



Social sculpture as a driver for social cohesion.  
How is this principle understood in relation to creative practices  
and the *g/local* cultural policies in Mexico City?

A Research Paper presented by:

M. Belén Moro

Mexico

in partial fulfillment of the requirements for obtaining the degree of

MASTER OF ARTS IN DEVELOPMENT STUDIES

Major: Social Policy for Development 2015/16

Members of the Examining Committee:

Roy Huijsmans

Wendy Harcourt

The Hague, The Netherlands

November 2016

## Disclaimer

This document represents part of the author's study programme while at the Institute of Social Studies. The views stated therein are those of the author and do not necessarily those of the Institute.

## Inquiries:

### Postal address

International Institute of Social Studies  
P.O. Box 29776  
2502 LT The Hague  
The Netherlands

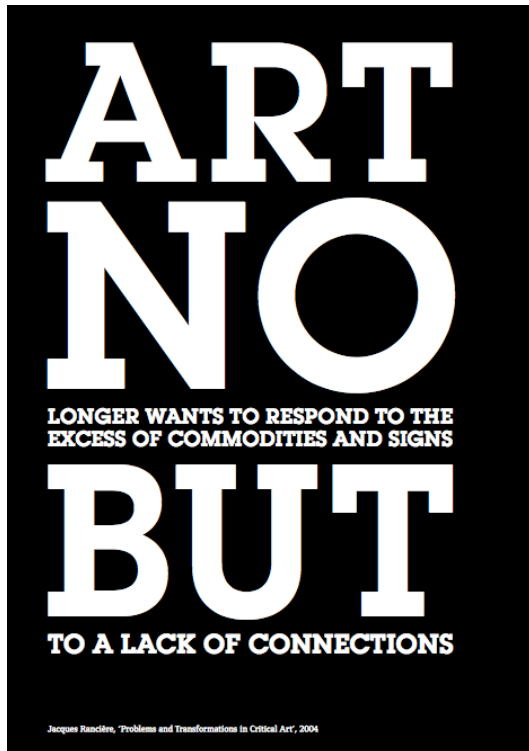
### Location:

Kortenaerkade 12  
2518 AX The Hague  
The Netherlands

Telephone: +31 70 426 0460

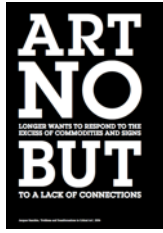
Email: [info@iss.nl](mailto:info@iss.nl)

Fax: +31 70 426 0799



*To the memory of my father, Juan José Moro, and to my mother, Gladys Beatriz Mori, who encouraged me in critical thinking, love for humanity and awareness on the individual and collective values that are nothing if we do not practice them in our daily life.*

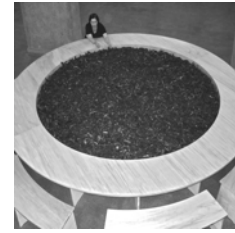
## List of images



Rancière, J. (2004) 'Problems and Transformations in Critical Art'. Image made from the text for Bishop, C. (Ed) (2006) *Participation*. Cambridge, London: Whitechapel. Massachusetts: The MIT Press



©Klophaus, U. (1967) Ringgespräch in der Klasse Beuys zur Gründung der deutschen Studentepartie (Round in Beuys' class about the constitution of the German Student Party).



© Sacks, S (2007-2016) *Exchange Values: Images of Invisible Lives*. Before the start of a forum, Dornach 2007



© Sacks, S (2007-2016) *Exchange Values: Images of Invisible Lives*. Shelley Sacks introducing a Forum, Dornach 2007.



©Tate Archive Photographic Collection (1972) Joseph Beuys's Action Piece. Presented as part of seven exhibitions held at the Tate Gallery 24 February - 23 March 1972.



© Grobet, L. (1990) 'Ruta 521'. Grupo Proceso Pentágono.



©Ivo Martinovic (2011) Andreja Kulunčić 'Creative Strategies for Building the Commons'. Workshops and interviews as part of the research on creative communities.)



© metamute.org (1972) Joseph Beuys, *Bureau for the Organisation of Direct Democracy*, Documenta 5.



Naxhielli Arreola (2016). Lugar Común Promotion of sustainable culture and self-construction of common public spaces in Patria Nueva, Oaxaca.



© Secretary of the Cultures and Arts (2016) 'Promueve "Lugar común" cultura ecológica para la construcción'.



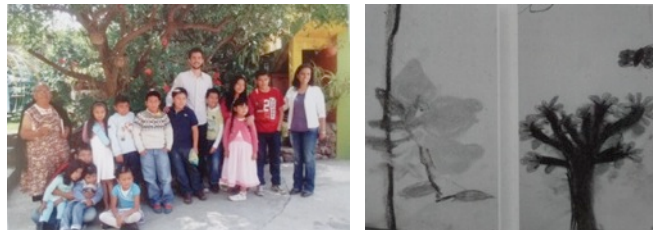
**Calpulli Tecalco** (2007) Workshop about the importance of the *milpa* (the place where maize grows). Coordinated by Héctor Celedón a participants from the book club Fernando Benítez / In caulli ohtli in San Pedro Actopan, Milpa Alta.



**Fernández, C. and Proyecto Meteoro** (2006-2010). Artist website



**inSite/Casa Gallina and Iconoclasistas** (Pablo Ares and Julia Risler) (2015) Taller de Mapeo Colectivo. Santa María La Ribera (Workshop of Collective Mapping. Santa María La Ribera. Interview formats for the collective mapping.



**Palma Rodríguez et al.** (2012) 'Icuauhtin ihuan itlachah in Atocpan Altepe. Los árboles y la gente de Actopan'. (The Trees and the People from Actopan). Calpulli Tecalco A.C.: Ciudad de México

## List of charts

1. Objectives, principles and programmes of CONACULTA during Salinas de Gortari's government (1998-1994). (Bordat 2013: 233)
2. Seven axis of the cultural policies introduced by the Programme of Cultural Development of Mexico City
3. Cultural agents interviewed in the fieldwork in Mexico City
4. The Threefold Structure after Steiner's theory. After Stüttgen (2012)
5. Summary of the discourses used by institutional agents in the cultural policy (re)construction process in Göteborg 1991-1998 (Johannisson 2006: 239)
6. Discourse of cultural citizenship after Nivón et al (2012: 326)
7. Guiding axis of cultural development in Mexico City. After Nivón et al (2012: 60)
8. Cultural policies content according to their temporal scope. After Nivón et al (2012: 326)

## List of acronyms

**CBO:** Community Based Organization

**CSO:** Civil Society Organization

**CONACULTA:** Consejo Nacional de la Cultura y las Artes (National Board for Culture and Arts)

**CONEVAL:** Consejo Nacional de Evaluación de la Política de Desarrollo Nacional (National Board for the Evaluation of National Development Policies)

**DIF:** Desarrollo Integral de la Familia (Family Comprehensive Development)

**EC:** European Commission

**FONAPAS:** Fondo Nacional para Actividades Sociales (National Fund for Social Activities)

**FONDESOC:** Fondo para el Desarrollo Social de la Ciudad de México (Fund for Social Development in Mexico City)

**GCMX:** Gobierno de la Ciudad de Mexico (Government of Mexico City)

**ISS:** Institute of Social Studies

**IUCD:** Indicadores de Cultura para el Desarrollo (Indicators of Culture for Development)

**GPP:** Grupo Proceso Pentágono (Group Process Pentagon)

**LFCDF:** Ley de Fomento Cultural del Distrito Federal. (Law of Cultural Development)

**MUAC:** Museo Universitario de Arte Contemporáneo (University Museum of Contemporary Art)

**PAC:** Patronato de Arte Contemporáneo (Board of Contemporary Art)

**PDC:** Programa de Desarrollo Cultural (Programme of Cultural Development)

**PNUD:** Programa de la Naciones Unidas para el Desarrollo (UN Development Programme)

**PRD:** Partido de la Revolución Democrática (Party of the Democratic Revolution)

**PRI:** Partido de la Revolución Institucional (Party of the Institutionalized Revolution)

**SCDF:** Secretaría de Cultural del Distrito Federal (Secretary of Culture of Mexico City)

**SCDF:** Secretaría de Cultural de la Ciudad de Oaxaca (Secretary of Culture of Oaxaca City)

**SDG:** Sustainable Development Goals

**SEDESOL:** Secretaría de Desarrollo Social (Secretary of Social Development)

**SEP:** Secretaría de Educación Pública (Ministry of Public Education)

**SITAC:** Simposio Internacional de Teorías de Arte Contemporáneo (International Symposium of Contemporary Art Theories)

**UAM:** Universidad Autónoma Metropolitana (Autonomous Metropolitan University)

**UCLG:** United Cities and Local Governments

**UICD:** UNESCO Indicators of Culture for Development

**UN:** United Nations

**UNESCO:** United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

**UNCED:** United Nations Conference on Environment and Development

**UNAM:** Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México (Autonomous National University of Mex.)

**WCCD:** World Commission on Culture and Development

## Acknowledgments

The list is a long recount of people and places that having been left it to the final moments, cannot be written as I desire. There is a special gratitude to ISS professors who have shared their understandings and thinking of development. Mostly to the course leaders of The Making of Development for opening a space to debate, un-pack and refill the ways knowledge is being constructed and resisted. To my supervisor Roy Huijsmans for asking the right, simple but deep questions that moved me from my own assumptions in this endless process of learning and building our own perspective of the world. But mostly to his patience and openness. To Wendy Harcourt, my second reader, for her enlightens comments and guidance that evidence her sensible experience in the 'messy' world of development as she says.

To my colleagues in ISS who drove me into very introspective moments that have shown me better who I am.

To the cultural agents and dear people in Mexico that made this research a puzzle full of rich and challenging thoughts and experiences. All my gratitude to them!!

To Abril Zales, Program Coordinator at the PAC, who donated me a set of publications that contributed to frame this research.

To the Organización de Estados Iberoamericanos, Fondo Nacional para la Cultura y las Artes y Consejo Nacional de Ciencias y Tecnología that supported my master studies at ISS.

To my professors and colleagues at the Universidad Nacional de Córdoba, Argentina, where I met Beuys and other important references that have constructed my perspectives.

To my dearest family members, to my mother, my sister Cecilia and her infinite support, intelligence, guide and energy, my brother Sebastián and his son Lorenzo that has kept me motivated during the grey days of The Hague.

To my *entrañables* friends that have been close even with the distance!

To Abdel Cuauhtli for his life lessons, his unique way of being passionate and keeping temperance and mostly for the love shared.

To the places I have rooted my most valuables experiences in life: Mexico and Argentina.

## Abstract

This research is a debate about how social sculpture is being grounded through creative strategies tackling diverse social problems in Mexico City. This is exposed through a set of social-artistic practices and thoughts of a group of cultural agents working at the community level. Along with the discussion is a critical analysis of the local translation of global discourses about culture and development conceptualized mainly in the Agenda 21 for Culture. Also the expanded concepts of arts and social sculpture, fostered by the artist Joseph Beuys in the 1970s, are unpacked and brought to the field of development studies as drivers for social cohesion. The triangulation between practices, concepts and a reflexive interpretation is understood a way of doing development (Escobar 2007). As a methodology it places this research in the post-structural margins (Strega 2005) where a counter-hegemonic knowledge may emerge. The open debate proposed along this paper is about rooting creativity and reflecting on the culture of development.

## Relevance to Development Studies

The purpose of this research is to contribute to an ongoing debate raised by post-development discourse, seeking to place culture at the basis of the process of thinking, designing, implementing and evaluating social policies. The inputs brought from my own encounter and understanding of development aim to see how the local practices and conceptualizations taking place in Mexico City are part of a global debate and how are international agendas translated to the local level. A relevant contribution is the principle of social sculpture as a strategy, but also an end itself, to address social, economic, political and environmental conflicts in specific contexts or fields of work.

I pretend to show what kinds of processes are being built from bottom-up approaches and practices, bringing grounded knowledge to the study field. Likewise, the object of doing a critical analysis of global translations and assemblage (Lendvai and Stubbs 2009) is to respond to Mosse's (2005) call for reflexivity in the political and contested process of thinking, making and implementing policies.

The importance of attending the connections between discourses and experiences is that it can inform both practices and policy making in order to improve frameworks, distribution of budgets and resources, find tools to measure and evaluate social programs and specially to work on the construction of an interdisciplinary and



cross sector network of social actors, organizations, private sector and State institutions that may strengthen the connection between culture and development.

Finally the most ambitious and probably romantic aspiration of this research is to place art as a driving strategy in the political process of thinking and advocating for a new culture of development.

Key words: Social Sculpture · Art · Culture · Joseph Beuys · Creative Strategies · Autonomy · Self-determination · Social Cohesion · Cultural Policies · Community · *Glocal* · Local · Green Book · Agenda 21 · Sustainable Development · Post-development · Civil Society · Cultural Agents · Mexico City

# Table of Contents

List of images	4
List of acronyms	5
List of charts	6
Acknowledgments	7
Abstract	8
Relevance to Development Studies	8
Keywords	9
<b>Chapter 1: An Introduction</b>	
• 1.1. Setting the <i>Glocal</i> Scene	11
• 1.2. Defining the problem	12
• 1.3. Research Questions	15
• 1.4. Methodological Choices	15
<b>Chapter 2: Conceptual Departure</b>	
• 2.1. The expanded concept of art	19
• 2.2. Social Sculpture	23
• 2.3. Community	24
• 2.4. Being <i>Glocal</i>	26
<b>Chapter 3: Art as Politics in Mexico City</b>	
• 3.1. From Political Art to Social Art Practices	32
• 3.2. Making Social Sculpture or Politics at the Community Level	36
• 3.3. About the Green Book	40
<b>Chapter 4: Discourses meeting practices</b>	
• 4.1. The policy making and the making of social sculpture	47
• 4.2. Creativity and Social Cohesion	53
<b>Chapter 5: Concluding Remarks</b>	
• 5.1. Culture of Development	60
• 5.2. Connections and Obstructions	63
References	65
<b>Appendix</b>	
• I. Venues	73
• II. Places	75
• III. People	76

# 1. Introduction

## 1.1 Setting the *G/oca/Scene*

In first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, art and cultural studies, initiated a process of self-reflection and re-conceptualization reacting to the expansion of new means of production and its implications for popular culture. New roles and concepts about arts and culture emerged from the Frankfurt School. This included Adorno and Horkheimer's (1944) theory of Cultural Industries and Benjamin's (1936) Era of the Technical Reproduction<sup>1</sup>. Frankfurt scholars believed the new era went beyond changing the artistic paradigm, emancipating and politicizing arts.

The expansion of the art field happened not only in aesthetics terms, but also in its relationship with society. The rise of mass media exposed vast numbers of people to social conflicts beyond their immediate locality, triggering debates about violence, social injustice, increasing poverty and environmental damage. Artists were not indifferent to these topics. In many places, art movements and new interdisciplinary groups transformed and diversified their practices, starting to intervene into social issues and connecting closer with broader publics. While this happened, other artists stayed within the aesthetic boundaries of arts.

A core idea to define the former group is 'social sculpture', coined by the German artist Joseph Beuys (1921-1986). Social sculpture is a driving force coming from creative thinking to encourage transformative processes. It is an expanded concept of art that can, according to Beuys and his interpreters, be used as a strategy to shape our individual lives and ways of being together. Arts and culture are understood as social processes where creativity is a driver to find alternatives or solutions to specific conflicts or social problems.

Key to the idea of social sculpture is Beuys premise "Everyone is an artist" (1979: 9). In other words, every human is seen as endowed with creative energy. I connect social sculpture to the capability approach developed by Sen (2004), where creativity is a capability that everyone has and can be used to tackle problems of inequality and lack of freedom. Likewise, I find a link to Appadurai's (2001; 2004) theory of the capacity to aspire, where arts and culture are empowerment tools to increase awareness on the ability to achieve an embraceable life. This research is framed in the cultural dimension

---

<sup>1</sup> Benjamin and Adorno challenged the traditional dialectic system of thought and theorized on the

of development, contributing to show how arts and culture matters for development, (Sen 2004: 37-38), as explained deeper in chapter 2.

Working across theories of arts and culture and those from development studies, I posit that art can be considered a form of capital, holding great potential for promoting the development of political society (Chatterjee 2004). Political citizens can challenge the injustice and oppressions produced through the capitalist system of production and distribution. From this perspective, social sculpture may be seen as mean and end for working out development goals as I will illustrate in this paper on the basis of research conducted in Mexico.

In Mexico City, as in many other places, civil society has been playing a growing role especially at the community level. This includes artists and arts, even though this remains an understudied dimension of civil society. The artists and projects I have worked with are rooted in the post-vanguard art movements from 1960s to 1990s- where the concept of social sculpture flourished. These artists and their interventions are situated in particularly locales, but understanding them implies analyzing the global scene, where knowledge and experiences are travelling and connecting development and cultural practices worldwide. The *g/ocal* is the assemblage<sup>2</sup> between global and local discourses and practices. It is taken here as a layer of the critical lens in the debate proposed by this research on the 'culture of development'. This idea will be shaped through the paper and picked up in the last chapter.

The purpose of understanding some of the cultural happening in Mexico City is to find connections between creativity and social cohesion and see how social sculpture works in creating awareness of personal capacities, restore and promote new social relationships, promote networks based on trust and solidarity, generate more equal access to information and technologies and advocate for respect of multicultural communities and societies. The relationship with social cohesion as another framing concept crosses this paper and is attended in chapter 4.

## 1.2. Defining the Problem

The sustainable development approach and post-development theories have been unpacking and raising attention on the relationship between culture and development. Also art theories have examined the expansion of arts in the public sphere. Despite the

---

<sup>2</sup> Assemblage represents an alternative approach to think about the making of social policy, particularly in the context of international actors and factors. (Lendvai and Stubbs 2009: 675).

common concerns, I still find more gaps than linkages between existing literatures. This became the first problem and motivation for my research.

The intention here is to see how development and cultural theories meet the *glocal* policy framework and the grassroots. Local policies and practices are framed within the global discourses and its problematic and contested translation (Lendvai and Stubbs 2009: 676-677) through the Agenda 21 for culture<sup>3</sup> (UCLG 2004). the Green Book that is a set of recommendations based this agenda and framed in the sustainable development discourses. The Secretary of Culture (SCDF) of the city government (GCMX) translated the recommendation into policies.

Adding to Sen and Appadurai's anthropological perspectives the ethnographical approach (Mosse 2005), the problem is to be analyzed by "Examining the making and re-making of policy as well as the practices that policy legitimizes as social processes" (Mosse 2005: 2).

The first obstacles for policies to reach the ground level effectively is related to the budget allocation required to achieve the targets of the Program of Cultural Development (PDC) made by the SCDF. As reported by Rueda Ramos (2014: 2) and Nivón et al. (2012: 66, 246; 396; 435) the minimum 2% expense has not been reached since the creation of the Law of Cultural Development (LFCDF) (GCMX 2003). The PDC actions and plans are constrained and disperse, since no norms guide the budget allocation (idem: 435).

