulated this kind of State-party, which took away the Mexicans' democratic liberties, such as the intended three autonomous powers (Executive, legislative and judicial), the federation and the municipality, have been continuously revamped, but they still reaffirm the predominance of a presidentialism that has apparently seen better times. Even so, it is present as a concept that governs and impregnates all relationships and articulations.

The presidentialism in which Vicente Fox Quesada's government takes refuge is a presidentialism without authority, like that of Ernest Zedillo Ponce de Leon (1994-2000), sifted with the frivolity of the figure of the presidential couple and the president's rural ignorance. It does not seem to be directed towards a political restructuring that would mean a real change of regime (the much-discussed reform of the State), or, even less, to be leading to a democratic regime, as yesterday's and today's apologists tirelessly claim.

Rather, we seem to be witnessing the limited expansion of the same authoritarian regime, with a presidentialism that upholds the majority of its functions and prerogatives but has touches of the president's inconsistent, unpredictable personality, from now on supported by a kind of political party system that guarantees the reproduction of a new political class in charge of managing the state machinery and occupying and giving meaning to the political area. The regime is getting broader, certain channels are becoming more flexible, functions are blended, institutional and other hierarchies are restructured, the power and the booty are divided up, certain relationships are rebuilt and a new political society is founded with restricted admission. This is the real "possible" state reform from above, the outcome of the PRI regime, closed, exclusive and historically removed from any kind of democracy: its self-reform, supported by the neoliberal transfiguration of the State and the dogged fundamentalism of the market that conditions, infuses and at the same time determines all the policies, actions and relationships, irrespective of the differences of tone or texture.

THE DEGRADATION OF THE INSTITUTIONS AND POLITICAL LIFE

But beyond the institutional political scenarios and, even within them, the intended government of change represented by Vicente Fox has not only failed to transform or rebuild another democratic regime on the ashes of the antiquated, decadent regime of the Mexican Revolution, but it is advancing in disarray towards its early decay and de-

cline. Firstly, all of the parts of the institutional regime that are still in effect (the so-called three powers, the corporate, presidentialism, and the incipient party system) are speeding down the path to delegitimation, inoperability and crisis.

The State, the executive power, embodied as they are in the person of the president, seems to be drifting in no clear direction, no matter how much it navigates within the parameters of the neoliberal policies. However, President Fox's ignorance and lack of ability do not hide his religious fundamentalism with which he imbues his actions or, less still, his subordination to the interests and imperial policies of the United States, in spite of the disloyalties of his friend, President George Bush. Beyond the much talked of conflict with Cuba, his actions that stand out most are those directed at denationalizing the energy sector, privatizing water, overprotecting financial capital, especially foreign banks, and leaving the farmers hit by the TLC without protection, as well as the wage-earner and excluded sectors.

The Congress of the Union is permanently tangled up in the pragmatic agreements, blackmails and negotiations that paralyze it for most of the time, but it almost invariably ends up endorsing the federal government's initiatives. The pretense of indigenous reform that goes against the current of the San Andrés Agreements signed by the government of Ernesto Zedillo and the Zapatista National Liberation Army (EZLN), was easily the most despicable case of conspiracy of interests against the excluded social sectors. The congresses –both federal and local– pay more obedience to the factious interests of the government and the parties which their members come from than to the worries and interests of the people they supposedly represent. The provocative use of the Chamber of Deputies to arbitrarily strip the head of the Federal District's Government, Andrés Manuel López Obrador, of his privileges and immunity and his office was indisputable evidence of the crisis in institutional representation. As the hard nucleus of the new political class, its dominant concern is to find the mechanisms for its perpetuation within the institutional political spaces (reelection, extension of terms of office, salaries, prerogatives, etc).

The so-called judicial power is the one that has been renewed least, without reforms that would enable it to transform the integration mechanisms, its composition and its functions. The president still carries decisive weight in the designation of its members and the judges. The administration of justice lacks autonomy and is subordinated politically and organically to the heads of the executive powers (national and state). The members of the judicial power –including the ministers of the Supreme Court of Justice of the Nation (SCJN)– have always and still do appear to be a closed, privileged, antidemocratic oligarchy,

without legitimacy, in a legalistic country riddled with laws, but without clear, unquestionable legality. It is the most antiquated part of the political class and its performance confirms the weakness of a State of law that doesn't govern but is interpreted at the convenience of the powers.

