UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA
RIVERSIDE

Re-Conceptualizing Social Medicine in Diego Rivera's *History of Medicine in Mexico: The People's Demand for Better Health* Mural, Mexico City, 1953.

A Thesis submitted in partial satisfaction
of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts

in

Art History

by

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June 2012

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Acknowledgements

I dedicate my thesis research to all who influenced both its early and later developments. Travel opportunities for further research were made possible by The Graduate Division at UC Riverside, The University of California Humanities Research Institute, and the Rupert Costo Fellowship for Native American Scholarship. I express my humble gratitude to my thesis committee, Art History Professors Jason Weems (Chair), Liz Kotz, and Professor of Anthropology Karl Taube. The knowledge, insight, and guidance you all have given me throughout my research has been memorable. A special thanks (*un agradecimiento inmenso*) to; Tony Gomez III, Mama, Papa, Ramz, The UCR Department of Art History, Professor of Native North American History Cliff Trafzer, El Instituto Seguro Social de Mexico (IMSS) - Sala de Prensa Directora Patricia Serrano Cabadas, Coordinadora Gloria Bermudez Espinosa, Coordinador de Educación Dr. Pedro Garcia Zuniga, and Dra. Maria Griselda Galindo Rodriguez; Siglo XXI: IMSS Centro de Información- Lic. Patricia Olguín Alvarado, Lic. Patricia Guadalupe Alfaro Guerra and Lic. Rosalba Tena Villeda; Centro de Documentación Museo de Arte Moderno- Directora Marta Nualart and Sra. Graciela Monroy; Museo Mural Diego Rivera- Investigadora Ericka Contreras; Museo Nacional de Arte- Directora Maria Estela Duarte; Biblioteca Museo Nacional de Antropología- Dra. Carmen Aguilera. Lastly, to an individual I only met once, Sr. Arturo Aguilar Gonzalez- thank you for the inspirational enthusiasm toward Diego Rivera's artistic history and its relation to Mexican culture.

ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS

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by

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Diego Rivera's *History of Medicine in Mexico: The People's Demand for Better Health* mural has been interpreted as a representation of the Social Security Institution in Mexico, ancient and modern medicine, or mythological indigenous iconography relative to fecundity. Interestingly, the mural's descriptive title overshadows Rivera's gritty commentary embedded within the depiction of ancient and modern societies of Mexico, specifically Mexico City. The overall narrative chronologically demonstrates a generational shift from the indigenous Nahuatl or Nahua medicine and myth, mainly reproductions of early colonial imagery, to the modern nineteen fifties urban landscape and hospital setting. Highly regarded as a creative interpreter of Mexican tradition and culture, Diego Rivera was not necessarily focused on representing accurate depictions of the ancient societies of Central Mexico. Scholars must reconsider how to approach

Rivera's art representing indigenous communities, in this case Nahua mythology and the social need for social security, and analyze their relationship relative to the push for modernity throughout the industrial era. Rivera's artistic vision, coupled with his polemic character, produced a final mural that strongly conveys a multilayered dialogue between the artist, the viewer, and the past. The mural *History of Medicine in Mexico: The People's Demand for Better Health* actively engages with the viewer through the ongoing regeneration of thoughts, movements, and actions that channel the fluctuations of modernity itself by questioning the institutionalized system and the organic indigenous perspective. Interaction with the mural is necessary to open one's comprehension of not only Rivera's own personal struggle and realizations, but a nations' choice to move forward towards modernization. Ultimately, Rivera's visual articulation of ancient and modern medicine allows the viewer to interact with, exchange ideas and potentially manifest the dynamic yet fragmented essence of an ambiguous modernity.

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Introduction

This study will critically analyze Diego Rivera's final mural in Mexico City in the Centro Médico Nacional de La Raza or Hospital de La Raza. In 1951-53, Rivera was commissioned by Mexican Social Security or Instituto Mexicano del Seguro Social (IMSS) to create the mural *History of Medicine in Mexico: The People's Demand for Better Health* which introduced to the public a visual articulation of socialized medicine and the development of social security over time (Figure 1).[1] Diego Rivera was an artist who attempted to convey visual critiques that highlighted both the positive and negative aspects of the modern. His works provoked and stimulated the viewer to rethink their position as active members of a larger urban community. Rivera's visual narratives deployed the past as a means to link the present with the uncertainties of history, situated in the modern, in order to familiarize the viewer with the new ideals emerging at the time. The viewer partakes in an ongoing regeneration of thoughts and actions that challenge and participate in the institutionalized modern healthcare system. This analysis of Rivera's mural representing the new social security for the urban population of Mexico City argues that both the mural and the artist encourage the viewer to continually re-evaluate the benefits and consequences of social medicine under an institutionalized bureaucratic structure.

[1] The paper will briefly touch upon Rivera's earlier works in relation to the mural at the Hospital de La Raza. There exists an extensive amount of scholarship on the identification of each scene displayed on the mural, therefore, included in this study is a supplemental Appendix I where clarifications and new interpretations are noted. Furthermore, the left (modern) and right (indigenous) sections of the central wall will be described as the viewer's left and right.

In 1951, Mexico's government under president Miguel Alemán, 1946-52, began to fund the construction of a state of the art medical center in what was to become a heavy industrial zone in Mexico City, the Hospital de La Raza. Capable of servicing over twenty-five thousand patients with over eight hundred rooms available for emergency and maternity services, the Hospital de La Raza building opened in October 1952 as a marker of Mexico's pursuit for modernization. Negotiations with private businesses and institutions, mainly from the United States, allowed the purchasing of electronic services, such as cooking and laundry machines, x-ray, surgery and laboratory rooms. These negotiations also included contracting technical staff to be sent to Mexico for the initial preparation of national technicians and operators.[2] Prior to the construction of the Hospital de La Raza there was a national competition for architects and was won by Enrique Yáñez de la Fuente.

The central wall in the main lobby of the Hospital de La Raza, Mexico City, was designed with a curved flat surface by architect EnriqueYáñez specifically for Rivera's mural (Figure 2). Upon entering the lobby the sheer size of the mural instantly overwhelms the viewer, intense warm and cool colored figures along with somber grey toned corners and mosaic detail captivate one's gaze. Rivera, nine artist assistants, and mosaic artist Graciela Ramirez used several mediums for the overall finish including

[2] Frank Brandenburg, *The Making of Modern Mexico* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J: Prentice Hall, 1964), pp. 46. See also, Instituto Mexicano del Seguro Social (IMSS), *La Raza: 40 años*, 1954-1999, ed. Genaro Borrego Estrada (Mexico: Instituto Mexicano del Seguro Social, 1994), pp. 46-47.

fresco, polyethylene colors, and a mosaic frieze in onyx marble or *tecalli* (Figure 3).[3] The overall size of the mixed media mural is 7.4 by 10.8 meters, 24 by 35 feet, or a total area of approximately 120.06 meters squared, 1,292 feet squared (Figure 4). On the left modern and right indigenous sections of the central curved wall, Rivera placed two prominent trees at each end of the image in order to frame the central space, the tree of "Health" in red and of "Life" in yellow. The trees extend further around the sides onto two walls on the left and right with scenes involving modern medicine (Figure 5).

The original contract for the commission was executed in September 1951 by Diego Rivera, Mexican Social Security Director at the time, Dr. Antonio Diaz Lombardo, Director of Construction Department Architect Guillermo Quintanar, and Head of the Legal Department Sr. Salvador Barros Sierra. The contract contains fifteen clauses, all of which were to be met by Rivera as agreed by the project committee. As stated on the contract's second clause, Rivera was to paint the central theme "Grand Figure of Tlasolteolt Mexican Goddess of Fecundity and Medicine."[4] The mural's creation was to

[3] Displayed throughout the mural are five different techniques: fresco, casein tempera, resin tempera, oils, and mosaic. The names of Rivera's assistants' are inscribed on the mural: Osvaldo Barra, Marco Antonio Borregui, Melquíades Ejido, Manuel Martínez, Teresa Ordiales, Nicolette Huguette, Ramon Sanchez, and Enrique Valderrama. Rivera could have also "experimented with industrial paints, a spray gun, and photography, using for example a projector to distend images on the wall, as he explained in his important text *How to Paint a Mural*." Dawn Ades*, Art in Latin America: Modern Era*, pp. 174-76.

[4] Instituto Mexicano del Seguro Social (IMSS)*, Contrato Diego Rivera*, Septiembre 19, 1951, Archive: Siglo XXI Centro Único de Información, Mexico City, Mx. pp. 1. " Este tema se llevara a cabo con estricto apego a la maqueta y boceto presentada y aprobada por el Instituto, pudiendo este suspender la obra sin responsabilidad en caso contrario- This theme is to be conducted in strict accordance with the model and sketch submitted and approved by the Institute, being able to suspend the work without liability otherwise." Unfortunately, I am unaware of the existence of a sketch or if there are multiple drawings, the archive at Siglo XXI (IMSS) did not bring this detail to my attention despite specific requests to view all remaining documents regarding the mural during my research abroad.

be supervised by IMSS Department of Construction, and if any deviation from the original theme mentioned in the contract was found the result would have been immediate suspension of the project. Rivera was given a strict six month deadline starting ten days after signing the agreement, any delays and he was to pay out of pocket for the remaining costs. The cost of the project was an estimated seventy-eight million seven hundred and fifty Mexican pesos. Rivera was given about thirty percent, or twenty-three thousand six hundred twenty-five pesos. The recorded end date was on November 28th, 1953.[5]

The deadlines and conditions outlined by IMSS and the Department of Construction demonstrate that the goal of a union between art, architecture, and the institution was a serious effort done by IMSS in order to develop a balanced relationship with the Mexican citizenry. Since the early nineteen fifties IMSS commissioned Mexican artists and sculptors in order to culturally, nationally, and socially identify with the urban general public. For the Hospital de La Raza IMSS contracted artists for both murals and sculptures to be erected within the property, for example, Rivera for the main lobby and David A. Siqueiros for the entrance to the auditorium commissioned and executed from 1951-54.[6] Therefore, IMSS could not afford to allow an unexpected controversial image considering that Architect Yáñez, IMSS Director of Construction

[5] IMSS, *Contrato Diego Rivera*, Septiembre 19, 1951, pp. 2, Clause 8. See also, Maria Duarte Sanchez, "Art before science and medicine: National Institute of Cardiology and La Raza Medical Center," in *Diego Rivera The Complete Murals*, pp. 516-17, footnote 18.

[6] The Hospital de La Raza also includes sculptures from artist Federico Cantú, titled *Maternity* and David Siqueiros mural titled, *For A Complete Social Security For All Mexicans*, 1951-54.

Quintanar, and Director of IMSS at the time Diaz Lombardo contracted and coordinated with two prominent Mexican muralists that often created murals with strong ideological narratives that sparked critical debate. At this point both artists were well known, but more importantly, the presence of their artworks connected the social security institution to Mexican nationalism and culture. Entering the nineteen fifties Mexico's government expanded social security and began to establish a network of medical and administrative branches within the urban community of Mexico City.

In 1946, Mexico's Director of Health Rafael Gamboa along with president Miguel Alemán and two of IMSS's general directors, Antonio Diaz Lombardo and Antonio Ortiz Mena, developed social and economic projects from the previous Ávila-Camacho administration and evolved their framework. Entering the nineteen fifties after World War II, Mexico emerged a creditor nation and began to fund the nation's first public hospitals on loan.[7] The establishment of an autonomous institutional entity to provide the public access to primary healthcare, the Instituto Mexicano del Seguro Social or IMSS, became the Alemán administration's priority. Despite rampant corruption by the Alemán administration, the continuation and establishment of policies that secured the Social Security Law, "Ley del Seguro Social" of 1943, at least attempted to ensure the Mexican people access to primary healthcare. However, due to a bargaining between

[7] Michelle Dion," The Political Origins of Social Security in Mexico during the Cárdenas and Ávila Camacho Administrations," *Mexican Studies/Estudios Mexicanos* 21, no. 1 (2005), pp. 72-75. See also, Michael Meyer, William Sherman, and Susan Deeds, *The Course of Mexican History* (Oxford University Press, 2006), pp. 477-79. Also, Howard Cline, *Mexico: Revolution to Evolution, 1940-1960*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1963), pp. 159.

private and foreign corporations, national medical institutions, and major labor unions-such as the Confederación de Trabajadores Mexicanos (CTM), Mexico's industrial class paid the price of the social security system.[8] During the first two decades IMSS subcontracted services and facilities with private physicians, and clinics resulted in insufficient working staff or infrastructure necessary to provide legally mandated health services. The national movement towards rapid industrialization required low wages for the working class, which basically sacrificed the labor force for capital accumulation.

In general, the rise in urban and national population prompted national policies to develop an institutional healthcare system in order to sustain and maintain the continual rise in demand for primary care. With the construction of public works, projects on the expansion and advancement of the drainage system, the modern city transformed itself into a sanitized health-conscious environment.[9] By 1952-53, around the completion of the mural, Mexico under Adolfo Ruiz Cortines experienced inflation and conditions for the industrial worker worsened. Laborers increased strike protests; however, luckily the

[8] Dion,"The Political Origins of Social Security in Mexico during the Cárdenas and Ávila Camacho Administrations," *Mexican Studies/Estudios Mexicanos* 21, no. 1 (2005): 88, 75-90. "Overall, the adoption and implementation of social insurance in Mexico can be explained as the product of shifting class coalitions and the need for the regime to incorporate the support of the organized working class into an institutionalized relationship with the regime."

[9] Claudia Agostoni, "Introduction," in *Monuments of Progress: Modernization and Public Health in Mexico City, 1876-1910* (University of Colorado Press, 2003), pp. xiii-xvii. "During the final decades of the nineteenth century, Mexico City was considered the most unsanitary place in the world, and this image contrasted sharply with the achievements which statistics ably displayed in the sectors of industry, mines, and commerce. The late nineteenth century governing elite attempted to modify the visual aspect and sanitary conditions of the city. The fact that a large percentage of national resources, foreign loans and investment were directed towards the city's public works, buildings and historical monuments was congruent with the centralization of economic and political power by the executive branch of government located in the capital."

Ruiz Cortines administration expanded healthcare coverage to permanent wage earners and small farmers. In short, profit driven interests both in the state and private sectors during the Alemán administration implemented a systematic approach to social welfare in order to accelerate the modernization of Mexico, which resulted in a challenging recovery by the late nineteen fifties.[10]

The national movement toward industrialization included the union between art and architecture, from the nineteen twenties to the early sixties, which introduced a "plastic integration" of visual expressions where structures were designed to accommodate the muralist's paintings in order to spark a new socio-political movement that aimed to unite a nation.[11] By abandoning the more conventional space of the canvas, museum, and gallery, the muralists expanded their horizons on the concrete walls of the industrial city and beyond. One significant aspect of the muralist movement was the involvement of the state as the patron for art that helped to establish the cultural and political framework by which muralism as a national art was established and promoted. However, most often the state did not coincide with the muralists' own conception of their role or with the social message their art conveyed.

[10] Carmelo Mesa-Lago, *Social Security in Latin America: Pressure Groups, Stratification, and Inequality* (University of Pittsburgh Press, 1978), pp. 217-18. Not until 1954-58 was the Ruiz Cortines able to expand IMSS coverage to the industrial worker and rural farmer. "By 1958, IMSS coverage had increased to 7 percent of the population and 9 percent of the labor force."

[11] Valerie Fraser, "Chapter One: Mexico," in *Building the New World: Studies in the Modern Architecture of Latin America, 1930-1960* (London; New York, Verso, 2000), pp. 22-23.

Diego Rivera, one of many artists who participated in the artistic post-revolutionary movement, had a direct connection with José Vasconcelos, Minister of Public Education, from 1914 to 1924. Vasconcelos was a key figure in creating the relationship between the muralist movement and the state as patron, which in way helped popularize Rivera throughout the twentieth century. For example, Vasconcelos established state-run projects, such as the muralist movement and widespread public education, which fostered a new sense of national identity and pride for Mexico's ancient history, culture and traditions. One of the earliest mural projects that contracted Rivera, coordinated by Vasconcelos, was at the Ministry of Education building and the auditorium for the National Preparatory School in Mexico City in 1922. Despite the fact that the true gritty nature of indigenous assimilation and industrialization was glossed over by politicians it was more forcefully examined and reinterpreted through visual expression by artists like Rivera- including David A. Siqueiros, José Clemente Orozco, Jorge Gonzalez Camarena, and others.

In order to asses Rivera's shift from a European style fresco depicting a mix of native indigenous traditions and Judeo-Christian figures in the mural *Creation*, 1922-23, to his final mural at the Hospital de La Raza one must examine Rivera's artistic growth in Mexico and Europe (Figure 6). Prior to entering the muralist movement of the nineteen twenties, or his relationship with José Vasconcelos, Rivera began his art career in Mexico at the Art Academy of San Carlos at age ten in 1896. At the Academy he studied a strict program, consisting of classical European painting of landscapes, still life, etc., with well

respected artists like Félix Parra and Gerardo Murillo also known as Dr. Atl. Training with Félix Parra and Dr. Atl contributed technical skill as well as interpretations of the past that sparked Rivera's developing fondness and romantic understanding of ancient culture and Mexico's natural environment. Early landscape paintings suggest that Rivera initially attempted to develop his artistic skills under European standards but with the subject being the Mexican countryside or sites of ancient settlement.[12] His early artistic training in Mexico and Europe strongly influenced the development of Rivera's approach and interest in the portrayal of ancient Mesoamerican people, art, and culture in socio-political narratives.

In 1906, Rivera received a modest four year scholarship to study European art from Governor of Veracruz Teodoro A. Dehesa-Méndez. He spent fourteen years in Spain, Italy, and France from January 1907 to July 1921 and did not permanently return to Mexico until he was thirty-four.[13] Rivera's work often incorporated European techniques and philosophies, styles such as Italian Renaissance frescoes, Expressionism, and Cubism- to name a few, as a means of redefining modern art. In France, for example, Rivera worked for four years with Cubist pioneers such as Picasso and Braque

[12] Laurence P. Hurlburt, "Diego Rivera (1886-1957): A Chronology of his Art, Life, and Times," in *Rivera: A Retrospective* (Founders Society DIA, 1986), pp. 25. "His teachers at the academy include Félix Parra, who introduces him to the beauty of pre-Columbian art." An example of an early landscape painting with an indigenous settlement site as subject see Rivera's *The Mixcoac Ravine*, also known as *Mixcoac House*, oil on canvas, 1906.

[13] Octavio Paz, *Essays on Mexican Art* (1987), pp. 125-29. Rivera briefly visited Mexico in 1910. On November 20th of 1910 Rivera exhibits his artwork at the Academia de San Carlos opened by Porfirio Diaz's wife, Doña Carmen Romero Rubio. He sold all his paintings and immediately returned to Paris, France.

to produce works that encompassed the free flow of form through geometric expressions. In his 1915 *Zapatista Landscape*, Rivera combined the Cubist language with Mexican revolutionary and landscape imagery which exemplified how the artist began to formalize a new method of expressing the social and political realities that were increasingly engaging his attention (Figure 7). The use of bright bold colors and of Mexican volcanoes, a carbine, and a *sarape* are details that art historian Ida Prampolini noted as a strong shift from Cubism to realistic subjects with a socio-political charge.[14] Rivera ceased to paint using Cubist techniques because of "the war, the Russian revolution, and the belief in the need for a popular and socialized art. In Cubism there are many elements that do not fit this specific need."[15] Therefore, there is a shift in focus where Rivera returned to traditional and classical techniques in his art, for example, the portrait of *The Mathematician*, 1918 (Figure 8). Using a design method that was specific to geometric calculations and symmetry Rivera's portrait of an anonymous mathematician corresponds to a more realistic portrayal of subjects. Stylistically, Rivera continued to produce art that reflected European techniques, such as geometrically organized realistic portraitures, and did not begin to incorporate ancient mythology or iconography until after this point.

In Spain, around 1919 into 1920- after mourning the death of his first born son with his first love Angelina Beloff in France, Rivera discussed with artist David Siqueiros

[14] Ida Rodriguez-Prampolini, "Rivera's Concept of History," in *Rivera: A Retrospective* (Founders Society DIA, 1986), pp. 131.

[15] Desmond Rochfort, *Mexican Muralists: Orozco, Rivera, Siqueiros* (San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 1993), pp. 25.

topics on the Mexican Revolution and the importance of social art.[16] In 1920, Rivera continued the discussion of public art in a post-revolutionary Mexico with José Vasconcelos, at that time director of the University of Mexico, who encouraged Rivera to study Italy's Renaissance frescoes in hopes of building a network of artists who could transmit and appropriate public art as seen in Europe onto the walls of Mexico City. The historical narrative as a thematic platform for the frescos in Mexico City introduced a stylistic technique developed by Rivera that demonstrated his interest in public art as a means of producing visual literacy for the masses. It is important to note that although Rivera is recognized as a prominent Mexican muralist his artistic career developed abroad and was strongly influenced by European perspectives.

In most of his murals, starting in the nineteen twenties and continuing into the fifties, Rivera incorporated historical narratives for his frescoes concerning the indigenous past demonstrating to the audience a visual interpretation or preference to incorporate the indigenous as subject.[17] For instance, in an early sketch of an *Etruscan Vase*, 1921, the subject is an ancient object from Europe. River drew emphasis on the shading only to the head, and side arms outlining its three-dimensionality while retaining a simple outline for the body (Figure 9). The sketch exemplifies how Rivera explored

[16] Hurlburt, "Diego Rivera (1886-1957): A Chronology of his Art, Life, and Times," in *Diego Rivera: A Retrospective* (Founders Society DIA, 1986), pp. 46-51.

[17] Scholars such as Octavio Paz and Barbara Braun have commented that Rivera was not depicting ethnically charged figures, representing the indigenous population of Mexico in socio-political historical narratives, until after his fresco works, *Creation,* 1922-23, in the Simon Bolivar Amphitheater and the series at the Secretariat of Public Education, 1923-24.

new subjects for study. Simultaneously, Rivera began an interest in collecting ancient artifacts and practiced the reproduction of art styles and techniques of the past.

This analysis of Rivera's perspective on modern art and the use of the ancient past argues that after the nineteen twenties and into the fifties his art conveyed a combination of various modern European, Mexican, and American philosophies that influenced artists throughout the early twentieth century, such as Western Primitivism, Indigenismo, and social realism. The bureaucratic healthcare system portrayed in the mural at the Hospital de La Raza continues Rivera's "vocabulary of realism" that prompted the viewer to comprehend that throughout time the demand for social medicine has transformed, adapting and adopting new social and cultural constructs for each generation.[18] Rivera's artistic legacy ultimately is not a definite path and cannot be categorized into simply one method of approach to a subject matter or an underlying message that connotes strictly a political or idealist view on the past and present. After his training in Europe, Rivera's later artworks in Mexico City and internationally are a testament to the process of modernity- continually fragmenting into new ideas to be critically examined as well as acted upon throughout the course of history. Primitivism, Indigenismo, and social realism are conveyed in Rivera's artworks as all-encompassing notions that aim to redefine the confines of bureaucracy or classification, which is essentially what Rivera consciously persisted to challenge throughout his personal and artistic life.

[18] Ida Rodriguez-Prampolini, "Rivera's Concept of History," in *Rivera: A Retrospective*, ed. C. Helms and L. Downs, New York Founders Society and Detroit Institute of Arts (1986), pp. 131.

Primitivism, a bold word that describes a complex system of ideas that emerged in Europe in the twentieth century was not designated to a specific individual or group of artists. As discussed in Jack Flam's *Primitivism and Twentieth Century Art*, Primitivism refers not only to artists' use of formal ideas from the works of so-called Primitive cultures, but also a "complex network of attitudes about the processes, meanings, and functions of art and about culture itself. Modern artists saw Primitive art as a unique kind of pictorial inventiveness and imagination."[19] Art that stemmed from Primitive peoples and culture prompted modernist artists, including Rivera, to view art production and form through liberating lenses. Modern artists were involved in reconstructing form, abandoning the naturalism of the Renaissance, and embracing fragmentation. Artists borrowed mythological concepts and iconography from the ancients in order to create new contexts for the modern.

Art produced through Primitivist lenses, however, did not focus on the accurate account of ancient or indigenous art, culture, and traditions. Instead, the use of ancient artifacts or the styles was for reinterpretation and re-imagination of the exotic forms of native art. The idea that the origins of Primitive art are lost in time allowed artists a substantial amount of romantic speculation and inventiveness. Moreover, Primitivism also held the potential —although not often realized— to elevate indigenous tradition by drawing them into consideration. As Flam contended, "the Western artists who appropriated forms from Primitive art did not inflict harm on the people who made the

[19] Jack Flam, "Preface and Introduction," in *Primitivism and Twentieth Century Art: A Documentary History*, ed. Miriam Deutch and Jack Flam (University of California Press, 2003), pp. xv, 3.

art, and in fact helped to encourage recognition and appreciation of their humanity and culture."[20] For example, in the mural *History of Medicine in Mexico* Rivera reproduced through liberated lenses the concept of human sacrifice by illustrating blood on the steps of the Templo Mayor in the background and dripping below the sculpture of the Nahua goddess Tlazolteotl-Ixcuina giving birth on the right section of the central wall (Figure 10). The inclusion of such details was not only a Primitivist exploration of an ambiguous ancient ritual but a reflection of how the artist portrayed visual triggers that signified both the ancient and modern interpretation of an unknown and uncertain reality.

Rivera conceptualized his own artistic or individual character rooted with indigenous origins as a means to affirm his visual representations of the Mesoamerican past as aesthetically authentic. In his memoires, he would express how his native caregiver Antonia, a Tarascan woman who nursed Rivera back to health at the age of two, became a mother figure that connected Rivera with an indigenous upbringing.[21] According to art historian Jaime Villarreal, in "Diego, The Pictographic Writer," Rivera was well aware of pre-Hispanic culture including a highly debated topic, the concept of human sacrifice, and took advantage of this idea in Europe. In Madrid, for example, he was nicknamed "*el salvaje mexicano*, the Mexican savage, and in Paris *le tendre cannibale*, the sweet cannibal," due to his physical build and his charismatic, often

[20] Flam, "Preface and Introduction," in *Primitivism and Twentieth Century Art* (2003), pp. 11.

[21] Diego Rivera, *Autobiography: My Art My Life*, ed. Gladys March (New York: Dover Publishers, 1991), pp. 3, 45.

controversial, persona.[22] It is uncertain whether Rivera propagated these nicknames or if they were spontaneously attached to his name through his acquaintances. However, the use of cannibalism and human sacrifice to create a persona for himself in Europe exemplifies the artist's Primitivist tendencies that aimed to incorporate cultural traditions of the past as a means to invent his own artistic character.

Rivera was closely acquainted with prominent figures who conducted visual and textual research of the Mesoamerican past, such as Alfonso Caso and Miguel Covarrubias. It is important to note that the only remaining evidence of the pre-Columbian past were largely described and interpreted by Spanish Franciscan, Dominican, and Jesuit friars including authors like Bernardino de Sahagún -whose works highly influenced Rivera's interpretation and analysis of ancient Mexico. Early twentieth century archeologists most often concerned their study of the pre-Columbian world on the discussion of myth and religious tradition, rather than ask critical questions regarding ancient societies' practical reality, such as politics or social issues.[23] Furthermore,

[22] Jaime Villarreal, "Diego, The Pictographic Writer," in *Diego Rivera: The Vitality of an Artist* (Kroller-Muller Museum, Stedelijk Museum, and Kunstforeningen GI, Netherlands. Ed. by Christina Burrus. France: Atelier Esope- Chamonix Mont-Blanc, 1999), pp. 141. "He used to tell stories to his friends and followers in Montparnasse, on how to cook human meat, and how the new pictorial art should spring up from a 'school of savagery.' Under his mask of a genius or a humbug trying to shock people above all, there was in Rivera a mythic affirmation of his Mexican origin that used to exalt his difference."

[23] See Barbara Braun, "Chapter 5: Diego Rivera Heritage and Politics," in *Pre-Columbian Art and the Post-Columbian World* (1993), pp. 187-88, 190. "Archeology achieved official status in Mexico around 1917 when the distinguished archeologist and anthropologist Manuel Gamio established the Department of Anthropology, which was soon changed to the Department of Pre-Hispanic Monuments and is now Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia (INAH). They (early twentieth century archeologists) never questioned the archeological record with regard to cultural change or complexity, nor were they interested in retrieving the culturally specific function and context of ancient artifacts- issues that preoccupied a later generation of archeologists."

Rivera's relationships with archeologists and or historians were not necessarily made to conduct diligent research; rather, his time was spent in casual discussion of the topic that generally explored the subject matter. For example, Covarrubias and Caso coordinated an important exhibition, titled "Twenty Centuries of Mexican Art," at the Museum of Modern Art in New York in 1940 which included works by Rivera, Orozco and Siqueiros.[24] Collaborative projects like the "Twenty Centuries" exhibition exemplify how Rivera would have spent time with influential individuals involved in anthropological investigation of the ancient past; time mostly spent working on art projects or events for international relations. Therefore, it was not strict research for critical examination of one subject but an intellectually informed overview of the past that served as a prime catalyst for artistic exploration.