A second problem identified by the authors of the Green Book (Nivón et. al. 2012) is the lack of continuity in the local administration to sustain cultural policies despite its "focus on the capacity to build community" (Rueda Ramos 2014: 2) though a human rights perspective, that is ineludible. The problem of continuity in financial affect many cultural projects, as my colleagues and own experience in Mexico City have proved.

Within the problems defined by Nivón et al. (2012: 336) is the claim for autonomy of culture. The authors are concerned with the use of culture in the governability agenda to promote for example civic programs. This statement clashes with the principle of crossing sectors and considering culture as a mean and end to development. Although the experts recognize the need to foster connections across different social dimensions and public policies, the definition of culture and arts are still

---

<sup>3</sup> The 4th Forum of Local Authorities approved this agenda in 2004 as part of the normative framework of Agenda 21, set up by the UNCED in Rio de Janeiro, in 1992.

limited to the production and distribution of goods and services. This dismisses Beuys expanded concepts and limits the possibility of social sculpture to be considered as a driver for social cohesion.

These limitations are more visible at the national level, where cultural policies in the recently formed Ministry of Culture are not even translating the global debates into the principles, objectives and programs summarized in the graphic above (Bordat 2013: 233). The same definitions continue shaping the way culture is understood, without connecting with other social development programs. The six substantive programs summarized in the chart below reveal the intention to develop culture and not develop through, with and by culture:

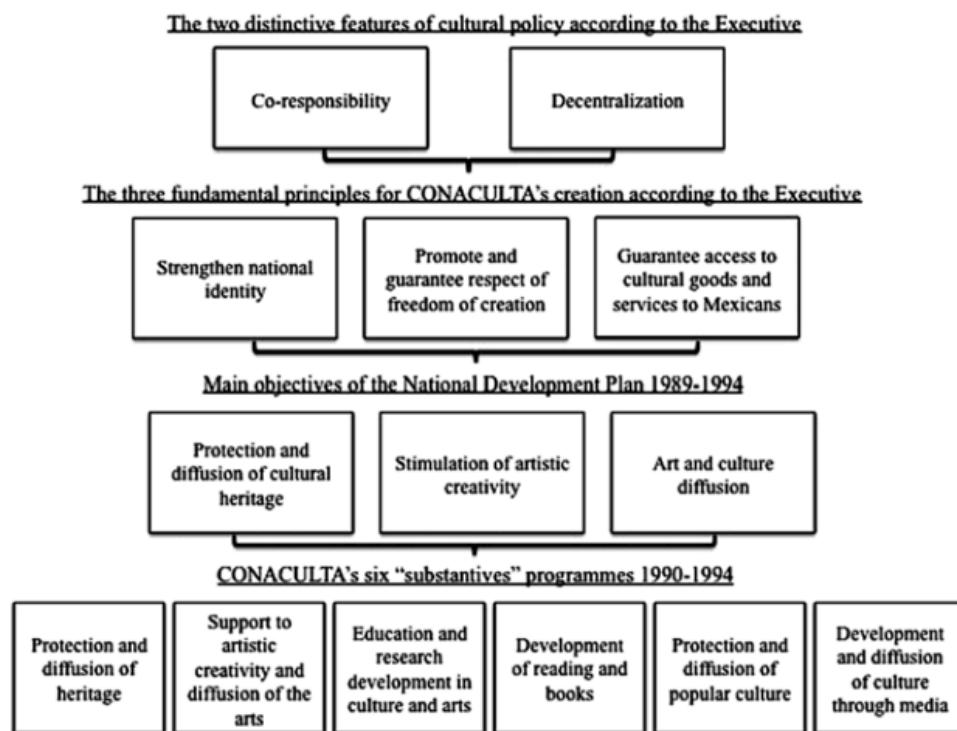
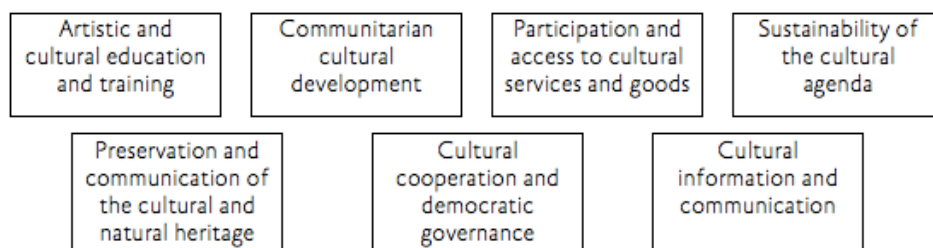


Figure 4. Objectives, principles and programmes of CONACULTA during Salinas de Gortari's government (1988–1994).

Similarly, the seven axis of the cultural policies introduced by the PDC (SCDF 2014: 42-43) are:



In sum the theoretical problem guiding this research is that, although cultural policies in Mexico City are defined on the basis of culture for sustainable development and moreover, on the principle of culture as the forth pillar of development, the scope of creativity is still limited to cultural industries and rights and not as a capabilities enabling practices for social cohesion.

At the empirical level, the problem detected after 10 years of working in social-art practices in Mexico City, is the difficulty to connect social and cultural policies in terms of institutional support. This connections not only links knowledge from different locales (Mosse 2005: 14) but most importantly, they would ensure the continuity and scope of their outcomes.

### 1.3. Research Questions

The academic sprout of this investigation is framed with the entrance of the new millennium and the impulse to start looking closely at local experiences and knowledge, without blocking the “porosity of boundaries” (Escobar 2001: 144) but “Questioning of the privilege accorded to space in analyses of the dynamics of culture, power, and economy” (idem 141).

The main question that this paper seeks to respond needs to be assessed in two parts: first, **What kind of connection/s exists at the conceptual and normative levels between social-art practices in Mexico City and the idea of social sculpture in relation with social cohesion?** And second, **What types of linkages have there been between these practices and the translation of the global debate around culture and development in the local policy framework?**

After answering the first and core questions of this paper, another interrogation is: In what ways could those linkages between cultural agents, CSOs and the local government inform the design and implementation of cultural policies as well as bring alternatives strategies for social cohesion in Mexico City? This interrogative concerning the *glocal* debate will be overviewed in the 4<sup>th</sup> chapter and concluding remarks.

### 1.4. Methodological Choices

To find out how are social-art practices and policies related to social sculpture in Mexico City, or in Clammer’s (2014: 3-17) words to find out what art does to society and development, I held open interviews and conversations with cultural agents whose

work I relate to this debate in the conceptual and pragmatic levels. The artists, civic actors and intellectuals I spoke with are working at the ground level through CBOs, in the academy and collaborating with government institutions. They represent various sectors within different contexts and places of Mexico City's diversity. Also they are part of a personal net constructed over the last 10 years. There was some snow sampling effect as well, since some actors recommended me to talk to others and most of them handed me publications of their work or indicated readings or projects to look at. The level of their work related to this research is summarized in the following chart:

Angélica Palma	Cultural manager and farmer Coordinator of Calpulli Tecalco in San Pedro Actopan, Milpa Alta
Héctor Celedón	Biologist specialized in Environmental Sciences Coordinator of Calpulli Tecalco in San Pedro Actopan, Milpa Alta
Carmen Rodriguez	Initiator of the book club in San Pedro Actopan, Milpa Alta
Fernando Delmar	Researcher, curator & professor. He has researched and translated to Spanish some of Joseph Beuys' works.
Víctor Muñoz	Artist formed in the late 1960s, participating in political and social art practices including GPP. Teacher and researcher at the UAM university.
Rosa María Larroa Torres	Researcher & professor of sociology at the UNAM. She is Victor Muñoz wife and host of the lunch
Ana Gilardi	Colleague working in her MA thesis in Humanities based on social reintegration of juvenile in conflict with the law
Josefa Ortega	Researcher, curator & civic agent. Coordinator of Casa Gallina
Claudia Fernández	Visual artist and coordinator of Proyecto Meteoro
Mónica Castillo	Artist, professor & cultural agent She has explored Beuys concepts, through education and participation in social projects and collective creativity as in Lugar Común / Patria Nueva.
Fernando Delmar	Researcher, curator & professor. He has researched Joseph Beuys' works and theories. The UAEM, where he teaches, recently published a translation by him of Beuys conversation with Volker Harlan along with another selection of works which I got as a present!
Eduardo Nivón	Professor and researcher at the UAM university. He is one of the main authors of the Green Book for Culture in Mexico City.
Amanda de la Garza	Curator & researcher at the UNAM university. She curated Andreja Kuluncic project 'Creative Commons' used in this research.
José Miguel Gonzalez Casanova	Artist, professor & cultural agent that participated in one of the workshop called by the Green Book, He has also initiated several alternative projects.



All conversations were held in Spanish and recorded. I transcribed relevant parts in Spanish and translated to English the opinions quoted and paraphrased, with their consensus. The in-text references include the family name, year and the acronym for in personal conversation (IPC) to save words and keep the debate flowing. The date and place of each encounter is detailed in the Appendix.

The qualitative interviews allowed exploring not only the research problem but also the concerns crossing the agent's thoughts and grounded experiences. Other techniques as ethnographic methodologies and case studies are also suitable to investigate the questions conducting this research. However, considering the main goal is to discuss and cross opinions about how social sculpture adds knowledge to development studies, I took the recommendation raised in the Design Seminar at ISS of doing open interviews as a convenient method to search for agreements and contestations.

The theoretical and pragmatic relationships between social sculpture and social cohesion will be analyzed through triangulation between the interpretation of the interviewees, the policy and the conceptual frameworks. This method aims to construct a reflection by contrasting different perceptions with my own position, which I place in the post-structural margins (Strega 2005) attending the "intermediate localizations: the peripheral-interstitial" (Richard 2012: 38). According to Strega (2005: 206) understandings the meanings rather than the facts responds to a methodology of resistance that is embedded in the side-streams discourses, as a counter-hegemonic construction of knowledge.

My position as a post-constructivist researcher is to go beyond the "hierarchical dualism" (Strega 2005: 201), trying to create dialogues between the Western hegemonic theories and the epistemologies of the south, recognizing the plurality of knowledge beyond the positivist-scientific one (Sousa Santos 2014). This strategy allows inter-textual relationships and prevents falling into new power realms, opening a space for knowledge to be constructed and contested at the same time.

The conversations were guided by a set of open questions and took place in informal scenarios. The actors decided the meeting point and that ensured a safe and comfortable space. Prove of this is that in several occasions I confronted or challenged certain statements and in others their commentaries drove me to reflect and re-

structure my own thoughts. The conversations involved the threefold structure of the research questions:

- Practical and theoretical approach to Beuys' concept of Social Sculpture.
- Social-artistic practices and creative strategies working on social cohesion.
- Cultural policies in Mexico City and their relationship with a global agenda.

This paper was written in a circular sense, as the roundtable conversation in 'Exchange Values', or the process around the oiled cloth in 'Earth Forum', where Shelley Sacks, one of Beuys' students and collaborators, engage participants and stakeholders in developing "Social sculpture both (as) inner and outer work, process and goal" (Sacks 2007). It was not a linear process but one crossing points of views and constructing a debate, where the reader is also invited to join.



Exchange Values on the table: Goetheanum, Dornach (2007)  
Shelley Sacks before the start of a forum (left) and introducing it (right).

As Castillo and Delmar said (2016 IPC), social sculpture is what we were doing in our conversations and is extended to this paper, as a roundtable o talk about the culture of development.



Johannes Stüttgen, another close student and collaborator of Beuys, is sitting in front on the left. In his conferences he uses a circular process that echoes the moment of the picture of Beuys'. *Ringgespräche* (Roundtable) in the art academy (Cyorodoy 2015: 122-123). I met Stüttgen in the conferences organized by Castillo in Mexico in 2012.

## 2. Conceptual departure

Having introducing this paper as placed in the post-structural margins (Strega 2005), the re-appropriation of Beuys' 'Western and Marxist' comes along with a "discourse of recognition" supported by an "inter-textual net" (Precilla 2013: 348-349). The net is weaved with other authors along with the qualitative data from the fieldwork conversations.

The main theoretical pillars are Beuys ideas of expanded and social-art, defined in the first two sections from interpreting several readings, Beuys work's and Castillo and Delmar's commentaries, mainly. The selection of theories was made to connect Beuys's concepts with development studies. The other two sections discuss and ground the definitions of community and the *g/local* making space for contestation to start flourishing.

The conceptual relationships are built through the perspective of post-development as a concept and social practice (Escobar 2007). The concepts of self-determination or agency, social cohesion, civil and political society, participation and a cluster of ideas related to social policy –translation, assemblage, across-sectors- will be briefly introduced here and picked up along the rest of the chapter.

### 2.1. The expanded concept of art

"Arts demands of a conceptualization and exponentiation of form that goes from the indefinite to the defined. Art then becomes the true capital. Capital in the Marxist sense, where we are all producers and benefactors of goods, in an ideal and balanced society in terms of services and economic exchange."  
Delmar (2016 IPC)

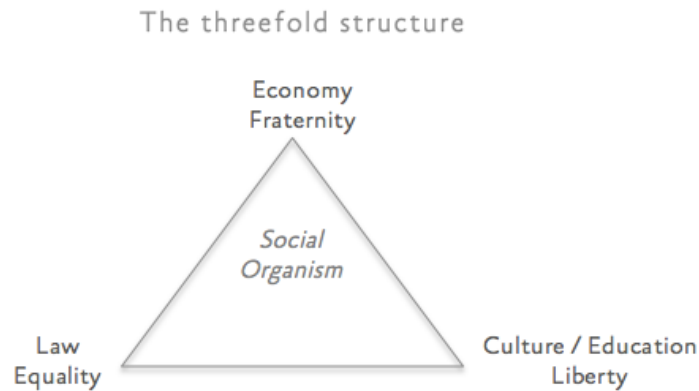
Beuys resumed his ideas of art as a source driving the process of self-determination or agency in the formula ART=CAPITAL. Art is a source of energy and a value to produce new meanings, products and services that can transform a person's life and a community situation, not only on the symbolic levels or arts as systems of representation, but also on the social reproduction, economic and political structures. Arts and creativity foster freedom and self-determination and contribute to recover the senses of equality and fraternity, eroded by the competitive, individualistic and material dimensions of capitalist societies.

Williams' (1977) cultural theory proposes an affirmative and subjective construction from the Frankfurt School's concepts. It seeks to unpack the contradictions and tensions within the Marxist theory of culture, as the consequence of moving from Marx to Marxism and the turnover into dialectic oppositions instead of complementary relationships. The superstructure defined by Marx, where class-consciousness happens, is the same that Beuys uses to explain the concept freedom: Legal and political -equality-; awareness and culture -liberty-; economy -fraternity- (Williams 1977: 76-77). The problem is the imbalanced flows between these dimensions. What triggers Williams and also this research is what is happening with the interconnections between the means of production, the political and cultural institutions and the process of class-consciousness or awareness. The author insists that the social and cultural constructs must be extended beyond hegemonic reductions<sup>4</sup>. Such constrain, as exposed in the research problem, places arts in a separate system converting its productions in commodities, limiting its possibility of mediating in social transformative processes (Williams 1977: 111).

Beuys' expanded concept of art is framed by an anthropological perspective, that places art in every individual and social action. The process towards a conscious agency, through the influence of art as a creative force, aspires to "transform art in a place for political citizen agency" (Gutiérrez Galindo 2013: 100.). Art and culture as means and ends. This process entails the formation of a political society. Stüttgen (2012) finds Beuys' expectation on art huge since it demands a sense of universality. Beuys concept of art presupposes its overcoming in life through the improvement of Capitalism (Gutiérrez Galindo 2013: 103). Accordingly, Stüttgen (2012) relates it to the task of bringing back freedom from the private sphere -where Capitalism has deliberately co-opted it- and relocate it in the threefold structure proposed by Steiner's (as cited in Stüttgen 2012) anthroposophy theory as presented below.

---

<sup>4</sup> Hegemony is defined according to Gramsci (as cited in Williams 1977: 108).



The anthropological concept of art is different to the middle class (Beuys 1979/2004: 10-11) or fetishized definition that prevails within the commodity or capitalist model. Beuys believed that productivity was not achieved through economic growth, defined as a “death process (...); just additive, cancerous proliferation of certain interest that people can no longer control” (Beuys 1979/2004: 27). Nor capital is the economic value -symbolized by money- but it is art the real capital –represented by creative strategies-. Thus the expanded concept of art is the capacity of everyone to develop productive processes in each individual and social dimension.

Through Sen’s(2004) capability approach -conceptualized since the 1980s- it is possible to connect the expanded concept of art to the discussion about the cultural dimension of development. Culture is part of the sets of capabilities that everyone has. Capabilities are understood as pre-conditions for working out and balancing inequality and poverty.

The capabilities lens also connects the expanded concept of art with social cohesion, by looking at Sen’s conceptualization of social solidarity and association that “Can be strongly influenced by culture” (Sen 2004: 41). More of this will be picked up in chapters 3 and 4 when analyzing the arts as politics and the influence of creative strategies in social cohesion.

The concepts Beuys used are also the essential features or buzzwords within development discourses and its mainstream goals. Freedom and self-determination can be synonyms of agency and free will. Freedom is likewise at the basis of capitalism, as a counterargument for socialism’s pursuit and defense of solidarity (Stüttgen 2012). Castillo (2016 IPC) recalls discussing with Beuys co-worker the relationship between

the economical feature of liberty and the idea of autonomy, stating that economic dependence limits creative and reflective processes:

“Freedom is understood, in Beuys’s interpretation, as a constant exercise of becoming free in the sense of self-determination. This practice is related to creativity because as a human being you have to question yourself about your doing and thinking in this world, as well as recognizing the ties you have, in order to break them and move to an autonomous state.”

Castillo (2016 IPC)



Beuys studied and later became a professor at the Dusseldorf Academy of Arts. There he used performance, round talks and blackboards – these last ones inspired by Steiner’s drawings on boards- to engage his students in discussions and collective construction of knowledge.

In capitalist societies the substantial problem is that “Freedom has been progressively converted into a private good” (Stüttgen 2012) and excluded from the professional fields and means of production, disconnected from the economical and political spheres. According to Appadurai (2001; 2004) the toughest consequences of this exclusion is the limitation in the capacity to aspire within the poor and vulnerable groups. Liberty and autonomy are abstract and radical concepts, but I agree with Castillo (2016 IPC) that achieving at least a percentage of them is a good progress in finding dignifying living conditions. Castillo also admits that in our societies precariousness and lack of stability are making it more difficult for solidary economies and other alternatives to grow. Nevertheless, as Castillo and Fisher (2010) say, Mexico’s indigenous communities enable the reproduction of other values and solidarity strategies. Along with Muñoz (2016 IPC) I question the romantic expectations that this idea can rise. In the next chapter we will see how this works in projects like Lugar Común and Calpulli Tecalco.

