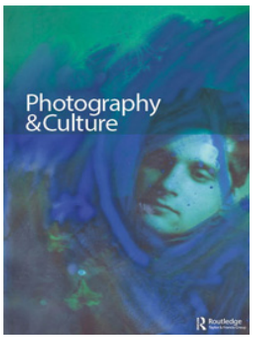

Photography and Culture

ISSN: (Print) (Online) Journal homepage: https://www.tandfonline.com/loi/rfpc20

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To cite this article: Lauren Walden (2023): Lola Álvarez Bravo: Subverting Surrealist Photography in Mexico, Photography and Culture, DOI: 10.1080/17514517.2023.2181803

To link to this article: https://doi.org/10.1080/17514517.2023.2181803

Published online: 15 Mar 2023.

Photography & Culture

Volume 0—Issue 0
March 2023
pp. 1–26
DOI:
10.1080/17514517.2023.2181803

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Lola Álvarez Bravo: Subverting Surrealist Photography in Mexico

Lauren Walden

Abstract

Rather than merely draw inspiration from Surrealism, I argue that Mexican photographer Lola Álvarez Bravo actually subverts some of its founding tenets and iconography. Though archived letters documenting the turbulent relationship with her former husband Manuel Álvarez Bravo, I contend that empirical experience incited her to deconstruct the male anatomy similarly to the surrealist treatment of the female body, photographically subverting surrealist iconography from within. I consider how Lola's staunchly Catholic religious beliefs impacted upon her feminist stance and how she navigated the female iconography of the Catholic faith in a Surrealist manner. Subsequently, I chart how Lola's photography reversed stereotypical gender roles in a post-revolutionary society, repurposing the surrealist penchant for the mannequin in the service of feminism. Lola's practice corresponds to a form of intersectional feminism, whereby her own battles concurrently engender sympathy for other marginalized communities such as the poor and the indigenous. Nevertheless, due to her reliance upon government commissions, her photographic repertoire does sometimes stray into propaganda despite her ardent denials thereof; Manuel clearly had more artistic freedom compared to Lola. Lola's subversion of surrealism is underpinned by the dichotomy of the generalized and concrete other, elaborated by feminist-cosmopolitan philosopher Seyla Benhabib.

Keywords: Lola Álvarez Bravo, Manuel Álvarez Bravo, feminism, photography, surrealism, Mexico

Introduction

Lola Álvarez Bravo (1903–1993) was born into a wealthy Mexican family in Lagos de Moreno, Jalisco. Upon her parents' separation in 1906, she was sent to live with her father and half-brother Miguel in Mexico City. Her future husband Manuel Álvarez Bravo (1902–2002) was one of Miguel's friends and would frequently visit their house. In 1906, her father passed away, leaving Lola in the care of Miguel who sent her to a boarding school. As her fortunes changed, Lola realized that once an adult she needed to fend for herself and carve out a career. Lola married Manuel Álvarez Bravo in Mexico City in 1925. Manuel was an accountant but had

practiced photography throughout his adolescence. The couple moved to Oaxaca and Lola became Manuel's assistant, giving her the opportunity to master the technical aspects of photography. Soon Lola harbored ambitions to become a photographer independently of Manuel. Whilst in Oaxaca, Lola encountered indigenous Mexican art and life which would become a pivotal factor in her future repertoire. Lola divorced Manuel in 1934 due to issues of infidelity, the catalyst for her to pursue a photographic career in her own right.

