The Mexican Revolution

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Author Note

Story of the Mexican Revolution by four murals

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Before we take a look at the murals about the subject, it is vital to have some background knowledge about the Mexican Revolution. This political power struggle was not due to a set of predefined ideals, rather they were based on an uncertain balance of power between the peasants and the influencers of foreign capital, as a communist intellectual Bertram D. Wolfe puts it.

If we take a look at the Mural called *History of Mexico: From the Conquest to the Future.* Diego Rivera painted this mural between 1929 and 1935. Many notorious scholars of Mexican Art often depict this mural as the story of the Mexican people from Aztec times to the point where they overthrew that colonial masters from 1521. This mural has considered epic due to its historical reach. Some have gone when far to equate the mural to the ceiling frescoes painted in the Sistine Chapel by Michelangelo.

Another iconic mural that depicts the story of the struggles of the Mexican people is *History of Mexico: From the Conquest to the Present*. A significant section of the mural tells the story of the famous peasant leader Zapata, who was the key figure in the Mexican Revolution. This mural is also a blend of the native history of the Mexicans blended with symbolism that lashed out at their colonial masters. In one of the sections of the mural, we can see the mythological figure of Quetzalcoatl, a title that is often attributed to a Spanish General Cortez, who was the first general to siege Aztec cities and cease enormous amounts of gold from the Ancient Aztecs. The "enemy" of the Mexican People has been depicted by the deity to incite willingness among the populace to aid their forces in battle.

Some murals have a direct resemblance to the situations developed during the revolution. In the mural called *Liberation of the Peon,* Rivera tries to convey the story of corporal punishment before the days of the revolution. In the mural, it can seem that a laborer is beaten badly and left to die, who is later rescued by the soldiers participating in the revolution to tend to the injured man. This mural is the direct reference to a system developed in the Spanish days of rule in Mexico. This system called Peonage forced the local Mexican population to work in their lands possessed by their Spanish masters. The interesting difference in this mural is that there are Christian symbols drawn instead of the traditional Meso-Aztec ones, which were commonly used in the previous murals.

Another mural that shows the situation at the time of the Revolution is called *The Sugar Refines.* In this mural, the basic tenant of colonialization in the Americas is shown, which is slave labor. This was perhaps the central reason that incited all the revolutions in the Americas in the first place. This may be the depiction of the cruelty that was experienced by the local Mexican peasantry that groomed leaders like Zapata and Villa in the first place.

To conclude, the murals of Diego Rivera are the complete slideshow of all the ideas and events that have contributed to the period leading to the Mexican Revolution. From creating a historical pride to inciting the passion to fight the Spanish, the murals did everything to make sure that the Mexican fought their oppressors and come out on top for the world to see and admire.

# References

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