According to Castillo’s interpretation of the threefold structure, “the weak point in a capitalist society is within economy, where all financial exchange is everything but fraternal. On the contrary it is about complete exploitation” (Castillo 2016, IPC). In

order to compensate the selfish interest of the monetary economy, Castillo highlights the importance of volunteer work and gift economy<sup>5</sup>.

“We are educated to take care and safeguard private property, which is good, but we have to imagine how to expand that to looking after the world that is also ours. Besides, the world requires a special care since resources are running off. On the other hand, the means of production cannot be thought as mine only because that leads to a maximization of the outputs.”

Castillo (2016 IPC)

This section explained how the expanded concept of art, through the threefold structure, is placed as a value and capital in the economic, cultural and legal systems to create alternatives for more equal distribution of social justice, and towards democratic and good governance. Due to its complexity and overall frame this research calls for deeper questionings from other perspectives.

## 2.2. Social Sculpture & Social Cohesion

Thinking forms – how we mould our thoughts or  
Spoken forms – how we shape our thoughts into  
words or

SOCIAL SCULPTURE how we mould and shape  
the world in which we live:  
sculpture as a an  
evolutionary process;  
everyone an artist.

Beuys (1979-2004: 9)

Social sculpture came along in the 1970s with Beuys' expanded concept of art. It refers to the collective work that follows the achievement of individual freedom and self-determination. The social work towards a creative democracy is done through social sculpture. Likewise the principle of 'construction of situations' applied by Debord to "participatory events using experimental behavior to break the spectacular bind of capitalism" (1957/2006: 96), social sculpture is a process of creating and transforming reality, also aiming "to produce new social relationships and thus new social realities" (Bishop 2006: 13).

---

<sup>5</sup> The gift economy (economía del don in Spanish), fostered by indigenous communities in Latin America, has a deeper meaning, rooted to a spiritual and solidary sense of sharing and caring about the other.

The possibility of social sculpture to extend the production of each one's destiny<sup>6</sup> into practical actions is the essence of art as a productive process of transformation. Beuys activated the process of social sculpture in his artistic works and performances, political actions, teaching and in every day life actions. Some of these aspects will be referenced in the work and practices of social sculpture held by the actor I spoke with. So far social sculpture is interpreted as a set of creative strategies implemented in social-art practices that act on social cohesion.

**"As a framing concept, social cohesion allows the inclusion of different dimensions of the social problem being analyzed: inclusion/exclusion, inequality/inequity, social mobility, distribution of income, segregations y discriminations of al kind (social, territorial, ethnic)"**  
Díaz and Meller (2012: 12)

In Latin America there is an important debate on social cohesion due to the international and local social crisis that impacts directly on the distribution of social protection (Godinez 2010: 15). Attending to Tironi and Sorj's (2007: 113) recommendation to explore the hypothesis that social cohesion is mainly based on the cultural and reciprocity levels I will focus mainly on the political dimension.

Social cohesion is understood as a broad term, as well as social sculpture, and is not limited to a unique model but to context specific conditions (Tironi and Sorj 2007: 119). It is fundamental to absorb change and conflict (idem) and transform it into solidarity and collective actions. Neither social cohesion nor social sculpture are visible processes -as Beuys said of social sculpture (1979-2004: 21)- but they are keeping people and places together in the pursuit of common and individual wellbeing through every day actions at the community level.

### 2.3. Community

**"Generally speaking, an unquestioned presumption designates the community as a group of people identified with each other by a set of common concerns or backgrounds, who are collectively oppressed by the dominant culture, and with whom, in the context of community-based art, artists and art agencies seek to establish a collaborative relationship (to address if not challenge this oppression)."**  
Kwon (2002: 145)

---

<sup>6</sup> *Bestimmung* is translated as destiny but has two meanings: one implies accepting destiny as something defining the individual beyond itself and other is the determination on what the individual can decide and may define about its own life. (Castillo's footnote is the translation of Stüttgen's conferences).



Kwon's distinctions within the definition of community as one where artists and cultural agents engage to build counter-hegemonic strategies, is the apt frame for this debate. In the conversation I found contested perceptions about the role of cultural agents in the groups they work with, as exposed in chapter 4. Before going further it is important to define civil society to see the differences with community:

“We work from a broadly Gramscian understanding of civil society as constituting an arena in which hegemonic ideas concerning the organization of economic and social life are both established and contested.”

Mitlin et al. (2007: 1702)

The ‘little *d* development’ process where the authors place this definition of community implies the political process through which civil society, organized or not, creates alternatives and innovations in a consciously and practical way, contributing in the counter-hegemonic production of knowledge and struggles for a ‘good society’<sup>7</sup> (Mitlin et al. 2007).

Returning to Kwon (2002) distinctions, there are certain practices using arts and creativity at the community level but instead of doing what we call social sculpture, “they function as a kind of “soft” social engineering to defuse, rather than address, community tensions” (Kwon 2002: 153). The first differentiation is between the artist ethnographer and the community-based-art as defined by Foster<sup>8</sup> (1996). The latter one includes artists, cultural agents and institutions working through participatory and context specific approaches but their actions do not translate necessarily into social wellbeing.

Another figure acknowledged by Kwon is the mediator or interlocutor, referring to an ‘outsider’ facilitating the start-up and coordination of a collective project or intervention. The problem is when the methodology applied defuses instead of addressing the communities’ tensions (Kwon 2004: 153). This may result from ignoring the social dynamics and forms of organization, as discussed with Garza (2016 IPC). The recognition of these pitfalls entails the need to “imagine alternative possibilities of

---

<sup>7</sup> “The ethical and political aspects of the ‘good society’ have contributed to development ethicists in looking beyond economic growth and including “the qualitative enrichment of human beings in all relevant aspects of human life” (Marangos and Astroulakis 2010: 556).

<sup>8</sup> Foster’s (1996: 305) distinctions and points on reflexivity and positionality explain critically the position of insiders and outsiders and how artists have used them to reveal for example suppressed histories within a community.

togetherness and collective action, indeed of collaboration and community” (Know 2004: 153). Nancy’s (1991) reflections are a starting point to re-conceptualize ‘community’:

“There is no communion, there is no common being, but there is being *in common*” (...) Henceforth the question should be the community of being and not the being of community.”

Nancy (1991: 5; 1. Italics in original text)

Being in common implies recognition of the self and the other. Nancy and also Fraser (2000) challenge the Hegelian concept of identity as “constructed dialogically, through a process of mutual recognition” (Fraser 2000: 109). Overly seeking to move from the dualistic perspective, Fraser’s status model admits a universalist, deconstructive and affirmative recognition of difference (idem: 116). The status model goes beyond valuing a community or group identity proposing to replace patterns of cultural values for a transformation process within the institutional and individual dimensions. According to Fraser, that is doing politics of recognition. At this point it should be possible for the reader to see the connection with social sculpture. As a contested space for individual and social recognition, community is the main source in the political process of constructing alternatives.

The cultural agents I interviewed and the projects they work in are building pathways in this sense. More than claiming for social justice, they are constructing alternative strategies to achieve collective and individual outcomes, using creativity as a way of being in common. This process is possible once recognition has been established within the community members likewise social sculpture is the continuation of achieving self-determination and individual freedom.

## 2.4. Being *Glocal*

“Locality and community cease to be obvious, and certainly not inhabited by rooted or natural identities but very much produced by complex relations of culture and power that go well beyond local bounds.”

Escobar (2001: 146)

Following the track of culture, politics and recognition (Fraser 2000), in this section I pretend to re-frame the links between culture and development by adding to Escobar’s (2001; 2007) post-development theory the lens of social sculpture. Appadurai (2004: 60) explains how development, embedded within mainstream discourses is seen as looking

to the future, representing plans, goals and aspirations. Instead culture, in this dichotomist understanding, is linked to 'pastness' (idem). That drives the generalized perception of economic actors as persons of the future and cultural actors as ones from the past (idem). Alongside with Appadurai I try to expand this binary conception.

During the conversation I found many different understandings of arts and culture, from the expanded concept of all human beings as bearers of a creative capacity to the exalted ability of professional artists to produce works and artistic processes. Despite that there is a common ground among the voices in understanding arts as a crosswise energy that enables transformative changes. Arts emphasis is in the present and the future outcomes. Delmar's (2016 IPC) definition of the 'artist as a prophet' illustrates this view.

Appadurai also departs from Sen's (2004) capabilities approach to link freedom with the 'capacity to aspire'. "Aspirations form part of wider ethical and metaphysical ideas which derive from larger cultural norms" (Appadurai 2004: 67). The problem is they are not equally distributed among society, and diminished within the poor (idem: 67-69). Therefore it is urgent to empower the voices of the poor and bring their aspirations as drivers of development programs and goals. This approach, as the scholar proposes, can also be framed under the politics of recognition (Fraser 2000).

Aiming to show how the efforts of some communities have reinforced the capacity to aspire and brought changes in the terms of recognition, Appadurai (2004) calls for examples and exposes a very illustrative one taking place in Mumbai's slums. His case study is built from the alliance between three organizations working together in advocating for housing policies and improving health and basic living conditions among one of the biggest and poorest urban communities in the world. The importance of alliances is key point in the making of social sculpture as we will soon see. Appadurai stresses how the work derived from bottom-up joint efforts shows that consensus on "specific forms of self-governance, self-mobilization, and self-articulation are vital to changing the conditions under which activists among the poor are changing the terms of recognition, globally and locally, for the poor" (Appadurai 2004: 81).

Moreover, in the text written by Appadurai for UNESCO's Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity in 2002, the principle of capacity to aspire is framed in the debate about sustainable diversity. The scholar offers some guidelines of a plan for international cooperation that start by the need to "**identify** the main CSO which they would regard as partners in such an exercise" (idem: 14. Bold in original text). The

importance of working with other stakeholders and allies at the national or local levels is observed in chapter 4. The other two tasks enlisted by Appadurai are to assess states on how to be part of sustainable diversity within their legal and fiscal scope and to determine the effects of capitalizing sustainable diversity. To achieve these missions - linked mainly to the articles 9, 11 and 12 of the UDCD- Appadurai suggests creating new institutional, communication and political strategies. The first consist in the connections and alliances between civil society and states in terms of *glocal* policy frameworks, as discussed deeper in sections 3.3 and 4.1. The second is relative to the mechanisms of public debate, opinion-formation, and consciousness rising, i.e. the creation of a political society where arts and culture are tools to drive self-governing and participatory processes. An overall perspective of this topic is presented in section 3.1.

The next question is how is Mexico City being *glocal* in relationship to the UNCD framework and the discourse on culture and development as presented through Appadurai (2001; 2004). In the discussion with Nivón he stated, after a brief review of the recent history of cultural development and UNESCO's global frameworks, that there has been "certain reticence" (Nivón 2016 IPC) linked to the deep roots of a welfare state regime. The academic recognizes four moments in the cultural development agenda. The first one is the implementation of the post-war development discourses. A comes a shift after the cold war, when the economic models and policies imposed by international agencies and specially the US government proved their failure. Mexico found difficulties to implement the recommendations encouraging the recognition of the local context to then translate and adapt the global policies since "nobody really knew how to do this" (Nivón 2016 IPC), despite having participated with enthusiasm in the production of new discourses despite. According to Nivón, there was also a mismatch between the local conditions and national policies that were based in improving the levels of cultural consumption.

Later came the idea already presented of sustainable development and postcolonial theories. UNESCO's principle of cultural diversity based in Sen's approach led to change from national goals to ones based on individual development. Nivón (2016 IPC) said that this debate was also delayed in Mexico and even when it was adopted, the legal framework guaranteeing the access to individual rights came much later. The problem of moving from communities' collective rights to individual rights is that we keep constrained by a dichotomy that is not useful anymore (Escobar 2006: 127). As

Escobar says, in order to achieve more pluralistic societies we need “to consider how social groups are trying to recreate both individual and communal forms of cultural and economic practice and political organization to meet the demand of the time” (idem). These considerations are translated in the policy recommendations of the Green Book (Nivón et al. 2012) and also found within the practices and approaches developed by the cultural agents I spoke with.

The perspectives and relationship between culture and development at the local discursive level moved into the sustainable and cultural diversity approaches but without evidence of taking in consideration the grassroots actions and practices. In Rosales Ayala (1994) review of the cultural practices that search for a connection with social development, Esteva introduces his call of “re-localizing the cultural initiative” (as cited in Rosales 1994: 10) and along with Nivón, they question the impact of civil society interventions through cultural projects (Idem: 11).

Continuing with Nivón’s review, this considerations found a place in a forth agenda that appeared in the early 2000s, where “some cultural institutions and cultural agents argued for a closer public commitment from the state that would not be merely declarative” (Nivón 2016 IPC). This moment is framed within the discourse of cultural citizenship. At that point a new strategy emerged trying to prove the role of culture in economic development through quantitative studies<sup>9</sup>. This shift is connected to other relevant issues as the problem about the construction of indicators; the institutionalization of culture and the technologies required to develop and sustain the infrastructure for cultural apparatus that could demonstrate its impact on social cohesion for example. Again, these topics scape the limits of this research but are noticed as fundamental cornerstones in the debate about culture and development.

The shifts in the global cultural discourse can be summarized according to Johannisson (2006: 239) as shown in the following chart:

---

<sup>9</sup> Piedras (2004, as cited in Nivón et. al. 2012) took this challenge in Mexico, showing very optimistic outcomes. However, the first results of cultural development recognized by the national and local governments were published by the INEGI in 2010, showing very different results from Piedras’ studies.

	THE QUALITY DISCOURSE	THE WELFARE DISCOURSE	THE ALLIANCE DISCOURSE
<b>Aim</b>	Professional, artistic quality	Broaden participation in cultural activities and create a good living environment	Sustainable development (financially and living environment)
<b>Concept of culture</b>	Aesthetic	Anthropological (group-oriented) and aesthetic	Anthropological (individual-oriented) and aesthetic
<b>Concept of place/space</b>	Artistic, universal space	National space	Glocal places
<b>Rationale</b>	Humanistic	Sociological	Market-oriented
<b>Model of governance</b>	Profession-oriented patron model	Legal-bureaucratic architect model	Network-oriented architect- and patron model

*Chart 1: Summary of the discourses used by institutional agents in the cultural policy (re)construction process in Göteborg 1991-1998 (Johannisson 2006, p. 239).*

Based on Johannisson (2006) analyzes, Nivón et. al (2012: 326) add a forth constituted by the discourse of cultural citizenship:

<b>Aim</b>	Citizen. Extension of citizen's capacities of participation
<b>Concept of culture</b>	Anthropologic (citizen=individual + rights)
<b>Concept of place/space</b>	<i>Glocal</i> (universal solidary citizenship)
<b>Rationale</b>	Cultural development (search for social goals within cultural goals)
<b>Model of governance</b>	Solidary networks and democratic state

The risk of proving the impact of culture on development through mix research –qualitative and quantitative data- is that positive results proving that CSOs and independent actors are finding the way to work without the state support will probably drive governments to stay back from the discourse of cultural citizenship, according to Nivón (2016 IPC). Nivón's comments give a first clue about the rationale in Mexico's local politics.

The length of this chapter responds to the theoretical problem around the definition and changes within the concepts of development, culture and social action, as well as the shifts in the role and goals of the state institutions and policies. The following chapters will put attention to the perceptions about the state's role, intervention and regulation on social policies, welfare and institutions and the contested and alternative means of governance and organization that the actor I spoke with work on.

By doing so I attempt to contribute to the debate about the *g/local* sustainable approach to cultural diversity, introduced here as a re-signification of theories that will now be confronted with a bottom up perspective, bringing new reflections and inputs from the experience-based data.

### 3. Art as Politics in Mexico City

#### 3.1. From Political Art to Social Art Practices

The concern about recovering the practices and discourses related to poetic and political actions that took place in the 1960s and 70s within the Latin American context, has taken place in the research field, the curatorial practice and the artistic production itself. (Cagnolo 2014: 17)

Adding to Cagnolo's comment the concern is now brought to development studies. Drawing on examples and local practices from Mexico City, this section analyses the shift from political art to social interventions through creative strategies.

I take the Mexican Revolution as point of departure. At that time, linkage between arts and culture and the political sphere was for the first time firmly constituted by the new 'progressive' and 'modern' state. A well know example is the *Muralism* period and the proliferation of graphic-art workshops all around the country. Despite the ideological and aesthetics differences, the common view of the actors at that time (government, artists, private sponsors) was to work through culture and creativity as vehicles for political and educational goals. Important to say is that these new perspectives in the arts production were "A response to a colonialism that was formally past, although the language, religion, social arrangements and oppressive semi-feudal agrarian structures (...) were still vividly present" (Clammer 2014: 109) and can be recognized in the colonial wounds (Mignolo 2009: 3).

Probably because of the persistence of the colonality and hegemonic power, among other causes, these movements and organizations that kept multiplying until the 1950s, gradually lost importance or were transformed into market oriented and individual practices. Nevertheless, between the 1970s and 1990s new manifestations and social interventions starting shaking the public scene, introducing new political content within the arts productions.

"Artists and theorists converged to create strongly political collective work that encouraged taking the streets and generating new spaces and situations to confront and involve the public" García (2015: 59)

A breaking point in Mexico was the students' killing in Tlatelolco in 1968, historically framed within the social movements and springs arising internationally. Muñoz, member of GPP summarizes in our talk:



“The conditions of Mexican and contemporary arts in general were fixed in categories and aesthetics that were faraway from the social dynamics and conflicts. In that sense the ‘68 was a detonator to reveal the state of crisis (...) and the lack of flexibility of the art system to work on the political aspects that the country’s condition required.”

Muñoz (2016 IPC)

This historical period also uncovered the co-option of *Muralism* by the state and the aesthetics movements shifts to formal rupture making their way into the market and gallery systems, pulled by the need to involve other publics into the political actions (Muñoz 2016 IPC). Awareness on this task within GPP and other groups and artists of the 1970s drove to internal disagreements about how to create in a participatory way. It also raised consciousness on not becoming “An appendix of a political party, defending a freedom of thought and therefore of political affiliation” (idem). The emphasis of the creative process as a free and horizontal space for ideas to converge (García 2015: 79) is a pre-condition in the shift from political art to social art practices as understood here.



GPP -Rafael Doniz, Carlos Finck, Lourdes Grobet, Víctor Muñoz- (1990)  
Route 521 Mexico City. “Upon the forthcoming 500 anniversary of the discovery of America, GPP launched a call for the public to meet at the Zocalo with a flower and a flashlight. The participants formed a great silent circle, celebratory of the defense of Tenochtitlan in August 1521.” (García 2015: 147)

A contemporary project that is both political and social is ‘Creative Strategies for Building the Commons’, leaded by the Croatian artist Andreja Kulunčić who has also worked in Mexico. Her practices are embedded in specific social situations, aiming to “contribute to open and more critical thinking” (Kulunčić as cited in Bekić 2013: 7).