Nevertheless, Lola has been memorialized as secondary to her husband, the illustrious Manuel who published 10 photographs in the periodical *Minotaure* (1939) , to accompany an article by Surrealist founder André Breton entitled 'Souvenir de Mexique'. Breton visited Mexico as a French cultural attaché in 1938 for almost four months and lodged with the painters Frida Kahlo and Diego Riviera. Kahlo arranged a meeting between Breton, Riviera and Leon Trotsky (in exile from Russia) who together conceived an internationalist manifesto entitled 'Pour un Art Révolutionnaire Indépendant' [For an Independent Revolutionary Art] (1938). Aside from his famous collaboration with Trotsky, Breton also became acquainted with both Lola and Manuel. In Mexico, Breton was hoping to expand the international reach of Surrealism as well as reaffirm its revolutionary politics after its cessation from the French Communist Party in 1935. Alongside his well-documented infatuation with Oceanic art, Breton was also fascinated by Mexico's pre-Colombian culture, untainted by European Colonialism. Jordan (2008: 44) notes that before Breton even visited Mexico, he had amassed a collection of pre-Colombian objects, some of which would even be displayed at an exhibition of Mesoamerican art at the Musée d'Ethnographie in Paris in 1928 and alongside works by Yves Tanguy at the Galerie Surréaliste in 1927. Due to Mexico's commingling of indigenous culture with revolutionary heritage[1], Breton famously dubbed Mexico 'The most Surrealist Country in the World.' Although networks of surrealism in Mexico comprised a substantial female contingent (Frida Kahlo[2], Alice Rahon, Tina Modotti, Leonora Carrington, Remedios Varo and Kati Horna), neither Breton's post-visit reminiscence in *Minotaure* nor the photography by Manuel Álvarez Bravo's that accompanies it, ruminate on the position of woman within post-revolutionary Mexican society. Instead, throughout 'Souvenir de Mexique', Manuel's photographs are employed to conceptualize a timeless imaginary of Mexico as a land where life and death commingle. Indeed, Breton notes:

> The ability to reconcile life and death is doubtlessly the principal lure of Mexico. In this regard, it offers an inexhaustible range of sensations, from the mildest to the most insidious. There is nothing like Manuel Álvarez Bravo's photographs to reveal to us its extreme poles (Translation: Walker 2014:7).

Whilst the repertoire of Lola Álvarez Bravo does not eschew the metaphysical, her photographic trajectory differs substantially from her husband, assuming a distinctly feminist form of social engagement anchored in the empirical experience of post-revolutionary Mexican society. Lola left her husband Manuel in 1934 due to his 'womanising' (Ferrer 2006:16) and faced 'chauvinism, and occasional downright hostility, especially in her earlier career' (Ferrer 2006:59). Indeed, when asked for reasons behind her divorce by *Novedades* magazine on the 28 November 1977, she replies, 'Because he was a womaniser (…) one time we were seated together in a lorry and he said to me: "Look what a beautiful girl! It would be great to do a portrait of her right?"' (LAB Archive: AG154:4) [3] [4] . Admittedly, Lola did not have the same contact with the European Surrealists as her husband, yet she formed an important part of Mexican Surrealist networks, creating photo-portraits of Diego Riviera with his murals alongside intimate portrayals of Frida Kahlo at her home during the 1940s and even on her death bed in 1954 [5]. Arguably, Lola enacted a similar role to Man Ray as documenter of Surrealist happenings in a Mexican context, imbuing photo-

documentary with tinges of the 'marvellous'. Her archive contains thirty-seven photographs of Surrealist paintings by Man Ray, Max Ernst, Yves Tanguy, Picasso and others taken at the 1940 International Surrealist Exhibition in Mexico [6]. According to Debroise, Álvarez Bravo, and Oles (1994:21) Lola also took photographs of 'Leon Trotsky and his secretaries; Breton and his then wife Jacqueline Lamba' indicating that Lola met the founder of the Surrealist movement when he visited Mexico. Moreover, in an interview with Salomon Grimberg regarding her Frida Kahlo photographs, Lola affirms: 'Breton and I met through Diego Riviera and Lupe Marín' (Grimberg and Bravo 1991:10). Clearly, Lola had more than a peripheral interest in the Surrealist movement whilst never formally identifying herself as a member of this grouping.

The Surrealist interest in Mexico peaks during the 1930s and 1940s[7]. Lázaro Cárdenas was the nations' president between 1934 and 1940, bringing in a wide range of reforms, particularly in terms of rolling out socialist education in rural areas, nationalizing the oil industry and the distribution of land to small holders. From the perspective of European surrealists and intellectuals: 'By the late 1930s, Mexico had in fact become an aesthetic and political icon for the exiled European avant-garde, so that the Mexico of Cárdenas was imbued with a "timeless and immanent revolutionary ethos" (according to Breton) and it was a "dynamic site of social and political transformation" (according to Trotsky')' (Baackman and Craven 2009:vii). Regarding the social status of woman, Castañeda (2020:27) cites historian Jocelyn Olcott who comments: 'the Cardenista project offered women the organizing infrastructure and a common idiom of mobilization that in many ways facilitated women's efforts,' but always within the confines of Cárdenas's 'state-sanctioned projects.' This was very much the political environment that Lola operated in, intrinsically reliant on state-sponsored commissions and posts in comparison to her husband Manuel who led a much more independent career trajectory[8].