The indigenous populations depicted in most of Rivera's artworks are not, and perhaps were not intended initially to be, direct or accurate representations of any specific indigenous peoples. The mythological and iconographical symbolisms may be accurately reproduced or placed into proper context within the narrative, yet, the native figures are a generalized native populace that referred to the region of Central Mexico. In the mural *History of Medicine in Mexico* Rivera presented on both sections of the central wall an indigenous populace of what could be descendents of the Nahuatl speaking people of Mesoamerica, or the Nahua. The figures within the mural at the Hospital de La Raza are invented representations of the Mexica (Aztec) community in Tenochtitlan, located in the

[24] Anna Indych-López, "Chapter 5: Explaining Muralism," in *Muralism Without Walls* (University of Pittsburg Press, 2009), pp. 158.

Central Mexican region due to the depiction of three iconic structures of the central grid of the empire (Figure 10). Therefore, one must explore further the motive surrounding Rivera's repetitive use of Mesoamerican iconography and native looking figures in response to modernity.

Rivera could have imagined historical encounters in his life that linked himself to the native ancient past of Mexico to not only create an artistic persona but also to give validity to his efforts in terms of his portrayal of the indigenous and mixed populations of his country. Once in Mexico City Rivera's public art legitimized the modern ideas that introduced a reaffirmation or vindication of the cultural traditions and practices of the native people that stemmed from the discussions he had with fellow artists and Vasconcelos in the early twenties. The post-revolutionary period in Mexico was of a nation rebuilding "trust" and "unity" between the government and the public. The concept of Indigenismo, which sprouted from the traumas of war and revolt, called forth a national movement toward a new social construct that could potentially make up a new identity for the modern nation.[25] Influential politicians, intellectuals, and artists promoted the philosophical re-vindication of native tradition and culture by means of borrowing the past as a platform ready to instruct and familiarize the modern industrialized era.

The agrarian rural population, majorly indigenous people, was integrated into a bureaucratic system that promised a smooth accommodation process into a modern

[25] See Betty Ann Brown, "The Past Idealized: Diego Rivera's use of Pre-Columbian Imagery," in Diego *Rivera: A Retrospective* (1986): pp. 154-55. Also, Diego Rivera, *Arte y Politica* (1979): pp.187, and Dawn Ades, "Chapter 9: Indigenism and Social Realism," in *Art in Latin America: Modern Era* (1989): pp. 198.

rigidly structured statecraft.[26] The motion toward the incorporation of Indigenismo into mainstream society touched upon the priorities of the state to uproot history as a means of legitimizing new socio-political, economic, and cultural constructs for the new urban community. Rivera's mural in the Hospital de La Raza continued the portrayal of the constantly developing relationship between the modern and the indigenous, such as the depiction of the group of people requesting access to primary healthcare on the top right and left sections of the central wall (Figure 11).

In a social realist sense, the depiction of the Mexican populace of both past and present generations are not exact or imitative of the actual reality or history but visual conduits of modern ideas. The point of view, or the communication of the idea, was the focus which "sometimes allowed the image to transform objective reality into symbols of transcendent meaning."[27] The thematic message or visual reminder of the demand for healthcare is the catalyst for action- or at least to contemplate on whether to continue on the path of least resistance. Meaning, the mural at the Hospital de La Raza is an amalgamation of Rivera's Primitivist imaginative lenses recreating an interpretation of how ancient and modern society has dealt with the issue of social security.[28] Then

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[26] David Lomas, "Remedy or Poison? Diego Rivera, Medicine and Technology," *Oxford Art Journal 30* no. 3 (2007), pp. 481. Lomas references a good source, Alan Knight, "Racism, Revolution, and Indigenismo," in *The Idea of Race in Latin America*, ed. by R. Graham (1990).

[27] David Shapiro, "Social Realism Reconsidered," in *Social Realism: Art as a Weapon* (New York: Frederick Ungar Publishing Co., 1973), pp. 14-15.

[28] Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths, and Helen Tiffin, "Modernity," in *Post-Colonial Studies: The Key Concepts* (Routledge New York, 2000), pp. 131. "Many social forms and processes are not found in pre-modern societies, such as the idea of a nation-state, Commodification of products and wage labor, the secularization of values and norms, and the predominance of urban forms of life."

through the visual construction of Indigenist optimism which argued for the vindicated of the ancient past for the modern, Rivera incorporated native figures onto his works in order to stimulate the public to become aware of their current situation within the system.

Literature on the artist Diego Rivera and his works internationally is extensive. The majority of scholarship concerning the mural *History of Medicine in Mexico: People's Demand for Better Health* tends to focus on the identification of iconography, explanations of the various illustrated medical practices, the mythos surrounding the significance of childbirth, and the thematic concept of a universal dualism such as life and death. Contemporary scholarship has introduced analysis on the indigenous right section in order to comment on Rivera's pseudo-accuracy and idealist perspective on the ancient past. For example, Betty A. Brown's essay, "The Past Idealized," discussed thoroughly how Rivera incorporated and borrowed concepts from ancient Mesoamerican iconography only to construe the original contexts of the influential objects. Brown concluded with a statement summarizing Rivera's possible contribution to modern art in Mexico as the "greatest popularizer of pre-Columbian art since Frederick Catherwood illustrated the explorer John Lloyd Stephen's *Incidents of Travel in the Yucatán* in 1843."[29] Although Rivera could be responsible for the popularization of Mexican iconography, Brown's concluding argument shines a negative light onto Rivera's motives behind the representation of ancient, and present, Mesoamerican communities and

[29] As concluded by B. Brown, "The Past Idealized," in Diego *Rivera: A Retrospective* (1986), pp. 155, "Rivera romantically glorified the pre-Columbian past, and his strong preference for the exotically sophisticated culture of the Aztecs gave a skewed view of the Indian populace."

imagery. Scholars must not conclude that Rivera did not fully understand or attempt to move beyond merely reproducing and manipulating ancient iconographical meaning. Further investigation of the mural in the Hospital de La Raza clarified one possible approach to Rivera's inventiveness of the ancient past. The indigenous communities shown on the right and left sections are not strictly idealized or romantic representations of native peoples, but stylistic features that highlight the diversity of symbolism and culture rooted in Mexico. Catherwood and Lloyd Stephens introduced Mexican art and culture as a distant fantasy where Rivera stressed a tangible sense of realism.

In a recent 2006 Instituto Mexicano del Seguro Social (IMSS) publication, titled *Art and Architecture of Mexican Social Security*, art historian Ida Rodriguez Prampolini visually analyzed Rivera's mural within the Hospital de La Raza as a representation of the history of medicine in Mexico and how the social security institution consisted of a "tripartite alliance."[30] Prampolini's essay included a well-rounded summarization of Mexican muralism, a brief analysis of certain scenes, and Rivera's legacy as a muralist. She concluded that Rivera aimed to "open our eyes," and that the viewer must engage with the murals as they are "statements of political will, integrators of nationality, silent accomplices or comrades of men, provoked to action."[31] The analysis abruptly ends

[30] Ida Rodriguez-Prampolini, "Pintura Mural y Seguro Social," in *Arte y Arquitectura del Instituto Mexicano Del Seguro Social* (D.F., Mexico: Instituto Seguro Social, 2006), pp. 187. The published volume was distributed to specific institutions and is not easily accessible to the public. The volume consisted of various essays chronologically discussing the relationships IMSS has established with artists, architects, and the continually changing Mexican government.

[31] Prampolini, "Pintura Mural y Seguro Social," pp. 187.

leaving the reader to interpret a vague explanation of the author's notion of opening "one's eyes" as a means of engagement with an image and does not elaborate on how murals are stimuli for action. My visual analysis takes into consideration what contemporary scholars like Prampolini and Brown discussed, and attempts to further explore their conclusions by focusing on specific scenes within the mural. I propose that the final image consciously and unconsciously provokes the viewer to consider their engagement with modern art as an active process that outlines one's position within the institutionalized system.

Combined with Rivera's socio-political awareness, such as his strong interests in Marxism and Leninism, his art became a re-vindication of indigenous culture and tradition as a means of raising a "collective consciousness" towards modernization.[32] Meaning the visual articulation of the past and present is not meant as strict propaganda for a single agenda; rather, the mural evokes fluidity into both the destructive and regenerative properties of modernity itself. The pseudo-accuracy of Rivera's historical imagery was perhaps a persuasive technique to familiarize the viewer with an uncertain past, invented for the present, as a means to potentially re-contextualize the modern

[32] Barbara Braun, *Pre-Columbian Art and the Post-Columbian World,* pp. 187-190. "Their (Rivera and the Syndicate of Technical Workers, Painters, and Sculptors) manifesto proclaimed their intention to produce, in collaboration with carpenters and plasterers, ideological art for the masses in the form of monumental public murals that would forward the aims of the Revolution by raising the collective consciousness of the people and mobilizing them to action. It upheld the native art tradition as a model for a socialist art, according to *El Machete* (1928), 'The art of the Mexican people is the most important and vital spiritual manifestation in the world today, and its Indian traditions lie at its very heart. It is great precisely because it is of the people and therefore collective.'" See Dawn Ades, *Art in Latin America: Modern Era* (1989), pp. 324.

future. Therefore, one must reconsider Rivera's visual articulation of Mesoamerican culture, in this case Nahua mythology, symbolism and medicine, and analyze their relationship relative to the push for modernity throughout the industrial era.

My thesis on Rivera's final mural in Mexico City argues that the image as a whole strongly conveys a multilayered dialogue between the artist, the viewer, and the past. The mural *History of Medicine in Mexico: The People's Demand for Better Health* actively engages with the viewer through representations of invented traditions that demonstrate the dichotomous relationship between the past and present. Interaction with the mural is necessary in order to become aware of both Rivera's own personal realizations and a nations' choice to move forward towards modernization. The viewer partakes in an ongoing regeneration of thoughts, movements, and actions, described earlier as the power of the "collective consciousness," that channel the fluctuations of modernity by questioning the institutionalized system and the organic indigenous perspective. Ultimately, Rivera's visual articulation of ancient and modern medicine allows the viewer to interact with, exchange ideas and potentially manifest the dynamic yet fragmented essence of an ambiguous modernity.

This study is divided into two main chapters. Chapter one begins with critical visual analyses of the mural as a whole image, including the side walls that curve around the main central wall. The mural *History of Medicine in Mexico,* much like Rivera's previous works, is impregnated with metaphorical narratives that reflect his own understanding of Mesoamerican concepts molded with modern perspectives that tend to

re-appropriate and adapt them into modern traditions. Chapter one argues that Rivera's artistic vision —which incorporated notions from Primitivism, Indigenismo, and social realism— manifested itself as a visual map of socio-political issues that were made identifiable to modern viewers through "invented traditions." The concept of the "invented tradition" was derived from Eric Hobsbawm's "Introduction," to *The Invention of Tradition*. Hobsbawm argued that certain everyday routines or set of practices, "normally governed by overtly or tacitly accepted rules," that have existed are often "invented traditions" based loosely off historical facts in order to legitimize the ideology of the time.[33] The idea suggests that certain invented traditions or set of practices that are repeated and automatically set into play in the real world are invented, constructed and formally instituted, even though they merely imply continuation with the past. What types of invented traditions are present within the mural? Why are they represented within an image about social security? Focusing on the depiction of childbirth chapter one identifies an invented tradition, the normalization of a specific practice in modern medicine, as a vital detail that portrayed an identifiable instruction on childbirth as well as a critical outlook on the mechanization of medicine.

Chapter one further explores the notion of creating "invented traditions" for modern societies and how the modern statecraft gradually implemented certain social norms in society as a means of establishing an "abridged map of its legible society,"

[33] Eric Hobsbawm, "Introduction: Inventing Traditions," in *The Invention of Tradition* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1983), pp. 1.

which is extensively explored in James C. Scott's, *Seeing Like a State*.[34] Certain invented symbols or ritualized set of practices, such as the process of registering for social security services, are processed into the everyday routine as legible visual instructions that implement social security as normal. Therefore, the systemization of social medicine could be argued to be a ritualized norm established by the state and institutions. The creation of a legible map of the urban social service by the modern government and central institution was not necessarily to represent the actual activity of the society depicted, nor were they intended to be so. Instead, what is chosen to be represented is "only that slice of it that interested the official observer, they were maps that when allied with state power would enable much of the reality they depicted to be remade."[35] The commissioning of public art for the Hospital de La Raza demonstrates that there were interests in both the state and national as well as foreign private institutions to create a legible visual mapping of the modern healthcare system.

Whether Rivera was an inventor of traditions for the sake of his own artistic legacy or for institutional propaganda is uncertain, most likely an ambivalent blend of both. His representations of pseudo-accurate Mesoamerican iconography and medicine reflect his engagement with the concept of modernity, the fact that to be modern is to exist in a state of constant fluidity and abstraction. Simultaneously, the mural visually normalizes the participation of the Mexican citizen in a social healthcare structure. It

[34] James Scott, "Introduction," in *Seeing Like a State: How Certain Schemes to Improve the Human Condition have Failed*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998), pp. 3-4.

[35] Scott, *Seeing Like a State* (1998), pp. 3.

could be argued that Rivera's final mural in Mexico City incorporated a critique on a multitude of metaphors that evoke a sense of critical optimism for the advancements in medicine, and yet cautious of the institutionalized future.

Chapter two discusses the ways that social insurance had emerged as an authoritative institution by the nineteen fifties and Rivera's role as a visual conduit of modern ideas. Through Marshall Berman's explanation of modernity, in *All That is Solid Melts Into Air*, one realizes that the mural's thematic narrative embodies modernity through the depiction of history's perpetual flux, symbolized by the Mesoamerican universal understanding of death and regeneration. What sense of optimism for the modern is present in the entire mural? A detailed look at the depiction of children on the central wall demonstrates to the viewer how Rivera was neither against nor totally in accordance with either the modern or the indigenous approaches to social welfare. Chapter two highlights the portrayal of an indigenous 'industrial family' and their relationship with Mexico's social security, IMSS. The mural visually articulated to the public that through a clinical language, the only supported and effective method of preventing death and illness, the modern notion of a centralized or institutional intermediary entity as the sole provider of healthcare was a sign of hope for the people. Nevertheless, the people are also a significant element and conductor of the entire process. Without both the institution and the participative public the access to primary healthcare as an option would not exist.

In order to assess how Rivera interpreted modern versus indigenous medical practices this study will incorporate Michel Foucault's notion of the clinical gaze, explained throughout his book *The Birth of the Clinic*. The clinical gaze coined by Foucault described the institutionalized language of modern medicine as a means to express the relationship between patient and medical practitioner at the brink of the twentieth century. Why the coupling of a modern institutionalized clinical gaze and native Nahua folk medicine? Through closer examination, and clarification of certain scenes that are only briefly analyzed in contemporary scholarship, this analysis argues that Rivera is a participant of modernity through the invention of traditions that are intended to be engaged with by the modern public. The juxtaposition of ancient native communities and the industrial urban collective visualized through the clinical language of medicine, exemplified through the display of childbirth, sacrifice, death and renewal, are to be actively critiqued not passively absorbed as accurate representations of history. Similar to the use of a map, the image outlines a foundation and situates the viewer within an identifiable environment where the symbols of the ancient world become legends in a map informing the viewer of the uncertainties of the past in an attempt to make sense of one's current position. As a result, Rivera's murals are consistent reminders that in order to have a working system that benefits not a selected few, but an equal portion of the majority could only occur with action brought forth by the 'collective consciousness' or an overall awareness of the modern ideologies.

Chapter I: The Multifaceted Mural

The Depiction of Ancient Naturopathic and Modern Allopathic Medicine

Diego Rivera's mural at the Hospital de La Raza adopted objects and symbols of the past then adapted them for the modern viewer to connect with an already established renewable organic and synthetic environment. It is important to note that Rivera demonstrated in specific instances, with or without intention is not certain, inconsistencies regarding his portrayal of certain Central Mexican medical practices and healing remedies. Throughout the mural certain figures and scenes are borrowed from three early colonial sources, The Codex Borbonicus, The Florentine Codex and the Badianus Manuscript.[36] However, the focus of the mural was not on the consistent portrayal of factual evidences of native iconography or healing practices, but the representation of indigenous and modern peoples engaging in socialized medicine. The indigenous or native right section of the central wall is discussed in this study as a pseudo-accurate representation of actual ancient medicine. Simultaneously, the modern left section demonstrates a cautiously optimistic portrayal of medical technology and personnel. This chapter aims to visually analyze the mural as a whole and examine Rivera's inventive or imaginative vision by focusing on representations of childbirth, and explain the methodology used to approach each detail within the grander narrative. It is through Rivera's inventive artistic vision that the mural's overall dialogue conveys a

[36] The original date of the Codex Borbonicus is still debated by scholars today. It is most generally recognized to have been in use in the early colonial period probably created at the Tlatelolco University, Colegio de Santa Cruz started by fray Bernardino de Sahagún in the sixteenth century. See John Glass, *A Survey of Middle American Pictorial Documents (*Washington: Library of Congress Reference Department, Hispanic Foundation, 1966), pp. 16.

representation of the past not as a distant or uncertain space but a comprehensible cyclical pattern that is grounded to our earth. The narrative evokes the idea that throughout time all great civilizations have attempted to provide and maintain the reoccurring demand for access to primary medicine.

The curvature of the central wall elegantly shifts the dimensions of the visual plane where the blue sky, celestial symbols, the golden haired god-child figure, and the trees' canopy peer over the viewer and the societies below (Figure 12). Time within the mural is instantly captured where the past and present generations of Mexico are active within the central urban region of Mexico City. The mural's color palette interplays a mixture of cool and warm colors that correspond with the central Nahua goddess Tlazolteotl-Ixcuina, which could have been consciously done by Rivera as a means of unifying the entire piece. The bright light-blue sky is a similar tone as the goddess's necklace; note the color scheme of the goddess's skirt and skin are red, black, white, and yellow. A second look at Rivera's portrayal of the Nahua goddess Tlazolteotl-Ixcuina one notices that her right hand contains defined lines on the palm forming the shape of an "M", meanwhile the left hand retains simplicity (Figure 13). Meaning, the artist is not simply copying ancient iconography but re-imagining the details relevant to their symbolism. On the right section of the central wall certain figural compositions are curiously coupled, for example, to the right of the central goddess three men on their hands and knees —two of which are headless— face the deity in a coordinated pattern. Nearby are several characters depicted bent forward with a curved orientation toward the

Nahua deity, such as the bottom near the illustrations of herbs, a native medicine man and woman face the center. The left section also guides the eye toward the middle, for instance, the bottom figure of Dr. Ema Aguiluz is depicted with both arms raised upward as she uses an electron microscope or spectrometer. The emphasis on the goddess Tlazolteotl-Ixcuina is strongly suggestive of the duality of both the destructive and generative qualities. Tlazolteotl-Ixcuina's intermediary position conveys a strong message about the feminine goddess as both the embodiment of chaos and order.

The metaphorical narrative of life, death and renewal are played out in the mural, which resembles the compositional structure of several "Last Judgment" scenes in most Italian Renaissance and even late medieval frescoes. A visual play on the concept 'from chaos follows order' or from the unstructured past results the modern compartmentalized and specialized environment. Rivera appropriated a tripartite compositional strategy, similar to the frescoes produced during the Italian Renaissance that he studied in Europe, to the mural at the Hospital de La Raza. Italian Renaissance "Last Judgment" frescoes usually depict a similar composition which included a God or Christ figure at the center then to his right are symbols representing the holy order and on the left the damned in chaotic oblivion. An example of a "Last Judgment" scene organized in a tripartite fashion, which would have been familiar to Rivera, is Hans Memling's *Last Judgment*, 1466-71 (Figure 14).[37] Memling's triptych painting displays two celestial Christian symbols in the center and to the east and west sides figures are scattered about in chaos

[37] See also Michelangelo's *Last Judgment* (1537-41) in the Sistine Chapel, Italy.

and order. Interestingly, both Rivera's mural and Memling's triptych painting depict figures on the right-hand side as unstructured and nudity is prominent, while the left is rigidly organized and clothed. Rivera's *History of Medicine in Mexico* incorporates the compositional strategy of Renaissance "Last Judgment" scenes as well as it supplements the symbolic metaphor of the mural's narrative of death and renewal.

Although the mythological significance and origins of the Nahua goddess Tlazolteotl-Ixcuina are complex, contemporary theories have suggested that her reverence can be explained as an interconnected counterpart to the mother goddess complex associated with Teteo-innan, or Toci, that overlap in meaning. Known by many names, the goddess Tlazolteotl-Ixcuina is most notably described as the "Great Parturient" or could also be addressed as the creative "Earth Mother" and the "Goddess of Filth."[38] The silhouette of Tlazolteotl-Ixcuina, borrowed by Rivera from page thirteen of the Codex Borbonicus, could be interpreted as the "Great Parturient," giving birth to the god of corn Cinteotl (Figure 15). The central wall relates the story of the child god of corn, Cinteotl, shown descending from the blue sky where the gods of creation Ometecuhtli and Omecihuatl, the dual generative deity, "dwell" and then through

[38] Thelma Sullivan, "Tlazolteotl-Ixcuina: The Great Spinner and Weaver," in *The Art and Iconography of Late Post-Classic Central Mexico* (1982), pp. 7-14. "Her second name Ixcuina, a compounded Huastec word of *ix-* a prefix meaning 'woman,' or 'lady' and 'cotton', is the *Lady of Cotton* or *Goddess of Cotton* which describes further certain significant attributes of the fertility goddess. Tlazolteotl-Ixcuina is known as; Teteo-Innan, 'Mother of the Gods'; Toci, 'Our Grandmother'; Temazcalteci, 'Grandmother of the Bathhouse'; Yohualticitl, 'Midwife of the Night'; Tonantzin, 'Our Mother'; Tlalli iyollo, 'Heart of the Earth'; Ilamatecuhtli, 'Old Woman'; Itzapapalotl, 'Obsidian Butterfly', to mention a few." Essentially, the universal meaning of Tlazolteotl-Ixcuina is what Rivera is playing upon with the depiction of scenes of birth/midwifery, sexuality, and medicine. The connection between Toci, Teteo-innan and Tlazolteotl-Ixcuina is not based on one being an avatar, embodiment, or aspect of each other but as overlapping, interweaving symbolisms of a 'Mother Goddess' type family.

Tlazolteotl-Ixcuina's loins does the celestial enter the earthly plane. In general, the symbolism represents the preordained conception of the god of corn which passes through the mother onto earth and unites two universes; one represented by the centipede, earth or the underworld, and the other as the snake, or the celestial plane.[39] Tlazolteotl-Ixcuina's offspring is a figurative replica of herself and together with the flayed skin garment of a sacrificial victim that she wears the goddess embodies generative, transformative, and regenerative power.[40] The mythological significance of the Nahua goddess Tlazolteotl-Ixcuina was considered an embodiment of both the generative and destructive properties of life or nature itself. Directly below Tlazolteotl-Ixcuina's black and red crescent moon skirt we notice the symbolic birthing of the Nahua botanical pharmacopeia in the form of eighty-four selected herbs and plants from the early colonial Badianus Manuscript (Figure 16). The metaphorical birthing of medical knowledge, presented by the illustrated herbs and plants, provides the template for perpetual health and wellness.

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[39] See Eduard Seler's commentary on the Borbonicus pages, in *Commentarios al Codice Borgia* (1904), volume 1, pp. 121- Figure 347. Scholars, such as Jesus Kumate, "Diego Rivera, la medicine en el arte," in *Diego Rivera Hoy* (INBA, 1986), have noted that the centipede and snake symbol suggests the *caduceus* symbol for medicine. I find this doubtful since the original meaning strays far from the Greek symbol, which includes the wings of Hermes and a central staff. See also, Karl Taube, "Maws of Heaven and Hell: The symbolism of the centipede and serpent in Classic Maya religion," in *Antropología de la Eternidad: La muerte en la cultura Maya*. ed. Andrés Ciudad Ruiz, Mario H.R. Sosa, Josefa Iglesias Ponce de Leon, (Madrid: Sociedad Española de Estudios Mayas; Mexico, D.F.: Centro de Estudios Mayas, Instituto de Investigaciones Filológicas, UNAM, 2003).

[40] Sullivan, "Tlazolteotl-Ixcuina: The Great Spinner and Weaver," (1982), pp. 14-15. "The unique feathered nose adornment that the goddess wears is in form and color a decapitated quail, *zolin*, a bird associated with its tendency to stay close to the ground and its prolific breeding habits- symbolizing earth and fertility."

Below the surface plane where the trees of "Life" and "Health" take root a mosaic representation of two feathered serpents, a symbol found throughout Mesoamerican mythology, designates the earth and sea that bind humanity to this world. The inclusion of mosaic art as the foundation of the mural was a sophisticated stylistic choice; the glistening quality of mosaic glass metaphorically connects the upper earth with the watery underworld. Despite consistent affiliation with the feathered serpent god Quetzalcoatl, which is more of an implied identification, the two mythical serpents presented evoke a metaphorical association with natural elements, such as air, earth, fire, and water. Furthermore, these mythical serpents merging at the center with two prominent trees sprouting from their lower bodies strongly corresponds with Nahua creation myths- which are then visually connected to the visual styles and myths of an earlier art and culture from Teotihuacan. Visually the serpents reference the stylistic features seen in the murals at the ancient city of Teotihuacan, specifically from the Temple of Quetzalcoatl, at a time when academic archeology of the site's murals were at its early stages in terms of conducting critical iconographical analysis.[41] Rivera adopted the Mesoamerican style, the use of bold dark outlines and vibrant colors seen on murals throughout ancient sites in Mexico, in order to create a visual association with the distant past and unconsciously connect the viewer with archeological sites like Teotihuacan (Figure 17).

[41] Braun, "Chapter 5: Diego Rivera Heritage and Politics," in *Pre-Columbian Art and the Post-Columbian World* (1993), pp. 227. "The two confronting feathered and scaled serpents recall the border imagery of Teotihuacan murals and Aztec reliefs." Further research on Teotihuacan murals can be found in Universidad Nacional Autónoma de Mexico: Instituto de Investigaciones Estéticas, *Pre-Columbian painting: murals of Mesoamerica,* (Jaca Books, 1999).

The blue and green colored serpents, in particular, trigger certain stylistic features that reference the depictions of a specific god displayed throughout Mesoamerica, the goggle-shaped eye that is strongly associated with Tlaloc the god of water, rain, and agriculture.[42] However, the inclusion of the green serpent counters the notion that the blue serpent references the god Tlaloc. Essentially, both serpents and the opposing trees are resurfacing a Nahua creation myth that involves two serpents who embodied the gods Tezcatlipoca, the obsidian or mirror eyed blue serpent, and the green feathered serpent *Ehecatl* or wind Quetzalcoatl with a yellow beak and dagger of light beaming from the eye coexisting with and supplementing the trees of "Health" and "Life."[43] The metaphorical serpents that support the trees reference Nahua mythology inspired by imagery found at Teotihuacan, such as the *Wagner Murals* of serpents and flowering trees, and in turn re-imagined and incorporated into the narrative (Figure 18). The roots of the trees of "Health" and "Life" firmly take hold of both elemental serpents and converge at the center shown as a light-blue stream that flows out of the serpents' mouth.

On the extended side of the tree of "Life," that curves around the central wall to the right, Rivera again drew a reference to a Nahua myth of the 'árbol nodriza' or nursing

[42] This identification and observation was done initially by Raquel Tibol, essay titled "El Ultimo Fresco de Diego Rivera," in *Novedades* (Feb. 1954), pp. 3.

[43] Garibay, Angel K., *Teogonía E Historia de los Mexicanos: Tres Opúsculos del Siglo XVI* (Editorial Porrúa, S.A. Mexico, 1979), pp. 32-33 and 108-109. "Capitulo quinto. 'Del diluvio y caída del cielo y su restauración,' and 'Otro mito de la creación.' The gods Tezcatlipoca and Quetzalcoatl transform into large trees, *tezcacuahuitl* or tree of mirrors, and *quetzalhuexotl*."

tree from early colonial accounts on "the place of *Chichiualcuauhco*."[44] The original story discussed a place where children who are still-born and mothers who pass during labor are designated a place amongst the gods (Figure 19). Rivera connected these mythical associations with real life practices by portraying Dr. Guadalupe Eguiluz, a pediatrics doctor, treating a female newborn. Rivera drew Dr. Equiluz presenting the baby to three anonymous nurses, one of which holds a manuscript that commemorated the mural, artist, and assistants (Figure 5). The tree of "Life" will be discussed again below, for now the reader is aware that Rivera consciously understood and interpreted in his own vision Nahua mythology and visual styles from the ancient site of Teotihuacan, an older civilization than the Mexica.

At the top canopy of both the tree of "Health" on the left and "Life" on the right section, as well as at the bottom center where the two serpents meet, Rivera drew the dual mask of life and death visually referencing the ancient mask from Tlatilco dating to the pre-Classic period before Teotihuacan (Figure 20). The original mask embodying life and death has a human face on the left and a skull on the right side. Rivera's masks are not similar to the original in terms of reproduction; rather, their symbolism interlinks the overall narrative of the recycling of energy and souls. The triad of masks representing death and life, day and night, signifying the universal idea of a duality of opposition and complimentary circumstances are embodied on the three different masks created by

[44] Bernardo Ortiz Montellano, *Medicina, Salud y Nutrición Aztecas* (Siglo Veintiuno Editores, 1993), pp. 86-7. Also *Hospital de La Raza 50 aniversario* (2004), Dr. Enrique Cárdenas de la Peña, "Los Murales", pp. 23-29.