Bekić states this type of work is a practice of social sculpture, expanding art into social life, including every person as “A creative social subject with the potential to play a high quality role in the formation of the social organism” (Bekić 2013: 12). Kulunčić (as cited in Bekić 2013: 27) explains the focus is in translating and mediating in the existing social relations to encourage change. This is a clear example of the artist as mediator, moving from political art to using creative strategies as practice of social sculpture.



Andreja Kulunčić (2011) 'Creative Strategies for Building the Commons'  
Workshops and interviews as part of the research on creative communities. Mexico City

In Mexico City Kulunčić worked on creating a platform to connect self-organized cultural collectives and social practices. Among the projects investigated were Calpulli Tecalco and the book club of San Pedro Actopan, also included in this research. The connections fostered by the artist were activated through workshops, conversations, making videos, launching a web platform and displaying a series of street signs. These strategies are conceived as tools for fostering social change. Besides the work at the community level and intervening the public sphere, the results of the strategies activated were exhibited in the museum that supported the project, the MUAC that is part of UNAM, the highest valued university in Mexico.

The institutional space is “understood as a privileged place of visibility that external actors are able to use” to “generate a series of viral mechanisms (...) with the aim of reinserting the demands and actors that are temporarily inside the museum back into the public setting” (Garza et al. 2013: 13). This is relevant in terms of the alliances and networks that the making of social sculpture needs to engage effectively with the communities problems and concerns. The project coordinated by Kulunčić is a good example of building connections between different stakeholders: the CSOs as active

partners in the construction of a political society; the museum as representative of the cultural industries; the university as an institution where knowledge is being created and contested; the federal government and other institutions supporting the MUAC and UNAM; the specific publics that visit the exhibition and civil society that runs into the street sings.

The discussion about the institutionalization of culture goes beyond the focus of this paper, but let us briefly say that post-coloniality theories held in the cultural field in Latin America have contributed in the process of “revealing arbitrariness, censorship and exclusions imposed by the dominant/Western culture’s modernist canon (...)” forcing “international art institutions to open the borders to non-canonical narratives, narratives of the otherness” (Richard 2010: 39). That explains how social art practices have been gaining attention in many museums’ agendas, expanding the concept and understanding of arts and culture beyond the systems of symbolic representation.

To conclude this section and following the debate introduced in 2.3, I highlight that political activism driven by artists and groups play an important role “to denounce conditions of extreme poverty and social oppression, to reconfigure identities and communities, to make historically buried memory visible, questions hegemonies of sexual representation or even make public interventions related to demands of the part of citizens” (Richard 2010: 39).

According to Fisher’s (2010: 29) categorization, the description made by Richard represents one of the two approaches of artistic activism. The other one occurs at the ground level, through practices and projects working in specific contexts, usually with small groups of people, in social and environmental problems. Such are the cases of Calpulli Tecalco, Lugar Común, Proyecto Meteoro and Casa Gallina, the CSOs coordinated by the cultural agents brought to this research.

The nature of the works and goals of GPP and the CBOs gathered by Kulunčić represent the fork of artistic groups working in the public sphere with political standpoints and creative strategies taking place in the periphery of the art system. Both are necessary and complementary. The one working inside the art system enables the recognition and extension of creative thinking, informs public about social problems, reinforcing the bonds between culture and social development and sometimes communicating and informing society. The other is bringing bottom-up experiences, expanding and connecting arts and creativity with different strategies working on social cohesion. Most importantly, both are forms of doing social sculpture.

### 3.2. Making Social Sculpture or Politics at the Community Level

The previous section exposes how the art system and the cultural industries have expanded to reach the public sphere and are engaged in building the commons, showing how creative strategies work at the community level. This section goes deeper in the idea that culture of political action is critical in the construction of a political society and practice of democracy (Sen 2004; Chatterjee 2004).

Beuys insisted in focusing in art as a way of searching the relationship and coherence between objects and ideas. He believed this connection would lead to replace private property by creation, as part of the transforming process raising consciousness and responsibility beyond the self and the other (Stüttgen 2012). Delmar (2016 IPC) explains the impact of this principle in social life as the ability of artists –that is every human being, following Beuys– to transform the spiritual into politics. Elaborating on the concepts presented in chapter 2, let us look at the way in which art as a political and social process is being constructed through the making of social sculpture.

As anticipated there is contestation in the conceptualization of arts as a creative energy enabling strategies at the community level. Garza resumed it as “Two types of community involvement: one that is residual -social retribution- and the other is the social practice” (Garza 2016 IPC). In Bishop’s (2006: 10-11) introduction of the social dimension of participation as a form of political commitment, there is a clear distinction within collaborative and socially oriented projects, which the author recognize since the 1920s, matching with the starting point of this chapter. The former one “seeks to provoke participants (...), is disruptive and interventionist” and the latter “aims to embrace collective creativity; (and is) constructive and ameliorative. In both instances, the issue of participation becomes increasingly inextricable from the question of political commitment” (Bishop 2006: 11).

From the early 20 century art movements explored the connections and possibilities of art to involve citizens in a reflective political process through manifestos and public actions, using similar strategies as social movements of the time (Clammer 2014: 116-117) or collaborating with unions and CSOs (Muñoz 2016 IPC). In the late 1960s Beuys<sup>10</sup> made a special emphasis in free participation “through elections,

---

<sup>10</sup> In 1967 Beuys formed the German Student party (DSP); in 1979 was a candidate for the European Parliament with the Green party, which he co-founded.

referendums and the general use of civil rights” as Sen (2004: 56) latter conceptualized regarding “freedom of the citizens to exercise their free agency” (Idem).

International art encounter of Document 5 in Kassel, where Beuys presented as artwork an office of the Organization for Direct Democracy through Referendum. For 100 days he attended and discussed with the visitors all type of issues related to civil rights, among the claims where salaries for households.



In the actual practices taking place in Mexico there are also different modes of using creative strategies to foster political action. An important point appeared in discussion with Castillo (2016) about ‘inoculating’ –a concept repeatedly used by Ortega (2016 IPC)- this process through direct action. I agree with her that there needs to be an initial motivation and will at the individual level. Castillo says that when developing a project based on creative flows, “The inoculation may occur in the less expected moments” (Castillo 2016 IPC). This implies learning to listen and guiding the transformative process from the interests of the people participating in the social actions and projects. According to Castillo voluntary work is a key and powerful alternative, leading to anti-systemic or alternatives approaches to the economic system such as the gift-economy, as mentioned in section 2.1.

As an example of the gift-economy and inoculation coming from a personal desire and ‘common place’ of interest, Castillo mentioned the collective work with a group of architects that are travelling around Mexico and assessing for free projects like the one recently started by Lugar Común in Oaxaca.

Lugar Común was initiated by an artist and native resident of the municipality where the CSO is located –Pueblo Nuevo- and two foreign ones, among them Castillo; but as she expressed, everybody who wants to get to know about the project is invited to come and work in it. Currently they are dedicated to the self-construction of the Laboratory of Cooperative Cultures, “an open space for the development of citizen

driven initiatives through creativity and join imagination” (Secretary of the Cultures and Arts of Oaxaca 2016). They also give workshops, artists’ residencies and foster other communitarian activities like a vegetable garden.



Lugar Común (2016). Promotion of sustainable culture and self-construction of common public spaces in Patria Nueva, Oaxaca.

Gilardi spoke about the role of creativity within the programs of reintegration of juvenile in conflict with the law and recognized:

“The ability of arts to create community and to enable relationships with others and with the social environment. Creativity to build a functional lifestyle rooted in the community”  
Gilardi (2016 IPC)

This capacity of arts is worked out through a process of affirmative communication as explained by Gilardi (Idem). According to the programs developed and implemented by the organizations she is researching, a starting point is to identify and recognize of ‘the other’ as an individual that shares the same rights. She stresses that identification and respect within these groups enables the identification of the each of them as subjects. As Subcomandante Insurgentes Marcos (2008) states, the big transformations happen:

“From the organized conscious of groups and collectives that know each other and have a mutual recognition -from the bottom and the left- and construct another politics”  
Marcos (2008)

In the conversation held in San Pedro Actopan, Milpa Alta, where the coordinators of Calpulli Tecalco, Palma and Celedón, work with the community members in engaging in environmental and political actions, Larroa Torres (2016 IPC) stressed the importance of CBOs, specially in indigenous communities, in “Moving



youth perception from ‘There is nothing to do with a corrupt government’ to ‘We can make important things, not to strengthen the state, but to engender autonomy’” (Idem). Celedón instead said, “We cannot be the executors of what is part of the state’s role. CSOs have to be conscious about what is being lost and not allow the state to be only ruling” (2016 IPC). The demands and opinions about the role of the state from civic and cultural agents will come back in chapter 4.



Calpulli Tecalco (2007) Workshop about the importance of the *milpa* (the place where maize grows). Coordinated by Héctor Celedón. The participants were children from the book club Fernando Benítez / In caulli ohtli and other community members from San Pedro Actopan, Milpa Alta.

The sustained attendance to the activities fostered by Calpulli Tecalco evidences not only recognition but also appropriation and defense of Milpa Alta’s natural reserve. Palma (2016 IPC) explains that there is a constant threat by the progress of the city and its ambitious economic growth, attempting against the slow and silent work of recovering and protecting the terraces left by their ancestors. Working with children and youth in actions that combine drawing, learning *Nahuatl*<sup>11</sup>, cleaning the land and recovering basic traditions such a salutations and the local history, reinforces social cohesion and fosters awareness and civic participation. Like this, Calpulli Tecalco is making politics at the community level.

---

<sup>11</sup> *Nahuatl* is a language or group of languages related to the Aztec people, settled mainly in the central part of Mexico. Recent policies promote its inclusion in public education.

During the ride that Muñoz<sup>12</sup> gave me from the faraway location of San Pedro Actopan after the group conversation, he brought an important point to the discussion about community based work. Muñoz (2016 IPC) stresses that the anthropological approach to culture should be also critical about which traditions are to be preserved and recovered, because many are negatives, like alcoholism and violence or mistreat against women.<sup>13</sup> This means that cultural actors and CSOs promoting political participation need to be aware not only of the exclusion and lack of recognition of certain communities in relation to others, but also about the internal social problems, inequalities and injustices.

Acceptance of cultural diversity is also a construct that requires analysis and consensus. This can be achieved through critical consciousness and creative planning and implementation of development practices. As shown here there are different ways of doing social sculpture and moving forward to a political and democratic society.

### 3.3. About the Green Book: a *g/local* policy framework

Until now we have seen how social sculpture has been working at the grassroots. In this section I explore the translation of global discourse of sustainable development and cultural diversity to the local frameworks of cultural policies in Mexico City. The interpretation is done with the social sculpture lens, seeking for conceptual considerations of creativity as a driver for development. This is a condition to then analyze how discourses meet the ground level.

In the presentation of the Green Book, Garcia Canclini (2012: 21) states that four fundamental assumptions regarding cultural policies have expired, being the two most important:

- o the organic relationship between culture, education and society, regulated by a rational organization managed by the state;

---

<sup>12</sup> Muñoz and his family moved to San Pedro Actopan in the 1990s and has collaborated in many projects including Calpulli Tecalco. As a foreign (Mexican but not original from the indigenous communities of Milpa Alta), white, tall, educated man and artist, he is recognized with a different status within the community. In Mexico, as in many other places the features listed are still strongly present in the post-colonial categorization of people.

<sup>13</sup> Muñoz (2016 IPC) named some examples that include mostly youth and family behaviors and changes that came along with the recent flourishing of the local market of mole, the typical dish we had for lunch at his house.



- o the complement role of education in the development of free and participatory citizens.

According to Gough and Wood's (2004) adapted model of Esping-Anderson's welfare state regime, the lack of connections between civil society and the state constitutes a problem when instead of autonomy in distributed responsibilities there are uncoordinated actions. These actions find limitations and difficulties to work in an integrated and crosswise approach, as suggested in the last decade of national development programs in Mexico.

In the Green Book, Arizpe (2012: 43) and Nivón et al. (2012: 55) introduce Mexico City as a context of social and political chaos, which is preventing the city from being perceived as the great cultural metropolis it is. According to the authors, the growing rates of violence and conflict and the economic and governability crisis stop Mexico from entering into the global shifts of cultural development. To this overall view it is important to add the huge and increasing inequality<sup>14</sup> that has direct relationship with the state's concessions to the private sector as well as the regulations on the public sector (OXFAM 2016: 21).

The problems of state legitimacy, policies ownership and political stability are among the arguments to defend the need of social regimes (Mkandawire 2001). Without getting into a deeper theoretical analysis, let us see what happens around the cultural debate and the ways in which creativity as a tool for transformative change is being considered in the making of cultural policies and its linkage, if so, with other social plans.

As mentioned, when consulting Nivón about the translation of cultural policies from the global frameworks of Agenda 21 (UCLG 2004) and the Green Papers reports introduced in the 2000s, he mentioned a difficulty to find guidance in them due to the lack of specific goals, especially within the PNUD reports. These documents, made by the UNESCO since the 1990s, are central features in the debate and re-conceptualization of the relationship between culture and development. In the WCCD Report (1996) for instance there are exciting points about the power of creativity as a driving capability to form partnerships and "create new and better ways of living and

---

<sup>14</sup> According to Esquivel Hernández (as cited in OXFAM 2016: 21) the wealth accumulated by four multimillionaires in Mexico has increased from 2% of GDP in 2002 to 9 % in 2014.

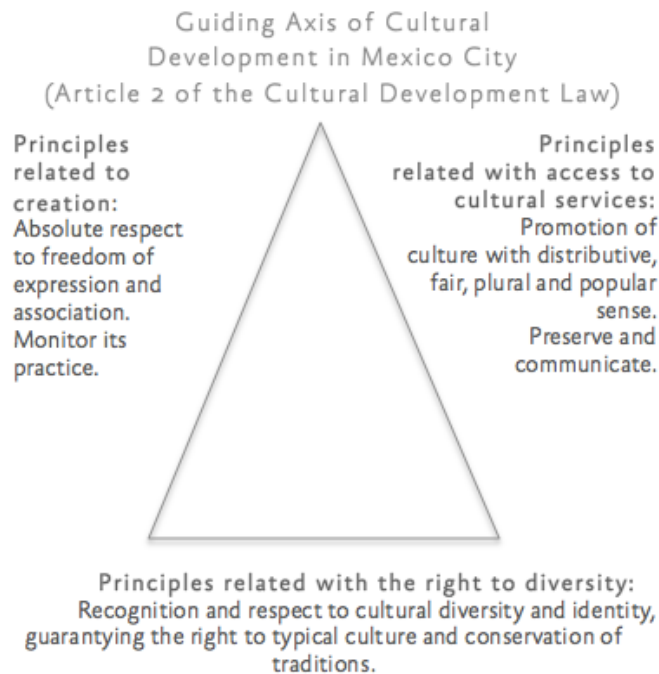
working together” (WCCD, 1996: 24). However, following Nivón’s comments, it is true that such broad definitions are difficult to translate to specific targets.

The debate fostered by UNESCO is connected to Sen’s capability approach and the recognition of the humanized aspect of culture as introduced in section 2.4. The reports declare to be inspired by the success of the Brundtland Commission in bringing together economy and ecology and seek to translate that agenda in the relationship between culture and development (WCCD, 1996: 8). They did this by proposing very broad recommendations that are to be looked at, considered and adapted according to individual targets at the local level.

**“The postcolonial discourses came to propose the transition from the general development models and goals to the focus on specific and local scale actions aiming to guarantee social welfare and specially certain autonomy”**  
Nivón (2016 IPC)

Within the sustainable development discourse and the recent definition of the SDGs by the UN (2015) there are two main concepts closely related to the content and purpose of the Green Book:

- The principle of cultural rights, aiming to guarantee equal access in a plural and contrasting context like Mexico City. It can be framed within the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> SDG, focused on ensuring and promoting well-being, inclusive and equal access to education and learning opportunities (UN 2015: 12).
- The idea of creative cities, gathered in the 11<sup>th</sup> SDG, aiming to make the urban space more inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable (UN 2015: 12). The cultural and creative industries were defined previously in Agenda 21 and the Green Papers. These conceptual frameworks target innovation, access to cultural rights and respect to cultural diversity. They recognize the equal capacity in every citizen to use their creativity beyond the artistic production and implementing it to adapt and transform their reality. This is equivalent to making social sculpture and working on social cohesion. The Green Book identifies the principles mentioned as the constitutive of the LFCDF in Mexico City (Nivón et al 2012: 60):



That being said, the authors of the Green Book state that, in the normative sense cultural policies in Mexico City are not established according to cultural rights. This statement is a clue to the question about connections between discourses and norms. In the discussion with Nivón (2016) he explains the framework assumes the existence of concentration of creative people but also of favorable conditions for them to assemble. The scholar admits that encouraging citizens to take over free time and space, as core concept within the creative cities, is opposing to the gentrification process (Nivón 2016 IPC). The recent gentrification phenomenon is one of the main concerns motivating the work of Casa Gallina<sup>15</sup> as Ortega (2016) expressed in the conversation and shown in the next chapter.

The local legal framework was elaborated in 2003 during the first administration of the PRD, putting together the existing codes and adding new ones. The problem, according to Nivón, was “The privilege towards ideological definitions instead of a more democratic, open and inclusive cultural policy” (Nivón 2016 IPC). After assessing the law, I find that again the main problem is the definition of culture and arts and the shortage of political interpretations impeding the normative and discursive dimensions to meet effectively at the institutional and instrumental levels.

---

<sup>15</sup> Casa Gallina is a cultural platform located in a centric zone of Mexico City and focused in projects working with the neighborhood’s identities and communities.

I argued with Nivón that there are not only disconnections between the national and local approaches to cultural policies as explained in the first and second chapters, where he agreed, but also within the Green Book in matter of expanding the concept of culture and arts. That means understanding culture beyond the use of leisure and free time. We talked about how to extend the idea of tolerance to solidarity and creativity as a way to link cultural and social development. Even though Nivón recognizes that Mexico, along with France and The Netherlands, is within the most committed countries in matter of cultural development, the participatory approaches are much more difficult, or even impossible to implement at the local and national levels in Mexico:

There is a need of participation and at the same time the federal government 'needs' to control participation. This results in insufficient and unsatisfactory participatory policies for the actors. It is very paradoxical because while we live in a world that has created the largest participation channels, there is an increasing mistrust on behalf of the citizens".

Nivón (2016 IPC)

Nivón explains in a latter clarification, "There is a systemic position from the state to control participation to avoid an overflow of demands or questioning the public actions. This happens in every sector of social life, including culture" (Nivón 2016 IPC). Adding to this, participation processes, thought to be part of a bottom-up approach, is contradictory with a top-down implementation by a powerful stakeholder as the state.