Notwithstanding, it appears that both Lola and Manuel avoid the overt socialist didacticism of figures like muralist Diego Riviera and his wife, the painter Frida Kahlo, despite holding a deep affection for them both. In a letter from Manuel to Lola dated 9 September 1922, Manuel states:

> Intelligence consists in knowing how to live and not in learning and discussing theories (that is the way I see it through my own lack of intelligence and study) It is quite difficult to believe this, such is the diversity of ideas between thinkers. With regard to knowing how to live well and live happily, we can already rely on the fundamental ideas of religion. (LAB Archive: AG154:1) [9]

Perhaps Manuel's disregard for theoretical associations rubbed off on Lola. Lola's ideological leanings are hard to pin down compared to many of her contemporaries. Both photographers would draw from a syncretic mix of Catholic and pre-Colombian religious iconography throughout their careers. When asked whether people called her a communist because of her friendship with Diego Riviera, Lola replies in the 7 September 1983 edition of *Excelsior:* 'Well no, and I am not sure why not. It may be, like a friend told me. I walk with the dancers but I do not dance' (LAB Archive: AG154:4) [10]. One could argue that Lola's affiliation with the Surrealist movement was of a similar persuasion. Indeed, she did not participate in the Mexico City International Surrealist Exhibition in 1940 contrary to her husband. However, she attended the event having taken copious photographs of Surrealist work there, a 'fellow traveller' as it were of both socialism and surrealism. Interestingly, she only photographs the work of European-based Surrealists and not her Mexican counterparts, with a particular predilection for Picasso, who again was more assimilated into the Surrealist movement rather than being a core member. As such, Lola retained her artistic dependence whilst drawing from aspects of Surrealist ideology and aesthetics. Ostensibly, this prevented her from falling into the trap of becoming an artist's

muse, as was the case of so many women aligned with surrealism.

In newspaper interviews, Lola is equally reticent about labeling herself as a feminist photographer but certainly does conceive her own stance apropos feminism:

> I don't see the necessity to always take so seriously the differences between men and women. When I started my photography career, it made no difference that women were allowed to work. Everyone found it strange to see me running up and down with my camera. Therefore, women should ardently proclaim that we need to make a living, we can make a living by working and making a contribution, we will march onwards. I think this is the only worthwhile way of asserting femininity[11]. (LAB Archive: AG154:4)

Adopting Lola's feminist stance, rather than merely draw inspiration from Surrealism, I argue that Lola Álvarez Bravo actually subverts some of its founding tenets and iconography. Though archived letters documenting her turbulent relationship with Manuel Álvarez Bravo, I contend that empirical experience incited her to deconstruct the male anatomy in a similar way to the surrealist treatment of the female body, photographically subverting surrealist iconography from within. Next, I will consider how Lola's staunchly Catholic religious beliefs impacted upon her feminist stance and how she navigated the female iconography of the Catholic faith. This will be read in conjunction with European Surrealists interests in Mexican syncretism where indigenous beliefs commingled with Catholicism. Subsequently, I will chart how Lola's photography reversed stereotypical gender roles in a post-revolutionary society, repurposing the surrealist penchant for the mannequin in the service of feminism. I will equally conceive of Lola's practice as corresponding to a form of intersectional feminism, whereby her own battles concurrently engender sympathy for other marginalized communities, such as the poor and the indigenous. In this respect, due to her reliance upon government commissions, her photographic repertoire does sometimes stray into propaganda despite her ardent denials thereof; Manuel clearly had more artistic freedom compared to Lola. Lola's subversion of surrealism is underpinned by intersectional feminism, in particular, the dichotomy of the generalized and concrete other, elaborated by feminist-cosmopolitan philosopher Seyla Benhabib. Regarding the relationship between the concrete and generalized other, Benhabib (1992:10) states:

> I envision the relationship of the generalised to the concrete other as along the model for a continuum. In the first place, there is a Universalistic commitment to the consideration of every human individual as being worthy of universal moral respect. (…) The standpoint of the concrete other, by contrast, is implicit in those ethical relationships in which we are always already immersed in the lifeworld.