Rivera. The transformative power of the soothsayer or diviner is presented as the mask with a human and jaguar face; meanwhile, the two remaining masks are part skull part flesh (Figure 5). The incorporation of such masks that visually connect to the pre-Classic original piece signifies Rivera's inventive vision that attempted to situate the central region of Mexico as an interconnected, and in a way homogenous, space. However, in reality each symbol and mythos incorporated into the mural are diverse remnants of societies that existed in history that are not directly affiliated with or created by specifically the Mexica.

Above the mystical serpents Rivera portrayed the community of Mexico City from the native Nahua to the modern Mexicans of the nineteen fifties shown participating in actions that suggest the demand for primary medicine. Separate generations are presented in a perpetual cycle in time and space, represented by the symbolically charged processional paths of the sun and moon (Figure 21). The soft outline of a rabbit within the moon on the left and the bright red sun on the right section of the central wall are a visual reference to the Nahua creation myth of the "Fifth Sun" known to have originated in the ancient site of Teotihuacan.[45] A summarization of the myth describes the deity named Tecuciztécatl who chose to jump first into the sacred flames in order to become the sun god and "bring light to the world." The creation of the moon is discussed as a

[45] Although not explicitly identified as a direct reference to the creation myth of the sun and moon from Teotihuacan, the general reference to the creation myth of the sun and moon in the Central Mexican region is significant. Scholars such as Beatriz de la Fuente, "El arte prehispanic y la pintura mural de Diego Rivera," in *Diego Rivera Hoy* (1986), pp. 98, discussed that Rivera "reproduced Mesoamerican myths as a witness to his archeological scholarship," which is more like his own analysis and understanding of the resources available at the time regarding the ancient people of Mexico- not only the Mexica.

chosen deity named Nanahuatzin who at first hesitated to throw himself into the sacred flames and become the moon. The pustule bodied deity Nanahuatzin soon became the coward moon who after the fourth try finally summed up the courage to jump into the flame, other remaining deities hunted and threw a rabbit at Nanahuatzin for there could only be one bright sun, therefore, the rough surfaced moon became a dimmed luminescence.[46] The portrayal of the sun and moon are suggestive of the chronological passing of time which connects the modern with the ancient, more importantly, their symbolism is not fixed despite their strong reference to Nahua mythology. The sun and moon of the celestial plane are incorporated within the mural's thematic narrative in order to familiarize the modern viewer with an uncertain detail from the past. In terms of the general public and their knowledge of ancient archeological sites and specific artworks is difficult to define. It could be argued that since the establishment of the National Institute of Anthropology and History in 1939, access to primary knowledge on the Mexica or the many other diverse populations of Mexico was available for research. In general, the public would have been more familiar with the artist and his stylistic depiction of the ancient Mexica and the current populace of Mexico City in his monumental murals.

Rivera's modernist perspective visually elevated the status of the Mexica as a continuation or an embedded quality of the ancient peoples of Teotihuacan and other

[46] Eduardo Matos Moctezuma, *Teotihuacan: The City of Gods* (New York: Rizzoli International Publications Inc., 1990), pp. 23-25.

Mesoamerican civilizations that reached a sense of empire or centralized control. Furthermore, the depiction of the right section of the central wall as a populace that is suggestive to be Mexica, because Rivera situated the indigenous figures within the sacred precinct at Tenochtitlan- the Templo Mayor, the Temple of Quetzalcoatl in the center and at the far right the Temple of Tezcatlipoca (Figure 22).[47] It is important to note, the native figures are shown standing on wood and concrete steps that reference the murals at Bonampak, room three in structure one, by the Maya (Figure 23).[48] Each level demonstrated a hierarchical organization where the most important figure in the group stood at the top. The murals at Bonampak were discovered in 1946 and would have been generally known throughout Mexico City during this time. Once again, Rivera is appropriating these visual stylistic details that are not all-encompassing of all diverse groups of Mesoamerica or the Mexica. Meaning, the natives in his artworks are an ambiguous society shown to be in the past but are not fixed or static within one particular region in terms of Cosmovision or culture.

Contemporary scholarship most often discusses the native figures on the indigenous right section as the Mexica of the pre-Columbian or near the contact period. The particular epoch of the right section where the indigenous figures are drawn is ambiguous, suggesting a romantic state of uncertain time in history. The native figures'

[47] For a useful diagram of the sacred central precinct of Tenochtitlan see Ignacio Marquina, *Arquitectura Prehispanica* (Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia, 1950), pp. 185.

[48] Further research on the Maya murals at Bonampak see Mary Ellen Miller, *The Murals of Bonampak* (Princeton University Press, 1986).

ambiguity relates to how Rivera's inventive vision manifested indigenous characters that are derived from factual history to a certain extent. It is Rivera's depiction of a native 'industrial family,' identified as the family unit depicted on the left section of the central wall illustrated with solid brown skin and oval-shaped heads, that signaled a generalized representation of the industrial class that can be situated in the present (Figure 24). The oval shape suggests the practice of skull modification by the Mexica, or the native peoples of Tenochtitlan, when in actual accounts skull modification practices are not supported in Central Mexico —more so in the Gulf of Mexico region and the Andes of Peru— which was most likely unknown to the public. Therefore, the native figures with elongated heads are a stylistic representation of an invented look that cannot be defined as pre-Columbian or from the contact period. The indigenous features that Rivera chose to reproduce are consistent reminders of the present populace, culture, and tradition of the urban community of Mexico City.

The left section of the central wall displayed the general public as a cluster passing through an intermediary entity, the IMSS administration, but within a closed hospital environment. The modern world is also a structured hierarchical order that designated and distributed medical specialties and aspects of sterilization into geometric spaces that hold separate medical instruments and treatments. The compositional arrangement of the modern environment is divided into a surface level, with the crowd of people gathering at the top, and a sublevel that houses the specialties offered in the hospital building (Figure 25). The compartmentalization of space consumes the figures

of the modern world, which corresponds with its industrial, technological, specialized, and synthetic environment. Below the crowd of people every square, bordered through the use of color coordination, is a space for the practice of medicine where there is literally no room to deviate from protocol.

One must look upon the mural and react to the realization that a large portion of the urban community are the working industrial class, mostly comprised of the native agrarian people, who migrated to the city for work and healthcare services. Essentially, the underlying theme that the mural's overall tripartite strategy engages with is the notion of earth's regenerative energy powered by a biological system that is universally accepted by all cultures throughout generations. The mixed populace shown on the central wall highlight population dynamics, demonstrating that throughout thousands of years Mexico City has accumulated a large general public from diverse backgrounds. The presence of the indigenous figures not only reaffirms our own familiarity with Rivera's art, but they serve to trigger the viewer to respond and be mindful of the greater indigenous majority who are adjusting to new social conventions. For example, the indigenous figures in the past and present on the central wall are ambiguously historical but essentially serve to familiarize the viewer with the social issues concerning urban life. Since the narrative could be viewed as an invented visualization of modernist ideals of the time Rivera created a legible visual map and interpretation of new traditions that were emerging from the everyday social interactions with the modern social security system.

Diego Rivera, Inventor of Traditions

Diego Rivera is a prominent visual conduit of modernist ideals and he repeatedly recreated historical narratives in order to articulate an identifiable critique on current socio-political and cultural perspectives, in this case socialized medicine. Rivera's artworks invented traditions as a means of participating in modernity, while simultaneously stimulating the viewer to choose to partake or re-interpret the ideologies of the time. As discussed earlier the artist's ambiguity toward the representation of native figures without being a definitive representation of a specific peoples and culture demonstrated his inventiveness. These instances that are based loosely from historical evidences are to be thought of not as deceiving information or Rivera's method of homogenizing Mexican culture, rather, consider these details of uncertainty as "invented traditions" for the modern era. The invented tradition as explained in the "Introduction" to Eric Hobsbawm's *The Invention of Tradition* outlined the methodological approach used to critically analyze Rivera's persistent adoption and adaption of ancient iconography as a means of creating new traditions for a modern Mexico.

The invented tradition should be considered as a "set of practices, normally governed by overtly or tacitly accepted rules and of a ritual or symbolic nature- which seek to inculcate certain values and norms of behavior by repetition, which automatically implies continuity with the past." When possible, these practices that invent traditions normally attempt to "establish continuity with a suitable historic past and in turn secure a

sense of legitimacy in the present and future."[49] The invented tradition is both an unconscious and conscious routine behavior that is established through one's interaction with the everyday lifestyle. For instance, within the mural one notices the continuity of exchange, in the form of either blood or money, for the services provided by the centralized entity, IMSS or the deity representative (Figure 11). At each end of the central wall the group of people demanding access to primary medicine is then distributed to specialists, or medicine men and women, that are attempting to situate the idea that throughout time healthcare services could be found in a centralized cosmopolitan area. In the end, one realizes that Rivera is inventing traditions —the details of the everyday that fill in the gaps of the past— that are derived loosely from historical fact in order to create a visual map of one's current position amongst the institutionalized system.

As discussed extensively by James Scott, *Seeing Like a State*, the idea that the "social standardization of society, or the social simplification of local diversity in order to make a society legible," was what the modern statecraft strived to accomplish throughout the modern era. This notion of the modern state aiming to create an "abridged map or visual plane of its urban society in order to be legible and easily influenced" could be

[49] Hobsbawm, "Introduction: Inventing Traditions," in *The Invention of Tradition* (Cambridge University Press, 1983), pp. 1-4. "*Tradition* in this sense must be distinguished clearly from *custom* which dominates so-called *traditional* societies. *Custom* is what judges do; *tradition* (in this instance *invented tradition*) is the wig, robe and other formal paraphernalia and ritualized practices surrounding their substantial action. Inventing traditions is essentially a process of formalization and ritualization, characterized by reference to the past, if only by imposing repetition. The actual process of creating such ritual and symbolic complexes has not been adequately studied by historians. Much of it is still rather obscure."

applied to the modern Mexican state's motive toward the normalization of an institutionalized social security, or socialized healthcare system.[50] Due to critical influential interests from the state and major labor unions, the creation of IMSS involved strategies that implemented the institution as a social norm. The systemization of healthcare, to a centralized autonomous institution that works as an intermediary entity, needed an uplifting persona that appealed to the general consensus and was part of all communities.

With a somewhat "high-modernist" ideological approach to modernization Mexico's leaders and institutions embraced the creation of a new nation through advancements in industry, science through technology, and capitalism.[51] However, in some instances Rivera depicted scenes that project critical-optimism, or a strong advocacy for the advancement and use of technology and science while suggestive of the negative aspect of mechanized healthcare or for-profit medicine in the capitalists' interests. Technologies of modern medicine such as the cobalt pump are emphasized by the space it consumes. Notice that the nurse in the scene looks upon the doctors with a

[50] James Scott, "Introduction," in *Seeing Like a State* (Yale University Press, 1998), pp. 3-4. "State simplifications, the basic given of modern statecraft, were like abridged maps. They were, moreover, not just maps. Rather, they were maps that, when allied with state power, would enable much of the reality they depicted to be remade. They did not successfully represent the actual activity of the society they depicted, nor were they intended; they represented only that slice of it that interested the official observer."

[51] Scott, "Introduction," in *Seeing Like a State*, pp. 4. "*High modernism* must not be confused with scientific practice. It was fundamentally, as the term 'ideology' implies, a faith that borrowed, as it were, the legitimacy of science and technology. It is best conceived as a strong, one might even say muscle-bound, version of the self-confidence about scientific and technical progress, the expansion of production. It originated, of course, in the West, as a by-product of unprecedented progress in science and industry."

serious face almost fatigued or irritated with the radiation treatment procedure (Figure 26). The two doctors, identified as radiologist Dr. Alfonso Díaz Infante and surgeon Dr. Manuel Aceves Pérez, gaze at the anonymous woman with a malignant tumor on her left breast with piercing attention —as the cobalt pump suggestively penetrates the laid female body with invisible harmful radiation— conveys an awkward feeling. The female body is viewed by the audience and the doctors within the scene as a specimen or isolated so as to focus on the tumor not the individual. In a way, Rivera depicted not only the proper method in modern medicine for tackling breast cancer in the nineteen fifties, but also visually outlined a space where interpersonal connection between patient and medical specialist is rare.

Diego Rivera's mural in the Hospital de La Raza significantly contributed a visible map or understandable vision of the past, present and upcoming future, comprised of scenes and figures that articulated to the viewer a potential everyday manifestation of socialized medicine. The mural introduced scenes, such as the four involving childbirth, that attempted to chronologically link the development of social security and the modern ideas relative to the bureaucratic system that —still to this day— demand the current populace to engage with, internalize via visual analysis, and in turn choose to physically manifest similar social conventions. The depiction of childbirth, discussed below, exemplifies an invented interpretation of what is considered proper childbearing procedures relative to the actual process in modern medicine that are comprehensible traditions visually mapped for the viewer. It is important to note that invented traditions

are created and destroyed constantly, for it is the continual fluctuation of the tradition that embodies modernity itself. The concept of modernity will be explained further later, for now one is to be aware that invented traditions created by artists, intellectuals, and academia are vital catalysts for modernization.

The Birthing of Medical Knowledge

Exploring further the notion of the "invented tradition," I now focus on Rivera's representation of four instances of childbirth through the practice of midwifery and cesarean section (Figure 27). The inclusion of a pregnant woman at the top then giving birth at the bottom of the central wall, both left and right sections, emphasized the creation of a maternity ward with eight-hundred beds that the Hospital de La Raza provided. In addition, the comprehensible mapping of the implemented process of the bureaucratic system —that of waiting for an entity to direct the figure to a specialist for medical help— is interpreted as a reoccurring and routine social practice. Furthermore, the birth scenes reflect Rivera's emotional struggle with his dying body, sexuality, personal relationships, and the continuation of his family. The four scenes regarding childbirth are presented to the viewer via a modern tradition, almost mirroring ancient practices, as symbols of the power and fragility of procreation. Simultaneously, as stated below, an old man is coming to terms with the death of his virility.

Focusing on the top of the right section of the central wall, an anonymous female figure is shown pregnant while holding a bundle of clothing for her child waiting to be directed by a soothsayer figure impersonating the Nahua goddess Tlazolteotl-Ixcuina

(Figure 28). At the bottom, the female figure is being assisted by a midwife known as, *tlamatqui* or *temixintiani ticitl* in Nahuatl, who wears a distinctive multi-colored *quechquemitl*, an upper-body garment for native women, and an unusual cap with un-spun cotton spindles, a broom, and three protruding yellow plumes.[52] Rivera included in this scene his two daughters from his first wife, Guadalupe Marín, as midwife assistants, Guadalupe Rivera on the left and Ruth Rivera on the right. As the midwife takes hold of the newborn she speaks, conveyed by the small symbols for breath familiar to early colonial imagery, a welcoming phrase or an ancient metaphorical speech called *huehuetlatolli*, for the baby boy.[53] The impact of seeing blood on the mantel and the placenta saved in a ceramic bowl captures the viewer at an instant. The interplay of yellow and red colors, sharp warm tones with cool whites or brown, are witnessed at eye-level. Interestingly, this scene also familiarizes the viewer with one specifically modern convention, a typical obstetrics method of childbirth that of laying on one's back like on an operating table, meanwhile situating the squatting position as an ancient almost mythological practice.

Despite the closeness in accuracy, with regards to the welcoming speech and costume, Rivera neglects to depict the most traditional aspect of the entire medical practice involving midwifery. Nahua women usually gave birth in a squatting position,

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[52] Francisco Guerra, "Aztec Medicine," *Medical History* 10, no. 4 (1966): pp. 327-29. Nahuatl terms taken from essay.

[53] Davíd Carrasco, "Religion of the Aztecs: Ways of the Warrior, Words of the Sage," in *Religions of Mesoamerica: Cosmovision and Ceremonial Centers* (Long Grove, IL: Waveland Press, 1990), pp. 82. "Male and female children have their own welcoming speech."

demonstrated appropriately by Tlazolteotl-Ixcuina, and were given instructions by midwifes to birth in such fashion.[54] Clearly, Rivera was not intending to represent an accurate birth scene; rather, he depicts a Western birthing position commonly advised in modern obstetrics that has been overlooked by most scholars prior to this study. Furthermore, the midwife's headdress is a feature created Rivera that is not supported by ancient historical evidence- chapter two further discusses the significance of this invented detail. It could be argued that Rivera depicted a pseudo-accurate indigenous birth scene through midwifery alongside a 'Mexica-style' sculpture, recognized as an authentic piece at the time, in the context of native traditional childbirth as an instruction for modern women. The juxtaposition of the native woman giving birth non-traditionally with an example of traditional birth via an ambiguous female sculpture conveys a sharp distinction and contrast between the organic versus the synthetic birthing method. The choice to convey an inaccurate birth scene on the right section of the central wall exemplifies Rivera's inventiveness as a means to create a narrative where socialized and institutionalized medicine are one in the same, exalted figures that provide the medical services needed as well as the instruction to how to conduct the procedure.

In the corner of the right section, adjacent Rivera's daughters as midwife assistants, the yellow hermaphroditic tree of "Life" is shown with an extended "phallus branch." Looped around the branch is a swing that supports an illustrated representation of the sculpture of the Nahua goddess Tlazolteotl-Ixcuina from the Research Library and

[54] Guerra, "Aztec Medicine," (1966): pp. 329. Several steam-baths days and hours prior to labor were also part of the birthing ritual. See appendix I: m, l, and N.

Collections at Dumbarton Oaks, Washington D.C., United States. The painted faux-Mexica sculpture, which at the time would have been considered an authentic artifact, is grey colored similar to rock whereas the original is made of aplite rock which resembles the surface of marble (Figure 29).[55] Immediately below the sculpture an infant tree sprouts from the soil at the base of the tree of "Life" from the menstrual blood and or placenta fluid of the deity.

The yellow hermaphroditic tree of "Life" further embedded the right wall with the concepts of sexuality, procreation, and tragedy associated with parturition. Rivera may have consciously drawn the "phallus branch" as an avenue to express his personal strife while undergoing X-ray therapy after cancer diagnosis, perhaps an emotional response to his own dying body. In 1951, after the commissioning of the mural Rivera was stricken with news of "penis cancer," sometime in 1952, where he was given the option of either the removal of his virile member or X-ray therapy.[56] He chose the later of the two, recovered, and afterwards fell into a deep depression. An emotional statement by Rivera perhaps best described how he coped with his dying virility,

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[55] Further reading on the Tlazolteotl sculpture as a hoax can be found in, Jane M. Walsh, "The Dumbarton Oaks Tlazolteotl: Looking Beneath the Surface," in *Journal de la Société des Americanistes*, pp. 94-1. To view article follow link- http://www.archaeology.org/0805/etc/indy.html.

[56] Diego Rivera, *My Art My Life* (1991), ed. Gladys March, pp. 174. As mentioned in Adrián Villagómez's, "la Biología en El Muralismo de Diego Rivera, " *Ciencias* (1997), pp. 29. "It was during this time of recuperation and personal strife that Rivera embarked in several art projects while working on the Hospital de La Raza mural; such as, the Anahuacalli, finishing the series of frescoes at the National Palace, the mosaic mural at the major stadium at la Cuidad Universitaria (UNAM), and the Teatro Insurgentes in Mexico City." It could be considered penile cancer diagnosis which is very rare- most likely caused by a sexually transmitted infection.

> "On the left side (viewer's right) of the mural, I painted a giant, phallic, yellow-green tree of 'Life.' Suddenly I was stopped by a painful idea flashing through my mind. Gazing wistfully at my creation, I thought, No more for me. Physical love exists for me no longer. I am an old man, too old and too sick to enjoy that wonderful ecstasy."[57]

Rivera's confession could be interpreted as a realization, a coming to terms with the fact that his virility is dying but continues to survive within his children and grandchildren. Rivera is fostering the fact that his own seed has produced two daughters who gave birth to grandchildren whom he greatly admired. Furthermore, the connection between his dying sexuality and the tragic possibilities of stillbirth and maternal death expose Rivera's revelation concerning his actions and experiences with his four wives- specifically his second wife Frida Kahlo.[58]

Contrasted to the indigenous side, the modern left section of the central wall is shown with somber grey and white tones, with a single light source emanating from a lamp above the doctors (Figure 27). Rivera's portrayal of childbirth through cesarean section has been described as presenting the modern medical procedure as inhuman, a less joyful birthing where the mother is hidden from view and not participating in the birth of her child. Four anonymous national doctors performing the cesarean procedure

[57] Rivera, *My Art My Life* (1991), pp. 174. Reflections on his relationship with his grandson, pp. 181.

[58] Diego Rivera's first love, not married, was Angelina Beloff who lost their first born son Diego in France from illness, 1918. His first official wife, Guadalupe Marín had two daughters successfully, yet, his second wife Frida Kahlo suffered miscarriages. See *My Art My Life* (1991), ed. Gladys March.

are illustrated without emotional reaction to the process of childbirth. The white surgical masks that the doctors wear make the figures unidentifiable due to their protection against contagion, only the eyes imply an insensitive response. Peering above the unseen mother an anonymous light-complected doctor with glasses observes the cesarean section in action, suggesting a systematic and impersonal atmosphere in modern medicine. The inclusion of an anonymous anesthesiologist nearby the supervising doctor signals to the viewer that the unseen mother is unconscious throughout the process, whereas the native woman on the right section is conscious and active.

Art historian Dina Comisarenco-Mirkin noted that the modern birth scene contains a melancholic quality because it referenced a difficult time in Rivera's life. The devastating event that occurred in 1932, with his second wife Frida Kahlo, could be argued is reminiscent of the modern birth scene. Kahlo was rushed late one night to Henry Ford hospital in Detroit due to labor complications which resulted in a painful miscarriage.[59] Rivera's experience at the Henry Ford hospital must have impacted his outlook on the mechanization of social medicine, a system whose main concern is the profit motive. In 1933, Rivera sent a letter with an attached watercolor drawing to the Mexican Communist poet Carlo Gutierrez Cruz, titled *Mechanized Motherhood*, which was an intended criticism on the capitalist system's use of machinery for human

[59] Dina Comisarenco-Mirkin, "Images of Childbirth in Modern Mexican Art," *Woman's Art Journal* 20, no. 1 (1999): pp 21. She concludes that, "the traumatic personal experience of Rivera and Kahlo during her hospital stay in that great industrial center, Detroit, set the tone for the dehumanized Cesarean operation depicted by Rivera as metaphor for Mexico's industrialization." See *My Art My Life*, pp. 123-24.

exploitation (Figure 30).[60] The drawing *Mechanized Motherhood* demonstrates Rivera's frustration, skepticism, and cautious perspective that was critical of the institutionalization of modern medicine. The sculptural female figure is shown without arms, left-leg, and a torso that is made up of industrial pipes and rigid rectangular-square appendages. The tragedy of miscarriage as well as the treatment of the female body as an object transformed into a machine conveys the notion of an inhuman environment in modern medicine that Rivera was well aware of through personal experience.

Comisarenco-Mirkin's analysis of the cesarean section scene resurfaced a discussion on the mural by Leopoldo Mendez and Pablo O'Higgins, titled *Motherhood*, which was destroyed by IMSS in 1946 (Figure 31).[61] Rivera was most likely familiar with this Mendez and O'Higgins mural before IMSS approached him to produce a similar themed project for the Hospital de La Raza. The mural *Motherhood* had a crimson red background color, which contrasted with the artificial light of the sterile surgical room. There are similarities present in the mural *Motherhood* to Rivera's La Raza mural, such as the depiction of medical doctors shown as unresponsive or callous to the cries of the newborn where again the mother is not present to witness the birthing. Perhaps, Rivera

[60] Laurence P. Hurlburt, "Diego Rivera (1886-1957): A Chronology of His Art, Life and Times," in *Diego Rivera: A Retrospective* (1986), pp. 87.

[61] Comisarenco-Mirkin (1999), pp 20-21. Bernard Myers describes the *Motherhood* mural as an "example of the artistic works that reflected government measures taken in response to the new conditions brought by social security and free medical care. However, the sterile portrayal of a birthing scene that excludes the mother bespeaks of the alienation and dehumanization that came with progress. The strong beams of artificial light that illuminate the scenes and the antiseptic white gowns, masks, and gloves of the physicians and nurses fill the mural with a cold, dramatic atmosphere. The reddish background, suggesting daily dealings with the blood of life and death, contrasts with the cool surgical procedures."

chose to continue how Mendez and O'Higgins portrayed the true nature of institutionalized healthcare; however, the image does not ultimately portray a melancholic or inhuman perspective. Medical garments are not colorful mostly a standard grey tone or white and the disposal of the placenta fluid is not unjust but following sanitation procedures to avoid contamination or contagion- which is relative to how modern medicine's antiseptic practices are actually performed.

The depiction of allopathic medicine does have representational differences from naturopathic medicine on the right section of the central wall and may be perceived as invasive, synthetic, or dehumanized to some extent. It is difficult to conclude that Rivera had a pessimistic view on modern medicine and science since he was such an advocate of modern technological breakthroughs. Rivera's outlook on modern medicine and technology was not pessimistic or disheartened. His artwork most often depicted a strong advocacy for the development of technology, such as the *Detroit Industry* mural, 1933, or the Lerma Waterworks mural *Hands of Nature Offering Water*, 1951, as an almost evolutionary breakthrough for man and machine. In the Lerma Waterworks mural, Rivera highlighted the development of a more updated water distribution system that tapped the underground mountain sources of the Lerma River as it nears the Valley of Mexico to provide water for the urban district of Polanco in Mexico City (Figure 32).[62] The inclusion of identifiable doctors and their use of new medical equipment set amongst the buildings of Social Security and other markers of the city, such as the church and

[62] Stanton L. Catlin, "Mural Census: Carcámo del Rio Lerma or Lerma Waterworks analysis," in *Diego Rivera: A Retrospective*, ed. Cynthia Newman Helms (Detroit Institute of Art, 1986), pp. 325.

multi-housing units, situate the image and viewer as partners within a mutual exchange. The modern left section could be argued as a cold calculated practice to the point where the process could be considered ritualistic or a procedural birth scene. The inclusion of a supervising doctor further demonstrates how a mechanized medical system cannot deviate from protocol or standards.

Although there are differences between midwifery on the right to the caesarian section on the left section, both birth scenes re-contextualize how the viewer —especially the female viewer— engages with modern conventions regarding childbirth. Female viewers are capable of situating themselves in the same position demonstrated by the anonymous native mother figure, right section at the bottom, lying on her back to give birth. Simultaneously, all viewers are able to cohesively integrate a similar looking figure lying on the table hidden under the white cloth onto the left section using the native woman on the right as a visual stand-in. These scenes that involve childbirth exemplify how Rivera is inventing traditions through repetition of ancient iconographical references as pseudo-accurate reproductions, or re-created Nahua traditional practices, that aim to legitimize modern interpretations of childbirth. The visual outline or mapping of the process of childbirth incorporated a modern interpretation of proper childbearing procedures over indigenous conventions. The criticism lied on the institution and how the capitalists' interest, the minority involved at the top, could dictate the use of technology and science without consideration for the majority.

Modernity, a paradoxical and constantly changing body of experience as well as a movement or a transformative idea, parallels the ancient universal concept of a recycling of souls through nature's perpetual renewal and re-building embodied by the two trees. In general, the notion of modernization constantly involves the invention of traditions because the reinterpretations of social norms are vital elements that perpetuate the inevitable modification of what is considered modern. Therefore, concepts that were normal local healing practices of the past are re-contextualized into a new form, a new visual map that could potentially manifest itself in the physical modern reality. Certain double meanings within the mural, scenes that reference childbirth and sacrifice- as well as the language of institutional medicine, provoke the viewer to decide whether to continue or change their current physical manifestations for they will obviously make an impact on future generations. The following chapter continues to identify new interpretations regarding certain invented figures and scenarios created by Rivera incorporated within the narrative of the mural in order to situate certain modern medical procedures as normal in reception and historically rooted. The public reception of these invented scenes and figures, as well as the artist's commentary on the mural, demonstrate how Rivera's invented traditions made possible a visual mapping of the social security system. This comprehensible map enabled the viewer to become aware of their collective power that ultimately dictates how the institutionalized system functions.

Chapter II: The Clinical Institution

Public Reception

The official inauguration of the Hospital de La Raza was in October 1952, while the mural was in progress- the hospital was not completely functional until 1954.[63] The mural was given two formal receptions, January 28th and February 11th of 1954. Once the mural was complete, all public attention was on the realization that this was to be Rivera's final mural in Mexico City. Direct reception from the general public will not be discussed because sources on this detail were not examined due the unavailability or access to immediate public responses. The majority of the archived materials regarding the second reception were written by government publications, national journalists and art critics, as well as representatives from Mexican Social Security. This chapter will focus on commentary by two prominent journalists and art critics, Antonio Rodriguez for *El Nacional* and Raquel Tibol for *Novedades*.[64] In addition to their responses, Rivera's thesis on the mural introduced to the public on the February 11th reception as well as a comment that was made with Tibol during an interview will be examined. The observations presented will be considered primary evidences of initial reactions that gave validity and substance to the finalized image. More importantly, Rivera's commentary

[63] Certain wards were not complete, specialty sections of the hospital were not fully operational until 1953-54. See Félix Domínguez, "La Próxima Inauguración del Hospital de Zona Numero Uno Del Instituto Mexicano del Seguro Social: Marca Brillante Etapa de Trabajo en el Distrito Federal," *Todo* (Oct. 23, 1952).