In this tune, the Green Book was the result of a process of consultation and participatory workshops with cultural agents and experts, following Escobar's (as cited in Nivón et. al. 2012: 92) arguments that cultural policies should not be left to the state but put in hands of cultural producers and social movements. In Mexico City two popular examples of doing this are the book clubs, referred in the following chapter, and the Faros<sup>16</sup>, which are cultural spaces located in peripheral or marginalized urban areas. Nivón (2016 IPC) and most of the agents I spoke to, recognize that only the first Faro, started in Iztapalapa<sup>17</sup> from a bottom-up initiative, demonstrated to be a successful project. When trying to reproduce its model in other similar socio-economic

---

<sup>16</sup> The Faros and Mexico City's cultural policies are selected among the 'good practices' of culture and local sustainable development by Agenda 21 (Culture 21 2016).

<sup>17</sup> Iztapalapa is one of the most populated delegations in Mexico City with the lowest index of socioeconomic development and huge rates of marginalization and violence.

contexts it did not work out that well. Discussing with Nivón on this and based on the practices I was exploring we concluded that the attempts to institutionalize models or to bring good experiences into policy recommendations clash with the rigidity of the normative, economic and legal frameworks. According to Nivón (2016 IPC), a second obstacle for norms to reach the ground level is that the government institutions responsible of implementing them and allocating budgets lose vitality due to the bureaucratic structure and political pressures. This comes along with *clientelism* and parties' political interests. These issues were also exposed in the conversation with Celedón, Palma, Fernández and Ortega and will be pick up in the next chapter.

In an attempt to go deeper into the questions laid out, I decided to interview González Casanova, an artist and cultural agent that took part in one of the workshops called for the making of the Green Book. He participated also in a previous consultation organized by the promoter of the law. Casanova briefly explained that during the first PRD administration (1997-2000) a huge amount of resources, using budget from a fund for social activities, FONAPAS, that was eliminated. The problem was that "Often times they were used in activities without previous planning and in many occasions with sings of corruption from the delegations" (Gonzalez Casanova 2016 IPC). This connects with the complaints and mistrust expressed by his colleagues in this research. The next administration (2000-2005) considered that cultural funds were some kind of luxury and decided to invest in education rather than in arts and culture. Then came demands from CSOs to the state, also exposed by Nivón, and adoption of the global sustainable frameworks. The Faros were created and the city gain mayor international presence. Following Casanova's (2016 IPC) I agree with him that despite all the good intentions from the left wind administrations, there is still a traditional and constrained concept of culture. Also Garza (2016 IPC) finds contradictions between the progress made by the PRD in translating global criteria into social development and working in collaborative initiatives but at the same time stepping back in the definition and promotion of culture.

Nonetheless, the second part of the book is dedicated to re-conceptualize culture within the cultural polices as instruments of power. The definition of "Culture as the 'great consciousness raiser' and enabler of social capital" (Nivón et al. 2012: 92) puzzled me since it matches with definition of social sculpture but adds more interrogatives about its reduction within the normative frameworks.

The Green Book's recommendations were translated into policies and plans by the actual administration through the Institutional Program of the SCDF 2013-2018 (GCMX 2013) and the PDC 2014-2018 (GCMX 2014). A significant point of the planning process is the potential to cross sectors with other development programs. However, after assessing them, I find that the pre-condition of expanding the understanding of culture beyond entertainment and consumption (García Vázquez as cited in Nivón et al. 2012: 346) was not fulfilled into the policy plans.

The previous chapter set the basis to understand the concepts framing the debate of culture and development. This one examines the political shifts of arts and policies making in the glocal scene of Mexico City in the last decades. The third section presented a critical review of the local debate and policy translations. The chapter shows contestations and mismatches about the understanding of culture, participation and the relationship between CSOs and the state. By doing so it establishes a dialogue and brings arguments to go deeper in the question about how are these connections perceived by the cultural actors.

## 4. Discourses meeting practices

### 4.1. The policy making and the making of social sculpture

Before starting this research I did not know about the Green Book. Neither did the actors I spoke. So, one of my questions to Nivón was why the book made by experts and involving public consultation with cultural agents was not circulating among those actors in the city. To answer Nivón (2016 IPC) explained that Lopez Borbón<sup>18</sup> proposed the production of Green Book to the previous administration and it was published almost ending their period. Despite the continuity of the PRD in the local government, “the first Secretary of Culture in the new administration had interests that were not aligned with the Green Book, to say it gently” expressed Nivón (2016 IPC). After a year of mandate the Secretary was dismissed due to confrontations with original communities. The new one picked up the book to design the PDC 2014-2018. Nivón concludes that the time and interest vacuums are probably the reason for ignoring the book.

After the first analysis of the Green Book and the later conversation with Nivón I went back to the 21 objectives of the LFCDF, and found that although some are aligned with the concepts guiding this research, in general the approach continues to be mostly top-down and responding to a structure of a centralized state, as perceived also in the PDC (GDCMX 2014). The hierarchical perspective becomes clear only by looking the 10<sup>th</sup> goal, related to the prerequisite of recognizing the cultural CSOs in order to support their participation in governments’ programs on one hand, and to guarantee their access to public and communitarian cultural infrastructure on the other. The idea implicit in this target is to incorporate grassroots initiatives to the government apparatus but without knowing their real needs and aspirations. Bringing community-based efforts under the state’s sight is not following the sustainable and cultural diversity approach.

In order to move towards equality and social re-distribution we need combine top-down decisions and bottom-up experiences, creating alliances and putting together informal and formal forces, as Leach concluded in the conference at ISS<sup>19</sup>.

---

<sup>18</sup> López Borbón is a cultural consultant of local cultural development projects. In 2011 she created three laboratories of specialized training for civil servants, independent cultural actors and for the prevention of crime and violence through arts and culture.

<sup>19</sup> Melissa Leach. 13 October 2016. ‘Challenging inequalities and unsustainabilities: the politics of transformative pathways’. Dies Natalis lecture, ISS, The Hague.

Already said, the Green Book and the PDC launched in 2014 were constructed through a participatory process, seeking to create alliances and cross-sector activities. Align with that rationale, the 3<sup>rd</sup> Report of the SCDF (GCMX 2015) begins with a self-recognition of the importance given by the administration to dialogue and inclusiveness towards a sustainable development perspective. The SCDF defines its main achievements as “consolidating the inter-institutional connections with the different government agencies and organizing the participation processes that drive to perceive culture as the best investment to reinforce citizenship building” (SCDF 2015: 5). The report follows the seven axis of public policies exposed in section 1.2. The policies that are closer to the debate held in this research report an important number of results in:

- Communal Cultural Development: financial support; implementation of cultural activities; creation of new film and book clubs; training of cultural promoters; creation of special programs, networks, committees and forums of cultural diversity of indigenous and original groups; (SCDF 2015: 15-19).
- Sustainable Cultural Activity: creation of the program Cultural Enterprises; modification in institutional procedures to include cultural enterprises and entrepreneurs as targets for credits and participation with the Secretary of Economy in the seminars of Creative and Sustainable Cities; foster book fairs, publications and promotion of film production in the city (SCDF 2015: 23-27).
- Governance and Cultural Cooperation: creation and implementation of following up and accountability tools; financial support to 39 CSOs and institutions; advocacy process for more budget allocation; legal reforms and other cultural initiatives in the Legislative Assembly and the Congress (SCDF 2015: 47-53).

The third axis explored here also reports strengthening of cross-sectors activities, among them with gender organizations, juvenile in conflict with the law and other marginalized or vulnerable groups. The actions leaded with other local and national Secretaries, agencies, museums and CSOs were focused in the recognition, respect and exercise of cultural rights within the mentioned groups, considered priority. Despite some of these groups are the same involved in the projects coordinated by the agents consulted for this research, none of them informs any connection with the activities reported.



Those lacks did not stop them from answering the question about how they perceive the connections between their practices and state support through cultural and social policies. The opinions drew a very contested debate. Some demand for more state intervention –provision from public cultural institutions- and major warrants. Others' thoughts are align with the WCCD recommendations of the less direct mediation from governments that "Should play more of a facilitating role and also correct some of the distorting effects of free market mechanisms" (WCCD, 1996: 46). In the conversation with Castillo and Ortega, both said that in seeking autonomy to practice social sculpture and applying creative strategies locally it is better to disregard state intervention or aid. Instead Celedón, Palma and Fernandez, regardless the mistrust and some failed experiences with the local government in previous administrations, find that CSOs and civic agents like themselves cannot cover all the gaps left by the state's withdrawal.

Larroa Torres (2016 IPC), as expressed in section 3.2, believes that precisely part of the goals and work that CSOs have to do is engender autonomy at the collective level, where the state has abandoned its role. She affirms that this autonomy is more difficult to achieve individually; instead working in community facilitates this process. Gilardi, with whom I have worked with in applying creative strategies with communities of teenagers in conflict with the law in Mexico City, and I share not only experiences but also points of view around this topic. She thinks the linkage with the state can be both positive and negative (Gilardi 2016 IPC). These alliances might limit the organization's autonomy, especially when social projects and their goals have to adapt to governmental discourses to receive support. This condition decreases the liberty of thinking and of action, which is of course very dangerous, as Gilardi stresses (idem). The positive effects, besides the financial support is the possibility to establish cross-sector and cross-institutional connections. Gilardi warns there is a delicate and counter-productive side in this first advantage:

When the government funds a project, the linkage with other state institutions, CSOs or private enterprises is easier to reach. But at the community level the support can be perceived as negative due to the actual mistrust on the government."

Gilardi (2016 IPC)

My colleague introduces the idea of hybrid models<sup>20</sup> of intervention and collaboration between stakeholders. I believe that the connections between the state, CSOs and other actors involved in multidimensional cross-wise networks need to be built and defined according to the contexts and communities through the processes of assemblage, as conceptualized by Lendvai and Stubbs (2008).

From the examples and opinions gathered in the fieldwork, Casa Gallina and Lugar Común declare to work with autonomy and disconnected from the local government. Casa Gallina's position is possible because of the contribution of an important number of economic and social allies. Lugar Común, as expressed by Castillo (2016 IPC), gained autonomy and recognition with the recent funding from Arts Collaboratory<sup>21</sup>. These projects work in very different contexts both with small and stable groups, focusing on the communities' identities and developing strategies to rescue or reinforce the use of the public space; share knowledge and training; promote horticulture and other creative and collective synergies. The neighbors are invited to join in but there is no target group or specific problematic being attended.

Instead the projects requiring or aspiring for stronger connections with the state and local governments are dealing with land and territory, environment and pollution –the problems being attended by Calpulli Tecalco- and excluded groups, like the community of street children and youth that were part of Proyecto Metero or the teenagers in conflict with the law that Gilardi works with. The complexity of such problems cannot be tackled only through the creative strategies initiated by cultural agents. Other creative synergies from specialized fields are required. During the talk with Fernández (2016 IPC), coordinator of Proyecto Meteroro, she explained that even though they worked with a multidisciplinary group including psychologist and social workers, the support from DIF, SEDESOL and cultural government institutions was needed and proved improvements and good practices when it was achieved.

Before making some first conclusions about this polemic debate I would like to examine an example of a good practice and policy implementation at the local scale. The case is part of the book club program initiated during the first elected government

---

<sup>20</sup> In Latin America hybrid state models may be traced back to the Third position of *Peronismo* in Argentina in the late 1940s. The Pink Wave emerged in the 2000s in the Southern Cone is an example of hybrid and alternative ways of good governance in the region.

<sup>21</sup> Arts Collaboratory is "A trans-local network of diverse organizations focused on art practices, processes of social change, and working with broader communities beyond the field of art" (Arts Collaborative 2016).

of Mexico City in 1997, by the poet Aura, director of what later became the SCDF. In a review of the last thirty years of attempts to foster lecture in Mexico, Alvarado and Patán (2007) explain how this program succeeded because it was basically an invitation for people to read without the bureaucratic apparatus in between. The plan was to offer a first institutional consultancy for citizens willing to appropriate the initiative of starting-up a book club within the conditions and infrastructure they could self-manage. Alvarado and Patán, as well as Celedón (2016 IPC) declare that the next administration failed to continue the program, which became more a tool for campaigning. These comments link to Nivón's arguments (2016 IPC) about the SCDF formation in 2002, which privileged ideological discourses over democratic, inclusive and open cultural policies (Nivón 2016 IPC).

In 1999 in San Pedro Actopan, Carmen Rodríguez placed to book club in her house where she consciously keeps selecting the publications according to the community's history, traditions and interests. Sra. Carmen, as the community members call her, started to relearn, at an elder age, her original *Nahuatl* language to read in rounds the stories of their ancestress:

“I read to children that live and come here, telling them about their true past, not like the stories made up by government institutions and reproduced in school text books”  
Rodríguez (2016 IPC)

The constant attendance to the book club's activities motivated the creation of Calpulli Tecalco, started by two of Rodríguez's adult children along with Celedón and other collaborators. When inquired about the dialogue with the local delegates and the CSO, Palma (2016 IPC) regrets that all the approaches and participatory processes had no real results. Palma claims they were only 'broken promises' and 'ghost' procedures that show the inefficiency and failure of the state (idem). The book club illustrates not only a self-governing practice that builds and recovers the community's knowledge and narratives, but also the organic and inclusive implementation of a cultural policy. The program had its interruptions but was picked up by the actual administration. It includes training, communication support, provisioning of books and didactic materials for the promotion of lecture through the local offices in each delegation (Perez Camacho and Lopez Ojeda 2015: 76).

The coordinators of book club, Calpulli Tecalco and Proyecto Meteoro received financial, technical and human resources from the local government, directly through

the GDF or its local offices. During our conversations, they were all very critique about the actual political administrations, but at the same time demanded for more and stronger relations to tackle together some of the complex and multidimensional problems they face. Instead Lugar Común and Casa Gallina's autonomy is possible due not just to private or international supports but also to the scope and problem they worked with.

Proyecto Meteoro<sup>22</sup> developed their program of vocational education to build alternatives to street children and youth. The local government called Fernández several times, one recently, asking her to give capacitation workshops and share the experience of implementing creative strategies with vulnerable groups. Fernández perceives that as a good step in building from bottom-up but fears a reduction of the complex project. Proyecto Meteoro is an example of how different actors involved in the same social actions can join efforts and construct synergies that will increase and improved the outcomes. The institutional connections succeed in establishing middle term collaborations with governmental and other CSOs. However, Fernández states that after nine years the members of the team started to feel tired and gave up the project. Although they felt it was concluding a cycle that had been long enough for a self-managed project, she recognizes that "a few more months to wrap up and mostly to train people to continue were missing" (Fernández 2016 IPC).

Fernández (idem) explains they tried to make it self-sustainable but it did not work since the revenues from the products made at the workshops were given completely to the assistants (idem). A difference with Castillo's thoughts about the gift economy, mentioned in chapter 2, is that Fernández believes that the collaborators of these social practices should be well paid to guarantee the dignity of their professional work. The dimension of compensation that goes along with training street-level and social workers must be carefully balanced to be motivating. At the same time it has to prevent creating heavy burdens or unreachable expectations (Rao and Walton 2004: 363). An important strategy for continuity as exposed by Fernández (idem) is the

---

<sup>22</sup> Proyecto Meteoro worked with a mix of donors coming from banks funding, a prize donated by an artist and government support from SEDESOL and collaborations with the DIF in doing a census of street children and youth.

capacitation of community members that can become future leaders of the projects they participated in or initiators of new ones<sup>23</sup>.

The autonomy defense “to avoid becoming a tool for political meet in meeting with the local offices, with the idea of “becoming a pilot” (idem), but not seeking to establish any kind of partnerships. The aspiration of becoming a model, also expressed by Fernández, is a polemic issue since the Agenda 21 recommendations and the sustainable and post-development theoretical frameworks neglect fixed models and advocate for grassroots movements and initiatives to construct their practices attending the context specificities.

This debate requires deeper reflection. However, the opinions gathered here resume some divergent approaches and needs regarding the connections with the state or other institutions. The distinctions respond to the targets and groups participating in creative strategies. What brings all the voices together is the will to communicate and share experiences that could inform and improve the policy making, even when not working closely with local administrations or nor benefiting from government supports.

## 4.2. Creativity and social cohesion

“There is an urgency that is being accelerated by the inertia of destruction over things and nature. Art does not work without a generous sense. We are swamped of aesthetics. (...) Arts have the value to transform reality, which is the substance, transform the context, the mindsets. It is a tool that few people consider important.”  
Fernández (2016 IPC)

In this section the issues to respond are first in what ways are the civic actors I interviewed relating to the people they work with? And second how are their methodologies making space for solidarity and co-creation of common responsibilities? According to Tironi and Sorj (2007: 110) the social agreements are the expected outcomes of building trust, alliances, equal access to information, tolerance and multiculturalism, which are in turn dimensions of social cohesion.

In the same way there are disputed ideas about the state’s intervention and its relationship with the CSOs and cultural actors working at the community level, there are also different opinions on how to work through creative strategies on social issues.

---

<sup>23</sup> The Report on communal cultural development includes support to 55 projects and following up on 100 collectives group in the Regional Cultural Network. (GCMX 2015: 15). But none of the actors I spoke with has received this benefits.

A common ground about methodologies is the intention to work together as a community, where agents, artists and the local members bring their inputs and ideas about how to plan and implement actions responding to their goals and needs. Horizontal structures are also essential in participatory action research (McIntyre 2008) where there are common tenets in the methodologies: collective commitment, self and collective reflection, joint decision to undertake actions and building alliances. Many of these principles are the same mentioned by Tironi and Sorj (2007) in relation to social cohesion, so finding out if they are in some way present will help to answer the questions posted. After Nivón's warnings about systemic control over participatory processes, let us see how they are worked out within the collective strategies.

Most of the agents interviewed are not originally from the communities they work with -except for Palma and her mother Sra. Carmen- but got involved with them to work on projects, similarly to what researchers do in fieldwork. Castillo spoke extensively about the way she is perceived by the community of Patria Nueva, the neighborhood where Lugar Común is settled. As in many peri-urban areas of Oaxaca, mestizos and original people integrate this one and usually the presence of a white woman is quite visible. She is called *la güera* that is a concept related to white blond people but nowadays used to point out other social distinctions. The point to stress here is that foreign actors are more noticed and the construction of trust, alliances and other features mentioned above develop differently when community members drive the projects. Also the possibility of dialoguing and understanding peoples needs is more constrained for Castillo and Ortega than for Palma and Rodríguez, original residents of Milpa Alta or for Celedón, who has been living there for many years and comes from a similar place.

Fernández (2016 IPC) also mentioned the importance of getting to know the people and environment where a project will take place before starting it up. She lives in Santa María la Ribera, the same neighborhood where Casa Gallina is located. As explained during our conversation, the street children and youth that conformed Proyecto Meteoro lived in plaza Sarco, next to her quarter. So the initiative started from "Literally crossing with the problem" (idem). These young groups live in the streets and are usually sexual workers and have serious drug addictions. They are abused and subjects of other human rights violations. The first step was to approach them and start talking with them. Fernández and other colleagues stopped to sit at the bench where groups of teenagers gather, still nowadays, to inhale *chemo*, an adhesive with a high

dependency effect that causes several damages, mainly in the brain and the heart. The year after the project started, Gutierrez and Vega (2003: 33) claimed in a report that governmental and NGO's were failing to reach long-term results in attending this type of severe problems. Fernandez said that the process of constructing trust, alliances and equal treat took time and was not always successful:

“The worst failures are related to the 17 people that died and to those that did not want to abandon the streets. It is really harsh when, after three years of working with someone, you realize that person can not find the way out.”