The 'generalised other' is equated with Kant's Universalism in which we 'abstract from the individuality and concrete identity of the other' (Benhabib and Cornell: 1987:87), the surrealist anonymization of the female form and non-European art a case in point[12]. Indeed, there is a potent tension within cosmopolitan thought between a grounded identity politics and the idea of an emancipated human being as an end in itself. Surrealism certainly did aim to transcend cultural distinctions *via* the spirit. Breton, Trotsky and Riviera when meeting together in Mexico in 1938, espoused in their tract 'Pour un Art Révolutionnaire Indépendant' [For an Independent Revolutionary Art], which conceives of an artistic world-state without borders: 'The necessity for the emancipation of the spirit need only follow its natural course to merge and re-immerse itself in that primordial necessity: the emancipation of man' (Breton and Riviera 1938). Yet, Benhabib and Cornell (1987:87) advance that the concrete other, 'requires us to

view each and every rational being as an individual with a concrete history, identity, and affective-emotional constitution (…) we seek to comprehend the needs of the other.' Ultimately, it was Lola's goal to concretize the position of women in post-revolutionary Mexico alongside other disadvantaged sectors of society, particularly the poor and indigenous. Surrealism, depending on its usage, could work both for and against this goal.

Deconstructing the male anatomy

Lola's turbulent relationship with her former husband Manuel ostensibly catalyzed her deconstructions of the male body. Lola Álvarez Bravo's treatment of the male anatomy subverts the prominent chauvinist or *machismo* discourse apparent in Mexican society. Indeed, in *Mutilado* (1930) when she was still married to Manuel, Lola photographs a classical Greek-style torso, removing it from a predictable museal environment. With no head, the male anatomy is anonymized and fetishized, the body languishing in a barren field amidst shrubbery (Figure 1). The male torso is *in lecto recumbit,* a traditional pose of the female spouse who has no agency or occupation. Indeed, it was rare for women to achieve leadership positions or pursue artistic careers in 1920s and 1930s Mexico. Lola herself comments: 'Women who worked and managed to achieve something, who were respected by colleagues, despite our best efforts, were few and far between' (Barquín and Héctor Barrios 2005:127) [13]. The difficulty of a creative female finding work also arises in an early letter to her husband Manuel who reproaches her for asking him to enter into correspondence more frequently. He states in a letter dated 10 October 1922, 'Lola, I believe that you know full well the only time I have to write to you is at night or in the morning before I go to work. You have the whole day!' (LAB Archive: AG154:1) [14]. Unlike Lola's *Mutilado*, as an agent of authority in classical sculpture, the male would usually be depicted upright, endowed with power, purpose and psychological individuality.

Notwithstanding, the title *Mutilado* conjures up associations with violence which would traditionally be linked with male domination over women. The torso serves as a proxy for the desires of Lola herself, who faced much male opposition to her photographic practice. Dismemberment of the female body was a common trope amongst male European Surrealists. The apotheosis of this tendency is 'fleshed out' in Hans Bellmer's (1936) *Poupée* series, comprising distorted representations of woman's bodies made out of the dismembered limbs of dolls. Whilst Lola indirectly indicts the Parisian-based Surrealists with misogyny, her ironic oeuvre equally cast a critical eye upon post-revolutionary Mexico and gendered power relations, the viewers frame of reference expectant of a reclining female body.

Moreover, Lola Álvarez Bravo frequently photographed Juan Soriano, a young Mexican Painter soon to gain renown. In a work entitled *Juan Soriano Reclining* (1937), we cannot intuit the individuality of the human psyche as Soriano's face is tilted upwards, his muscular torso is performatively on display with the lower half of his body wrapped in a white sheet (Figure 2). To further add to the sensuality of the display, the scene is photographed on a beach with Soriano caught between ebb and flow of the tide. Lola converts a talented artist dubbed 'el Mozart de la pintura' [the Mozart of painting] into a male muse. Such an oneiric depiction demonstrates Lola's discrete negotiating of power relations within Mexican Surrealist and avant-garde coteries. This resonates further with Benhabib (1997:36) contention of the generalized other that 'Identities, personal as well as collective, are seen as social constructions with no basis of givenness in nature, anatomy, or some other anthropological essence.' Soriano is essentialized by his anatomy against the natural background of the sea. His identity and cache as an artist are lost in the tide becoming a 'generalised other' which was more frequently the treatment afforded to feminine corporeality within Surrealist circles. As such, Lola Álvarez Bravo subverts the trope of the generalized other perpetuated by the surrealist movement, to which she had previously fallen victim as a woman.