The political parties, and the party system in general, which are professed to be the most patent expression of the democratic change in the country, are going through an early crisis of credibility and identity. The beneficiaries of a system they have created themselves, have taken over the increasingly narrow political space in an exclusive manner. The absence of democracy in the country formed and conditioned them until the same authoritarian, patronage and obviously corrupt habits and inertias that characterized and still characterize the political regime, were reproduced in its structures and rules of operation. The active members were replaced by civil servants who were paid enormous sums of money, thanks to the public funds that the parties generously allotted to each other in compliance with the legal requirements they had agreed on themselves. The electoral franchise system excluded society at the same time as it permitted the expansion of the professional political class that operates politics as if it were a job for specialists. With no other bonds to society than those of patronage, without any pragmatic references or readings of the reality to identify them, the parties have mimicked each other, becoming indistinguishable, governed by the same political culture of patronage that characterized the PRI. Their internal struggles for power and money and the repeated scandals are no more than a part of the political show presented to society, to the audience that comprises the vast majority of its members.

The fact that institutional elections are finally being carried out under the organization and supervision of electoral bodies (the Federal Electoral Institute and its equivalents in the states) that are more or less autonomous from the authorities and that, for the same reason, the votes are counted and recorded with a certain degree of transparency, is definitely an advance since this was the central demand of the democratic movement. It represented a first step towards the effective emergence of the citizenry, whose rights have always been usurped by the State and its politico-corporate instruments. But this fundamental step is emptied of content so long as the climate of freedom continues to be segmented, differentiated, unrestricted at the top, restricted, conditioned and even regimented at the bottom. The political and social rights of the different components of Mexican society continue to be precarious, conditioned by the needs to repeat the consensus and the intended legitimacy of the regime that has not yet finished breaking with the structures or the corporate bonds that supported it. They

are basically regimented in such a way that they prevent escape from society and the advance of self-organization and autonomy measures that would unhinge or upset the political scene articulated by the *centrality of the electoral process*. Society continues to have a truncated citizenry that is under surveillance and under suspicion. No policy is accepted other than the institutional, state policy that gives the parties registered exclusivity of representation and of electoral and government action, this is institutional. The elections are still not really credible and the action of the arbiter –the Federal Electoral Institute– has resulted perverse, biased, leaning crudely towards the government and the right-wing party.

The community, the village, the neighborhood, the organization, the company, as public spaces where society can discuss and jointly decide on the issues that concern them and vitally involve them, that is, where the underdogs engage in politics, they are all subjected to a beating that disintegrates and paralyzes them, seeking to steer them towards the protected institutional channels, that is, towards the parties and their patronage methods of representation and management. Everywhere the patronage relationships are reproduced and consequently reinforce the corruption, subordination, and multiform repression against those who overstep the restricted forms of political participation that characterize the “new” institutionality set up under the sign of “change”. As always, the government fears the mobilization of society and, above all, the autonomization of its suppressed members who could rebel or resist.

The democracy that is supposed to have arrived in Mexico under the modernizing auspices of neoliberal globalization is consolidated in this way in electoral participation, around which witty scenes and shows are mounted, regulated by the ups and downs of the polls. The citizen, finally existing for the first time in Mexico, turns out to be more of a spectator who is watching a movie or television programs performed by professional actors who can create the illusion of getting through to him, filling him with expectations and dreams. But in practice he finds them foreign, volatile, as things that are imposed on him, that manipulate him and even end up confirming his abandonment and exclusion. Of course, as a part of the change, also advertised as the modernization of politics, in the country itself, they promote the full individualization of society, from now on composed of citizens in possession of individual rights that are consolidated in the recurring vote. That is, like a sort of citizens who are conceived as being part-time.