Fernández (2016 IPC)

About the positive results and effects that Proyecto Meteoro had in motivating a transformation process, Fernández highlights that some returned to their homes and one of them is now selling jellies and studying cooking. He continues going to plaza Sarco to with two other friends to “Encourage their mates to stop consuming drugs and to search for a job or to study” (2016 IPC).

Proyecto Meteoro became a school of vocational education based on design, arts and crafts of sustainable productions. It stopped working in 2010 but the team keeps contact with many of the participants. A relevant step made by the project was moving from the public space, where they began working -in the same bench they sat to talk- to a room facilitated by a museum located nearby. This was the result of searching for alliances. Fernández confesses that it was very motivating to have a place to work and that it encouraged the trust building within a safe space:

“Besides the flows of energy generated by creativity, there was a spirit of trusting. It is not enough to be working on something that might be interesting for the others if that spirit is not present. In social projects that spirit is given by arts and that is the direct relationship with Beuys' ideas. Still, it is difficult for institutions to understand this.”

Fernández (2016 IPC)

The conclusions reached by Fernández are again drawing attention to the importance of doing social sculpture not only within the specific community but also with the social environment and mostly with multidisciplinary institutions, as stressed in the previous section. According to Makowski et al. (2010) these practices imply rethinking the forms of social intervention, moving from what they call 'prosthesis' model to a mediation process:

“Committed with co-producing a social place that can be recognized by children and youth living in the streets. It accompanies instead of supplanting the process of re-configuration of social fabrics, including the relationships with the family, other institutions, social actors, the labor market and the urban juvenile culture.”  
Makowski et al. (2010: 85)

The prosthesis refers to the welfare state, provisioning social protection through their centralized institutions. Mediation is closer to the idea of hybrid models, introduced in the previous section, where institutions and other CSOs mediate between individuals or groups and policy programs and governments budgets –even if inputs are coming from other sector- through a regulated process. In this sense, Casa Gallina defines its mission and strategies in terms of facilitating “A series of inoculation platforms, focused on certain interests, entailing a transformation in life experience” (Ortega 2016 IPC). After visiting the house a talking with Ortega I could prove that one of their main targets is inviting artists to stay in short or medium term residencies, fostering social artistic practices that can bring creative ideas to co-participatory projects. They aim to work from the bottom-up daily experiences of the residents, as well as with the history and legacy of the place. Other strategies are the training programs to construct shared knowledge through workshops, open talks and conferences that seek to respond to the local agenda and concerns. As a cultural platform their goals are also to build solidary synergies and assertive communication that can connect better the economic productions and social fabric, as stated in their mission (inSite\_CasaGallina 2013). Gilardi concluded our talk mentioning the importance of assertive communication, especially in the phase of reintegration of juveniles in conflict with the law:

“Assertive communication refers to an open dialogue aiming to understand the other. It seeks to communicate ideas clearly and interchanging thoughts not through a process of negotiation but through recognition.”  
Gilardi (2016 IPC)

The participatory projects coordinated by the actors I spoke with work also as diagnoses that are contributing to build the image, identities and behavior of the diverse social groups, as well as their demography, history of the place and their religious and social practices (inSite/Casa Gallina 2013). Some of their projects were actually based on ethnographic study and mapping exercises, with the purpose to understand the structure an operation of important references and spaces in the neighborhood as the

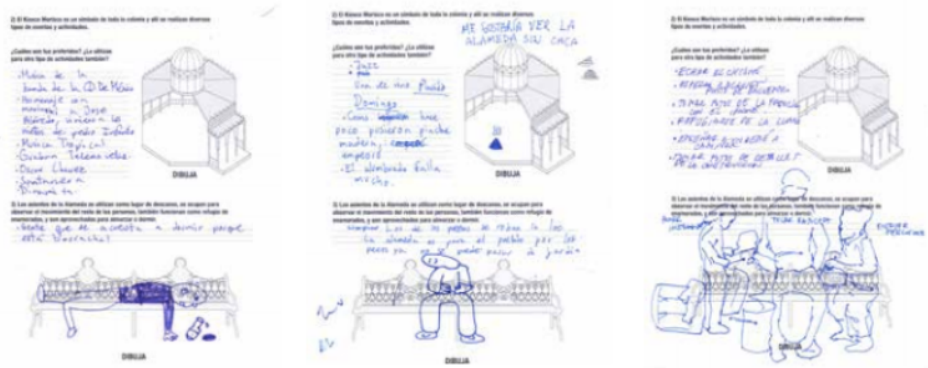


local market, the life around the famous Arab style plaza and the commercial networks. The pictures and interview formats shown here illustrate the collective mapping coordinated by the artistic duo Iconoclasistas, during their residency in 2015.

The results of the context studies articulate a multi-dimensional view of the place and their people and also inform about possible sites of intervention, topics for the workshops and training programs. They also engaged the neighbors in the recognition of their cultural elements and stimulated the construction of a network with Casa Gallina.



Iconoclasistas and collaborators from Casa Gallina doing the collective mapping in Sta. Ma. la Ribera. (up) Interview formats for the collective mapping. Section dedicated to the life around the Arab square.(down)



The context studies and the proposals displayed by the artists in residence have activated an ongoing dialogue with the community. This compensates Oterga's (2016 IPC) presentation of Casa Gallina's director as someone that has everything planned and knows where to conduct a project. Nevertheless, during the conversation with Ortega and analyzing the published and institutional materials that Ortega showed me, I could see how they are constantly consulting, adapting and putting together the programs according to the needs and interests expressed by the neighbors. The activities planned as well as the printed materials they produce are entirely distributed at the community

level in the same way Calpulli Tecalco does. Therefore the access to information, spirit of solidarity and inclusiveness is taking place at Casa Gallina.

There are also differences in the way the actors I spoke with perceive the artists' role in doing social sculpture. Ortega (2016 IPC) defines them as "Leaders and bearers of a creative energy". Leadership is considered part of the artists' creative contribution. Delmar (2016 IPC) also views artists as someone discovering the idea and form on something that has not been created yet. He immediately adds Beuys' principle about the capacity to "Use a constellation of forces or substances" (idem) to reveal new forms as inherent in every human being. On the other hand, Castillo (2016 IPC) reiterated in our talk that there is an urgent need to dismantle the importance given to the artists and their egos. The artists' overvalue is, according to her, impeding finding alternatives or expanding the art system beyond the pursuit of individual recognition. Similarly, Fernández (2016 IPC) believes that artists need to commit and invest their creativity in social projects.

If we put the statements together we may reach a broad definition where artists as professionals -with specialized education and working within the art system- and those working with substances and creativity to transform an object or a reality, all fit in the expanded concept of art, proposed by Beuys. The best example of that is the role Sra. Carmen plays in the promotion of the book club and all the activities planned around it. As Celedón said, she represents "The fabrics rooted in the traditions of deep Mexican communities. (...) She is like a cultural and spiritual kind of source, an adhesive representing the community-base-work" (2016 IPC). In Esteva's view she is a not of a network weaved by mutual obligations between the community members, who conceived the community as a concret dimension of their existence "They are in communality" (Esteva 2002: 363). Sra. Carmen creates spaces for dialogue, sharing knowledge, recovering local traditions and language and learning from children's new worries and perceptions.

This section has presented different ways in which practices and roles are being played at the ground level within the group of people I approached in the fieldwork. Despite the confronted opinions about the methodologies, the features of social cohesion and participatory approach were found in the work and voices crossing this debate. Willingness for solidary actions, communications based on listening and collective construction of trust are building networks and alliances at the community level. Likewise, efforts to engage in a more equal access to information, knowledge and

training are the basis of the work being done by these cultural agents. May these arguments be used to state that creative strategies are making space and expanding social cohesion.



Sra. Carmen and a group of participants of the book club round readings. The drawing is part of a publication made by Calpulli Tecalco as the result of a botanic and biological recognition of the environment and the trees of San Pedro Actopan. During several weeks the multidisciplinary group together with children and adolescents of the place visited the neighbours houses and public spaces to recognize and draw the trees they found.

## 5. Concluding remarks

### 5.1. Obstructions & Connections

To start wrapping up, I would say that at least in Mexico City –with its huge cultural diversities and increasing inequalities– the pathways towards a sustainable approach to development still needs to make space for dialogue. From those encounters the bridges to cross practices and policy programs with common aspirations may be located and then constructed. The importance of connecting practices and policies through a recognition and combination of bottom-up and top-down approaches has been exposed along the different discussions and experiences gathered in this research. Clear moments showing this are Celedón’s call for the state to take its responsibilities; Casa Gallina’s participation in meetings with colleagues from the local government aiming to learn from CSOs; Fernández’s review of the alliances achieved between Proyecto Meteoro and different institutions. The actual calls to bring the state back is not limited to address market failures but most importantly in creating and implementing policies to tackle inequalities (Leach 2016)<sup>24</sup>.

On the policy making side Nivón et. al claim (2012: 236-240) a lack of innovative models of citizen participation to incorporate creators and cultural actors in decision-making and designing instruments to achieve economic resources beyond the government’s calls. This implies overtaking the mistrust from cultural agents in the government’s institutions regarding their productions as instruments for development. In this sense, a relevant and specific question is the one inspired by Woddis (2014) about how do public policy analysis of participation and the concept of civil society contributes towards investigating the role of arts practitioners in the cultural policy process.

Nivón et. al (2012) point out the insufficient and inappropriate normative frameworks and pending cultural planning able to coordinate the mechanisms between the local government and the delegations. As recommended by the authors this planning should be done along with an institution reform and mayor commitment from the delegations (idem).

The analysis has shown that the local governments intentions are good but even when the political attempts of translating the sustainable approach to local policies are recognized internationally as ‘good practices’, they have not been translated into

---

<sup>24</sup> Idem footnote 35.

support for many of the CSOs and actors working with creative strategies at the ground level. The discourses of cultural rights and sustainable diversity make space for bottom-up practices and strategies as the ones coordinated by the agents participating in this analysis. However, despite the expanded definitions of arts and culture and the intention to root them in the local context through participatory approaches, I find the plans and activities of the PCD recently reported by the GCMX are made from top-down perspective.

The open debate and consultation process that guided the contextualized translation from Agenda 21 to the Green Book appears to be cut off when making its way to reach the ground levels. The assemblage approach does not reach its “complex, contradictory and contested” (Clarke 2004 as cited in Lendvai and Stubbs 2009: 675) stage where policies are sometimes legitimized by practices (Mosse 2005).

The targets defined in the policy framework include both tangible and intangible dimensions of culture, but they are not directly seen as tools or ends –creative strategies- in the processes of working out social problems. Therefore, to incorporate social sculpture as a driver for alternative development requires setting collectively an action agenda, defining a series of concrete priorities for policy and planning, a set of practical mechanisms for executing these plans and a benchmarking process for learning from the successes and failures of this effort. But first, it needs to solve the tensions clearly stated in the Green Book (Nivón et al. 2012: 324-325) as:

- A humanistic and elitist movement of mestizaje and integration versus indigenous movements of cultural pluralism.
- Eurocentric models of development and modernization versus reaffirmation of sovereignty and national identity.
- Social and legal uniformitarianism based on individual citizenship versus state models that include the original and indigenous communities.
- Free market versus protection of cultural goods as identity and creativity factors.

Once again the reading leads to more questions and puzzlement. Having proved some common ground were to expand the debate and possible ways of working out social sculpture, both at the conceptual and pragmatic levels, there is still resistance or

delay from the different stakeholders to come together. Nivón's arguments of the governments delay and resistance match with Bordat's (2013) statement:

"The inertia observed in Mexican cultural policy can be explained by the institutional structures constraints inherited from the PRI and by the actors resistance to change (bureaucrats, union leaders and intellectuals)"  
Bordat (2013: 222)

Bordat and others authors (Canclini 1987; Nivón 1999) have traced the withdrawal of the state in culture to the 1950s, as a process of institutionalization that took over cultural industries, transforming their scope and agendas towards cultural development. As seen in the second chapter, both at the national and local levels, the axis and programs are designed attending the development of culture and not culture as a pathway to development.

Connected to this problem is the lack of effective moves towards an articulated cross-sector system of cultural production and distribution, linked to citizenship. "They keep thinking in a vertical communication of culture" (González Casanova 2016 IPC). González claims, "The same happens at the national level; although there has been more financial support to arts production it is not connected with distribution and construction of publics" (idem). I would say that to fit our debate we must add to this comment that the use of creative strategies in grassroots projects, beyond the cultural industries and its publics, has not been yet grasped.

Another possible answer is that we are still facing a short-term phase of what Nivón (2012: 323) has summarized in the following chart of cultural policies content according to their temporal scope. If we manage to move into the long run, the principle of social sculpture may be put in action since the content are the same: arts as politics, crosswise use of creativity; social action and alliances and new forms of governing.

<i>Time</i>	<b>LONG TERM</b> Cultural policies as a relationship between art and culture within modern politics	<b>MEDIUM TERM</b> Cultural policies thought as public policies	<b>SHORT TERM</b> Cultural policies defined by specific or current agreements. They are ways of cultural organization.
<i>Political content</i>			
<b>THE PUBLIC</b> Aesthetic styles, ideological content, satisfaction of needs, free creativity.	Intervention in almost every public space within culture: arts, heritage, media, etc.	Great interest in media management, heritage and art funding, definition of the legal framework for the participation of cultural agents, budget structures and institutional models.	Special programs associated to a particular field; development and elaboration of public policies following a western model. Encouraging decentralization.
<b>GOALS AND OBJECTIVES</b> Collective action, artistic renovation, production of cultural objects	Achieve social action and institutional legitimization or support long term social processes	Organize the participation of cultural agents; guarantee the production, circulation and consumption of cultural objects.	Prioritization of cultural goals; stimulus to cultural agents; make some change in the organization of culture, for example decentralization, sponsorship, etc.
<b>THE POWER</b> Global / National / State / Local: political and economic power; political parties; NGOs	Take part in State power structure.	Cultural institutions, at national, regional and local level.	Specific agents or agencies.

Source: Elaborated by Eduardo Nivón Bolán (2012)

## 5.2. Culture of Development or Culture as Development

Arts and culture are a social construct (Jelin 2001) that is constantly worked-out. As observed this ongoing process happens within the art system and at the community level. It not only defines but also informs about the relationship between people and places at the political, social and economical dimensions. At the same time working through and in creative strategies like the ones exposed, brings possible solutions to specific problems within diverse types of communities. By showing and analyzing the opinions and examples brought from the fieldwork, this research situates in Escobar's "Call for a return of culture in the critical analysis of development" (Escobar 2012: 14), particularly local cultures, where knowledge is being constructed and practiced.

The anthropological return has been considered in different ways but mostly as arguing for the connection between culture *and* development. This research stands for pushing the boundaries of development *of* culture and even of a more radical proposition of culture *as* development (Clammers 2015: 3) and to the principle of social sculpture driving a ***culture of development***. This adds to Loomis (2000: 893) holistic perspective of development planning and decision-making in a sustainable way, where the political and economic dimensions are to be transform through expanded and creative practices producing knowledge and sustaining social cohesion.

Democratization and participation are part of the political process that, looked through the lens of social sculpture, motivates citizen consciousness. GPP showed how this has pushed the art system boundaries and Kuluncic's project how it creates networks with collectives implementing creative strategies. On the other hand the challenges to transform some of the problems raised by social exclusion and unequal distribution were seen through the experiences developed by Fernandez with Proyecto Meteoro's vocational education workshops with the street children and youth from plaza Sarco; the self-construction of Lugar Comun and the activities driven by them and Calpulli Tecalco to recover, preserve or improve the environmental conditions. The recognition of the place, history and knowledge in the process of community building are fostered by all the projects mentioned and looked at in Casa Gallina's synergies and Calpulli Tecalco and the book club experiences.

The length of the research has not allowed including Gonzalez Casanova's project of CACAO, as an example of solidary economy seeking to "strengthen the independent cultural production and creation of symbolic capital; (...) as well as creating new channels of exchange" (González Casanova 2015: 11-12). Nevertheless the ones mentioned add to the small and localized practices (Clammer 2015: 23) bringing alternatives in an attempt of humanizing development beyond the mitigation of some effects produced by its misleading ambitions.

This research has unpacked Beuys concepts to re-signify them, adding new understandings, both theoretical and empirical. Moreover it has shown how the making of social sculpture is constructing togetherness and pathways of being in common.

Moving from the triangle of politics, economics and society to the square, including culture as a fourth pillar, and from there to the organic figure of the spiral where arts and creativity are crossing and flowing into other sectors. It might sound aspirational and nostalgic, like Castillo said (2016 IPC) referring to the suburban idea of development, but the proposal comes from proving that development mainstream perspectives have produced more imbalances than the ones they 'helped' to construct.

Having engaged the reader till this point and moreover having raised reflections and new questions, this paper is already a step in the political process of building new pathways towards a culture of development studies and practice, if that is what we aspire.



## References

- Adorno, T. and M. Horkheimer** (1944-1994) 'La industrial cultural. Ilustración como engaño de masas' (The Culture Industry: Enlightenment as Mass Deception). *Dialéctica de la Ilustración. Fragmentos filosóficos* (Dialectic of Enlightenment. Philosophical fragments). Pp 165-212. Madrid: Trotta (Originally published in 1944)
- Alvarado, N. and J. Patán** (2007) 'Leer por la vereda tropical' (Reading Towards The Tropical Truth), *Letras Libres* No. 104. August 2007. Accessed 4 September 2016  
<http://www.letraslibres.com/mexico/leer-por-la-vereda-tropical>
- Appadurai, A.** (2004) 'The Capacity To Aspire.' In Rao, V. and Michael Walton (Eds) (2004) *Culture and Public Action*. Pp 59-84. California: Stanford University Press:
- Appadurai, A.** (2002) 'Cultural Diversity: A Conceptual Platform. Sustainable Diversity: The Indivisibility of Culture and Development'. In Stenou, K (Ed). *UNESCO Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity Cultural Diversity*. Series No. 1 A vision a conceptual platform a pool of ideas for implementation a new paradigm. Pp 9-17. United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization: Paris Accessed 19 February 2016  
<http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0012/001271/127162e.pdf>
- Arizpe, L.** (2012) 'Comentarios' (Commentaries), in Nivon et al. (Eds) *Libro verde para la Institucionalización del Sistema de Fomento y Desarrollo Cultural de la Ciudad de México* (*Green Book for the Institutionalization of Cultural Development en Mexico City*). Pp 35-39. Mexico City: Gobierno de la Ciudad de México.
- Arts Collaborative** (2016) 'Introduction' Accessed 10 September 2016  
<http://www.artscollaboratory.org/about/>
- Benjamin, W.** (1936-2003) *La obra de arte en la época de su reproductibilidad técnica*. (The work of art in the Era of the Technical Reproduction). Andres E. Wikert (translator). Ed. Itaca: Mexico
- Beuys, J.** (1973) 'I Am Searching For Field Character'. In Bishop, C. (Ed) (2006) *Participation*. Pp 125-126. Cambridge, London: Whitechapel. Massachusetts: The MIT Press.
- Beuys, J. and V. Harlan** (1979-2004) *What Is Art?: Conversation with Joseph Beuys*. Forest Row, United Kingdom: Clarview Books.
- Bekić, I.** (2013) 'The Poetics of Social Change'. In *Andreja Kulunčić: Art for Social Changes / Umjetnost za društvene promjene*. Pp 6-35. MAPA: Zagreb
- Bishop, C.** (2006) 'Introduction. Viewers as Producers'. In Bishop, C. (Ed) *Participation*. Pp 10-17. Cambridge, London: Whitechapel. Massachusetts: The MIT Press
- Bordat, E. M.** (2013) 'Institutionalization And Change in Cultural Policy: CONACULTA and Cultural Policy in Mexico (1988–2006)', *International Journal of Cultural Policy*, 19: 222-2482.