Figure 1. Álvarez Bravo, Lola Mutilado, c. 1930 © Center for Creative Photography, The University of Arizona Foundation / DACS 2023

Figure 2. Álvarez Bravo, Lola Untitled (Juan Soriano Reclining), 1937 © Center for Creative Photography, The University of Arizona Foundation / DACS 2023

Manuel Álvarez Bravo navigated around the surrealist propensity toward dismemberment of the female body, yet the trope of fragmentation pervades his photographic repertoire, another common device used by many male surrealists. In his work *Signals and Prognostications* (1938), the torso of a nude female sojourns amidst shards of broken glass, her hands eclipsing her face to further augment a sense of anonymity and objectification (Figure 3). Undercurrents of violence abound, but Manuel leaves the female body intact. Yet, this photograph juxtaposes fragment against

fragment: shards of glass and essentialized upper limbs. This piece easily inserts itself into a history of surrealist fragmentation of the female form and, instead of appearing idiosyncratically Mexican (as is commonly cited vis-a-vis Manuel Álvarez Bravo's photographic oeuvre [15]) could easily be mistaken for the work of a European surrealist, hence the Mexican woman is subsumed into a universal grammar of modernity, as is the Mexican culture Manuel's photography purportedly represents. Interestingly, this image was probably taken at the same photoshoot as Manuel's *Good Reputation Sleeping* [La Buena Fama Durmiendo] (1938) which was actually commissioned by André Breton to form the front cover of *Minotaure* (1939) where Breton's travelogue 'Souvenir de Mexique' would be published (Banville 2008:10)[16]. However, the piece was not chosen in the end due to what Banville terms 'the frank nudity of the model' (Banville: 2008:10). It is important that Manuel, like Lola, did not formally consider himself to be a Surrealist, despite the resonances Breton saw between his photography and the movement. Therefore, these 'commissioned' works of Surrealism, grant insight into how Manuel attempted to assimilate the anatomical iconography of the movement.

Figure 3. Álvarez Bravo, Manuel Señales y Pronósticos, 1938 © ADAGP, Paris and DACS, London 2023

Figure 4. Álvarez Bravo, Lola La Madre Matiana (Sister Matiana), 1935 © Center for Creative Photography, The University of Arizona Foundation / DACS 2023

Despite their subsequent divorce, it seems that Lola's feminism initially attracted, but also intimidated, her erstwhile husband Manuel Álvarez Bravo. In a letter to Lola dated 27 May 1922 he recalls:

> Before you were my girlfriend, we went to an exhibition of sublime feminist work together and then we went to Chapultepec soon afterwards. I already loved you at this time but full of self-doubt and worry I did not dare to speak to you' (LAB Archive: AG154:1) [17].

Not only does this letter attest to Lola's long-standing feminist commitments, but also to the fact that, theoretically speaking, her husband agreed with her ideological stance. In fact, it was Manuel's empirical actions that led to the end of their relationship. In another letter dated the 19 August 1922, Manuel writes to Lola: 'I am convinced that woman are talented, the creator of the novel in France was Madame Lafayette (I don't know the spelling)' (LAB Archive: AG154:1). It is important to note that Lola had the opportunity to curate what she left in her archive before passing away, therefore with posterity she may want us to envisage the figure of Manuel as theoretically sympathetic to feminist views despite his unpredictable behavior and artistic practice. Clearly these letters, dated before she married Manuel in 1925, were held all of Lola's life and of great emotional significance to her.

Religious feminism

Interrogating the place of the woman within Catholicism also seemed to be a preoccupation for Lola. Along these lines, she photographs the Mexican religious cult of the female *Madre Matiana* (1935) (Figure 4). Wright-Rios (2014:222) describes 'the legendary Madre Matiana, the epitome of backwardness and fanaticism that has been gendered female.' The Madre Matiana was a laywoman and Mexican fortune-teller who supposedly foresaw Mexico's war, poverty, foreign invasion, and starvation which were apparently enacted as a punishment from God. A mannequin of this figure is photographed by Lola Álvarez Bravo surrounded by male admirers, modestly dressed and gazing downwards. Men are seen putting coins into a pot held by the mannequin and pulling out pieces of paper which purport to tell their fortune. Here, Lola Álvarez Bravo clearly deconstructs woman's