[64] Further research on direct responses from general public will be considered post-completion of this study. My time spent in Mexican archives focused on the mural itself and Diego Rivera, public reception and their immediate written criticisms is information that is not readily available or easily accessible in public archives abroad or in the United States.

supports his personal criticism surrounding the demand for social medicine throughout history and how the modern institution could become a for-profit healthcare system that overrules the peoples' right to access to primary medicine.

Written materials that were distributed around the time of both inaugurations, January and February 1954, focused on admiration for Rivera's artistic legacy as well as assessing a brief visual analysis consisting of identification of the medical scenes on the central wall. Anticipation and rapid reaction for Rivera's latest mural in a way overshadowed the chance to carefully analyze the image separate from the artist. Most authors were hastily writing a response to the new mural, such as Antonio Rodriguez for *El Nacional*, "Rivera's Grand Mural," where he commented that his first response to the new mural was quickly drafted in order to make the morning press, but noted that one must view the piece for it "deserved detail analysis."[65] The earliest published response on the mural, one month before the first public viewing was an article published the third of January 1954 by journalist and art critic Raquel Tibol titled "Diego Rivera's Last Fresco." Tibol's article contained a summarized visual analysis of Rivera's final masterpiece, beginning with a chronological discussion of his works throughout Mexico City and ending with the Hospital de La Raza mural.

Tibol's article commented on the various Mesoamerican imagery found within the mural, such as the dual-faced masks, that represented a metaphorical universal concept

[65] Antonio Rodriguez, "Grandioso Mural de Diego Rivera en el Hospital de la Raza: Rivera, Gran Pintor de Temas Históricos; Temas de la Obra," *El Nacional* (Feb. 11, 1954), pp. 2a,4-4a.

existing in nature- the necessary duality of life and death. The mural was described as a poetic and polemic approach to social issues, such as healthcare, rather than a heavily political stance. Through the representation of national figures engaging in the services of social security, as well as social medicine on the right section, Tibol highlighted the poetic narrative of such a highly ambiguous social responsibility and its controversial implementations. Tibol proposed that the mural represented more of a "structure in the past and a warning in the present," which prompted a sense of responsibility placed upon the community to provide adequate healthcare.[66] Although Tibol's observation seems vague, it alluded to the mural's overall death and renewal narrative that could be considered structural or solid in the past, but susceptible to corruption in the present. The comment suggested that Rivera was poetic in the presentation of a "structure in the past," or the centralized institution within the city of Tenochtitlan and the native people of the region working together to provide social medicine. What Tibol means by a "warning in the present," relates to the depiction of the native majority up against the private sector at the uppermost center, discussed in detail below, of the left section.

The article, "Rivera's Last Fresco," ended with a comment by Rivera that was said around the time of the first inauguration of the mural, which could be interpreted as a verbal "warning in the present." In January 1954, Rivera expressed that, "In the midst of their urgent requirements, builders and developers are realizing that what they are

[66] Tibol, "El Ultimo Fresco de Diego Rivera," in *Novedades* (Mexico City), January 3rd 1954, pp. 3. "En sus últimos trabajos Diego Rivera polemiza, relata, significa, propone, impone y poetiza...Estructura en el pasado: advertencia en el presente. In his last works, Rivera is polemic, reports, signifies, proposes, imposes, and poeticizes ... structure in the past: Warning in the present."

providing is, a taste of their own medicine."[67] Rivera's comment touched upon the notion that despite the urgency and effort of the industrial working class to build and establish adequate hospitals, as well as maintain the current social security system through massive spending of money, their hard work is in the end used against them.[68] This idea could be deduced from the representation of the general public and labor unions, Mexican social security, and the private sector involved in the creation of IMSS at the top-center detail on the left section of the central wall (Figure 24).

At the second inauguration, in February 1954, Rivera continued to proclaim his critique on the notion of social security and how the government would attempt to provide access to primary healthcare to all Mexicans. In an address to the audience and a thesis to his overall work Rivera stated,

> "All the people of Mexico and the country's natural resources should be directed towards achieving the best possible welfare for the community, this I wanted to express in my painting. I wanted the Mexicans who enjoy the services of a

[67] Tibol, (1954), pp. 3. "En medio de su exigencia impostergable, los constructores y los elaboradores van comprendiendo que lo que se les brinda es- al decir de Diego Rivera- 'una sopa de su propio chocolate.' In the midst of their urgent demand, builders and developers are realizing that what they provide is, in the words of Rivera, 'a taste of their own medicine.'"

[68] According to Dina Comisarenco Mirkin, "Images of Childbirth in Modern Mexican Art," *Woman's Art Journal* 20, no. 1 (1999): pp 21. The phrase was translated and interpreted from Tibol's research as (footnote 25) "According to Raquel Tibol, Rivera did not believe that the social security system was giving enough benefits to Mexico's Indian population. He referred to the situation with the popular Mexican expression, "like soup of its own chocolate," and according to Tibol this is his main message in the Hospital de La Raza mural; July 1994 conversation." I feel that C. Mirkin translated it too literally, and in turn somewhat misinterpreted the phrase. The saying refers to mean 'a taste of your own medicine' which is more similar in English. I do not agree with her conclusive argument that Rivera was "pessimistic and anti-modernist" about his approach towards social security and or the Alemán administration.

> hospital, understand what they are enjoying: this is not a gift from anyone, but all that has been decanted, or filtered, over time from the ancient Aztec healers to the doctors of today. Mexico, like everyone, is a nation thirsty for security and the government satisfies a popular longing, or need, to provide it in an organized and institutional form."[69]

The significance of both Rivera's comments, in Tibol's article conducted in a private interview and the other at the February 1954 public reception, is that Rivera is creating a narrative that situated the concept of social welfare in both a modern-present and ancient setting for the viewer to actively engage with the idea of social security. The comment proves that Rivera is inventing modern traditions that stem from deep ancestral roots. Although his comment from the interview with Tibol differs from what was said at the second public reception, Rivera surfaced the notion that the demand for access to primary healthcare will remain constant while attempts by government and institutions to provide such services could spoil or work against the people and must continually change.

Rivera's commentary should not be viewed as a final analysis of the mural; rather, they provide justification for his vision of socialized medicine, which is not a "modern miracle" but a "gift that has been decanted over time." On the central wall, for example, Rivera's words are illustrated through the historical transition of specialties from native healers to national and foreign doctors. The urban community and medical specialists

[69] Instituto Mexicano del Seguro Social (IMSS). *Historia En Los Muros: Cinco muralistas y la seguridad social mexicana* (Instituto Mexicano del Seguro Social, 1977), pp. 47. "La Salud en Peligro de un Mexicano no esperas, ensayos o improvisaciones: Inauguración del servicio de Infectología del instituto del Mexicano del Seguro Social," *El Popular*, February 11, 1954, pp. 2.

illustrated on the top right and left sections exemplify a social realist attempt to depict significant modern traditions as a means to provoke the viewer to contemplate their position in the present. Rivera understood that throughout history the management of social welfare within a growing urban population has been a challenge to efficiently and effectively execute. Sustainable strategies to continue an institutionalized social healthcare system are quite often difficult to achieve and expensive to prolong. For instance, on the left and right sections, Rivera's depiction of sacrifice, the symbolic exchange of one precious resource for another, are presented to the viewer in order to convey the significance of social security services that provide primary medicine for all. Through a legible mapping of social medicine, under the modern gaze, the viewer receptively internalizes that the idea of social security as an exchange of services have existed throughout history. The mural represents in two striking instances the exchange of one energy source to another and the re-imagining of new socio-political and cultural conventions over time.

Exchanging Blood Sacrifice for Modernity, Industrialization, and the Clinical Gaze

Rivera's representation of a chronological progression of social security is conveyed through a narrative that seemed to have adhered to IMSS's contract, and produced what could be considered propaganda for the social security institution. In the end, through visual analysis and exploration of his own words, the mural fosters the re-conceptualization of the healthcare system implemented in nineteen fifties Mexico. Rivera depicted his own interpretations of modern and native medicine, where ancient

representations are described as invented traditions or pseudo-accurate scenes that instruct as well as re-imagine the past for the present audience. These created traditions then transform into visual outlines or maps of socialized medicine in both the past and present that must be considered part of the process of modernity itself. Throughout multiple generations, demonstrated from the right to left progression of time on the central wall, new embodiments of modernity are continuously in flux, heterogeneous, and dynamic. The mural's overall narrative incorporated the universal notion that throughout history society has witnessed the continual change and re-conceptualization of social constructs, or routine behaviors that govern one's day to day experience. The demand for social medicine and access to primary healthcare may have persisted and remained fixed, nonetheless, the implementation of governing institutions and the process to receive such services continues to be created and destroyed.

Scholar Marshall Berman explained, in *All That Is Solid Melts Into Air*, that to exist in the modern is to be "overpowered by the immense bureaucratic organizations that have the power to control and often destroy all communities, values, lives; and yet to be undeterred in one's determination to face these forces, to fight to change their world and make it our own."[70] Moreover, the uniting factors that constitute the experiences of modernity, including the invention of traditions, are in a "paradoxical unity, a unity of disunity," which could be argued are represented on the mural at the Hospital de La Raza. The depictions of allopathic versus naturopathic medicine on the central wall are

[70] Marshall Berman, "Preface and Introduction," in *All That Is Solid Melts Into Air: The Experience of Modernity* (Simon and Schuster: New York publishing, 1982), pp. 13, 15.

paradoxical methods of healing, which in a way connect both medical perspectives and languages as existing in the modern because of their perpetual disjunction. Berman discussed an understanding of modernity that puts into perspective Rivera's approach to the theme of social security and medicine. Through the lenses of modernity, and by incorporating the different philosophies that influenced his early artistic career, Rivera expressed an anxious yet optimistic representation of invented traditions within a new visual map for the modern nineteen fifties public to re-conceptualize their position within the system.

Although it is difficult to claim that Rivera preferred indigenous medical practices over the modern he unquestionably borrowed symbolic and mythological iconography of native ancient culture in order to situate the past within modern cultural concepts of the present. The pseudo-accurate native community presented on the right and the modern medical hospital on the left section is argued to be strongly influenced by the modern clinical institution. Rivera's interest in medicine can be traced back to 1920, where in France he attended and illustrated a surgical operation by Dr. Jean Louise Fauré in Paris.[71] Then in 1932-33, Rivera involved medical practices that were cutting-edge in the *Detroit Industry Mural*, north and south wall corner panels, concerning the development

[71] Luis H. Toledo Pereyra, "Diego Rivera and his extraordinary art of medicine and surgery," *Journal of Investigative Surgery* 20 (2007), pp. 139, 141. "The French art historian, Elie Fauré, brother of the surgeon and good friend of Rivera, facilitated the artist's attendance at the clinic, which offered a wonderful opportunity for the talent of the eager and ascendant Rivera."

of chemical and natural substances for pharmaceuticals and surgery (Figure 33).[72] In order to comprehend Rivera's perspective on modern versus ancient medicine, one must look upon the depiction of science with the institutional language that became an established gaze since the early nineteenth century into the twentieth century. The "clinical gaze," as described by philosopher and historian Michel Foucault, is a justifiable scientific method supported by years of clinical study and peer-reviewed analysis via the institutionalization of medicine that unconsciously dictated Rivera's representation of modern medicine.

In Foucault's, *The Birth of the Clinic*, the medical gaze of the modern industrial and institutionalized twentieth century is explained as a new medical language that established a vision that redefined the relationship between the doctor and patient, the signifier and signified. Foucault described the gaze as "not a medical gaze itself that has the power of analysis and synthesis, but the synthetic truth of language which is added from the outside, as a reward for the vigilant gaze of the student."[73] The "synthetic truth" of a clinical language that Foucault introduced is interpreted as the institutional cannons in medicine that have legitimized a hierarchical stratum of specialties. The modern clinical experience consisted of the "reorganization of the hospital field, a new definition

[72] For a detailed look at the Detroit Institute of Art mural see Linda Downs, *The Detroit Industry Murals* (1999). Note the titles of these medical and chemical practices- the north wall corner panels *Vaccination*, *Healthy Human Embryo*, *Manufacture of Poisonous Gas Bombs*, and *Cells Suffocated by Poisonous Gas Bombs*. Also, The south wall corner panels *Pharmaceutics*, *Surgery*, *Commercial Chemical Operations*, and *Crystals.*

[73] Michel Foucault, *The Birth of the Clinic: An Archeology of Medical Perception* (Vintage Books: Random House, New York, 1994), pp. 60.

of the status of the patient in society, and the establishment of a certain relationship between public assistance and medical experience, between help and knowledge." In turn, the patient would then have to "be enveloped in a collective, homogenous space."[74] It could be argued that the collective space that absorbed the patient, and the distant yet necessary relationship with the doctor, became a centralized environment in an attempt to sustain good health and systematically tackle or delay death.

Foucault concluded that the paradoxical clinical gaze and language could be considered superficial, yet simultaneously embedded with the revealing gesture of nature through the "legible basis of death."[75] One is reminded that throughout human life man is in perpetual struggle with illness, which could lead to death. However, only through death do the answers to conquering illness emerge and are examined. The symbolic three dual-faced masks flanked at the top corners of the left and right curved walls, and at the bottom center, trigger the viewer of this idea of a mask or tangible representation of death and life. The half-jaguar and half-human faced mask implies the power or ability of the ancient soothsayers to transform or co-exist with the dualities of nature (Figure 34).[76] The organic essence of life is accounted by death where renewal is fundamentally what

[74] Foucault, *The Birth of the Clinic* (1994), pp. 196.

[75] Foucault, pp. 145-46. "Was it not necessary that medicine should circumvent its oldest care in order to read, in what provided evidence of its failure, that which must found its truth?"

[76] Karl Taube, editorial conversation. Professor of Anthropology Karl Taube and I discussed the significance of the jaguar as a reference to Maya concepts of transformative power of the shamans or diviners. The Maya "Way" glyph or the Ajau emblem, of a ruler with a jaguar pelt, meaning co-essence or "nagual." In Central Mexico the symbolic jaguar was the embodiment of shamanism and was related to the god Tezcatlipoca- so it corresponds nicely with the bottom blue serpent with an obsidian eye. UC Riverside, Office Hours: April (Spring Quarter) 2012. See appendix I: Q.

makes things modern, and man continues to grasp or dictate what cannot be defined. Overall, the central Nahua goddess and the birthing of ancient medical knowledge provides a visual mapping of the reality of death and regeneration, meanwhile, the modern section complied with the clinical language of the modern era represent the developing future.

The clinical gaze that Foucault introduced best describes Rivera's preconceived comprehension of modern medicine, a language that by the nineteen fifties was an established authority, and a basis for the mural's thematic narrative. The idea that social security has been an intermediary entity that has existed for multiple generations, which attempted to provide an avenue for the prolonging of life and or to conquer illness within a socialized system, is artistically conveyed in the mural through an invented dialogue. Significant resources are shown interchanged between a centralized dominant figure, an institution on the left, a deity representative on the right sections, and the people of Mexico City as a whole continue to demand for another chance at delaying death. The notion of sacrificing precious resources, although is highly reminiscent of the Nahua concept of offering blood for the continuation of life, is transformed into a representation of security. The exchange of one's energy source, be it blood or any form of tribute, to achieve continual health among the community is an activity or demand that is depicted taking multiple forms throughout time. Rivera attempted to convey the notion of sacrifice not in a "humorous allegory," as described by art historian Jaime Villarreal, but as a serious thought provoking representation of an unknown ritual that is complex and

difficult to define. The inclusion of such a concept historically anchored the right section to the past. More importantly, Rivera's vision of sacrifice was not conceptual but a tangible notion that explained the constant exchanging of energy, time, and the essence of life for perpetual health.

Rivera was conscious about the "inconvenience of representing the ritual of human sacrifice without underplaying it." According to J. Villarreal, the artist needed to "approach the subject with a certain amount of humor in order to lighten or disarm it, or better still, expounded on the functional sense of sacrifice within a whole conception of the world."[77] For example, one of the murals at the National Palace, titled *The Great City of Tenochtitlan*, 1945, shows on the right side a native warrior holding a severed arm to a prostitute (Figure 35). Villarreal's interpretation of this detail was that the use of an arm implied a humorous undertone, referring to another name or common phrase used locally to identify a type of Mexican bread. The arm in the marketplace is a joke, "there is in Mexico a kind of cake made of corn, or tamal, called 'indian arm.' Rivera literally paints the name of this innocuous 'bread,' which the warrior is offering to the prostitute- whose job is to 'trade in the flesh'"[78] The notion of representing the "inconvenience" of human sacrifice as a means to disarm or make palatable the idea proposed by Villarreal also has

[77] Villarreal, "Rivera the Pictographic Writer," (1999), pp. 142-3. "With his characteristic sense of humor, the painter decided to play first with the idea of sacrifice and cannibalism."

[78] Villarreal (1999), pp. 142-3. "In the market scene, he placed a warrior showing an amputated arm to a prostitute surrounded by lustful customers. The disgusting image of this arm is out of place, since cannibalism amongst the Aztecs existed exclusively as a ritual; there was no such street trading of cut-off arms."

the effect of undermining the reality of blood sacrifice and its complex origins. Instead of viewing the fact as an inconvenient truth, so to speak, consider the inserted severed arm in the realm of a fruitful marketplace, which would have been stationed in the city of Tlatelolco, as an indicator of the sacred temple where human sacrifice was conducted at the Templo Mayor in the city of Tenochtitlan shown at the top. Furthermore, the depiction of a severed arm or bloody structures remind the viewer that the exchange of flesh and blood is a tangible significant aspect of history that did exist and that its symbolic reference still persists in our modern world. In the modern left section, at the bottom, an anonymous figure undergoes blood transfusion which essentially revitalizes the weakened body with blood (Figure 36). Contrast to the right section, blood on the left section is controlled demonstrated by a glass bottle holder which presses further the notion that under modern standards blood sacrifice is beneficial for healing. However, keep in mind that blood exchange could also lead to detrimental issues such as rejection, infection, and death.

Rivera engaged with the history of human sacrifice in Mexico, and specifically in Mexico City, not only to stir controversy but also to represent an interpretation of an ancient concept derived from early colonial accounts by Franciscan friars. Rivera would have had a limited interpretation of the concept, due to the fact that new interpretations of the ritual and its significance in Mesoamerica were not published until the nineteen eighties, but would have had an idea of the general content and context of the ancient

ritual.[79] In the La Raza mural Rivera visually articulated a metaphorical narrative that involved Mexico's past, present, and future generations developing new forms of exchange —whether it be blood or precious resources to wages equivalent to manual labor— for modernization, industrialization, and social welfare via access to primary healthcare. At the top center of the right section, adjacent to the bloody steps is an invented figure that directs the gaze toward the Templo Mayor associated with human sacrifice that could be identified as a soothsayer or deity intermediary entity. The invented figure, discussed below, is an implication to the idea that society has historically exchanged something that is considered valuable as an acceptable sacrifice for the security of the community through an intermediary authority. Today, similar sacrifices are made in order to create a sense of protection or security where the emphasis lies in the significance of the exchange.

It is important to note, Rivera did not always faithfully reproduce early colonial manuscript iconography despite his familiarity with original sources- this information would have been available to the public since 1939 due to the establishment of the Institute of Anthropology and History in Mexico. The standing figure portrayed at the top corner, right section, previously identified as the "goddess Ixcuina protector of children or infancy" does not have a direct affiliation with the original image in content

[79] Scholarship on human sacrifice of Mesoamerica did not enter an interdisciplinary approach, nor dive into critical examination of all Spanish accounts on human sacrifice, until the 1980s. Further research on this subject may be explored in Guilhem Olivier, Leonardo López Luján, and Instituto Nacional de Antropologia e Historia's, *El Sacrificio Humano en la Tradición Religiosa Mesoamericana* (Mexico: INAH, D.F, 2010).

or context. At the bottom-left section of page thirty of the Codex Borbonicus is a soothsayer or diviner that is dressed in a garment strongly associated with the god Tlaloc, an impersonator of the male god, not Tlazolteotl-Ixcuina (Figure 37). The original figure on the Borbonicus page has a multi-colored robe of red, blue, green, yellow, and white along with the peripheral view of Tlaloc's face at the base of the headdress. The blue colored serpent held by the priest who symbolically embodied the god, is a symbol specific to Tlaloc, which would essentially be a contradicting accessory for the goddess Tlazolteotl-Ixcuina.[80] It could be argued that Rivera chose the stylistic silhouette from the Codex Borbonicus, specifically the one on page thirty, in order to convey the act of proclamation or a figure in motion.

The colors of the deity representative's garment are reproduced in a similar fashion to Tlazolteotl-Ixcuina's crescent mooned skirt, focused on the colors white, black, red, blue, yellow and lime-green (Figure 38). The small blue Tlaloc icon that is depicted in the original image, identified as such due to a goggle-shaped eye and curved nose, at the base of the headdress is replaced by a flower in a bell-shape. As mentioned in an instructional film titled "Diego Rivera in the Hospital de La Raza," the deity Ixcuina or

[80] Karl Taube, editorial conversation. Professor of Anthropology Karl Taube and I discussed the Borbonicus page and the priest, covered in black rubber, who wears the multicolored rainbow garment of the god Tlaloc- Tlaloc's impersonator. The blue serpent symbol represents Tlaloc's lightning-bolt rod or staff but could also imply the phallus of the god. The figure is shown within the context of a performance ritual enacted for the Trecena festival calendar section of this divinatory almanac. UC Riverside, Office Hours: September (Fall Quarter) 2011. The figure, continually identified by scholars as Ixcuina, was reaffirmed by B. Brown, "Past Idealized," (1986), pp. 154, as a depiction of the figure shown on the Codex Borbonicus, page 30. See Eduard Seler's commentary on the Borbonicus pages, in *Commentarios al Codice Borgia* (1904), volume 1.

more notably a deity impersonator or representative, handles a broom as a means of metaphorically cleansing or to sweep away man's impurities or sins, meanwhile, at her feet sickly children offer the deity tribute.[81] This is the case mainly because the figure is drawn with an item strongly associated with Tlazolteotl-Ixcuina's ritual for purification- the broom. However, the serpent and the broom are contradicting symbols due to one being strongly associated with a separate deity altogether. Rivera consciously depicted both icons on the invented representative of the Nahua goddess Tlazolteotl-Ixcuina suggesting perhaps that the figure communicated with both male and female deities.

Nevertheless, the figure served to create the normalization of a representative for the indigenous urban community as either a soothsayer, a mediator between deities and man, or both. The original symbolic meaning of the deity impersonator is incorporated into a modern concept, that of an authoritative representative who is given the collective's 'trust' in order to ratify the people's demand for better health. Furthermore, the inclusion of eight figures with un-spun cotton spindles, broom, and yellow plumed "paper crowns" as an accessory most closely affiliated with Tlazolteotl-Ixcuina, not Toci, is strictly another invention by Rivera. Although the headdresses act as designative caps for medical practitioners or healers, these stylistic distinctions in 'specialties' are difficult to prove existed in ancient Nahua communities (Figure 39).[82] The headdresses signify a

[81] Babbitt Instructional Resources, "Diego Rivera en el Hospital de La Raza," ed. Harry E. Babbitt, Eloy Williams, and Dr. Jorge Regalado (Orlando: University of Florida Library, 1997), VHS: 11 minutes.

[82] B. Brown, "Past Idealized," in *Rivera: A Retrospective* (1986), pp. 154. "Eight of the figures in this section wear the 'paper crown with protruding spindles, cotton flowers, and quetzal feathers' found in Sahagún's depiction of Toci (Codex Florentino, B1, Illustration 8)." Brown did not realize that the 'paper crowns' look

hygienic connotation mainly because they include symbols, such as the broom, that represent cleanliness. Furthermore, these decorative headdresses further imply the notion of an institutionalized or centrally ordered organization of healers within a major metropolitan area.

The significance of these invented narratives is not necessarily that Rivera is dishonest or unknowingly inaccurate about ancient medicine and iconography. The inclusion of these eight figures, below the deity representative who in a way distributes the sick to specific healers for their ailments, seem more like modern conventions based off interpretations of ancient practices. For example, focusing on the uppermost section of the central wall, where a cluster of people await for medical assistance on both left and right sections, a pregnant woman dressed in red who wears a turquoise ear spool is later drawn at the bottom giving birth, recognized through her accessories (Figure 28). On the left, a woman in a yellow dress- discussed in detail below- also awaits maternity services. Therefore, a short story within a grander narrative unfolds in front of the viewer as a means to engage with the characters involved in the image. Access to the mural from within the hospital building is a vital element that allows the viewer to witness a legible mapping of one's position within the modern healthcare system.

Recall that the intended viewers of the mural are everyday people who enter the central lobby in the Hospital de La Raza building for registration and assistance, although

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exactly like Tlazolteotl's crown shown on the following page of the Florentine Codex, B1, Illustration 12. See appendix I: c, d, e, g, h, i, j, k, m, q.

now in the twenty-first century, the lobby has become a closed space within the hospital building the mural is still quite visible from all entryways. The mural stands indoors, not outdoors in contrast to other murals found within the city. Nonetheless, one must argue that gazing at the mural continues to be considered a thought provoking and stimulating experience. The captivating visual narrative activates thought production by questioning or accepting the familiarization of oneself with the institutionalized healthcare system. Ultimately, the mural is for the urban community that was developing in Mexico City, which by the nineteen fifties surpassed three million people.[83] The populace that comprised the collective, migrant workers or farmers, the urban family, individuals, professionals, and even foreign interests are the focus of the entire thematic narrative.

The Family Unit and The Collective

The mural overall highlights the significance of the collective, the urban community represented by all who live in Mexico. As discussed earlier, Rivera's commentary to the public proposed a both an acknowledgement and critique on the idea of a social security system as a centralized institution. Both the left and right sections of the central wall display the raw power that the past, present, and future generations of Mexico's populace possesses which in a significant way dictates the course of modernity. Through a historical visual narrative Rivera expressed to the viewer the notion that as a collective force the people are the most significant element of the entire socialized healthcare system. Therefore, the general public must be aware of the modern

[83] Alejandro Gaytán Cervantes, "El IMSS y su arquitectura," in *Arte y Arquitectura del Instituto Mexicano Del Seguro Social* (IMSS, 2006), pp. 98-99.

bureaucracy and intend to participate in it. The focus on the depiction of children as part of the struggle for better health stimulates the notion that for the youth something has to be done in the present to secure their future. The portrayal of children suggests that time will pass and that someday the new generation will have the choice to physically manifest what is implemented in the present.

It is interesting to note that the depiction of children at the forefront of the diverse group of people could be interpreted as a representation of the volatile relationship humans have with illness. The top corner of the right section, for example, displays a group of people in need of medical attention and are drawn without detail behind a dental procedure. At the forefront of the group, are three children who offer precious commodities to the deity representative are shown sickly and in desperate need of healthcare. The young girl to the left offering the quetzal feather, obsidian or rubber ball, and cacao beans is drawn incredibly slim, with one leg thinner than the other. The two boys to her right are in poor shape, one pot-bellied and the other on crutches, both seem to be suffering from starvation (Figure 38). The sickly children on the right section could be considered to be a subtle emphasis on the difficulties in the past on tackling illness and malnutrition. In a way, Rivera suggests that despite the presence of medical knowledge in the past disease and famine continued to affect the youth. Although difficult to prove, these details reflect Rivera's sense of optimism for the technological and scientific future where modern children are not suffering in such extremes or from something as basic as undernourishment. On the left section, the post-World War II children of the "baby-

boomer" generation await assistance from the Hospital de La Raza staff and are at the forefront of a new bureaucratic healthcare system. Rivera portrayed the modern youth in the process of entering a potential period of peace and health, signaled by the model Violeta Bonilla holding the dove and heart-shaped fruit from the tree of "Health."

On the modern left section, top left-hand corner, the representation of the collective force that laid the foundation for the creation of the Mexican Social Security, IMSS, is portrayed. The group of people who make up the diverse urban community of Mexico City are shown gathering toward action, demanding access to primary healthcare. The populace could be considered a combination of industrial laborers, rural farmers migrating to the center, and labor union representatives. Directly to the groups' right the declaration of the Law of Social Security represented by the book held by IMSS Director at the time Antonio Diaz Lombardo, 1946-52, connects all who contributed to the formation of the law (Figure 40). To Diaz Lombardo's right a group of four anonymous foreign individuals of an aristocratic class, and a fifth unknown character with only a single green eye visible, stand opposite the crowd of Mexican laborers. The two male characters that are charged with stereotypical features stand close together, perhaps to signal a business and or banking partnership. From left to right, one notices a dark-brown toned man looking angrily at the opposing public drawn with Mediterranean or Semitic characteristics, such as his small glasses in comparison to his large nose. To his right is an individual drawn as a robust Caucasian male, perhaps of a Protestant or Christian background, stern faced as he firmly takes hold of his cash investment. It could

be argued that these male figures are associated with the negotiations or business deals between the United States, Europe, and Mexico for the construction of hospitals and the purchasing of new state of the art medical equipment. At their side are two anonymous women, presented with European facial features where the woman on the left has green eyes and light colored hair, wearing jewelry and fine clothing. Both women fan out a few playing cards as they hold their feminine wallets above a pile of currency, multicolored Mexican pesos and green U.S. dollars.