**Cagnolo, C.** (2014) 'Breve diagnóstico de las artes visuales en Argentina: Organizaciones autónomas y redes colaborativas en el contexto de la poscrisis' (Brief Diagnosis of Visual Arts in Argentina: Autonomous Organizations and Collective Networks in the Post-Crisis Context'), *Forum*. Volume XLV. Issue 2. Latin American Studies Association. Pp 16-19. Accessed 18 August, 2016. <https://lasa.international.pitt.edu/forum/files/vol45-issue2/LASAForum-vol45-issue2.pdf#page=15>

**Chatterjee, P.** (2004) 'Populations and Political Society'. *The Politics of the Governed: Reflections on Popular Politics in Most of the World*. Pp 27-51. New York: Columbia University Press.

**Clammer, J.** (2015) 'Art, Culture and Development'; 'Arts as Social Enterprise'; 'The Arts of Sustainability'; 'Art, Culture and Integral Development'. *Art, Culture and International Development. Humanizing Social Transformation*. Pp 1-19; 20-38; 39-61; 138-154. London: Routledge.

**Clammer, J.** (2014) 'For a Sociology and Anthropology from Art'; Art and Social Transformation'; 'Art Movements as Social Movements'. *Culture, Development and Social Theory. Towards and Integrated Social Development*. Pp 3-17; 34-46; 95-110. London / New York: Zed Books.

**Culture 21** (2016) 'Good Practices. Agenda 21 For Culture'. Accessed 15 October 2016 <http://www.agenda21culture.net/index.php/goodpractices-eng/good-practices-eng>

**Debord, G.** (1957-2006) 'Towards a Situationist International'. In Bishop, C. (Ed) (2006) *Participation*. Pp 96-101. Cambridge, London: Whitechapel. Massachusetts: The MIT Press. (Originally published in 1957)

**Déotte, J-L.** (2012) *¿Qué es un aparato estético?* (What is an Aesthetic Apparatus?). Santiago de Chile: Metales Pesados.

**Díaz, F. and P. Meller** (2012) 'Introducción / Violencia y cohesión social en América Latina: perspectiva introductoria' (Introduction / Violence and Social Cohesion in Latin America: introductory perspective). In Díaz, F. and Patricio Meller. (Eds) *Violencia y Cohesión Social en América Latina* (Violence and social cohesion in Latin America). Pp 11-25. CIEPLAN: Mexico

**Escobar, A.** (2001) 'Culture Sits in Places: Reflections on Globalism and Subaltern Strategies of Localization', *Political Geography* 20. Pp 139-174. Accessed 19 December 2015. [http://crossroads-asia.de/fileadmin/user\\_upload/Literatur/Area\\_Studies/Escobar2001\\_Culture\\_sits\\_in\\_places.pdf](http://crossroads-asia.de/fileadmin/user_upload/Literatur/Area_Studies/Escobar2001_Culture_sits_in_places.pdf)

**Escobar, A.** (2006) 'An Ecology of Difference: Equality and Conflict in a Glocalised World', *Focaal—European Journal of Anthropology* 47 (2006): 120-37

**Escobar, A.** (2007) 'Post-Development as Concept and Social Practice'. Ziai, A. (Ed.) *Exploring Post-Development. Theory and Practice, Problems and Perspectives*. Pp 18-31. Routledge: London / New York.

**Escobar, A.** (2012) 'Introduction'. *Encountering Development*. Pp. 3-20 Princeton: Princeton University Press.

**Esteve, G.** (2002) 'Más allá de la identidad nacional: la creación de opciones políticas y culturales' (Beyond the National Identity: The Creation of Political and Cultural Options) in Béjar, R. and Héctor Rosales (Eds) *La identidad nacional mexicana como problema político y cultural*. (Mexican National Identity as a Political and Cultural Problem). Pp 331-382. Morelos: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México.

**Fischer, J.** (2010) 'Neither North nor South'. In Medina, C. (Ed.) *South, South, South. VII Seventh International Symposium of Contemporary Art Theories*. Pp 19-33 Mexico City: Patronato de Arte Contemporáneo.

**Foster, H.** (1996) 'The Artist as Ethnographer', in *The Return of the Real: The Avant-Garde at the End of the Century*. Pp 302-309. Cambridge: MIT Press

**Fraser, N.** (2000) 'Rethinking Recognition', *New Left Review* 3: 107-120. Accessed 2 April 2016. <https://newleftreview.org/II/3/nancy-fraser-rethinking-recognition>

**García Canclini, N.** (1987) 'Políticas culturales y crisis de desarrollo: un balance latinoamericano' (Cultural Policies and a Crisis of Development). In *Políticas culturales en América Latina* (Cultural policies in Latin América). Pp. 13-61. México, D. F.: Grijalbo.

**García Canclini, N.** (2012) 'Introducción'. (Introduction), in Nivón et al. (Eds) *Libro verde para la Institucionalización del Sistema de Fomento y Desarrollo Cultural de la Ciudad de México* (Green Book for the Institutionalization of Cultural Development en Mexico City). Pp. 29-33. Mexico City: Gobierno de la Ciudad de México.

**García, P.** (2015) 'Dossier Grupo Proceso Pentágono'. In Álvarez Romero, E. (Ed) *Grupo Proceso Pentágono. Politics of intervention. 1969-1976-2015*. Pp 58-70. Mexico: MUAC / UNAM.

**Garza, A. de la et al.** (2013) 'Creative Strategies for Building the Common'. In Álvarez Romero, E. (Ed) *Conquering and Building the Common. Andeja Kuluncic*. Pp 10-13. Mexico: MUAC. Museo Universitario de Arte Contemporáneo, UNAM. Accessed 25 August, 2016. <<http://www.andreja.org/prezentacija/kuluncic-MUAC.pdf>>

**Garza Caligaris, I.** (2011) '¿Alguien sabe cuántos son?' (Someone Knows How Many They Are?), *Rayuela. Revista Iberoamericana sobre niñez y juventud en lucha por sus derechos* (Ibero-American Journal of Children and Youth in Struggling for their Rights). 1: 129-131

**Gobierno de la Ciudad de Mexico (Government of Mexico City)** (2003) Ley de Fomento Cultural del Distrito Federal (Law of Cultural Development of Mexico City), *Gaceta Oficial del Distrito Federal*, October 14 20102, 1-33

**Gobierno de la Ciudad de Mexico (Government of Mexico City)** (2013) Programa Institucional de la Secretaría de Cultura 2013-2018. (Institutional Program of the SC 2013-2018). Accessed 23 July 2016  
<http://www.cultura.cdmx.gob.mx/storage/app/uploads/public/576/ae9/02b/576ae902ba147623717059.pdf>

**Gobierno de la Ciudad de Mexico (Government of Mexico City)** (2014) Programa de Fomento y Desarrollo Cultural 2014-2018 (Program of Cultural Development 2014-2018) Accessed 23 July 2016  
<http://www.cultura.cdmx.gob.mx/storage/app/uploads/public/576/ae1/ee2/576ae1ee20141397991306.pdf>

**Gobierno de la Ciudad de Mexico (Government of Mexico City)** (2015) 3er. Informe de la SCDF 2014-2015 (3rd Report of SCDF 2014-2015). Accessed 9 April 2016.  
<http://www.cultura.cdmx.gob.mx/storage/app/uploads/public/576/aea/30d/576aea30db775796283866.pdf>

**Godínez, V.** (2010) 'Reflexiones en torno a la cohesión social' (Reflections About Social Cohesion), *Colección de Estudios sobre Políticas Públicas Locales y Regionales de Cohesión Social*. Vol. 8. Pp 9-71. Barcelona: Diputación de Barcelona (Oficina de Coordinación y Orientación del Programa URB-AL III). Accessed April 27, 2016  
<https://www1.diba.cat/uliep/pdf/52679.pdf>

**González Casanova, J. M.** (2015) 'Presentación'. In Lopez, V (Ed) *Tianguis de CACAO. Cooperativa Autónoma de Comercio Artístico de Obras*. Pp 11-13. Mexico City: CONACULTA

**Gough, I. and G. Wood** (2004) 'Introduction'. *Insecurity and Welfare Regimes in Asia, Africa and Latin America: Social Policy in Development Contexts*. Pp 1-11. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

**Gutiérrez Galindo, B.** (2013) 'Creatividad y democracia. Joseph Beuys y la crítica de la economía política' (Creativity and Democracy. Joseph Beuys and the Critique of Political Economy), *Anales del Instituto de Investigaciones Estéticas*, Vol. XXXV. Num. 103. Pp 99-140. Mexico: UNAM. <http://www.redalyc.org/toc.oa?id=369&numero=29618>

**Gutiérrez, R. and L. Vega** (2003) 'Las investigaciones psicosociales sobre la subsistencia infantil en las calles, desarrolladas en el INP durante los últimos 25 años' ('Psyco-social Researches on Children's Subsistence in the Streets, Developed in the INP over the last 25 years'), *Salud mental*, 26(6), 27-34. Accessed 11 September 2016  
<http://www.medigraphic.com/pdfs/salmen/sam-2003/sam036d.pdf>

**inSite\_CasaGallina**, (2013) 'inSite/CasaGallina' Accessed 10 July 2016  
[http://insite.org.mx/wp/ct\\_proyecto/casagallina/](http://insite.org.mx/wp/ct_proyecto/casagallina/)

**Jelin, E.** (2002) '¿De qué hablamos cuando hablamos de memoria?' ('What Do We Talk About When We Talk About Memory?'). *Los trabajos de la memoria* (The Works of Memory). Pp 17-39. Buenos Aires: Editorial Siglo XXI.

**Johannisson, J.** (2008) 'The Geography of Cultural Policy: Regional Cultural Policy in Sweden.' Paper presented at ICCPR 2008: The Fifth International Conference on Cultural Policy Research, Istanbul. Accessed 10 April 2016 [http://iccpr2008.yeditepe.edu.tr/papers/Johannisson\\_Jenny.doc](http://iccpr2008.yeditepe.edu.tr/papers/Johannisson_Jenny.doc)

**Kwon, M.** (2002), 'The (Un)Siting of Community'. *One Place After Another. Site-Specific Art and Locational Identity*. Pp 138-155. Cambridge, London: The MIT Press.

**Lendvai, N. and P. Stubbs** (2009). 'Assemblages, Translation and Intermediaries in South East Europe.' *European Societies* 11(5): 673-695.

**Loomis, T. M.** (2000) 'Indigenous Approaches to Holistic, Self-Determined Development' *World Development* Vol. 28, No. 5: 893-910

**Makowski, S. et al** (2010). *Niños, niñas, adolescentes y jóvenes en situaciones de calle. Elementos para repensar las formas de intervención.* (Children ,Adolescents and Youth in Street Situation. Elements to Rethink Forms of Intervention). Ciudad de México: Editorial Lenguaraz. E-book. Accessed 11 September 2016  
<http://revistarayuela.ednica.org.mx/sites/default/files/Investigaci%C3%B3n%20Qu%C3%B3rum.PDF>

**Marangos, J. and N. Astroulakis** (2010) The Aristotelian Contribution to Development Ethics. *Journal of Economic Issues* Vol. XLIV No. 2 June 2010 DOI 10.2753/JEl0021-3624440228

**McIntyre, A.** (2008) 'Introduction' and 'Participatory Action Research'. *Participatory Action Research. Qualitative Research Methods Series* 52. Sage University Paper. Pp. ix-xviii and 1-13.

**Mignolo, W.** (2009) 'Epistemic Disobedience, Independent Thought and De-Colonial Freedom'. *Theory, Culture & Society* (SAGE, Los Angeles, London, New Delhi, and Singapore), Vol. 26(7-8): 1-23 DOI: 10.1177/0263276409349275

**Mignolo, W. and M. V. Tlostanova** (2006) 'Theorizing From the Borders. Shifting to the Geo and Body Politics of Knowledge', *European Journal of Social Theory* May 2006 vol. 9 no. 2: 205-221. Accessed 3 May 2016 <http://est.sagepub.com/content/9/2/205.full.pdf+html>

**Mitlin, et al.** (2007) 'Reclaiming development? NGOs and the challenge of alternatives'. *World Development*, Vol. 35, No. 10, pp. 1699-1720.

**Mkandawire, T.** (2001). 'Social Policy in a Development Context. Social Policy and Development Programme', Paper Number 7. Geneva: United Nations Research Institute for Social Development (UNRISD)

**Mosse, D.** (2005). 'Introduction: The Ethnography of Policy and Practice', Chapter 1 in *Cultivating Development: An Ethnography of Aid Policy and Practice*. Pp: 1-20. London, Ann Arbor (MI), Pluto Press.

**Nancy, J.L.** (1991) 'Of Being-in-Common'. In Miami Theory Collective (Ed.) *Community at Loose Ends*. Pp 1-12. University of Minnesota Press: NED Accessed 15 August 2016.  
[http://uciteljneznalica.org/upload/ebook/104\\_Of%20Being-in-Common%20-%20Jean-Luc%20Nancy.pdf](http://uciteljneznalica.org/upload/ebook/104_Of%20Being-in-Common%20-%20Jean-Luc%20Nancy.pdf)

**Nivón, E. et al.** (2012) *Libro verde para la Institucionalización del Sistema de Fomento y Desarrollo Cultural de la Ciudad de México (Green Book for the Institutionalization of Cultural Development en Mexico City)*. Mexico City: Gobierno de la Ciudad de México.

**OXFAM** (2016) 'Una economía al servicio del 1%. Acabar con los privilegios y la concentración de poder para frenar la desigualdad extrema'. (An Economy for the Benefit of the 1%. Ending With the Privileged and Power Concentration in Order to Stop Extreme Inequality). 210 OXFAM Report. Accessed 15 October 2016. <http://www.oxfamMexico.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/bp210-economy-one-percent-tax-havens-180116-es.pdf>

**Perez Camacho, C. and A. López Ojeda** (2015) 'Los usos sociales de la lectura' (The social usage of lecture). Canclini et al. (Eds). *Hacia una antropología de los lectores* (Towards and Anthropology of the Readers). Mexico: Ediciones Culturales Paidós (in collaboration with Ariel, Fundación Telefónica, Universidad Autónoma Metropolitana and Editorial Planeta) Pp 41-101. Netlibrary database. Accessed 4 November 2016.

**Precilla, F. C. de la** (2013) 'The «Expanded Concept of Art» and «social sculpture» by Joseph Beuys in the work of Remo Bianchedi'. *Dialogismo e intertextualidad en la obra de Remo Bianchedi y su contexto institucional*. - Pp 22-356. Córdoba : Universidad Nacional de Córdoba. E-Book. Accessed 18 August, 2016. [http://www.ffyh.unc.edu.ar/sites/default/files/e-books/TESIS\\_PRECILLA.pdf](http://www.ffyh.unc.edu.ar/sites/default/files/e-books/TESIS_PRECILLA.pdf)

**Rao, V. and M Walton (Eds)** (2004) 'Culture and Public Action: Relationality, Equality of Agency, and Development'; 'Conclusion: Implications of a Cultural Lens: for Public Policy and Development Thought'. In Rao, V. And Michael Walton (Eds). *Culture and Public Action*. Pp 3-36; 359-372. Stanford University Press: California.

**Richard, N.** (2010) 'Peripheral Derivations Concerning the Intersitial'. In Medina, C. (Ed.) *South, south, south. VII Seventh International Symposium of Contemporary Art Theories*. Pp 35-43. Mexico City: Patronato de Arte Contemporáneo.

**Rosales Ayala, H.** (1994). 'Presentación'. In Rosales Ayala, H. (Ed). *Cultura, sociedad civil y proyectos culturales en México*. (Culture, Civil Society and Cultural Projects in Mexico). Pp 9-14 Mexico D.F.: CONACULTA.

**Rueda Ramos, J.** (2014) 'The cultural policy of Mexico City.' In *Good Practices of Agenda 21 for Culture*. Accessed 10 October 2016 [http://www.agenda21culture.net/images/a21c/bones\\_practiques/pdf/MEXICO\\_Pol\\_Cult\\_ENG.pdf](http://www.agenda21culture.net/images/a21c/bones_practiques/pdf/MEXICO_Pol_Cult_ENG.pdf)

**Sacks, S.** (2007) 'Exchange Values. Eleven Years On. In On the Table Venue'. Accessed 5 September 2016 <http://exchange-values.org/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/shelleysacks1.pdf>

**Secretary of the Cultures and Arts of Oaxaca. Governement of Oaxaca** (2016) 'Promueve "Lugar común" cultura ecológica para la construcción' ('Lugar Comun Promotes Cultural Ecology for Construction'). Culturas y Artes. Accessed 10 September 2016 <http://www.culturasyartes.oaxaca.gob.mx/promueve-lugar-comun-cultura-ecologica-para-la->

**Secretary of Social Development. Mexican Government (SEDESOL)** (2015) 'CONVOCATORIA dirigida a las OSC e Instituciones de Educación Superior y Centros de Investigación para presentar proyectos de Inclusión Social (IS), dentro del Programa de Coinversión Social. Diario oficial.

**Sen, A.** (2004) 'How Does Culture Matter?' In Rao V. and Michael Walton (Eds) *Culture and Public Action*. California: Stanford University Press, pp 37-58

**Sousa Santos, B. de** (2014) Beyond Abysmal Thinking: From Global Lines to Ecologies of Knowledges, in Sousa Santos, B. de. *Epistemologies of the South. Justice Against Epistemicide*. Boulder: Paradigm Publishers, pp. 118-135. (originally published in 2006).