positioning as the generalized other in Mexican society through the male gaze of the crowd surrounding the mannequin. The mannequin is static, unable to speak, a mythological identity is projected onto her by the surrounding male entourage. Wright-Rios (2014:222) notes the mannequins' 'sham individuality.' Indeed, the Madre Matiana has merely been fashioned into a generalized trope of passive, mythical Mexican femininity. The stasis of the mannequin undoubtedly parallels the role of women in Mexican society. Her photograph thus emphasizes the mobility of the male compared to the inertia of the woman. Indeed, Benhabib and Resnik (2009:4) perspicaciously comment: 'The mobility of some has consequences for or corresponds to the immobility of others'. Indeed, when growing up, Lola's family appeared to instil the subordination of her gender and the immobility of the domestic sphere of existence. In an interview, she states:

> Growing up, I was taught how to serve tea, make French-style snacks and cakes which were so ornate that they became infamous and nobody wanted to try them. I couldn't stand any of this. It was supposed that I should do these things because I was a young woman, but to me it all seemed degrading. (Debroise: 1985: unpaginated)[18]

It seems then, Lola was being trained for male adoration in the same way embodied by the Madre Matiana.

The mannequin was, of course, a staple of surrealist iconography, reducing woman to an object that could be reproduced and passively decorated at will. Eugene Atget's 1920s photographs of mannequins adorning Parisian shop window displays is a case in point as was the so-called 'mannequin' street at the 1938 International Surrealist Exhibition in Paris. Regarding the latter, Cruz Porchini and Ortega Orozco (2017: 5) reveals that the mannequins from the 1938 Paris exhibition were resurrected for the 1940 International Surrealist Exhibition in Mexico:

> the first image one encountered in the 1940 catalogue was a photograph by Raoul Ubac showing the mannequins of the 1938 show. In the gallery, a photograph by Denise Bellon on the same subject was on display. Photography, in this sense, was not only used as an artistic medium, but also as a way to revive aspects of previous surrealist exhibitions for the Mexican viewer.

As such, the trope of the surrealist female muse was officially 'exported' to a Mexican audience where it augmented organically home-grown assaults on womanhood.

However, *La Patrona* (Figure 5) shot sometime during the 1960s, serves quite a different purpose. As a gendered language *La Patrona* in Spanish can be translated as 'The Patroness,' the owner of a market stall standing behind the translucent array of scarfs bearing the figure of the Virgin Mary. The title of Lola's work clearly instils both the stall holder with economic agency but also alludes to the vital Biblical role played by Mary in giving birth to Jesus. Whilst the Virgin Mary was used in the campaign for Mexican independence during the 1810s, Conley (1996:29) notes that 'she herself has a subversive value as a female deity figure within the patriarchal church' and became an 'icon of disruption in patriarchal society … as such the Virgin Mary has great potential as a muse figure for female artists'. Unlike some of the attacks on organized religion, male European surrealists predicated on the Virgin Mary[19], Lola appears to cast the virgin and the immaculate conception as a symbol of female independence from the male gender. Moreover, in a Mexican context, the image of the Virgin Mary most likely represents the Virgin of Guadalupe[20], an apparition of an indigenous Virgin Mary that appeared to a Mexican peasant in 1531 during the early years of the conquest, speaking in Nahuatl language. Many indigenous Mexicans viewed this Marian apparition as stemming from the Aztec Goddess Tonantzin which encouraged syncretism between Catholicism and indigenous belief systems, often leading to conversions as well as forging ties between Catholicism and the national identity of Mexico. Although the scarfs

Figure 5. Álvarez Bravo, Lola La Patrona, c. 1960 © Center for Creative Photography, The University of Arizona Foundation / DACS 2023

are supposed to be worn as an embodied form of religion to symbolize worship, the apparition of Mary through Guadalupe can also be viewed as a symbol of indigenous pride. Lola has therefore chosen a symbol that advocates for her *indigenismo*, feminism and religious belief system whilst a ludic photographic composition incorporating both occlusion and translucence adds a Surrealist dynamic of opposing forces.