The portrayal of the wealthy bourgeoisie playing cards over their contributions to the institution's funds —which is only a minor portion of their money compared to the industrial workers— suggests that the private group did not necessarily gamble on their investments, rather, they were the unseen group that held all the cards. Meaning, the private sector that contributed only a preferable amount to the overall cause in the end profited or turned around their investment. Interestingly, this scene suggests that the administration or IMSS is responsible for the distribution of that capital which in the end is given to the wealthy private interests despite the peoples' efforts. Focusing on the group of laborers and general public, Rivera illustrated a woman in a red shirt —a symbolic color for Communism and support for revolutionaries— in the action of submitting a specific denomination of cash to the IMSS department (Figure 40). The amount of four hundred million Mexican pesos is written on the slip, inflation adjusted that amount in today's market would equal to about two billion U.S. dollars, which could indicate what the public sector was taxed for the establishment of IMSS services or how

much in total was spent to continue social security since its inception. Rivera clearly demonstrated an immediate tension that exists between the uppermost levels of society and the rest of the populace who makes up the majority.

The critique lies in the portrayal of the public versus the private interests that make up the social security system, and how the institution stands as the intermediary figure amongst the group while underhandedly takes more money away from the people than from private business. The depiction of Dr. Neftalí Rodriguez with an apologetic gesture, shown next to the public and Dr. Diaz Lombardo, signals to the viewer Rivera's criticism with regards to his comment "a taste of their own medicine." Within the scene Rivera conveyed an exchange with the public, institutional, and private sectors that were foundational to the creation of social security- but only the unseen forces held more of a bargain. The public sector is only given the option to interact with IMSS, an intermediary institutional entity represented by Dr. Neftalí Rodriguez and Dr. Diaz Lombardo, to manage their demands and not have direct contact with the other half that is involved within the bureaucratic system. The entire scene is a visual reminder that there are several interests at stake when it comes to funding such an expensive and demanding healthcare system. The exchange of such a valuable resource, one's capital, for socialized medicine is not something one should bargain with or take advantage of. Therefore, the inclusion of such details on the left section proves to remind the viewer of their needed efforts to maintain equilibrium and become aware of their current circumstances within the urban community.

The socio-political awareness of the artist is reflected in the scene of the collective and the family unit at ends with the intermediary institution and wealthy private interests. The group most at risk in the scenario is the public and the industrial worker who sacrifices his or her time and labor for promises of prosperity and wellness. Shown explicitly on the central wall, Mexico's diverse population has historically awaited, at times tirelessly, for a response from the institution or an authoritative figure regarding their contributions and demands for healthcare. For example, on the left section of the central wall at the top Rivera presented the sick, elderly, and injured entering the Hospital de La Raza's emergency room and with proper documentation in hand they wait in a dense line to register. At the beginning of the line an anonymous industrial worker dressed in a coral-red shirt, blue overalls, and bandaged arm requests further registration of his family. This particular scene, the portrayal of a native 'industrial family,' could essentially be interpreted as the most compelling piece of commentary about the concept of an institutionalized healthcare system and the peoples' role as participant and conductor of the entire process.

Focusing on the upmost area of the left section, below the figures that represent IMSS and private business interests, Rivera displayed a family unit participating in the social security system. The 'industrial family' consists of the father as the laborer, the pregnant wife and mother in the yellow dress, and their two children- a young girl who suffers from polio and a boy dressed in blue overalls holding a toy rifle (Figure 40). Interestingly, the depiction of children on the central wall expressed Rivera's connection

or loyalty to the dynamic essence of modernization through familiar symbols relating to peace, health, and revolt. The inclusion of the daughter dressed in a rose colored dress struggling with polio references two important realities that occurred in Rivera's life. One, the little girl reminds the viewer of the tragic polio epidemic of the nineteen fifties in the United States and Mexico that lead to the creation of the vaccine and its widespread use by 1954. Secondly, her left leg is thinner than her right which subtly connects the scene with Rivera's wife, Frida Kahlo, who suffered all her life with the disease. Kahlo was diagnosed with polio at age six, and her right leg was thinner than her left.

Coincidently, the young girl's brother also incorporates a seemingly cautious gesture for the boy is drawn facing away from the viewer dressed in the familiar blue overalls that his father wears, as well as what Rivera wore as he worked. Although it is not certain, the boy aims the toy gun near the dove of peace but definitely waves the barrel of the gun upwards toward the direction of the dove of peace and the IMSS directors. The gun in the boy's hand is one of the few objects within the scene that is not confined to the designated red colored border. Also note that the branch from the tree of "Health" that extends toward the children is the only instance of an emerging tree leaf or sprout, a visual cue that guides the eye toward that detail. The little boy with a toy rifle evokes the spirit of the Mexican Revolution, with the gun and blue overalls as his symbols of revolt, who warns the viewer that one must not allow a centralized authority take advantage of the people.

Immediately to the right of the 'industrial family' Violeta Bonilla holds a heart-shaped fruit from the tree of "Health" in her left hand and a dove with an olive branch in her right hand. In the dark background, contrast to Violeta's healthy heart from the tree of "Health," the second X-ray photo shows an enlarged or stressed heart. Interestingly, Violeta Bonilla is the only female figure standing as an external force not interacting with the other figures in the scene, perhaps as a symbolic presence that signaled optimism for peace and prosperity. With a healthy heart in hand Violeta indicates to the viewer that amidst the current social security system there exist constant changes, tensions, and resolutions that are reachable. Most importantly, those responsible for the development of such experiences are the people and the youth who are absorbing the process of a systemized healthcare through interaction with their parents.

The red shirt and symbols of peace and prosperity are drawn on Violeta Bonilla as visual triggers that demonstrate Rivera's optimistic view for socialized medicine and how throughout history developments in science and technology benefit rather than hinder the healing process. Although that is not necessarily always the case, illness and death as Foucault explained will continue to mark the truth about our bodies and our symbiotic connection with the microscopic organisms that share our world. Therefore, the entire mural encapsulated the concept of death and renewal as a cosmic reminder that one is bound to this earth and will continue to struggle against disease despite the passing of time. The brother and sister duo represent the presence of the culture and traditions of the present and past rooted in their parents ancestry that will someday manifest into new

traditions due to their own participation in modernity. However, within the grander narrative the scene signaled a revolutionary undertone that encouraged people to not follow blindly, but to actively engage with the bureaucratic system implemented. Rivera's depiction of the industrial family are the embodiment of the struggle for equilibrium between the public, private, and institutional forces that demand for social healthcare as well as participate in the modern system.

The mural in the Hospital de La Raza is a testament of a nation's choice to continue their path toward modernization and industrialization which included the implementation of an authoritative institution like social security. The concept of socialized medicine is not considered a negative course of action, rather, the mural as well as the artist conveyed a message that critiqued how the people and the institution are willing to work together to produce a sound sustainable healthcare system. Art historian Beatriz Sanchez Zurita, in an essay titled "Medicine in the Arts," proposed that the mural confirms Rivera's "historical, social, and humanistic concerns showing, in turn, that medicine has changed with advances in science and technological research that has enabled life to expand."[84] Rivera portrayed modern and indigenous medicine as the foundational knowledge necessary to conduct treatments, the equipment created are there to serve those studies as a means to tackle illness efficiently and effectively. The mural's central and side extended walls are visual maps that legibly demonstrate the physical and

[84] Beatriz Sánchez Zurita, "La medicina en el arte," in *IMSS 40 year celebration of the Hospital de La Raza* (Instituto de Seguro Social, Mexico D.F., 1994), pp. 61-62. "The pursuit of health through science: the man at the service of man. Technology, science, and culture of the modern health is understood and applied."

psychological anxiety of the upcoming modern generation. Both children of the past and present interacting and becoming part of the established social security system embody the fact that throughout history the demand for primary healthcare will perpetually be a challenge faced by all. It is the responsibility of a united public to become aware of the centralized entities elected, or selected, that deserve constant monitoring and input from the community. The invented figures, such as the deity representative on the right section, are visual markers that reaffirm the existence of an intermediary entity; therefore, one must also collectively balance that notion with an informed participative populace.

Diego Rivera's artistic vision cannot be defined to a specific genre or type, in turn, scholars must not dismiss or gloss over Rivera's final murals before his death in 1957 as works that are not as provocative or aesthetically enticing to examine.[85] Art historian Dina Comisarenco-Mirkin and others have discussed a particular aspect about Rivera's final mural in relation to other artists, such as Rufino Tamayo, and Modern Expressionist or "Internationalist" styles. These new artists that were popularized in the early fifties challenged new expressions in art instead of the "old ideals of the early twentieth century."[86] It was Rivera's socio-political "credo that could not have been sympathetic,

[85] Pete Hamill, *Diego Rivera: A Biography* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1999). According to Hamill, Rivera's final years "were a mess. Diego did more murals and they were all terrible. Perhaps their quality had something to do with other distractions." pp. 199.

[86] According to art historian Dina C. Mirkin, "The internationalizing political and economic trends during the Miguel Aleman administration brought with them the international modernist style in art. Rivera, in appropriating the archeologically accurate figure of Tlazolteotl in the Hospital de La Raza's mural rejects this trend. I suggest that Rivera's faithful copy of Tlazolteotl is not only another incident of the indigenist versus internationalist battle in Mexican art but Rivera's personal response to Rufino Tamayo's imagery in his government-commissioned Palace of Fine Arts mural, *Birth of Our Nationality*." See "Images of Childbirth in Modern Mexican Art," *Woman's Art Journal* 20, no. 1 (1999), pp. 21.

ideologically or artistically, to the new international modernizing trend" that developed after World War II, such as Abstract Expressionism.[87] Rivera continued to participate in modernity through the visual articulation of a social security system that is historically rooted to the urban community of Mexico City and focuses on the collective. Artists of the nineteen fifties, especially in the United States, emphasized not only the individual and the artist as the central conductor of art production but also the viewer's raw emotional response to the artwork.

The 'internationalist modernism' that emerged marked an opposition to the concept of Indigenismo in modern art and began to reinterpret Mexican values as well as culture as a means to create new expressions for the modern populace to engage with. In Tamayo's, *Birth of Our Nationality*, 1952, the abstract shapes, dark-toned colors, and shades metaphorically represented a new expression of nationality (Figure 41). Tamayo's mural at the Palace of Fine Arts in Mexico City demonstrated a new trend in art that was more conceptual, which diverted from Rivera's thematic social realist tendencies. However, to conclude that Rivera upheld specific ideologies like Indigenismo, anti-capitalism, or even Communism to a certain extent is to label the artist as strictly one aspect over another. At this point in his artistic career it is difficult to conclude that Rivera was to visually create artworks that merely follow trends. It could be argued that Rivera as an individual and artist did not follow any specific dogma which would have also been the case regarding his stance on artistic styles.

[87] Catlin, "Mural Census: Hospital de La Raza," in *Diego Rivera: A Retrospective* (1986), pp. 323.

The focus of Rivera's artwork was a means to continue his loyal message of the "old ideals of the Mexican Revolution," as if to preserve the essence of revolt, for the social equality and participative action by the people- for the people.[88] There are signals present that remind the viewer of the ideals and traditions of the revolutionary period as well as the uncertainties of the ancient past. Nonetheless, these transcendent symbols are not strictly political gestures but a combination of various philosophical and creative approaches to modernism. It could be argued that as a whole the mural combined mythos and science as a metaphorical language that familiarized the viewer with the concept of socialized medicine. The invented narratives and symbols depicted by the artist are what art historian David Shapiro described as the idea becoming transformative, where an objective reality demonstrated by symbols and imagery create "transcendent meaning."[89] In turn, the viewer will look upon the mural and reinterpret how the past and present are conducting socialized medicine, but not without Rivera's own critique about the issue in question. The urban community of Mexico City in the early nineteen fifties was at the threshold of the institutional revolution where the modern state established IMSS as an authoritative entity and despite the institution's autonomy from the government their interest in social security became quite intimate.[90]

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[88] Catlin, pp. 323.

[89] Shapiro, "Social Realism Reconsidered," in *Social Realism: Art as a Weapon* (1973), pp. 14-15.

[90] The notion of the "institutional revolution," was mentioned in Howard F. Cline's, *Mexico Revolution to Evolution, 1940-1960*: Chapter 3 (1962). pp. 24-25. According to Cline, "The history of modern Mexico can be subdivided into several phases...the year 1940 ushered in the Institutional Revolution, which had crystallized by 1946, the year in which President Miguel Alemán was inaugurated."

Conclusion

By the early nineteen fifties Rivera was undergoing challenges in health, politics, and his relationship with Kahlo- who in August 1953 amputated her leg due to infection then died shortly after in July 1954. Death also was at Rivera's doorstep which in a way prompted the artist to produce a mural that would represent the struggle of both himself and the people of Mexico demanding access to healthcare. Scenes of childbirth, sacrifice and the industrial family —including the inclusion of Mexico's youth—exemplify Rivera's coming to terms with not only his own illness, but the realization that his daughters and grandchildren are the continuation of his artistic and social activist legacy.[91] Through the depiction of his daughters, Guadalupe and Ruth Rivera on the right section, Rivera acknowledged the biological cycle of death and renewal. Rivera's socio-political awareness of Marxism and Leninism has been caressed into the mural's narrative through the representation of a collective power or the informed citizen participating in the social medical services.[92] In his last painting, *The Watermelons*, 1957, Rivera illustrated with a paralyzed right arm ten watermelons on a table removed of seeds and split open (Figure 42). The solar matt on the floor reflects the sunlight from the many windows present inside his studio in San Angel, a district of Mexico City. The

[91] Rivera, *My Art My Life*, ed. Gladys March (1991), pp. 181. "One of my greatest excitements now is seeing my newest grandson, Ruth's baby. Ruth calls him Zopito, meaning 'little frog,' because he is fat like me, whom she calls Zoporana, 'big frog.'"

[92] Hurlburt, "Rivera: A Chronology of His Art, Life and Times," in *Rivera: A Retrospective* (1986), pp. 111. By September 1954, Rivera was readmitted to the Mexican Communist Party, therefore, his affiliation with a specific political group was not until much after the completion of the mural but was definitely in mind prior to- there were several attempts to re-enter but were denied.

metaphorical fruits of Rivera's loins are connected to the bounty of Mexico's natural environment, represented by the ten watermelons on the table, are consumed at a slow pace and not entirely finished. In 1957, after being diagnosed with cancer —specifically what type of cancer is not mentioned— Rivera passed on November 24th from heart failure.[93]

Considering access to primary healthcare was in perpetual demand, according to Rivera's mural, there have existed in history intermediary entities like IMSS that responded to the issue. The depiction of an interactive populace, shown exclaiming to their deity representative on the right section, is a duty that the public themselves or the individual within the grander community must analyze and physically manifest through action. The power of the "collective consciousness" as an idea that transcends time embodies what Rivera attempted to represent as an overall message in his public murals, especially in the mural *History of Medicine in Mexico: The People's Demand for Better Health*. The diversified populace that existed and continues to participate in the industrial urban center of Mexico City act as the conductors of invented traditions participants of a fragmented and continually renewed modernity that is developing before their eyes. As explained by Terry Smith,

> "Rivera's artworks are exceptional in what the imagery demands of the spectator that the viewer is to be the inseminator, the life giver of the image. If we take all

[93] Hurlburt, "Rivera: A Chronology of His Art, Life and Times," in *Rivera: A Retrospective* (1986), pp. 114. Rivera suffered a blood clot that paralyzed his right arm in October 1957.

> the murals together, the message becomes: along with the work of the earth itself, of chemical fusion, of science and technical invention, of the new forms of organized work, of the sweat of working men and women, the meaning being created as we read these murals in a contribution to the creation of a new society. This is awesome in its optimism."[94]

Although Smith is discussing Rivera's *Detroit Industry Mural* from 1932-33, we can deduce similar connotations regarding the overall message conveyed in the Hospital de La Raza mural. The "science and technological invention that forms an organized work force" is demonstrated once again on the mural *History of Medicine in Mexico* signified by the dynamic force of the socialized medical system which included a variety of medical specialties capable of battling illness or injury. The urban communities of Mexico City are vital instruments that normalize the bureaucratic system because of their repetitious action within the social security network. As indicated by the mural, specialists of medicine are derived from the community and on a grander scale the centralization of socialized medicine is available to make primary healthcare conveniently accessible. To completely get rid of the already established process would dismantle the community rather than connect it. Therefore, in order to find a balanced relationship with modernity, science, technology, and the past one must encounter and exchange ideas through positive objectives and communal involvement in the present moment.

[94] Terry Smith, "The Resistant Other: Diego Rivera in Detroit," in *Making the Modern* (Chicago University Press, 1993), pp. 228.

Rivera's murals in Mexico City and elsewhere are visual articulations of a modern philosophy that was both critical and optimistic of the advancements in technology and medical knowledge. Rivera's statement regarding the mural, at the second inauguration of the unveiling of the image at the Hospital de La Raza, gives substance to his final image but does not fully conceptualize the message it conveyed. His commentary instead should be viewed as the other crucial part of the puzzle that aimed to make the concept of modernity tangible, identifiable, and relevant to the present and future communities of Mexico City. As mentioned by Rivera, the services provided by the institution are not "gifts from a single individual but all that has been decanted over time, from the ancient Aztec healers to the doctors of today." Meaning, the people of Mexico over time demand an opportunity to have access to primary healthcare with equal contribution in the development of such an impacting social responsibility.

Exploration of Rivera's artistic legacy in Mexico and internationally continues to influence and impact both present and upcoming generations. Although highly regarded as a Leftist, or generally understood as an artist whose themes and narratives involved Socialist, Marxist-Leninist and Communist philosophies, Rivera toward the end of his life was not as politically passionate but continued to produce works that embodied modernity. The red colors of Communism to a certain extent are not as prominently displayed as absolute certainty, but as subtle indicators of the potential resistance from the majority. As expressed by poet and art historian Octavio Paz in *Essays on Mexican Art*, Rivera was modern and produced modern art,

> "The art of modernity has been, simultaneously, critical creation and creative criticism, an art that has made of criticism a creation and of creation a critical, subversive power. Modern art, precisely because it is not public art, has devoted itself to the criticism of heaven above and the earth below. This criticism has been creative, for it has invented worlds of living images, forms, and creatures."[95]

What Octavio Paz explained is essentially the roots of Rivera's artistic legacy. The representation of socialized medicine in *The History of Medicine in Mexico: The People's Demand for Better Health* mural embodies a perpetual re-conceptualization of one's position amongst the modern.

[95] Octavio Paz, *Essays on Mexican Art* (1987), pp. 148-49.

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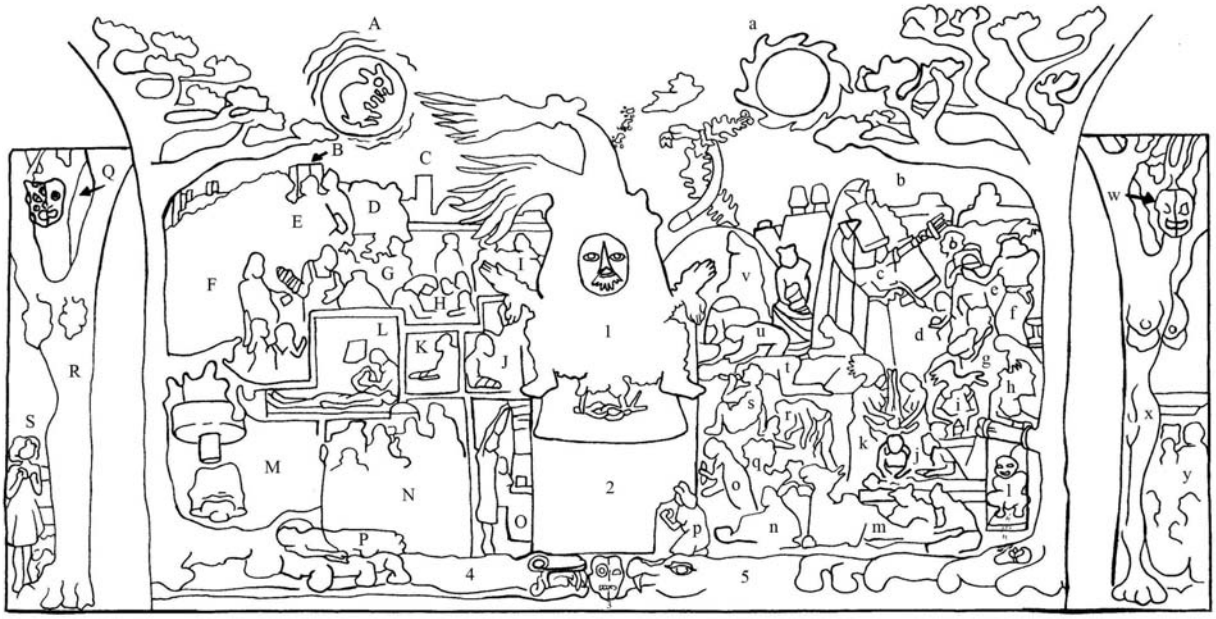

Figure 1. Gabriela Rodriguez-Gomez. *Modified diagram of the mural History of Medicine in Mexico: The People's Demand for Better Health*. Black ink on paper. 1953. Centro Médico Nacional de La Raza, Mexico City, Mexico.

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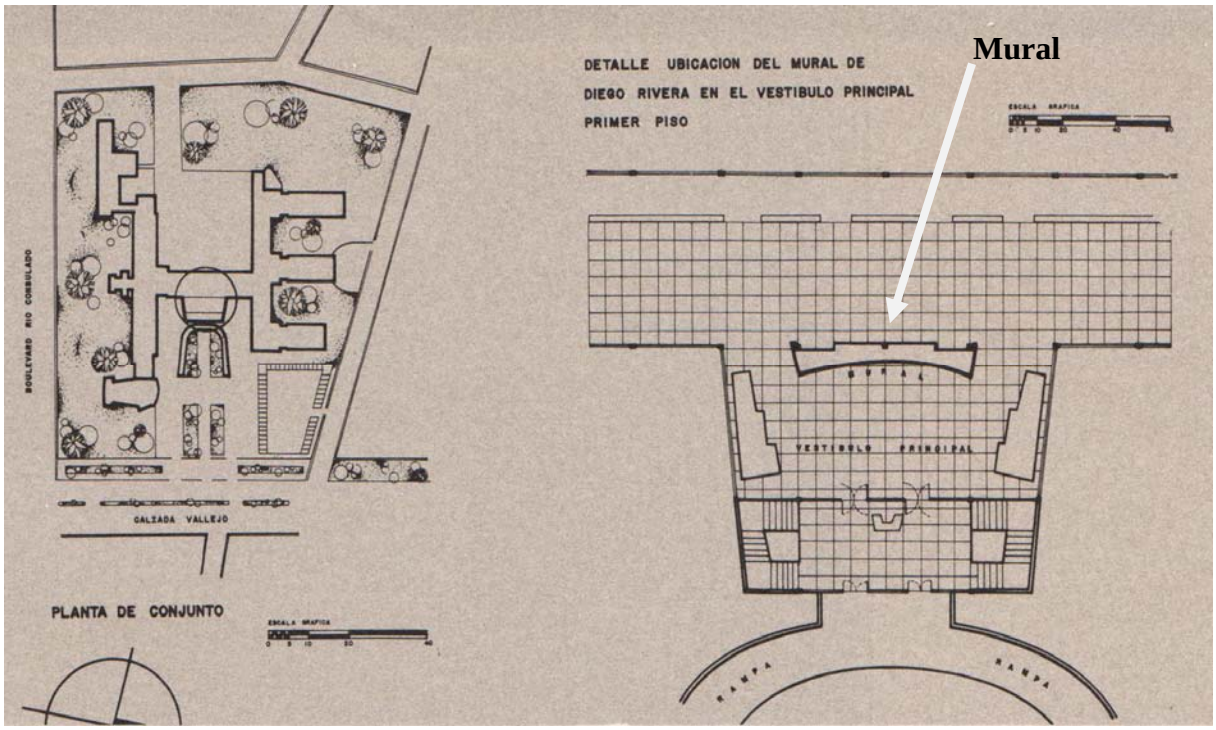


Figure 2. Enrique Yáñez de la Fuente and Instituto Mexicano del Seguro Social. *Centro Médico Nacional de La Raza: layout of main lobby (first floor)*. 1953. Centro Médico Nacional de La Raza, Mexico City, Mexico.

Figure 3. Top photograph: Anonymous. *Diego Rivera and mosaic artist Graciela Ramirez*. Silver gelatin print. 1953. Bottom photograph: Anonymous. *Diego Rivera and only four of his artist assistants*- not in identifiable order- Osvaldo Barra, Marco Antonio Borregui, Melquíades Ejido, Manuel Martínez, Teresa Ordiales, Nicolette Huguette, Ramon Sanchez, Enrique Valderrama. Silver gelatin print. 1953. Instituto de Bellas Artes (INBA) Collection, Mexico City, Mexico.

Figure 4. Diego Rivera. *History of Medicine in Mexico: The People's Demand for Better Health*. Fresco, mosaic, and multimedia. 1953. Centro Médico Nacional de La Raza, Mexico City, Mexico. Photographed by author.

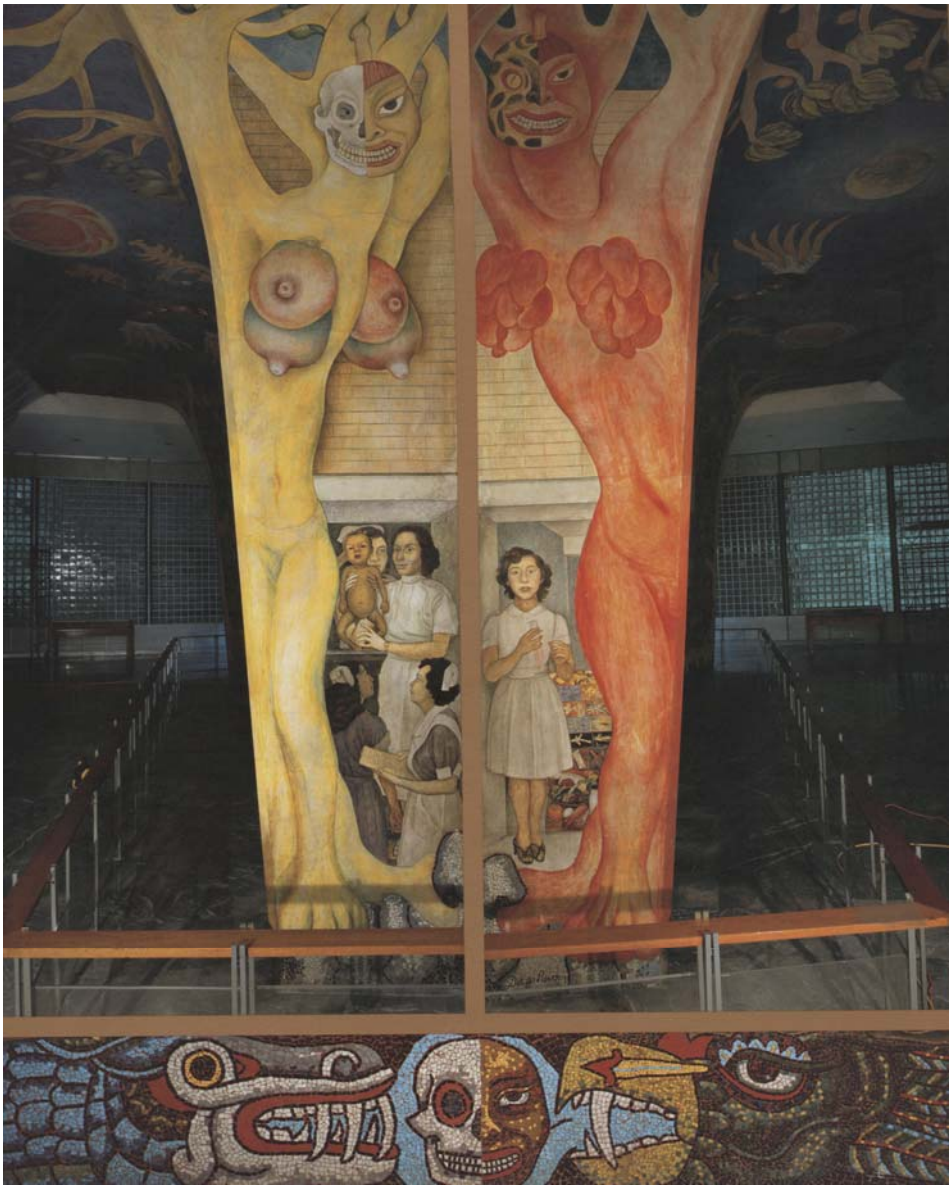


Figure 5. Diego Rivera. *History of Medicine in Mexico: The People's Demand for Better Health*, detail of left and right side walls. Fresco, mosaic, and multimedia. 1953. Centro Médico Nacional de La Raza, Mexico City, Mexico.