Everything collective, pertaining to the community or the neighborhood or society, is presented as disposable waste from the past and, therefore, social and collective rights are also undermined. Neither in

the unions, nor in the peasants' organizations, nor in the villages, nor even in the parties, has it been possible to pave the way for authentic democracy with no obstacles. Individual passivity, not collective action, is what is sought to support the new Mexican democracy.

AN EXCLUSIVE, OLIGARCHIC POLITICAL REGIME

Consequently, the centrality of the electoral process has been imposed on all the political processes, which overdetermines and resizes all of the organizations, relationships and political practices in the country. In this way, the parties are the inevitable and almost exclusive players in the political plot; they are projected as state organizations responsible for intervening in the interminable campaigns for the election of the institutional representatives to the different bodies (governments, congresses) and ensuring their performance. So then, they become the only way that is tolerated, officially recorded and legal, to enter an area of politics that has been degraded to the merely governmental and institutional. All of the others –organizations, communities, peoples and individuals– are excluded, condemned to their political marginalization, no longer just to socio-economic and cultural exclusion. Their voices are distorted or silenced, they are supplanted.

Supported by public funding and mechanisms that guarantee them the monopoly over political participation, the parties become electoral mechanisms without a political soul, stripped of their ideology and deprogrammed. Attended to and occupied only by professionals, (paid civil servants and state employees, people elected from different positions), the ideological and political profiles of the different parties become blurred due to the demands of the marketing and opinion polls that govern not only their political and governmental practices but also their internal processes, which become warped and break down. The parties' social bonds weaken and fade, just taking on the form of commercial relationships and the restricted exchange of favors and loyalties, generally circumstantial. In fact, all of the parties discard their distinguishing features and mimic each other, readopting and expanding the PRI culture –which obviously thrived as a perfect national political culture that was undemocratic, inequitable and generated inequality. The struggles and demands of the different sectors of society and the nation's economic, social, political and cultural needs, appear like a discordant echo from surveys and opinion polls, all from private agencies. For this reason the parties swing between frivolity and social autism, trapped in a show without worrying too much about the possible audience and their demands.

In the new political society that characterizes twentieth century Mexico, the parties and the different social sectors follow diverging

paths and it seems unlikely they will manage to cross. The parties appear to be booming, full of possibilities, rich from the public wealth, promoted by the modern media, participants in an increasingly exclusive political society with rules and enciphered codes, cohesive due to the indiscriminate exercise of power and where entry is only by means of an intricate initiation process supervised by the IFE. On the other hand, society is disintegrating and segmenting under the influence of the regressive economic policies that result in a massive loss of jobs and condemn ever broader and more diverse strata of the population to impoverishment, emigration and uncertainty. Although the corporatized social organizations as a whole are becoming thinner and losing any ability to negotiate (subordinated as never before) the autonomous social and civil institutions are the ones that suffer most from harassment by a “plural” (multiparty) government that seeks to displace them, paralyze them, corner them or co-opt them.

Disintegrated, persecuted, cornered, the subordinated social sectors are expelled from the political sphere, their human rights (political and social) are undermined and the only thing they are offered as a feasible alternative is the saving bond (commercial, patronage) with the parties and their government administrations or the parliamentary efforts that should favor them. The institutional channels appear to be the way to safeguard certain minimum means of existence through the generalized assistentialism in the form of social policy par excellence (once again multiparty), the complicated procedures in the different public institutions and the promise of informal jobs in exchange for the precarious jobs they have just lost. Although the countryside can't put up with any more, they maintain the supposedly free-market neoliberal policies –negatively affected by the provisions of NAFTA– and on the other hand, the solutions to the peasant's urgent demands are not to be seen anywhere. Scourged villages, disintegrating communities, desolate cities are depopulated; they emigrate in the search of dreams and hopes to the empire of no hope in the North.