**Stachelhaus, H.** (1987) *Joseph Beuys*. New York: Abbeville Press

**Stüttgen, J.** (2012) 'El arte', 'La libertad', 'La tripartición social', 'La plastica social', 'El dinero' ('Arts', 'Freedom', 'The Social Threefold', 'Social sculpture', 'Money'). Conferences Held in a Series of Five Encounters in Mexico City. Círculos de discussion (Circles of discussion). Accessed 10<sup>th</sup> August 2016 <http://www.proyectosparticipativos.com.mx/01C%20ConferJ.html>

**Strega, S.** (2005) 'The View from the Poststructural Margins: Epistemology and Methodology Reconsidered'. In Brown, L. And Susan Strega (Eds.) *Research As Resistance Critical, Indigenous, and Anti-Oppressive Approaches*. Toronto: Canadian Scholars' Press, pp 199-235

**Marcos, Subcomandante Insurgente** (2008) 'Algunas tesis sobre la lucha antisistémica' ('Some thesis about the antisistemic struggle') Podcast Annoucement. Accesed 2 September, 2016 <http://enlacezapatista.ezln.org.mx/2007/12/13/conferencia-del-dia-13-de-diciembre-a-las-900-am/>

**Talavera, J. C.** (2014) 'La cultura, mi sentido en la vida: Enrique Semo Calev' ('Culture, My Motive in Life: Enrique Semo'), *Expresiones. Excelsior*. Accessed 31 August 2016 <http://www.excelsior.com.mx/expresiones/2014/11/18/992968>

**Tironi, E. and B. Sorj** (2007) 'Cohesión social cohesion: a una visión desde América Latina.' ('Social cohesion: a Latin American vision), *Pensamiento iberoamericano* N° 1. (2). Cohesión social en Iberoamérica: algunas asignaturas pendientes. Madrid, pp 105-127

**United Nations** (2015) 'Outcome Document of the United Nations Summit for the Adoption of the post-2015 Development Agenda'. Accessed 26 October 2015 [http://www.un.org/pga/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2015/08/120815\\_outcome-document-of-Summit-for-adoption-of-the-post-2015-development-agenda.pdf](http://www.un.org/pga/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2015/08/120815_outcome-document-of-Summit-for-adoption-of-the-post-2015-development-agenda.pdf)

**UNESCO** (2002) 'UNESCO Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity' (UNESCO Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity). In Stenou, K (Ed) *A Vision a Conceptual Platform a Pool of Ideas for Implementation a New Paradigm*. Series No. 1. Paris: United Nations Educational,

Scientific and Cultural Organization, pp 4-6. Accessed 10 September 2016  
<http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0012/001271/127162e.pdf>

**United Cities and Local Governments – Committee on Culture** (2008) *Agenda 21 for culture*. Accessed 11 April 2016  
<http://www.agenda21culture.net/index.php/docman/agenda21/212-ag21en/file>

**Williams, R.** (1980) 'Culture'; 'Hegemony'; 'From Medium to Social Practice'. *Marxism and Literature*. Pp 11-20; 108-114; 158-164. Oxford, New York: Oxford Press University

**Woddis, J.** (2014) 'Arts Practitioners in the Cultural Policy Process: Spear-Carriers or Speaking Parts?' *International Journal of Cultural Policy*, 20:4, 496-512, DOI: 10.1080/10286632.2013.818672

**WCCD** (1996) 'Our Creative Diversity'. Summary Version of the Report of the World Commission on Culture and Development. Paris: Culture and Development Co-ordination Office.



## Appendix

### I. Venues

people	place	time
Fernando Delmar Researcher, curator & professor	Lunch in La Alondra, a small restaurant located in the centrum of Cuernavaca, Morelos.	Friday 15 <sup>th</sup> of July 2016
Víctor Muñoz Artist, professor & civic agent Rosa Ma. Larroa Torres Researcher & professor of sociology Angélica Palma Civic agent and activist Héctor Celedón Botanist and activist	Lunch at Victor and Rosa Maria's house in San Pedro Actopan, Milpa Alta. Their daughter Argelia also joined as. Angélica, Hector and their son where invited as well. He had the traditional mole recipient from the local town.	Saturday 23 <sup>rd</sup> of July 2016
Carmen Rodriguez Civic agent	After having lunch at Victor's house we visited Carmen for a short but productive talk at her house's gallery, where the activities related to the bookclub she initiated take place. It is also located in San Pedro Actopan.	Saturday 23 <sup>rd</sup> of July 2016
Ana Gilardi Researcher, teacher & civic agent	Interview in the garden of Abdel's house, one of the places I stayed in during my field trip, located in Cuatla, Morelos	Tuesday 26 <sup>th</sup> of July 2016
Josefa Ortega Researcher, curator & civic agent	Visit to Casa Gallina and interview after having a walk through the house and talking with other members working in the organization.	Friday 29 <sup>th</sup> of July 2016
Claudia Fernández Visual artist & civic agent	Skype interview. I was in a south part of the city and Claudia babysitting her nephews at her brother's house.	Thursday 4 <sup>th</sup> August 2016

<b>Eduardo Nivón</b> Professor, researcher & policy maker	Interview in Eduardo's studio. Before the interview started Eduardo invited me a coffee in a place nearby where I introduced the topic and questions of my research.	Friday 5 <sup>th</sup> of August 2016
<b>Mónica Castillo</b> Artist, professor & cultural agent	Interview in Monica's house. The interview started with Monica preparing breakfast in her kitchen where we continued talking.	Sunday 7 <sup>th</sup> of August 2016
<b>Amanda de la Garza</b> Curator & researcher	Skype interview planned after the research trip. I was at my home in Den Haag and Amanda was at hers in Mexico City.	Tuesday 13 <sup>th</sup> of September 2016
<b>José Miguel Gonzalez Casanova</b> Artist, professor & cultural agent	Conversation through Facebook messenger. I was at my home in Den Haag and José Miguel in Mexico City.	Saturday 22 <sup>nd</sup> of October 2016

## II. Places

Map showing the location of the venues



### III. People



María Angélica Palma Rodríguez

Civic agent and activist

Palma is from San Pedro Atocpan, Milpa Alta. She studied philosophy in the UNAM.

Now defines herself as cultural manager and farmer. She has also been a teacher in high schools from SEP. She is currently working on: *Totlahuan*: an eco-archeological Project documenting and researching in order to re-activate the cultural landscape of Milpa Alta; and *Por nosotros*: Project base don prevention, mitigation and compensation of the impact produced by industrial waste.



Héctor Celedón Muñiz

Botanist and activist

Héctor Celedón is biologist specialized in Environmental Sciences. He did his master studies at the UNAM and has

developed programs for the Scientific Divulcation in the Secretary of Culture of Mexico City, Institute of High School Education, where he is now Research Professor. Has texts published on biodiversity, traditional knowledge from the southern region of de Mexico City, especially Milpa Alta. His last researches, since 2003, have been based on agriculture system and land Malacachtepec Momoxco, Milpa Alta.

Angélica and Héctor are, along with Fernando Palma, the main coordinators of Calpulli Tecalco. This CSO is based in San Pedro Actopan, one of the twelve original communities that are part of Milpa Alta, a peri-urban delegation with the highest index of poverty in Mexico City. The organization works in diverse programs where art and education are tools to involve the community in creative activities that aim to recover rooted forms of communal governance, agriculture and cooking; recognition and preservation of the environment and of the *nahuatl* language, within other important cultural values and knowledge. Recently they have started to put more attention to activism due to the aggravating political and social crisis in Mexico. The bottom-up organization, flexibility to social demand and struggle to resist the progress of the city –as an “apocryphal concept” (Palma as cited in Garza et al. 2013: 21)- are the topics explored in the qualitative interview held around a meal with the traditional food of San Pedro Actopan.



Carmén Rodríguez

Civic agent

Angélica's and Fernando Palma's mother. Short visit and talk at her house and book

club, founded two decades ago in San Pedro Actopan. The book club was the seed that gave birth to the SCO Calpulli Tecalco and continues to feed and 'glue' the communities' efforts to recognize and foster their knowledge, traditions and identity.



Víctor Muñoz

Artist, professor & civic agent

Studied arts at the National School of Painting and Sculpture La Esmeralda, INBA. His work has been exhibited in Mexico, Guatemala, Canada, Chile, Puerto Rico, Argentina, France, Spain y México. Founder of the social art group Proceso Pentágono that was active mainly between 1973-1990. The group was characterized for its contested and political actions addressed to the State and the cultural and artistic system.

Professor of Science and Arts for Design and research leader in Methods and techniques of prefiguration at Creative Synthesis Department, Universidad Autónoma Metropolitana, Unidad Xochimilco. There he founded and coordinated the Galería del Sur

and initiated a change in cultural policies. Between 2009 and 2014 conducted the General Office of Arts at the university.

Research topics are modern and contemporary art. Has published articles in journals in Mexico, Spain, Canada and other places and also two books. He is head of the editorial program CyAD-UAM-X (2003-2007).

Victor's experience as an artist formed in the late 1960s and his participation in political and social art practices until the 1990s with Grupo Proceso Pentágono (Process Pentagon Group) is a historical reference that continues to bring reflection into the art system through his performances and artistic practices, curatorial exercises, teaching, editing and researching at the UAM. He moved to San Pedro Actopan, Milpa almost four decades ago and is also a collaborator of Calpulli Tecalco. The interview with him contributes to construct the historical perspective and critical analysis that this paper aims to have.



Rosa María Larroa Torres

Researcher & professor of sociology

Rosa María is Víctor Muñoz's house and was, together with their daughter Argelia, who at

her parents' home for a short stop in moving from New Zealand to Liverpool. They prepared the local 'mole' recipient and joined the table talk with Angélica, Héctor and their son. She has been professor at the Institute of Economics and Politics at UNAM and researching in coffee plantations, social capital and community based organizations.



Claudia Fernández

Visual artist & civic agent

BA in Arts and postgraduate studies in Youth Policies, Political Sciences and Governance by [Instituto Mexicano de la Juventud \(IMJUVE\) y Seminario de Investigación en Juventud \(SIJ\)](#).

[UNAM](#) and in Cultural Management and Cultural Policies by UAM-OEI.

Lives in Mexico City where she currently studies a MA in Humanities and works on education at high school Madrid and with the CSO Reinserta un mexicano, in a program of re-integration of teenagers in conflict with the law. Since 2009 she has worked with these communities in different projects and approaches. In 2013 published the book *Memoria de un relinquo* with the support of a national grant from CONACULTA, that is a subjective perspective on the treatment of juvenile delinquency.

The project Proyecto Meteoro (Project Meteor), initiated and coordinated by Claudia and a group of colleagues during more the six years addressing an important issue of extreme urban poverty with a local community of youth living in the streets of Mexico City, set a reference in the local art system. However by 2009, the population was not only growing but also leaving the workshops of vocational education offered by them and going back to prostitution. The interview with her is centered in figuring out why, despite receiving founding and other institutional supports, it did not manage to continue. Claudia's call (2009) for public authorities intervention was not attended. The questions and reflections around what did and did not work and the experience-based evaluations are the most relevant findings in this research.



Josefa Ortega

Researcher, curator & civic agent

J Studied arts at the National School of Painting and Sculpture La Esmeralda, INBA. His work has been exhibited in Mexico, Guatemala, Canada, Chile, Puerto Rico, Argentina, France, Spain y México. Founder of the social art group Proceso Pentágono that was active mainly between 1973-1990. The group was characterized for tis contested and political actions addressed to the State and the cultural and artistic system.

Professor of Science and Arts for Design and research leader in Methods and techniques of prefiguration at Creative Synthesis Department, Universidad Autónoma Metropolitana, Unidad Xochimilco. There he founded and coordinated the Galería del Sur and initiated a change in cultural policies. Between 2009 and 2014 conducted the General Office of Arts at the university.

Research topics are modern and contemporary art. Has published articles in journals in Mexico, Spain, Canada and other places an also two books. He is head of the editorial program CyAD-UAM-X (2003-2007).

osefa's approach to the curatorial practice – in modern and contemporary art- has been based on the idea of a creative act as a shared construction of a new discourse, perspective and reading of a historical or actual productions. She believes that this creativity is a possibility not restricted to artistic or authorial productions but is instead a common chance to construct a space of freedom (in a talk at Taller Multinacional 2013). Currently working in Casa Gallina (Hen House), a CSO conducted by a group of cultural agents and placed in a very specific social neighborhood within the city. The strategies to foster a 'change of paradigm' are the central topic of the interview conducted while visiting the house.



Fernando Delmar

Researcher, curator & professor

Studied arts at the National School of Painting and Sculpture La Esmeralda, INBA. His work has been exhibited in Mexico, Guatemala, Canada,

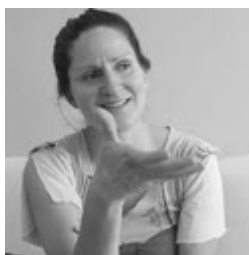
Chile, Puerto Rico, Argentina, France, Spain y México. Founder of the social art group Proceso Pentágono that was active mainly between 1973-1990. The group was characterized for tis contested and political actions addressed to the State and the cultural and artistic system.

Professor of Science and Arts for Design and research leader in Methods and techniques of prefiguration at Creative Synthesis Department, Universidad Autónoma Metropolitana, Unidad Xochimilco. There he founded and coordinated the Galería del Sur and initiated a change in cultural policies.



Between 2009 and 2014 conducted the General Office of Arts at the university.

Research topics are modern and contemporary art. Has published articles in journals in Mexico, Spain, Canada and other places and also two books. He is head of the editorial program CyAD-UAM-X (2003-2007). Fernando, who was Josefa's professor, has also conceived the curatorial work as a creative process. He has worked with government institutions, museums and galleries and is currently focused on teaching and writing. He has researched Joseph Beuys' works and theories, which



Mónica Castillo

Artist, professor & cultural agent

Mónica describes her actual position as the result of a long trajectory that started as an artist and painter and has become an exploration of Beuys concepts of emancipation and social sculpture, through education and participation in social projects and collective creativity. She is



Ana Gilardi

Researcher, teacher & civic agent

BA in Arts and postgraduate studies in Youth Policies, Political Sciences and Governance by Instituto Mexicano de la Juventud (IMJUVE) y Seminario de Investigación en Juventud (SIJ), UNAM and in Cultural Management and Cultural Policies by UAM-OEI.

Lives in Mexico City where she currently studies a MA in Humanities and works on education at high school Madrid and with the CSO Reinserta un mexicano, in a program of

lead part of his seminar at the MA Artistic Production program at the UAEM. The university recently published a translation by him of Beuys conversation with Volker Harlan along with another selection of works. His intellectual and also experience-based approach to the relationship between art, culture and society is of great importance to construct the theoretical framework of this paper and explore the connections between Beuys concepts and the projects developed by the other interviewees.

professor at the art school La Esmeralda and integrant of Lugar Común / Patria Nueva (Common Place / New Country), a CSO based in a peri-urban area in Oaxaca. Mónica has a profound theoretical and mostly experience-based knowledge about Beuys central concepts. In 2013 she invited one of his main followers, Johannes Süttgen to give a series of talks and workshops in México City. Having participated of them and bringing back the texts translated by her to this research, as well as following Delmar's recommendation to interview her, the discussion and thoughts shared by Monica constitute the most fundamental contributions to this research.

re-integration of teenagers in conflict with the law. Since 2009 she has worked with this communities in different projects and approaches. In 2013 published the book *Memoria de un relingo* with the support of a national grant from CONACULTA, that is a subjective perspective on the treatment of juvenile delinquency.

Ana has been working and researching at the time than applying strategies, actions and evaluations on the process of treatment and reintegration of youth in conflict with the law in Mexico City. We have worked together in Próximo Desliz (Next Slip) and other projects that integrate art practices, research and institutional relationships to address specific social problems within local communities in

Mexico City. Her actual research for the MA thesis in Humanities as well as her



Eduardo Nivón

Professor, researcher & policy maker

Professor at the Department of Anthropology in the Universidad Autónoma Metropolitana, Unidad Iztapalapa since 1981 and coordinator of the postgraduate program on Cultural Policies and Cultural Management.

Research on social movements, cultural policies and urban culture, mainly focused in Mexico City. Has also participated in projects related to education and training of cultural agents and managers of cultural heritage. Has been consultant for UNESCO evaluating frameworks on cultural policies in Latin America and in international meetings with



Amanda de la Garza Mata

Curator and researcher

Amanda de la Garza Mata lives and works in Mexico City as a curator, art historian and poet. She holds a BA in Sociology (UNAM), a MA in Cultural Anthropology (UAM-Iztapalapa), and a MA in Curatorial Studies (UNAM). She currently works as Adjunct

experience on the field is what conducts the linkage with this paper.

experts to design and define concepts and frameworks to integrate cultural diversity.

Currently chair of C2 Culture and citizenship, a civil organization that, within other achievements, has been one of the collaborators for the Green book for the institutionalization of cultural Development and the Survey on Reading, in 2012; and a conservation and management of the historical center of Mexico City: a successful case in public policy (2014).

Eduardo is one of the main authors and researchers in the local and global debate around culture and development. During a long and full of content interview to talk about the Green Book, he explained the dilemmas, political shifts and vacuums that are still to be filled in the relationship between the discourses being constructed and the implementation and practices happening in the local scene.

Curator at the University Museum of Contemporary Art (MUAC, UNAM). Among of her recent curatorial projects Andreja Kuluncic. Building the Commons (2013). De la Garza Mata has co-curated the experimental poetry festival Enclave held at the International Book Fair of the Mining Palace in Mexico City (2012-2016). She has published art reviews, research articles, essays and poems in local and international journals and catalogues on a wide variety of subjects, such as architecture, urbanism, contemporary dance, poetry, photography, public art, and contemporary art.





## José Miguel Gonzalez Casanova

Artist, professor & cultural agent  
Multidisciplinary artist with master studies in ENAP, UNAM, where he has been teaching Drawing since 1988 and the seminar Medios Múltiples <http://mediosmultiples.mx>. He has lived in Spain and Brazil, and has started up interdisciplinary and independent projects and spaces that are already emblematic if the recent history as Temísitocles 44. Since 1998 he is director of the Banco Intersubjetivo de Deseos (Intersubjective Bank of Desires) [www.bid.com.mx](http://www.bid.com.mx). In 2009 he published two books about drawing lessons and his work.

In 2010 he presents the project El jardín de Academus <http://jardindeacademus.org.mx>, which gathered 31 independent initiatives of art and education with specific publics that was later edited and published. In 2013 he obtained an important federal support and made CACAO, a cooperative of art and cultural works and services with its own currency and economy. I participated with a project I was working on with Ana Gilardi and teenagers in conflict with law.

Gonzalez Casanova participated in one of the workshop called by the experts that wrote the Green Book of Culture in Mexico City. For that reason but mostly because of his committed and long-standing attitude towards transformative experiences and the practice of social sculpture, this actor has many experiences to bring and knowledge built on shared ground to continue putting under discussion.