Figure 6. Diego Rivera. *Creation*. Fresco, encaustic and gold leaf. 1922-23. Amphitheater Bolívar. National Preparatory School of Mexico City.

Figure 7. Diego Rivera. *Zapatista Landscape*. Oil on canvas. 1915. The National Museum of Mexico, Mexico City.

Figure 8. Diego Rivera. *Mathematician*. Oil on canvas. 1918. The Dolores Olmedo Collection, Museo Dolores Olmedo, Mexico City.

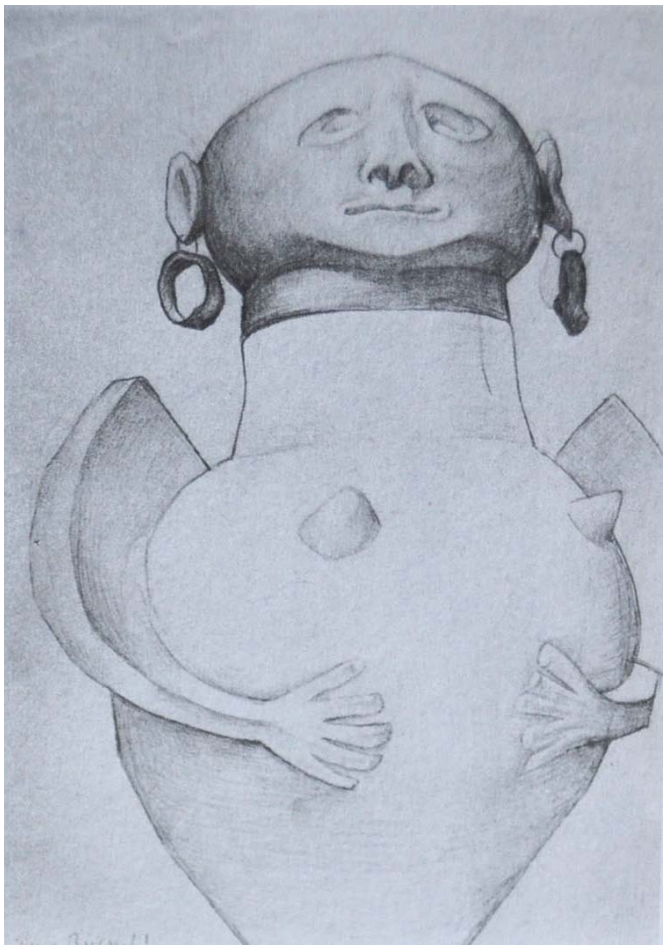


Figure 9. Diego Rivera. Study of an *Etruscan Vase.* Pencil and paper. 1921. Purchased by the Philidelphia Museum of Art, Lola Downin Peck Fund from the estate of Carl Zigrosser.

Figure 10. Diego Rivera. *History of Medicine in Mexico: The People's Demand for Better Health*, detail of right section (top-center) and bottom corner. Fresco, mosaic, and multimedia. 1953. Centro Médico Nacional de La Raza, Mexico City, Mexico. Photographed by author.

Figure 11. Diego Rivera. *History of Medicine in Mexico: People's Demand for Better Health*, detail of right and left sections (top center). Fresco, mosaic, and multimedia. 1953. Centro Médico Nacional de La Raza, Mexico City, Mexico. Photographed by author.

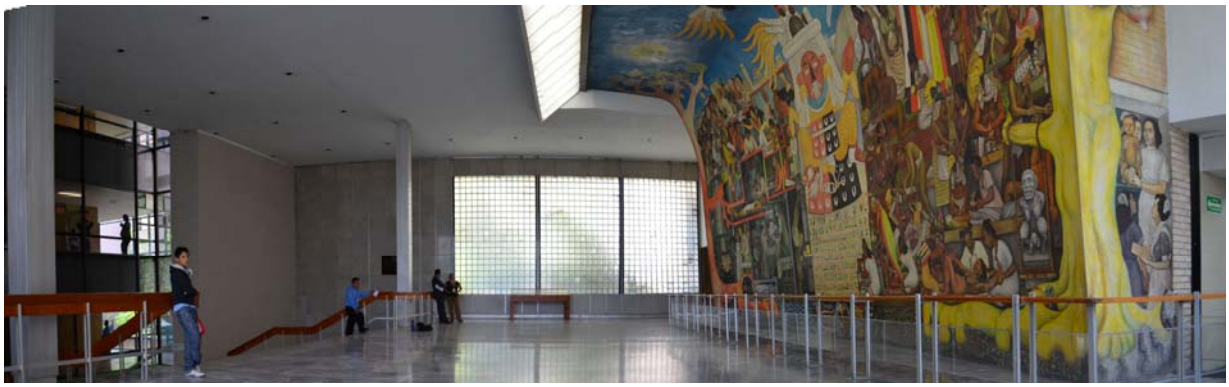


Figure 12. Gabriela Rodriguez-Gomez. *Panorama of mural: Hospital de La Raza main lobby*. Digital Photograph. 2011.

Figure 13. Diego Rivera. *History of Medicine in Mexico: The People's Demand for Better Health*, detail of central wall Nahua goddess Tlazolteotl-Ixcuina. Fresco, mosaic, and multimedia. 1953. Centro Médico Nacional de La Raza, Mexico City, Mexico. Photographed by author.

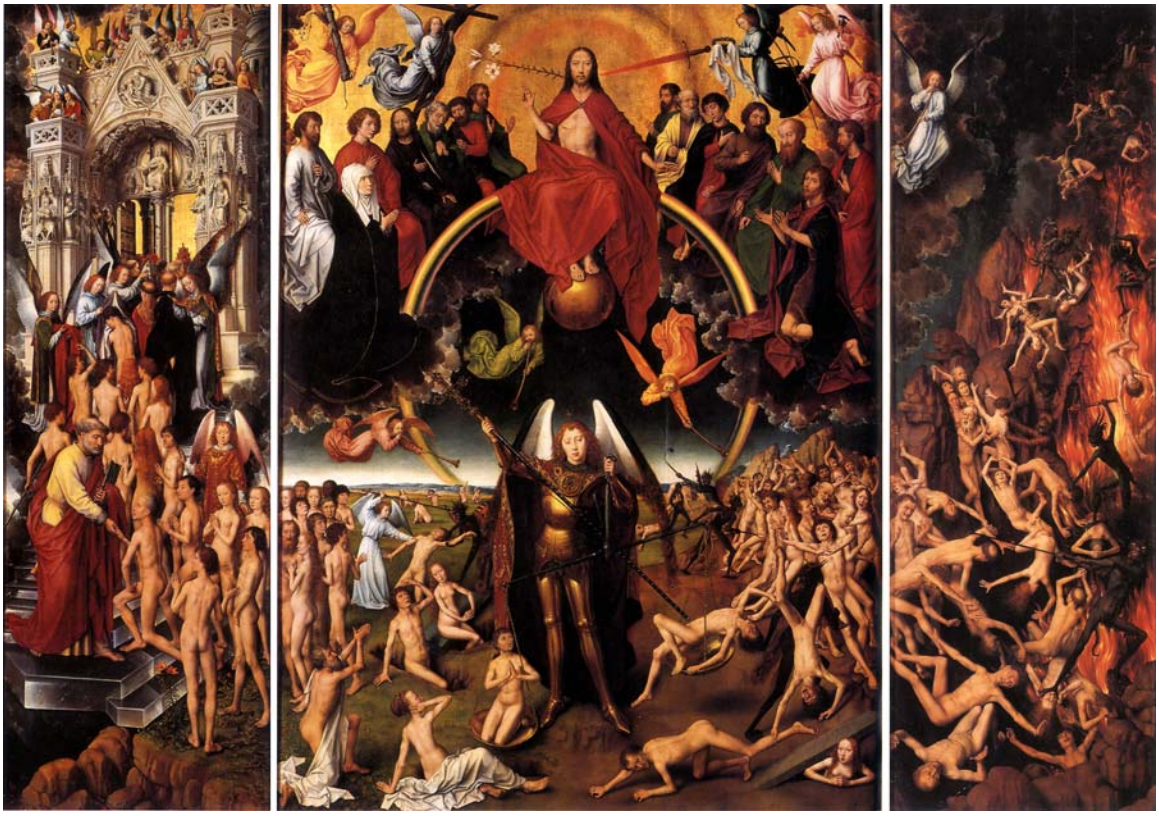


Figure 14. Hans Memling. *Last Judgment*. Triptych, oil on wood. 1466-73. National Museum of Art, Gdańsk, Poland.

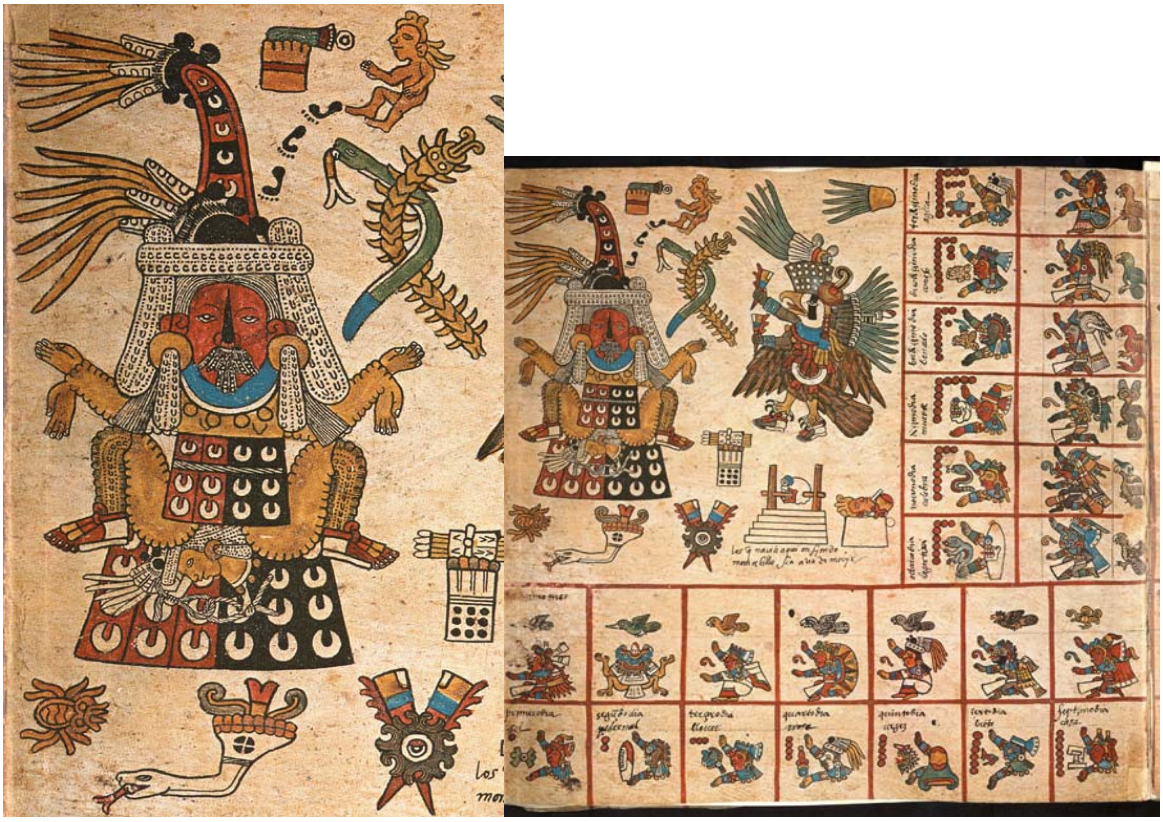


Figure 15. *The Codex Borbonicus*. Mexica (Aztec), central Mexican. Page thirteen and detail. Bark paper, *amatl*, and ink. Date unknown, most likely an early colonial document. Bibliothèque de l'Assemblée Nationale, Paris, France.

Figure 16. Diego Rivera. *History of Medicine in Mexico: The People's Demand for Better Health*, detail of central wall herbal medicine from the Badianus Manuscript, 1552. Fresco, mosaic, and multimedia. 1953. Centro Médico Nacional de La Raza, Mexico City, Mexico. Photographed by author.

Figure 17. Gabriela Rodriguez-Gomez. Detail, *Temple of the Plumed Serpent: Quetzalcoatl*. Stone masonry. 150-200 C.E. Digital Photograph. 2011. Teotihuacan, Mexico.

Figure 18. *Wagner Murals* at Teotihuacan. Fragment titled *Feathered Serpent and Flowering Trees*. Volcanic ash, lime, mineral pigment, and mud backing. 600-700 C.E. Wagner Collection, San Francisco: De Young Museum.

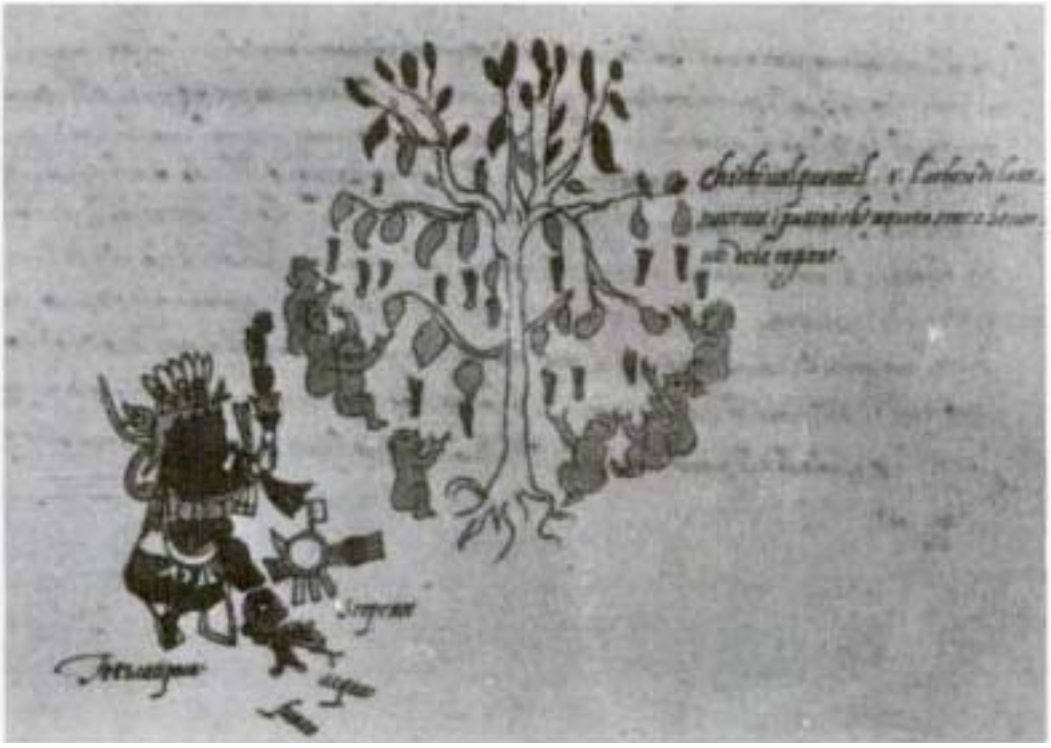


Figure 19. *Codex Vaticanus Latinus 3738 or Vaticanus A or Codex Ríos*. "Chichiualcuauhco," el lugar del Árbol Nodriza, page 4. Early colonial document. Vatican Library, Italy.

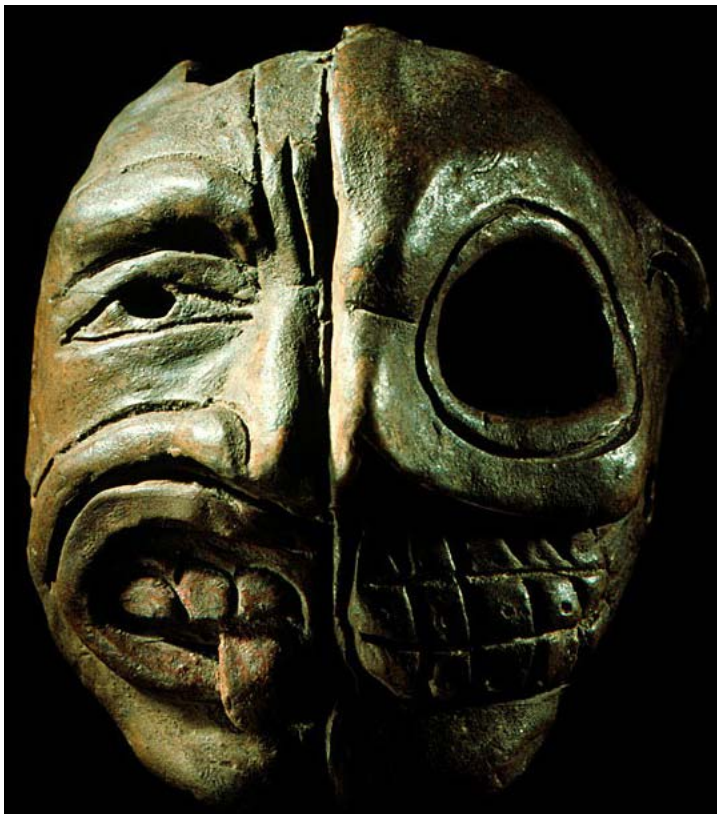


Figure 20. *Tlatilco Mask of Life and Death.* Clay. 3 1/2 inches. Middle or Early pre-Classic period, 1000-600 B.C.E. Instituto Nacional de Antropología, Mexico City.

Figure 21. Diego Rivera. *History of Medicine in Mexico: The People's Demand for Better Health*, detail of the top of central wall. Fresco, mosaic, and multimedia. 1953. Centro Médico Nacional de La Raza, Mexico City, Mexico. Photographed by author.

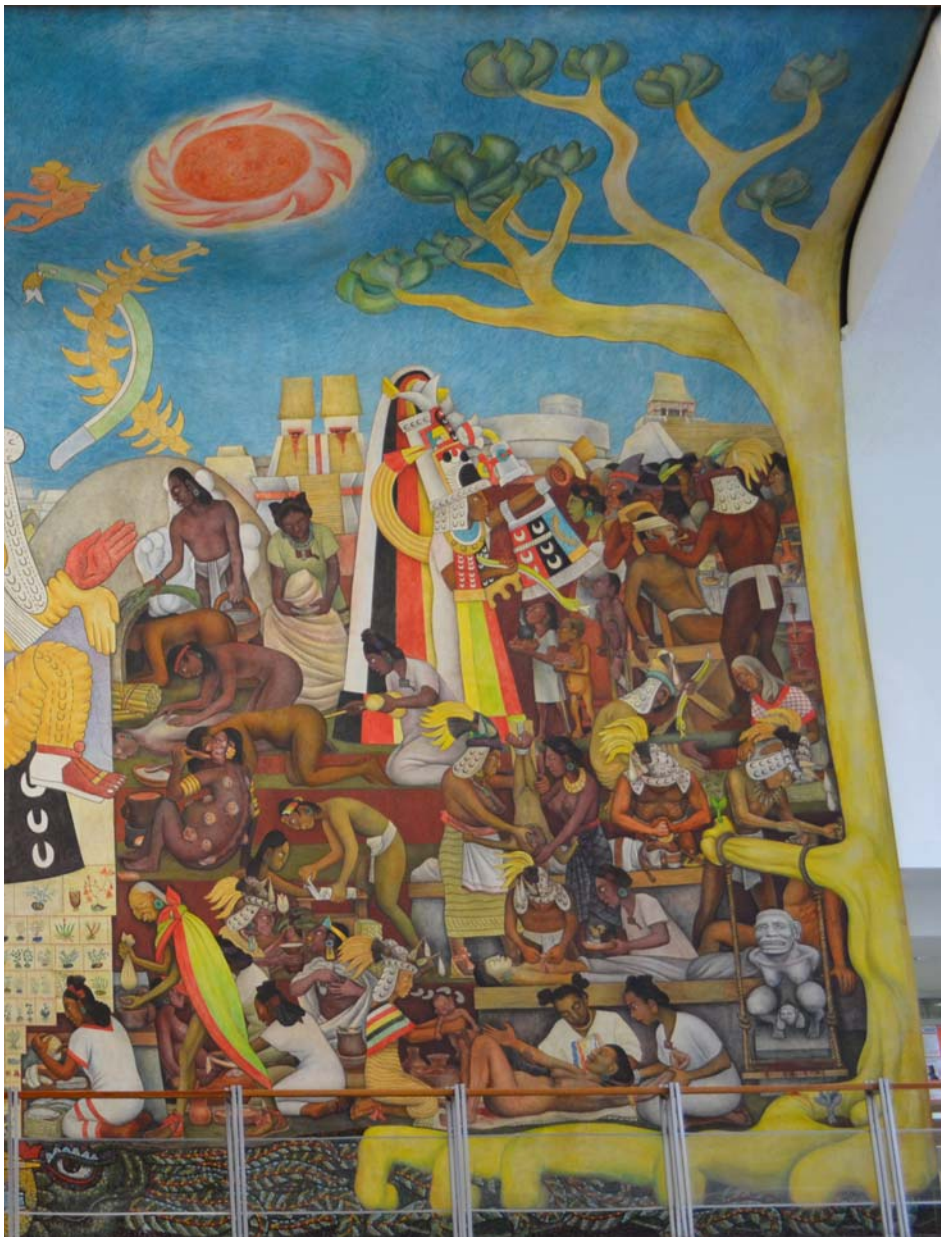


Figure 22. Diego Rivera. *History of Medicine in Mexico: The People's Demand for Better Health*, detail of right section of central wall. Fresco, mosaic, and multimedia. 1953. Centro Médico Nacional de La Raza, Mexico City, Mexico. Photographed by author.

Figure 23. Antonio Tejeda. *Detail of diagram of Bonampak murals, room three, structure one*. 1955. Carnegie Institution of Washington.

Figure 24. Diego Rivera. *History of Medicine in Mexico: The People's Demand for Better Health*, detail of top-center left section. Fresco, mosaic, and multimedia. 1953. Centro Médico Nacional de La Raza, Mexico City, Mexico. Photographed by author.

Figure 25. Diego Rivera. *History of Medicine in Mexico: The People's Demand for Better Health*, detail of left section of the central wall. Fresco, mosaic, and multimedia. 1953. Centro Médico Nacional de La Raza, Mexico City, Mexico. Photographed by author.

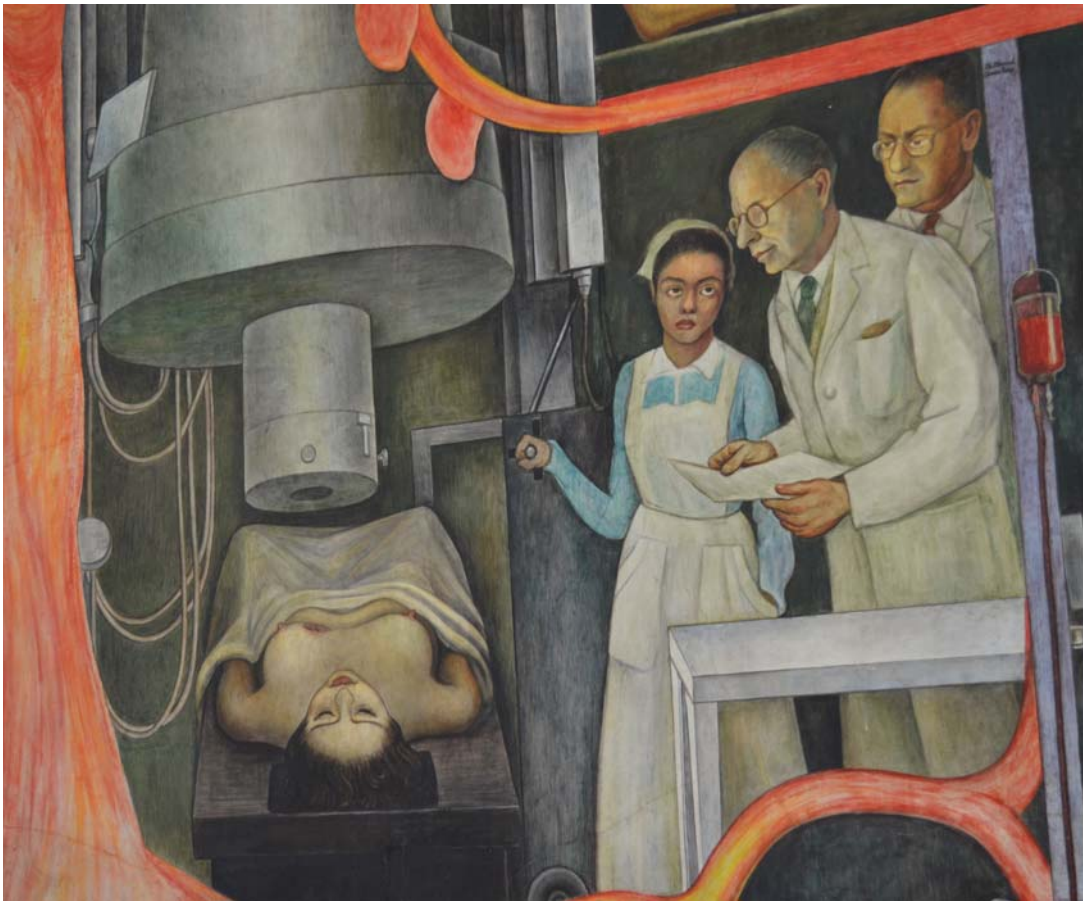


Figure 26. Diego Rivera. *History of Medicine in Mexico: The People's Demand for Better Health*, detail of left section cobalt pump scene. Fresco, mosaic, and multimedia. 1953. Centro Médico Nacional de La Raza, Mexico City, Mexico. Photographed by author.

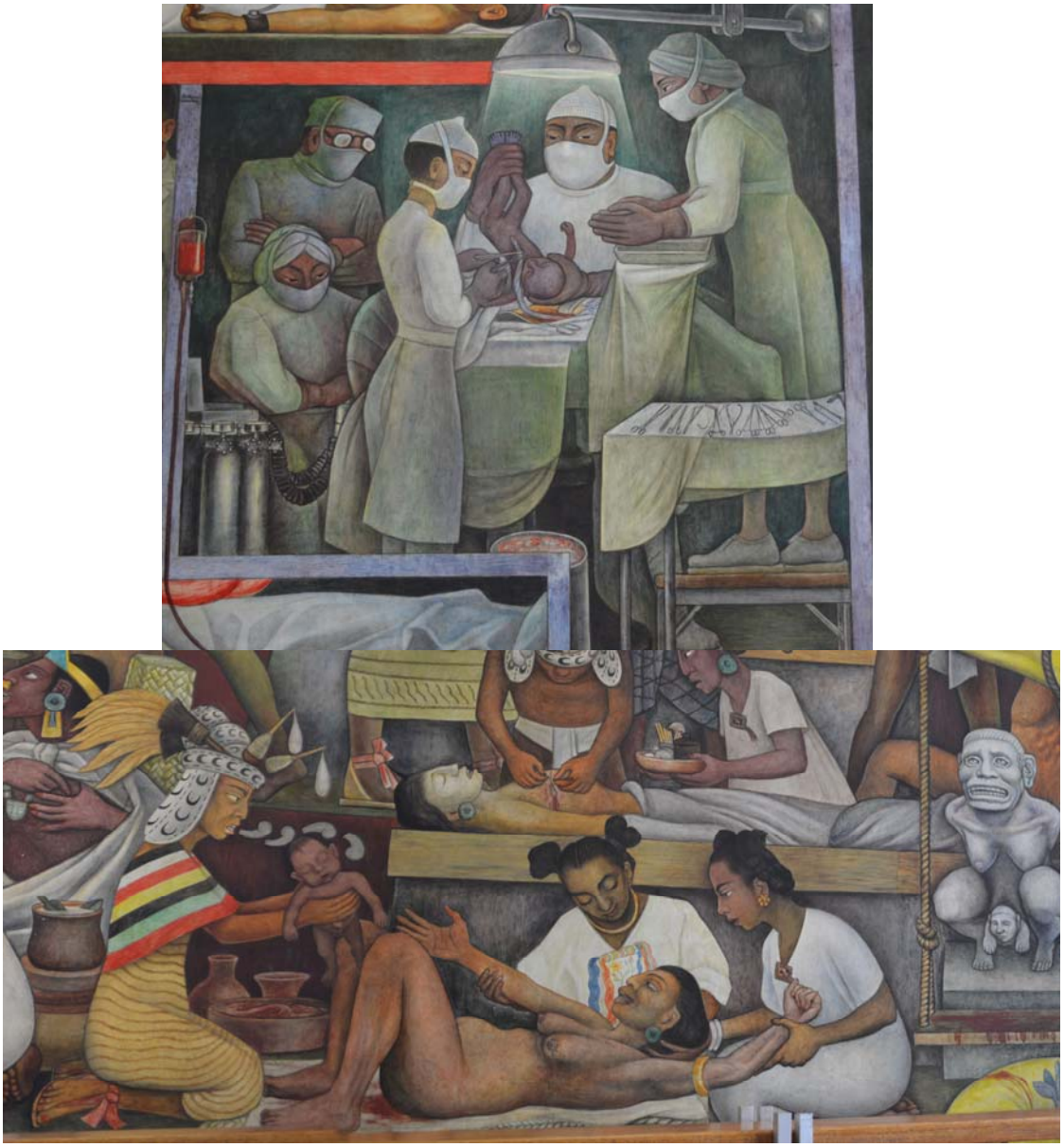


Figure 27. Diego Rivera. *History of Medicine in Mexico: The People's Demand for Better Health*, detail of left and right bottom sections of the central wall representing childbirth. Fresco, mosaic and multimedia. 1953. Centro Médico Nacional de La Raza, Mexico City, Mexico. Photographed by author.