The junk market promoted by the political parties and the “governments of change” –and not only by Fox's government– puts a distrustful society on the defensive, even though it appears to lack any real alternatives. The recurring electoral processes are the opportunity for a profusion of propaganda by all of the parties and the governments, who are bent on selling their candidates using marketing methods that barely distinguish one from the other, except perhaps by the colors that also seem to become blurred and merge into an enormous undifferentiated shapeless splotch. But the noise in the media, although deafening, contrasts visibly with the apathy shown by the people towards the never-ending election campaigns that are unlikely

to attract anybody to the polling stations except for the voters who are committed to one of the parties or party-governments.

The reformed political regime and its parties are living the fantasy of mere state politics, members of an exclusive political society with limited responsibility, without attending to or noticing the changing moods of the excluded society that has just been called to cast a vote without any options or prospects. Nobody wants to see that the ship is running adrift, with a captain who is unskilled and doesn't know where he's going, caught up in his childishness, disorder and confusion.

The very long, scandalous electoral campaign based on an excessively dirty war and uncontrolled spending, with the repetition of the worst patronage practices of the PRI, which fabricated totally one-sided State elections, has confirmed how far we are from landing in a truly democratic regime, whatever the adjective used to describe it. The scandals surrounding the corruption in the presidential family uncovered a very advanced process of rot that expresses a prolonged political culture based on a corruption that nobody has bothered to eradicate and really change. In the parties, this stems from the breaking of the social bonds that ought to characterize the parties.

The offensive of the impeachment that was maintained for nearly a year by president Fox and his allies (the main parties, the businessmen and the media) to disqualify Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador (of the Democratic Revolution Party) as the main contender for the already well-advanced presidential succession, rarified and polarized the national political atmosphere in 2005, preparing the institutional political crisis scenario we are experiencing now after the unclear and not very credible election results on July 2nd, 2006, which gave a very narrow victory to the PAN candidate, Felipe Calderon. Deprived of its social element, politics assumes the logic of the market, of crude competition, the logic of profit that imposes itself with neither scruples nor principles, nor programs, nor rules nor ethical considerations of any worth, in the search for competitiveness and political success, which is nothing more than the accumulation of material assets, public offices and the opportunity to be heard. Marketing replaces political strategies, private consultancy firms replace programs and advertising, mostly in the media, replaces mobilizations, the political practice of the social sectors.

The opacity of the political parties permits all kinds of alliances aimed at achieving a particular policy or, particularly, entered into in order to obtain different kinds of elective offices. But the political show, that of crude power, bores and cloy. It is found clearly alien and imposed, and a means of achieving personal ambitions; the players demonstrate their blunders, their lack of ability and capacity, their

utter lack of sensitivity and their imperviousness towards their environment. Now when they are only just starting out, the parties are in crisis, socially isolated, caught up in egocentric soliloquies, dazzled by power and money and their driving ambition that keeps them united in spite of their internal squabbles, which paralyze them.

ALTERNATIVES IN THE FACE OF THE DISORDER OF THOSE AT THE TOP

In general, the government of change represented by Vicente Fox and the PAN, like the other parties' local governments of change, was in a permanent state of disorder, putting into practice erratic policies that reproduced inequality, the weakening of the economy, the tearing of the social fabric and the loss of the nation's viability, not just because of the porosity of the borders caused by neoliberal globalization, but also due to the economic, social and political subordination to the empire of the North. From Miguel de la Madrid (1982 to 1988) to Fox, the Mexican nation has been disarticulated, torn apart, stripped of its national resources and of policies that would reaffirm its consistency, its viability as a nation that is independent, even though it is autonomously incorporated in a planet without opportunities but plagued with contradictions and imperial restructurings.

The nation's loss of identity and viability is due to the fact that the whole country, its economy, its institutions, its society, have been transfigured under the onslaught of neoliberal globalization and the material and cultural transformations that superimpose and aim at a "westernization" (Americanization) that sweeps away and dismantles traditions, histories and the country's own native, local and national cultures. In this way, not only do the economy and political forms dance to the tune of neoliberal hegemony, which is more fragile today in spite of everything, but there is also an attempt to overthrow and wash out history, the life of peoples and societies that are much richer and diverse than those imposed by technological development and the power of the media.