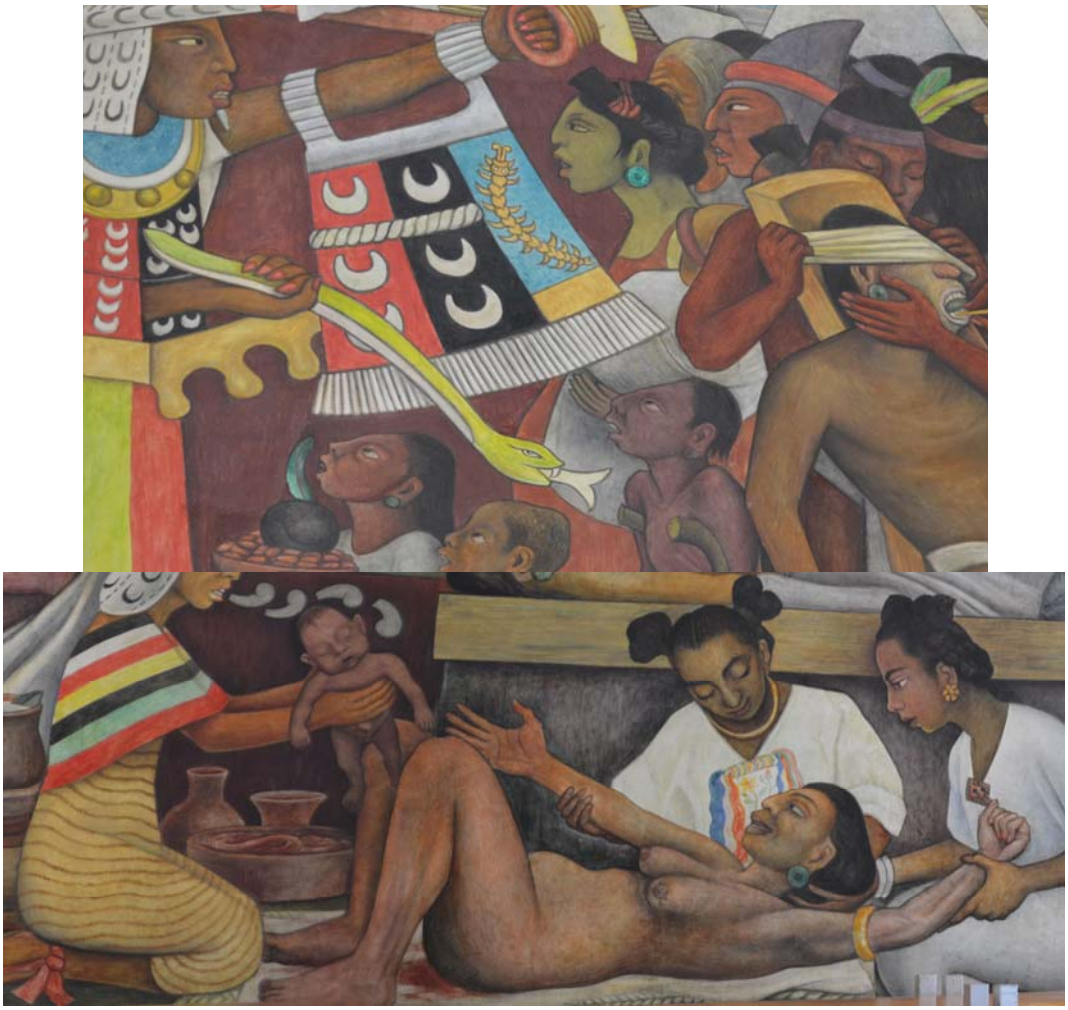


Figure 28. Diego Rivera. *History of Medicine in Mexico: The People's Demand for Better Health*, detail of top and bottom of the right section of an anonymous native woman pregnant then giving birth. Fresco, mosaic and multimedia. 1953. Centro Médico Nacional de La Raza, Mexico City, Mexico. Photographed by author.

Figure 29. Unknown Artist. *Sculpture of Tlazolteotl-Ixcuina*. Aplite. Nineteenth century. Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection: Pre-Columbian Collection, Washington, D.C.

Figure 30. Diego Rivera. *Mechanized Motherhood*. Watercolor. 1933. The Dolores Olmedo Collection, Museo Dolores Olmedo, Mexico City.

Figure 31. Leopoldo Mendez and Pablo O'Higgins. *Motherhood*. Mural, fresco/unknown. Approx. 13x36 feet in length. 1946. Destroyed. Instituto Mexicano del Seguro Social (IMSS) Mexico City.

Copy of mural taken from Dina Comisarenco Mirkin, “Images of Childbirth in Modern Mexican Art,” *Woman's Art Journal* 20, no. 1 (1999): pp. 20, Figure 4.

Figure 32. Diego Rivera. Cárcamo del Río Lerma or Lerma Waterworks, *Hands of Nature Offering Water* detail. Fresco. 1951. Lerma Waterworks, Mexico City (Chapultepec Park), Mexico.

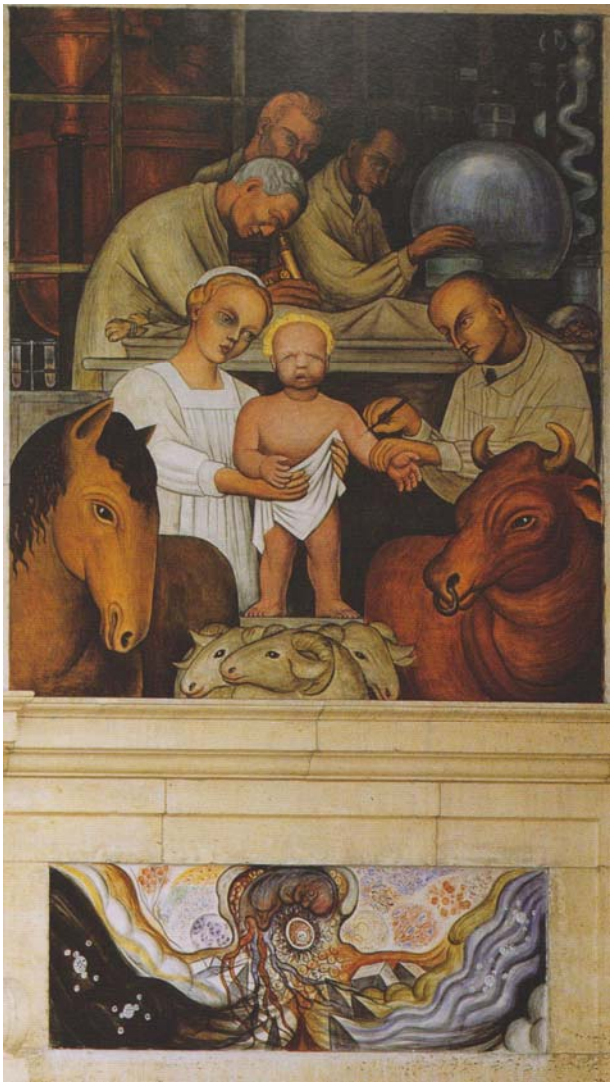


Figure 33. Diego Rivera. *Detroit Industry*, detail of "Vaccination and Healthy Embryo," right-side of the North wall. Fresco. 1933-34. Detroit Institute of Arts, Michigan, United States.

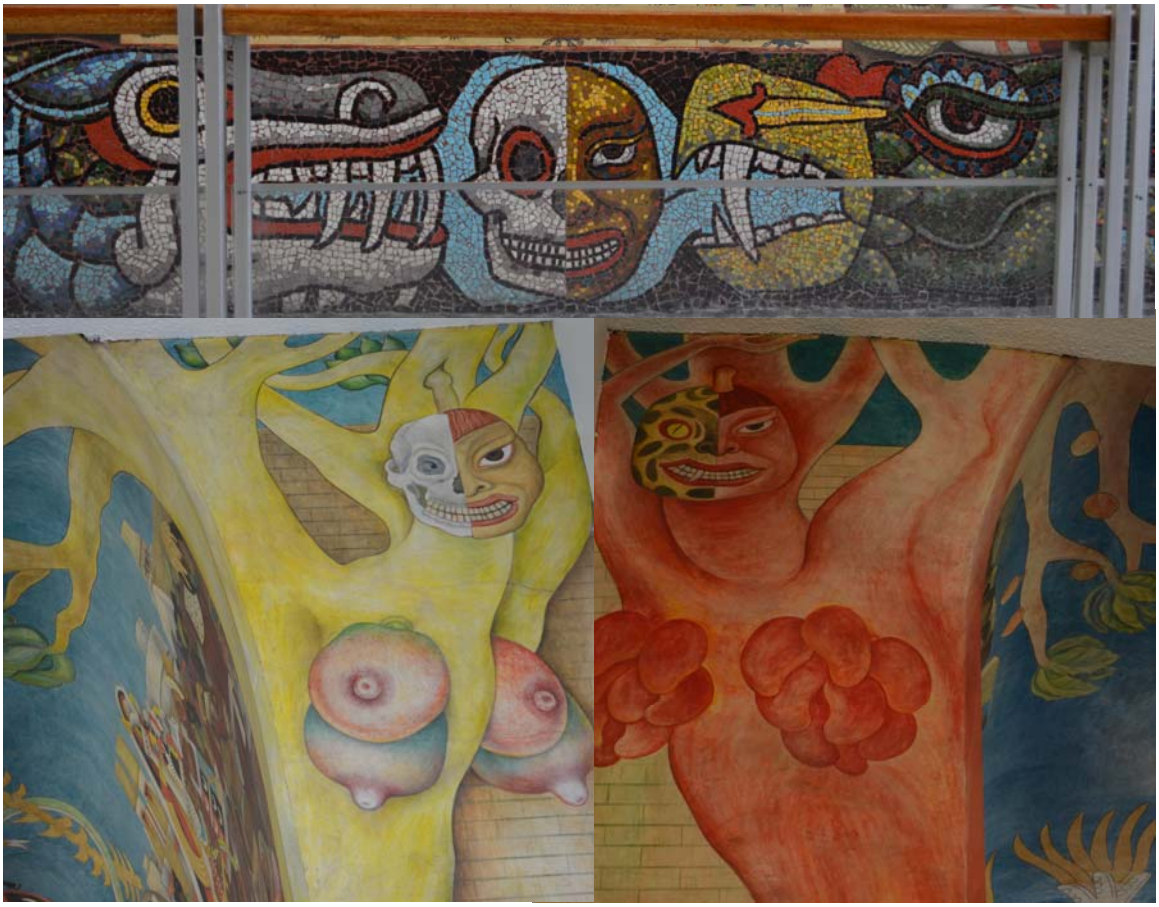


Figure 34. Diego Rivera. *History of Medicine in Mexico: The People's Demand for Better Health*, detail of left and right side walls and central wall masks. Fresco, mosaic, and multimedia. 1953. Centro Médico Nacional de La Raza, Mexico City, Mexico. Photographed by author.

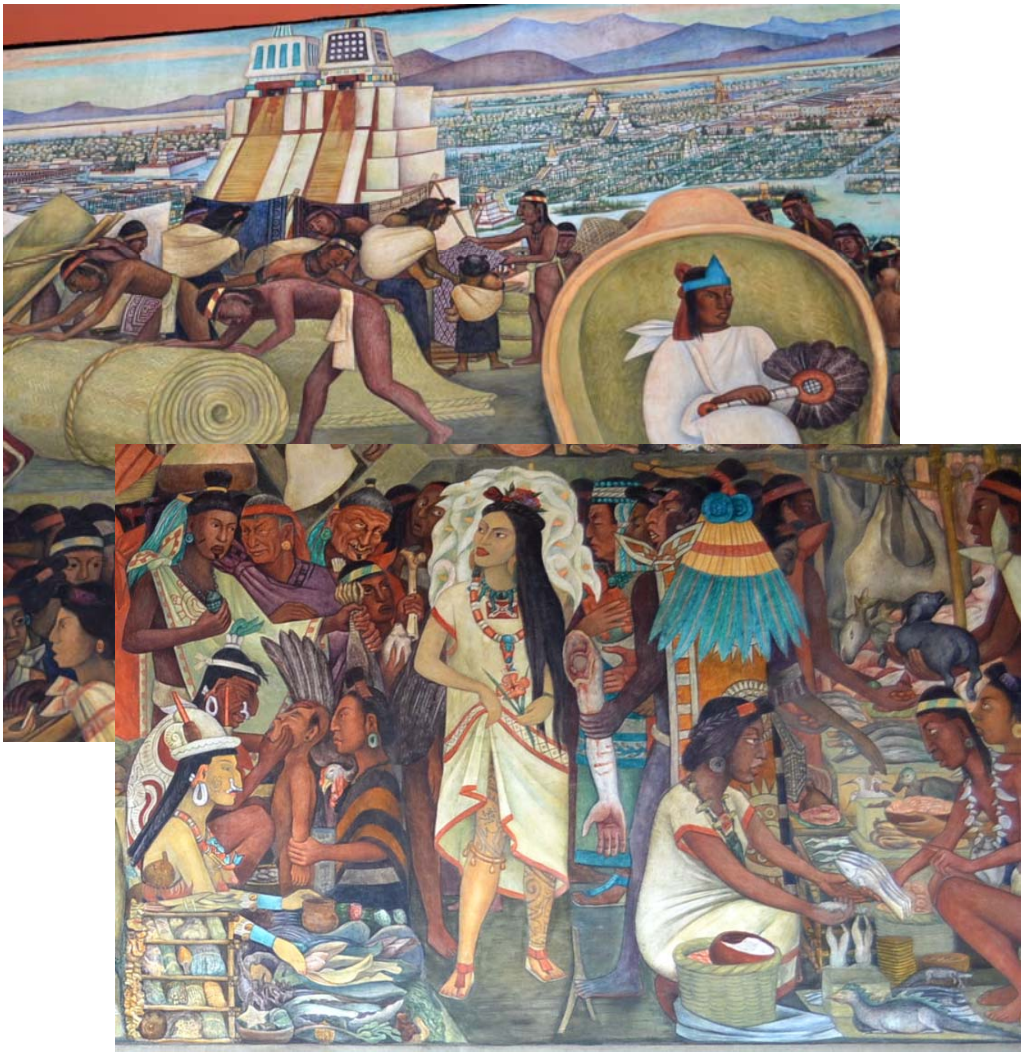


Figure 35. Diego Rivera. *The Great City of Tenochtitlan*, details of left section and uppermost center section. Fresco series. 1945. The National Palace, Mexico City, Mexico. Photographed by author.

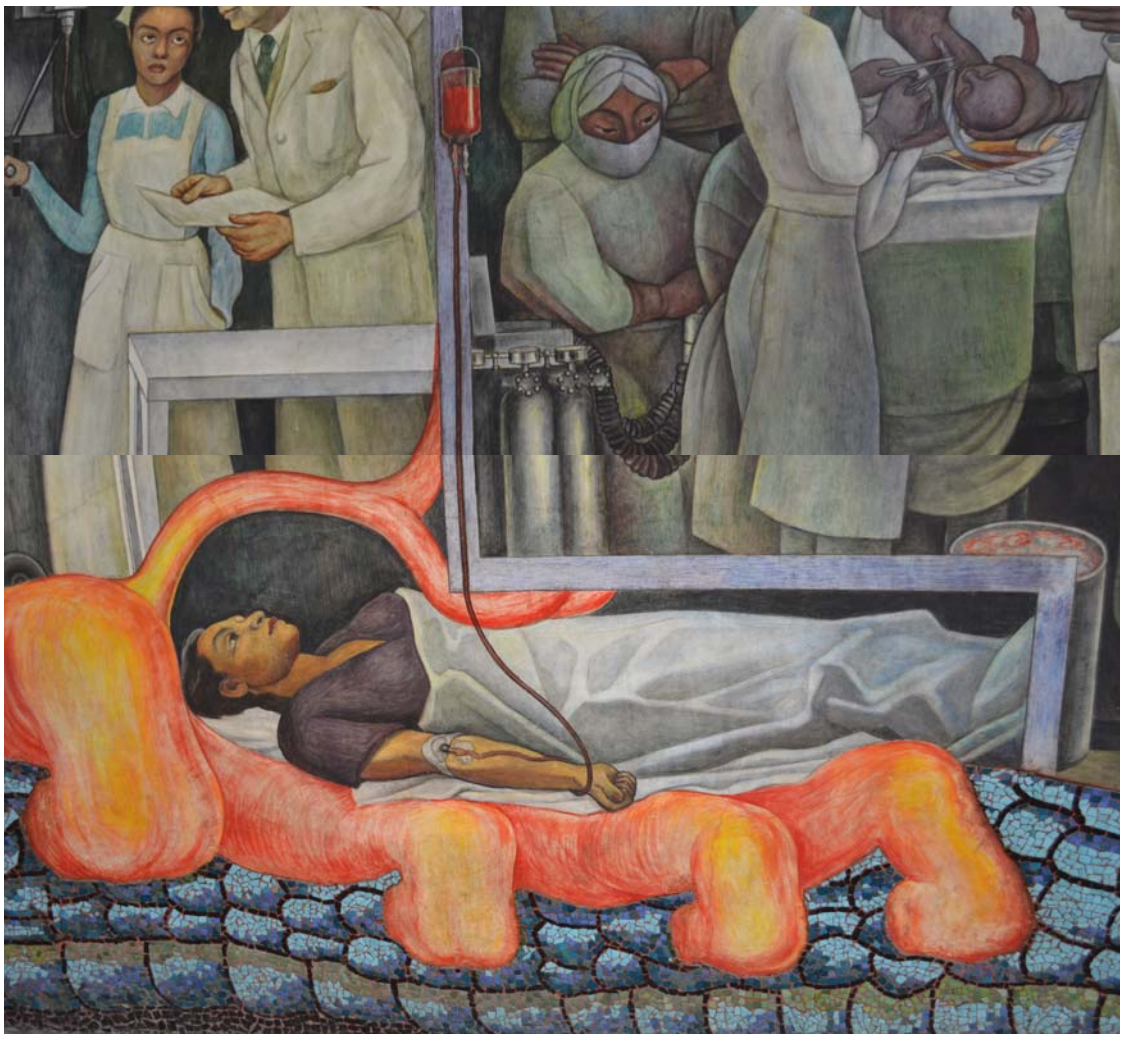


Figure 36. Diego Rivera. *History of Medicine in Mexico: The People's Demand for Better Health*, detail of bottom of left section of blood transfusion. Fresco, mosaic, and multimedia. 1953. Centro Médico Nacional de La Raza, Mexico City, Mexico. Photographed by author.

Figure 37. *The Codex Borbonicus*. Mexica (Aztec), Central Mexican. Page thirty and detail of Tlaloc impersonator. Bark paper, *amatl*, and ink. Date is unknown, most likely sixteenth century. Bibliothèque de l'Assemblée Nationale, Paris: France.

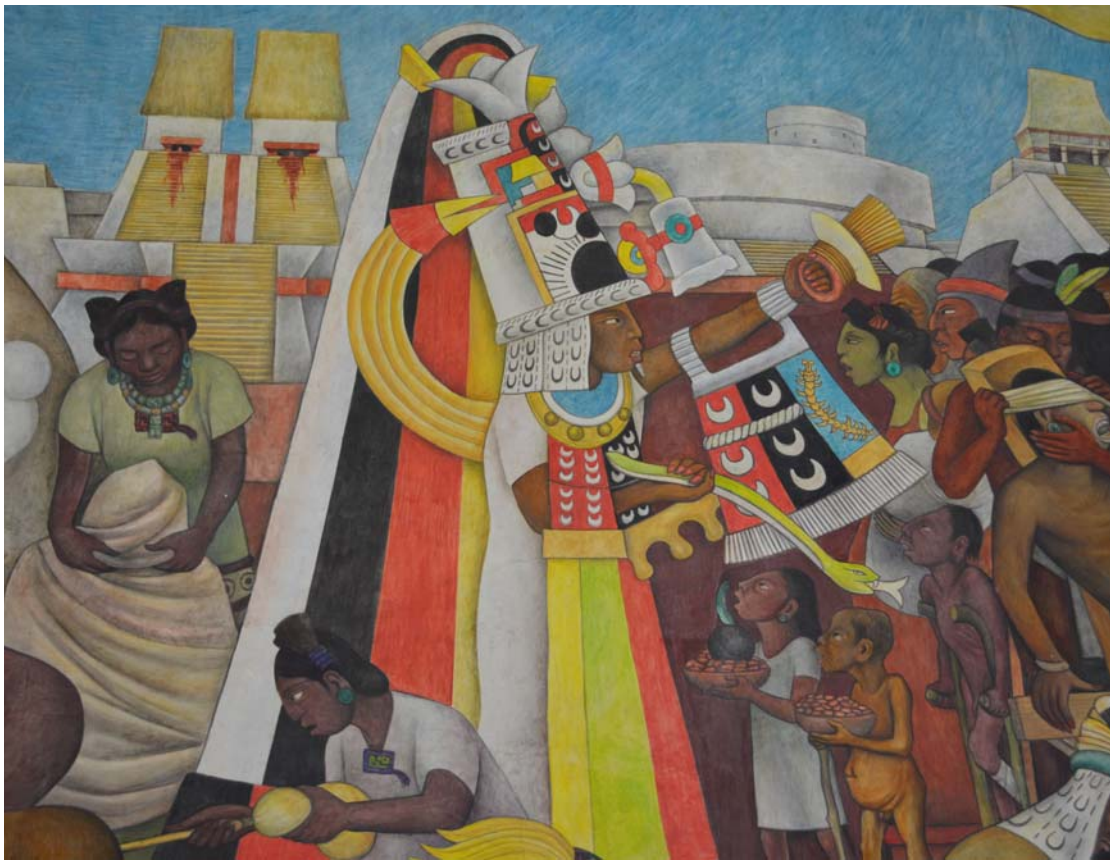


Figure 38. Diego Rivera. *History of Medicine in Mexico: The People's Demand for Better Health*, detail of top- right section of central wall of Tlazolteotl-Ixcuina impersonator. Fresco, mosaic and multimedia. 1953. Centro Médico Nacional de La Raza, Mexico City, Mexico. Photographed by author.

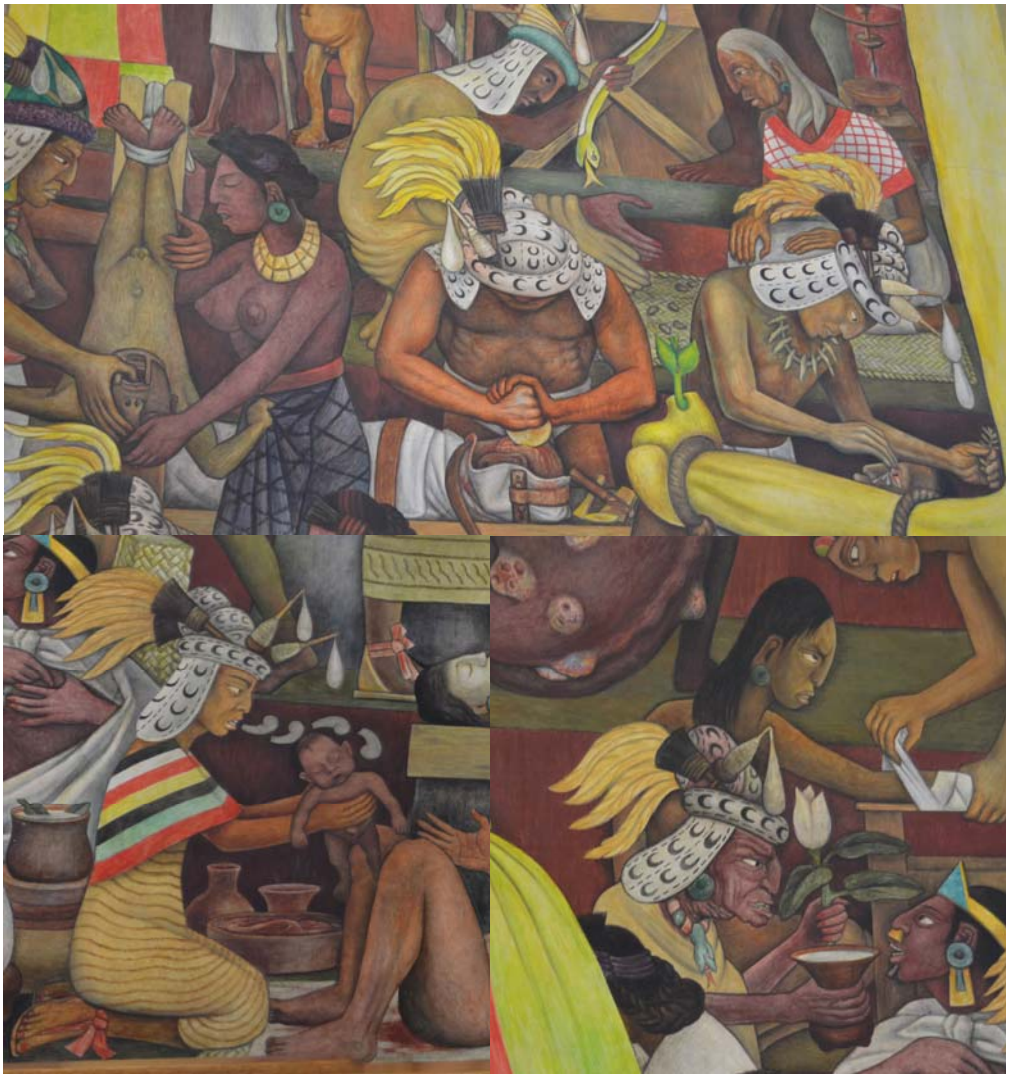


Figure 39. Diego Rivera. *History of Medicine in Mexico: The People's Demand for Better Health*, details from the right section of native healers with designated paper headdresses. Fresco, mosaic and multimedia. 1953. Centro Médico Nacional de La Raza, Mexico City, Mexico. Photographed by author.

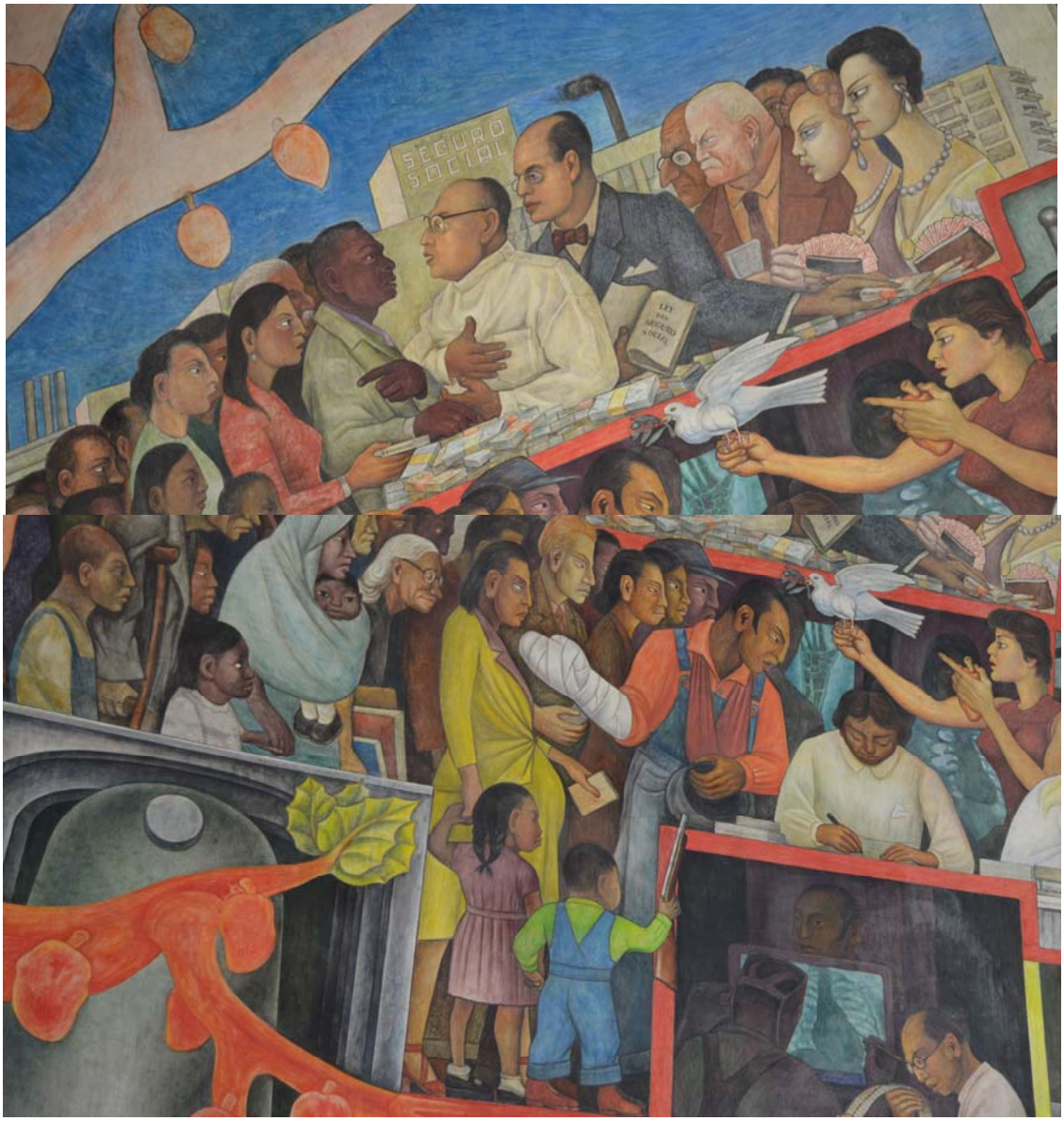


Figure 40. Diego Rivera. *History of Medicine in Mexico: The People's Demand for Better Health*, Uppermost-central detail of left section. Fresco, mosaic, and multimedia. 1953. Centro Médico Nacional de La Raza, Mexico City, Mexico. Photographed by author.