Vicente Fox's government, the different institutional actors in the form of parties, and his followers are leading the country adrift, in no direction, battered violently by the hurricane winds of the war of expansion, the oligopolic, oligophrenic world economy charged with crises and the instability of political institutions emptied of social content and delegitimized in the eyes of societies that resist exclusion and being reduced to the status of a mere audience to the perverse, degrading spectacles of the others, of the government or the perverted powers who have come down in the world. However, we shouldn't fool ourselves and just see the disorder or lack of skill of a frivolous, ignorant pilot or the ambition and corrupt unprogrammed ineptness

of the whole political class. In any case, they act within the unchallengeable parameters of neoliberalism, which they consider to be an unavoidable misfortune, and as a result the first things to suffer are the living, working, material and cultural conditions of the workers, of the subordinated social strata.

That has transformed institutional politics, merely state politics and the politics of the government. The wager is to prevent the formation and above all organization of autonomous alternatives that would act under different rules and logics than those of the market and, on the contrary, would give priority to the community. This means that they would reject the exclusive, oppressive situation reproduced by neoliberalism in the form of a devastating, fatal capitalist order, and, conversely, from now on seek to construct a web of relationships, organizations and policies that would undermine the rule of money and perverse individuality and aim towards an equalitarian, just, free, libertarian future.

All the institutional actors are acting against the latter –from the PAN to the PRD including the PRI and the governments and institutional representatives in every corner of the country. The whole political regime, its rules for funding, organization, management and representation have been created to prevent the hostilities of the other actors who are excluded, despised and feared indiscriminately and without any opportunity.

The sordid political atmosphere, heavily polluted by marketing and the degradation of institutional politics rely on disorder and chaos as a way to increase and spread mistrust, discouragement and apathy in society everywhere. Therefore, it is not surprising that the election campaign of 2006 to choose a new president of the Republic was characterized by the imposition of a politics of fear that led to the extreme polarization of society. A society that was paralyzed would provide room to maneuver for the mounting and policies of the show, however depressing and terrible it might be. A society that was mobilized and critical would not cease to resist the stupidity and the economic and political aggression repeated by neoliberalism. For this reason, the paths of the parties and other institutional players cross, without stumbling on the paths that are being opened up by society, its communities, peoples and collective components.

The political crisis that obviously characterizes the Mexican situation is really their problem, that of the political class, the power of the privileged blinded by their long and apparently undisputed power. The restricted democracy that they foster cannot be resolved by a complete reorganization of social life since it has become an exclusive option, for just a few, elitist, only for the so-called political class. The others, the excluded, the underdogs, the society that resists, maintains its criti-

cal edge and even irony as conditions for its existence, are only just beginning to renew bonds, put two and two together and recover their organizational, political and cultural traditions decimated by those at the top. It is not going through any crisis, except, perhaps, birth pangs. It is preparing to act, to resist, shaking off the imposed inertias and alienations and seeking to reverse an unfavorable ratio of power. It is barely beginning to get going, stealthily, determinedly, like in the early morning of New Year's Day 1994. In the face of the crisis in state politics and the reduction of society's public spaces, the EZLN began the *Other Campaign* as a way to start repairing the social fabric and the possibilities of another politics based on society's self-organization.

In the struggles, in the attempts at restructuring the organizations, in the defense of autonomies, self-government and self-organization, even in mere irritation and protest, it is carving out –on the fringe of state politics and the political institutional society– another way to do politics, the politics of the oppressed, politics understood as the vital resistance of workers, indigenous people, peasants, women, young people, intellectuals, etc. The politics that will not allow itself to become trapped in the present, but rather lives in it looking towards the future.

It would appear that the state politics and the politics from below cannot cross, they follow different paths and their actors and destinations will no doubt be different. In view of the scandalous struggle for power without alternatives, faced by all the parties in the permanent election campaign that characterizes the reupdated regime, society needs to advance with its reorganization from below, experimenting with new, democratic methods of reorganization and participation, working hard to outline political alternatives that will fight for justice, equality and the freedom to do a different politics under the influence of the regressive economic policies that result in a massive loss of jobs and condemn ever broader and more diverse strata of the population to impoverishment, emigration and uncertainty.

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