Figure 41. Rufino Tamayo. *Birth of Our Nationality*. Vinylite on canvas. 1952. Palacio Bellas Artes, Mexico City, Mexico. Photographed by author.

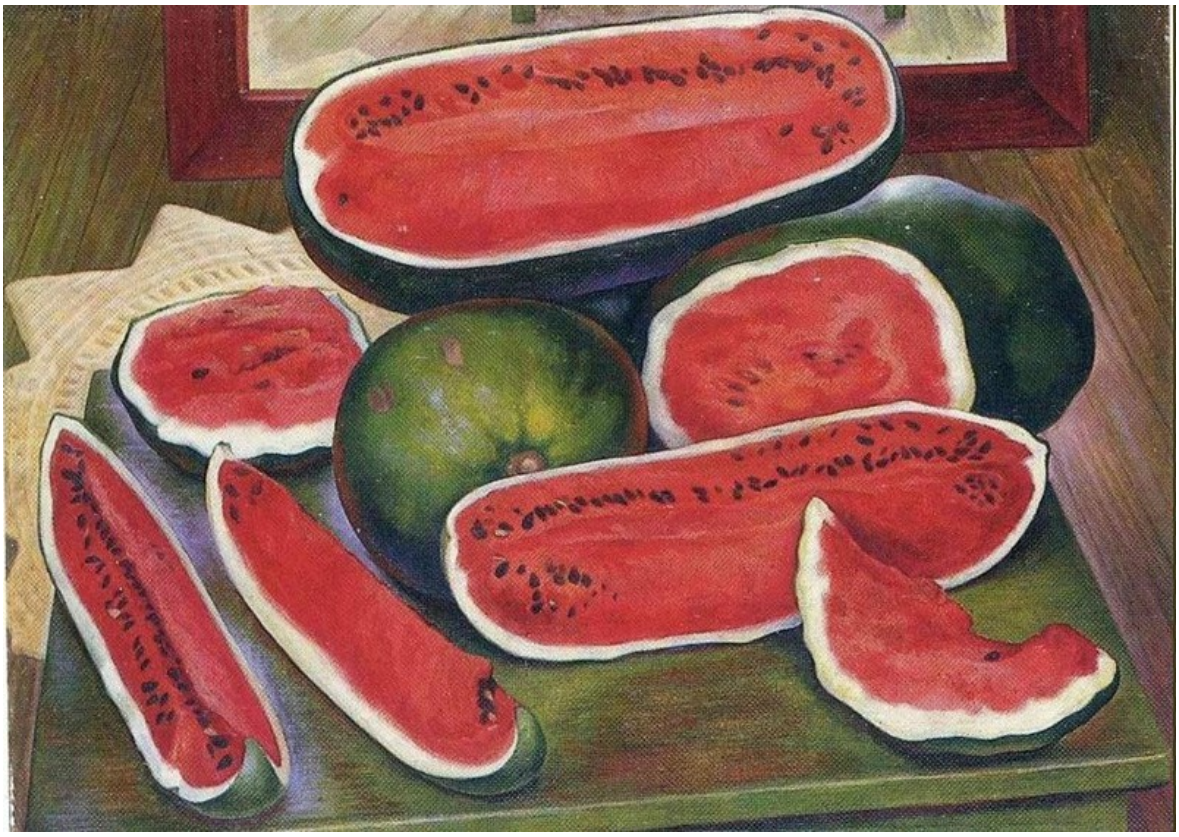
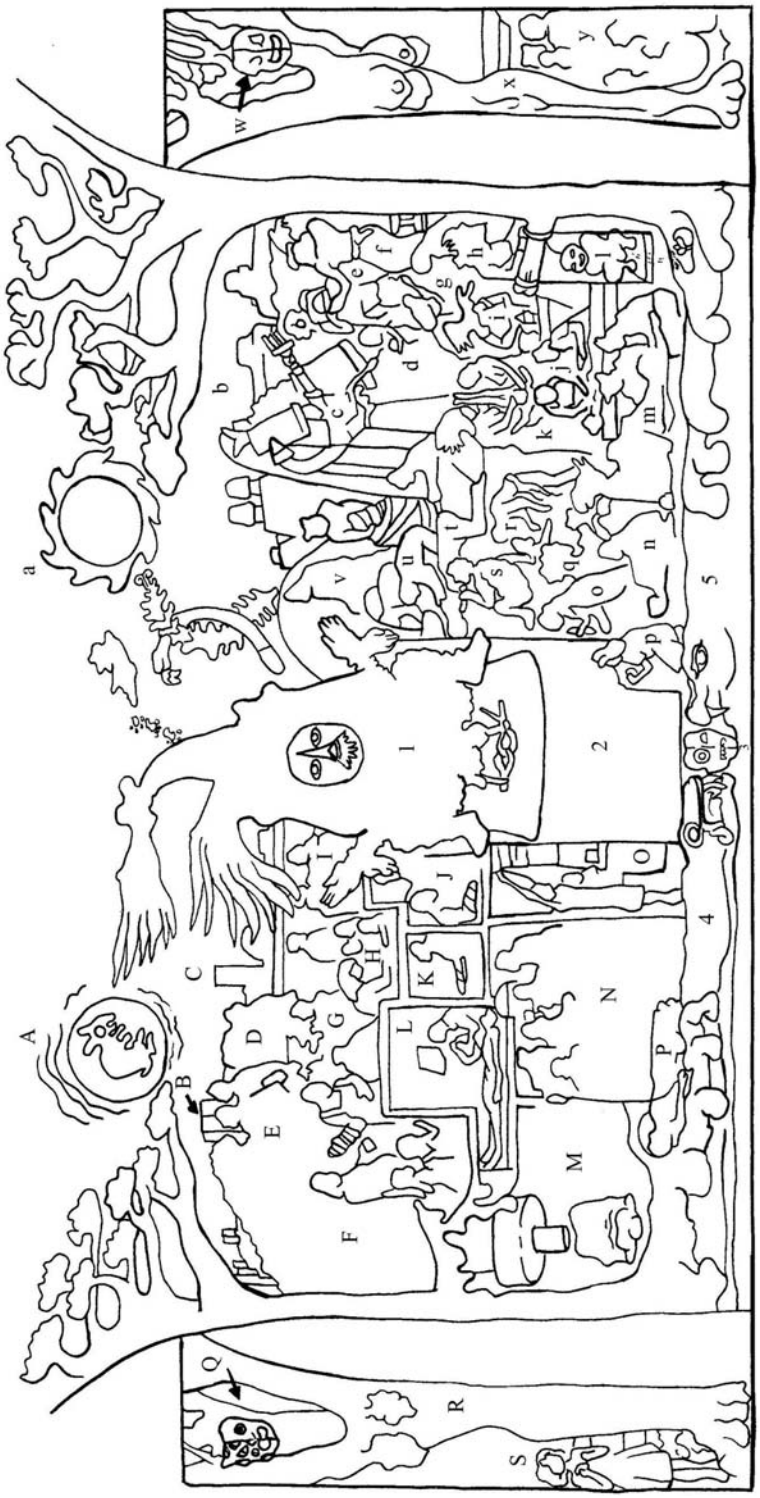


Figure 42. Diego Rivera. *The Watermelons*. Oil on canvas. 1957. The Dolores Olmedo Collection, Museo Dolores Olmedo, Mexico City.

Appendix I



Modified Diagram of Diego Rivera's *History of Medicine in Mexico: People's Demand for Better Health*, 1953. Designed by author.

Original diagram template from:

Instituto Nacional de Bellas Artes (INBA). *Diego Rivera: Catalogo General de Obra Mural y Fotografia Personal*. Ed. Rafael Cruz Arvea. pp. 247-49. Mexico D.F.: SEP, Instituto Nacional Bellas Artes, 1988.

Descriptions are referenced from the primary source, mentioned above, and the secondary source:

Lozano, Luis-Martín and Juan Coronel Rivera. *Diego Rivera, The Complete Murals*. pp. 529. Hong Kong; Los Angeles: Taschen, 2008.

Central Wall

1) The Nahua deity Tlazolteotl-Ixcuina, goddess of carnal love, childbirth, medicine, "eater of impurities or filth", copied from the Mexica/Aztec *Borbonicus Codex*, page 13. The centipede and snake symbol, along with the deity Cinteotl floating in the air, continue the notion of a union between the universe and earth. The deity essentially contains overlapping meanings that represent the "mother goddess or Teteo-Innan complex." Tlazolteotl shown in the mural becomes a fluid image that embodies the universal themes Rivera chooses to highlight, such as renewal and procreation.[1]

[1] Tlazolteotl-Ixcuina's symbolic and spiritual origins can be further researched in, T. Sullivan's article in *The Art and Iconography of Late Post-Classic Central Mexico*. pp. 7-35. See also, C. Klein, "'Divine Excrement': The Significance of 'Holy Shit' in Ancient Mexico." *Art Journal* 52, no. 3 (1993): pp. 20-27. K. Taube, "The Womb of the World," in *Maya Archaeology*. ed. Charles Golden, Stephen Houston, and Joel Skidmore. pp. 87-106. San Francisco: Precolumbia Mesoweb Press (2009). The Codex Borbonicus is debated to be an

2) 84 illustrations of the variety of medicinal herbs/plants taken from the Nahua pharmacopeia the *Badianus Manuscript: Libellus de Medicinalibus Indorum Herbis,* by Martin de la Cruz (1552), translated in Latin by Juan Badiano. The original manuscript holds 184 illustrations and information on 251 plant species.

3) A mosaic mask embodying the dual qualities of life and death. Influenced by the dual faced mask, half skull half human face, from Tlatilco (now part of the federal district) about 3 1/2 inches, from the 12th to 7th century B.C.E. or Middle pre-Classic period. Rivera reproduced the symbolism and switched the human face to the right-side, the original Tlatilco mask has the human face on the left-side and skull on the right.

4) The Plumed Serpent, "Quetzalcoatl" colored blue for water. A closer analysis of the serpent shows that it is drawn with blue scales and an obsidian eye, a strong reference to the obsidian mirror of the god Tezcatlipoca.

5) The Plumed Serpent, "Quetzalcoatl" colored green and yellow for air or wind. This symbolic serpent is drawn with a feathered-like body and a bird beak with a solar ray shooting out from the eye which is a characteristic of the god Quetzalcoatl, specifically Ehecatl-Quetzalcoatl.

Right Section: Pre-Hispanic or Contact Nahuatl Medicine

a) The sun, Tecuciztécatl or Tecuzitecatl (Nahuatl deity name), a symbolic reference to the mythological story from Teotihuacan about the birth of "Fifth Sun."

b) Three temple structures located in the central sacred precinct of Tenochtitlan (Mexico

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early colonial manuscript or considered a Pre-Columbian document. See John Glass, *A Survey of Middle American Pictorial Documents* (Washington: Library of Congress Reference Department, Hispanic Foundation, 1966), pp. 16.

City), from left to right, the Templo Mayor dedicated to the deities Tlaloc and Huitzilopochtli, Temple of Quetzalcoatl, and Temple of Tezcatlipoca. Rivera consciously situated the mural's setting to be within Central Mexico, specifically Mexico City, at the time of the Mexica Empire where originally the Templo Mayor stood at the center, and the Temples to Quetzalcoatl in front and Tezcatlipoca to the left-hand side of the Templo Mayor.

c) Identified in previous scholarship as the goddess Ixcuina, protector of childhood/children. This deserves clarification for the figure is not a direct copy, merely an adopted silhouette, of the male soothsayer or diviner who is the impersonator of the god Tlaloc shown in the *Borbonicus Codex*, page 30. Rivera manipulated the colors of the original costume, the multicolored rays of Tlaloc's garment.[2] The figure is illustrated by Rivera as the impersonator or representative of the goddess Tlazolteotl-Ixcuina.

d) Three Sickly children, a young girl with what could be signs of polio, a pot-bellied boy symptom of abdominal distention due to starvation and a handicapped boy on crutches, gather to offer a few precious resources to the 'deity representative.' They offer what seem to be a rubber ball, or a spherical piece of obsidian, cacao beans, and a quetzal feather. The crowd of indigenous Nahua people with an anonymous pregnant woman at the forefront seem to exclaim to their representative their ailments and concerns.

[2]Eduard Seler, *Commentarios al Codice Borgia* (1904), volume 1. Art historian Betty Ann Brown stated that the figure is "a priest who wears the costume of Tlazolteotl as portrayed on page 13 of the Codex Borbonicus, and who is proportioned and positioned exactly like the priest who faces a seated Toci figure on page 30." See "The Past Idealized: Diego Rivera's use of Pre-Columbian Imagery," in *Rivera: A Retrospective* (1986): pp. 154.

e) Practicing dentistry, pulling teeth. Clarification should be noted, a second look onto this procedure would suggest that the figure is drilling a hole to decorate the tooth with a precious stone, such as jade or turquoise.

f) The detail of a bow drill could have been used by the Mesoamerican people. However, this ancient tool is not mentioned in colonial texts to support its existence or use by the Nahuas.

g) A soothsayer or diviner, also called *ticitl*, is shown reading the placement of corn grains on a mat made of woven fiber, *petate* in Spanish or *petlatl* in Nahuatl. This practice allowed the foretelling of luck, the prevention of illness, or to ask for good health. It is important to note that the flayed-skin garment, the headdress, and serpent accessories are not historically accurate but another created scene by Rivera.

h) Applying a collyrium, eye drops from an herbal remedy.

i) Surgical operations either trephination or craniotomy. The special tool used by the surgeon, *texoxotla ticitl*, strongly resembles a *tumi* knife from the Andes.[3] However, in Central Mexico the shape of the knife referred to the object as copper axes or hoe as money not to be used as surgical tools.

j) Surgical procedure of suturing with maguey needles and the use of peyote, or *peyotl* in Nahuatl, to sedate the patient. The use of peyote, or the *ololiuhqui* a vine-like psychedelic plant (perhaps the morning glory), in this scene is not exactly presented. A detailed look

[3] Patricio Doherty-Santillan, "Medicine and Ancient Mexico: Rivera's View," *Journal of Investigative Surgery* 11 (1998), pp. 6. "Although there is archeological evidence of these procedures in ancient cultures, it is interesting that Diego should depict this as an Aztec scene when the instrument being used by the surgeon is a *tumi* from the Inca culture in Peru. Perhaps Diego was fascinated by the fact that ancient American cultures performed such procedures, or he was simply attracted to the beautiful form of the *tumi* knife."

at the bowl the female assistant is holding near the patient does not seem to suggest that they used peyote.[4] Rivera included this scene perhaps to further link the ancient people with their active use of hallucinogens, however, studies on this topic are complex and still under debate. Furthermore, peyote use was strictly for religious ritual, not for medicinal use, the Nahua pharmacopeia had a vast amount of other substances for medicine and anesthesia. Hallucinogens were not necessarily preferred over other substances.

k) The folk medical practice of either treatment for stutter, or most likely a representation of the "levantamiento de mollera, caída de mollera, or fallen fontanel." The fallen fontanel is usually a sign of dehydration that could affect young children.[5] The representation of this treatment reminds the viewer that Rivera was playing on both folk and historical evidences of ancient healing practices. Rivera drew the female healers with exposed breasts and a nude boy, meanwhile, the majority of the female and male figures shown around them are clothed.

l) A reproduction of the sculpture at the Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, of the Nahua goddess Tlazolteotl-Ixcuina giving birth. The sculpture is

[4] Further research on the use of herbal narcotics or hallucinogen substances, as a type of anesthesia, for surgery, See Clayton, Martin and Windsor Castle: Royal Collection, *Flora : the Aztec herbal* (London: The Royal Collection- Harvey Miller Publishers, 2009). See, F. Guerra, "Aztec Medicine."*Medical History* 10, no. 4 (1966): pp. 315-338. Also, Emily Emmart, Chapter 7, *The Badianus manuscript, 1522* (Baltimore: John Hopkins Press, 1940), pp. 66. "The extract of the peyote cactus was used largely in religious ceremonies to produce hallucinations."

[5] Further research on the origins and new theories regarding this topic see, Bernard Ortiz de Montellano, "Caida de Mollera: Aztec Sources for a Mesoamerican Disease of Alleged Spanish Origin," *Ethnohistory* 34, no. 4 (Autumn, 1987): pp. 381-99. Also, K.K. Hansen. "Folk Remedies and Child Abuse: A Review With Emphasis on Caída de Mollera and Its Relationship to Shaken Baby Syndrome." *Child Abuse and Neglect* 22 no. 2 (February 1998): pp. 117-127.

inauthentic, a nineteenth century piece sold to the collection in 1883.[6]

m) An indigenous woman gives birth with the help of a midwife, *tlamatqui* or *temixintiani ticitl*, and two medical assistants, Rivera's daughters. [7] The central figure facing down is Guadalupe Rivera and her sister Ruth Rivera is on the far right in profile. The Nahua herbal remedy used for menstruation pains and for recent parturition are depicted on the mural but Rivera neglected to include a category or label to identify the plant species.

n) Medical procedure either as an amputation of a cancerous breast or treatments using a fibrous towel placed over the malignant breast. A closer look suggests that the bowl below them seems to contain an herbal remedy that the soaks the towel.

o) An aged medicine man prepares medicinal herbal remedies. He wears a brightly colored *tilmatli*, or manta, a garment usually worn by native men.

p) A female healer collecting mold from tortillas to be later used in remedies.

q) An aged folk medicine woman or man, *ticitl*, treating a king or dignitary, *tlatoani* or *tecuhtli*, for his ailments of the chest or heart, "afliciones camacas." She offers the noble a remedy using a white magnolia flower, or the *yoloxochitl*.[8]

r) The treatment of osseous lesions with bandages and a splint.

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[6] See articles by P. Anawalt and T. Sullivan, in *The Art and Iconography of Late Post-Classic Central Mexico*. pp. 7-35, 87, see "H.B Nicholson Deity Classification" chart mentioned in article. Further reading on the Tlazolteotl sculpture as a hoax can be found in, Jane M. Walsh, "The Dumbarton Oaks Tlazolteotl: Looking Beneath the Surface," in *Journal de la Société des Americanistes*, pp. 94-1.

[7] Further research on midwifery and the rituals of childbirth in Nahuatl culture see, B. Sahagún *Historia General: Books VI, X,* and F. Guerra, "Aztec Medicine." It is important to note that Nahua women traditionally gave birth through a squatting position, similar to how Tlazolteotl gives birth to the god of corn, Cinteotl.

[8] For a detailed look at the native plant *yoloxochitl* and its medical properties see, *Flora : the Aztec herbal*. London: The Royal Collection in association with Harvey Miller Publishers (2009), pp. 59.

s) The treatment for ulcers, or pustules, through the ingestion of a liquid remedy. It should be noted that this particular silhouette is adopted and adapted by Rivera from Sahagún's *Florentine Codex,* book eleven illustrations or from ancient West Mexican sculptures from Nayarit that show pustules or sores.[9] It is difficult to conclude what exactly this figure is being treated for considering the similarities to the treatment for pustules or sculptures of sores. Exactly what source Rivera used to produce this figure is unknown. Furthermore, the suggestion of a sexually transmitted disease such as syphilis, or even something like leprosy, existing before contact with Europeans could be implied by Rivera- which is still a topic under debate.

t) An enema treatment or a curative wash or rinse, "nite pamaca (?)," as a medical practice in this scene is debatable.[10] The silhouette of both figures is a direct copy of Sahagún's *Florentine Codex*, book eleven illustrations for chapter twenty-eight, representing a treatment for hemorrhoids.

u) A massage or the application of a white substance similar looking to the magnolia remedy or an herbal rub prior to the wrapping of the patient in cloth.

v) The sweat baths or sweat houses of ancient Mexico, *temazcalli* or *temazcal*. The bundling up of a figure before entering the sweat house with curative herbs.

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[9] Bernadino de Sahagún's *General History of the Things of New Spain: Florentine codex*. Translated by A.J.O Anderson and C. E. Dibble, Book XI, Illustrations for Chapter 28. Santa Fe, NM: American School of Research and Salt Lake City: University of Utah (1970). See also, Los Angeles Museum of Art, *Sculpture of West Mexico: Nayarit, Jalisco, Colima; The Proctor Stafford Collection* (LACMA, 1970), pp. 90, 93.

[10] This particular "Nahuatl" word or phrase is not strongly supported in the original citation, See the original Diagram in INBA *Diego Rivera Catalogo*, 1988. The word could also be spelled "Hitepameca," however this word is not found in Nahuatl dictionaries, and I have not found a strong source that clearly defines the meaning of this phrase. The Maya funerary urns, mentioned by B. Brown (1986), pp. 154, that depict enemas were not accessible nor discussed in scholarship during the 1950s; therefore, Rivera was most likely influenced by Sahagún's *Florentine Codex* illustrations or Nayarit sculptures of West Mexico.

w) A mask representing the concept of duality of life and death by the split faces of a human being and a skull.

x) Tree of "Life," a yellow tree with breasts, and both male and female genitalia. The tree with breasts references the "arbol nodriza" or the nursing tree from the Nahua myth, "el lugar del (the place of) arbol nodriza, *Chichiualcuauhco*."[11]

y) The pediatric section of the left-side wall showcases Dr. Guadalupe Eguiluz treating a female newborn, while teaching fundamental medical practices to three other nurses. The nurse on the lower right-hand side holds the proclamation of Rivera's artwork as a project with the Social Security Institute and lists the names of his artist assistants, including mosaic artist Graciela Ramirez. The nurse behind Dr. Eguiluz looks upon her with a bright green eye as she holds the baby's head and underarm. Could this be an homage to the infamous 1920's poet and artist Nahui Olin, Maria del Carmen Mondragón-Valseca?

Left Section: Modern Medicine

A) The moon with a rabbit inside, Nanahuatzin (Nahuatl deity name), a symbolic reference to the mythological story from Teotihuacan about the birth of "Fifth Sun."

B) The building of the Instituto Mexicano del Seguro Social, IMSS, in Mexico City.

C) The surrounding buildings are, to the far left we notice the industrial factories secreting smoke into the air. To the far right of the IMSS building are Mexico city's churches and common multi-housing structures or skyscrapers.

[11] Bernardo Ortiz Montellano. *Medicina, salud y nutrición aztecas* (1997), pp. 86-7. Google Books Download, Oct. 2011. See also *Hospital de La Raza 50 aniversario* (2004), Dr. Enrique Cárdenas de la Peña, "Los Murales", pp. 23-29. It is important to note that Rivera included the phallus which is not originally part of the "arbol nodriza."

D) The director of IMSS at the time Dr. Antonio Diaz Lombardo holds out a book representing the law of Social Security above a pile of currency, presumably both Mexican pesos and U.S. dollars, that helped fund the expansion and authority of the institution. To the right of Dr. Diaz Lombardo a group of four anonymous foreign aristocratic type figures, two male two female, and a fifth character with only a single eye visible, stand opposite the crowd of Mexican laborers. The figure on the left could be described as a stereotyped figure who is of Semitic decent representing international business or foreign banking. The other male is Caucasian representing business or banking interests from U.S.A or Europe drawn with a firm grip on his cash investment. The green eyed woman on the left, wearing a "Holy Cross" pendant, holds a set of playing cards above her black or brown feminine wallet. Adjacent the green-eyed woman another light complected female figure with darker hair is shown wearing a golden Virgin Mary or "Madonna" pendant and a yellow dress. Both women are of European decent, or nationals with colonial ties to Europe.

E) An anonymous industrial worker, along with the urban community and labor unions, demand medical attention or at least negotiate with influential individuals, such as Dr. Neftalí Rodriguez representing the Hospital de La Raza and the Director of IMSS at the time Dr. Antonio Diaz Lombardo, regarding their financial contribution for these healthcare benefits. The anonymous woman in a red shirt hands over cash with an exact amount written on the side strip of four-hundred million Mexican pesos. This number represents, inflation adjusted as compared to gold prices from 1954 and May 24th, 2012, an estimate of two billion U.S. dollars today.

F) The indigenous industrial worker and his family, the 'industrial family,' along with a diverse group of laborers, wait as they are attended by IMSS's administrators. The father dressed in blue overalls and an orange-red or coral colored shirt, with a bandaged arm, points to his pregnant wife in a yellow dress who holds their families' medical records or a note identifying their proof of insurance. Her two children, the young girl in the pink dress and the boy in blue overalls and a lime-green shirt, are also awaiting medical attention in the emergency room of the Hospital de La Raza. The young girl is painted with a much thinner left leg than her right, signifying her struggle with polio. Meanwhile, her brother waves a toy rifle on his right hand pointed somewhat near the dove and olive branch of peace or toward the private interests.

G) The model Violeta Bonilla holds a heart-shaped fruit from the tree of "Health" in her left hand and a dove with an olive branch in her right hand.[12]

H) A blond haired doctor, identified as Dr. Isabel González Garza, is shown administering a Mantoux screening test, a diagnostic tool for tuberculosis, on three Mexican children.

I) An anonymous man is administered a radiography exam by two unidentified doctors, one female with a bouffant cap the other male with glasses.

J) The industrial worker is shown connected to an encephalogram, an electroencephalography (EEG).

K) The industrial worker undergoing a myoelectrical study, electromyography (EMG).

[12] The information diagram seen in Luis-Martín Lozano and Juan Coronel Rivera, *Diego Rivera, The Complete Murals* (Hong Kong; Los Angeles: Taschen, 2008), pp. 529, states the model's name as "Violeta Bonillam." However, the original source published in 1988 by INBA states her last name as "Bonilla" so I preferred to state the primary source, this could be an error in text print.

L) The industrial worker is administered an X-ray in the dark background and electrocardiogram test (EKG) by Dr. Ignacio Chavez shown in the foreground reviewing his test results.

M) An anonymous woman with a malignant tumor on her left breast undergoes radiation treatment by a cobalt pump. The supervising doctors, radiologist Dr. Alfonso Díaz Infante and surgeon Dr. Manuel Aceves Pérez, direct an anonymous nurse to either stop or continue the radiation.

N) The modern birth scene through a caesarian section is shown contrast to the indigenous natural birthing. The doctors represented are not identified.

O) Two specialists, microbiologist Dr. Iturbide Alvírez and Dr. Ema Aguiluz, examine spectrums of light that list vitamins through either a scanning electron microscope or a spectrometer.[13]

P) An anonymous patient undergoes blood transfusion.

Q) A mask representing a dual face, half jaguar-half human. This mask could be a symbol of life and death or simply East and West. The jaguar references the transformative power of the soothsayer, or *nagual* a co-essence with the totem animal. It is unknown if Rivera was conscious about representing a manipulated mask that embodied similar symbolisms to the Tlatilco mask using a jaguar instead of a skull.

[13] This detail is not entirely consistent in terms of what the scene portrays. According to the diagram in Maria Estela Durate Sánchez, "Art Before Science and Medicine," pp. 514, the description states "fluoroscope" but does not elaborate on the fact that a fluoroscope would not necessarily be used to detect B Vitamin spectrums of light. The fluoroscope would be used like an X-ray machine, detecting a radioactive dye inside the body in order to properly diagnose the patient. Also, Adrián Villagómez, "la Biología en El Muralismo de Diego Rivera, " pp. 30, noted that they are using "un microscopio electrónico (electronic microscope)...que presenta una tabla con el espectro cristalográfico en que se inscriben la tiamina, la riboplasina, la nicotinamida, la piridozina, la riboflavina, el ácido ascórbico, etcétera." However, I think Villagómez meant a scanning electron microscope is used in the scene.

R) Tree of "Health," orange-red color with hermaphroditic or anthropomorphic attributes. What look like breasts on the tree of health appear more like heart-shaped bunches similar to mango fruit native to Mexico.

S) An anonymous young model displays a graduated cylinder with an extraction of nutrients from vegetables, fruits, and other organic material. Behind her seems to be representations of the analysis of nutrients, microscopic images of vitamins or a synthesis of multiple nutrients.