Lola particularly documented items relating to syncretic belief systems, commingling Catholicism with pre-Colombian rituals. In 1935, Lola contributed to a special issue of *Mexican Folkways,* a bilingual Spanish-English journal edited by anthropologist Frances Toor. Several other Mexican Surrealists photographed for, or contributed to, this magazine, including Lola's former husband Manuel.[21] It seems that the Mexican Surrealist engagement with anthropology and ethnography paralleled the Parisian-based Surrealists fascination with the collections of the Trocadéro. Lola was highly engaged in the plight of indigenous Mexicans as much of her later photography from the 1940s and 1950s attests to. In an interview with *Siempre* magazine (1979), Lola is asked how she was taught how to view indigenous peoples when growing up. It seems that her views were influenced by the kindness instilled by her father. She comments:

> My father was very knowledgeable and generous: he treated the servants with great respect and they liked us. Sometimes we would go onto the street with him and if we

> saw a beggar we would say to them "Come on, let's go to our house" (LAB Archive: AG154:4)

Regarding her perception of *Mexican Folkways* itself, Lola Álvarez Bravo is asked in an interview (LAB Archive: AG154:4) 'Why do you think that foreigners always conduct this type of investigation in Mexico?' [22], to which she replies 'Since foreigners often lack their own folklore, they search for otherness and hence satisfy an aesthetic need.'[23] Indeed, it would seem that in its search for a 'concrete other,' anthropologists turned toward non-Western cultures in a search for an authenticity lacking in the plurality of contemporary Western society.

One of the objects Lola photographed for the magazine was: 'Bread for the Day of the Dead, State of Mexico'[24] (Figure 6). This decorative bread forms part of a food offering or 'ofrenda' to departed souls. Nutini (2014:122) describes the *pan de muertos* as 'the most important and prominent offering to the dead.' Surprisingly in rural communities, 'Men are solely responsible for the *pan de muertos* from the mixing of the ingredients to the baking and removing of the bread from the oven' (Nutini 2014:122). Such a ritual aligns with Mikhail Bakhtin's idea of the 'carnivalesque' whereby hierarchical relations are temporarily suspended on special festive occasions, men temporarily assuming household roles traditionally assigned to women. As Lachmann, Eshelman, and Davis (1988:125) notes the 'hierarchy as staged in the carnival, offer permanent alternative to official culture-even if it ultimately leaves everything as it was before' Postulating alternatives to female domesticity was most likely Lola's motivation behind photographing this object.

Although photographed by Lola Álvarez Bravo, the *pan de muertos* pictured belongs to, therefore was likely made by, Carlos Merida (Toor 1935:77)[25], a Guatemalan painter who became part of the Mexican muralist movement, renowned for incorporating the decorative leitmotivs of folk art onto the canvas. This attests to the power of the transmission of motifs not only across cultures but across a panoply of different artistic media. Whilst Merida subsumed Folk Art objects into painting, Lola Álvarez Bravo did the same through her photographic lens. In *Mexican Folkways* Lola's camera allows the idiosyncrasies of Mexican life to be transmitted to both a pan-Hispanic and Anglophone audience whilst the camera serves as the intermediary for the aesthetics of everyday life to be transmitted into fine art. It seems no coincidence that one of the popular art forms Lola chooses to photograph disrupts stereotypical gender power relations, even if only for one day a year.

Breton himself was clearly fascinated with the Day of the Dead due to its morbid iconography and syncretic commingling of belief systems. A full-page reproduction of a sugar skill emblazoned with the Christian Cross is photographed by Raoul Ubac in 'Souvenir de Mexique' (Breton, André: 1939: 43). Frances Toor notes the sugar skulls are also a form of food offering: 'For the Day of the Dead, November 1st and 2nd, for example, there are candy skulls and coffins and little animals and figures in candies with pumpkin seeds, and so on, which are put on the altars of food offered to the dead.' (Toor 1935: 76). As such, the surrealists turned to Mexico and its embodied form of religion to satisfy the generalized otherness that Lola alludes to.

Reversing gender roles

Lola's photography often supersedes a mere disruption of gendered labour. In the 1930s, Lola photographed a work entitled *Pespunteando en la brisa* [cross-stitching in the breeze] depicting a man at work on a Singer sewing machine, flanked by a small hut at what appears to be a lakeside (Figure 7). The outdoor rural location and solitary endeavor give rise to a somewhat romanticized portrayal of manual labor. This begs the question, is this photograph, which reverses stereotypical gender roles, a document of reality or a composition of possibility? Historically speaking, De la Cruz- Fernandez (2015:531) reveals that the Singer company thrived in post-revolutionary Mexico, stating:

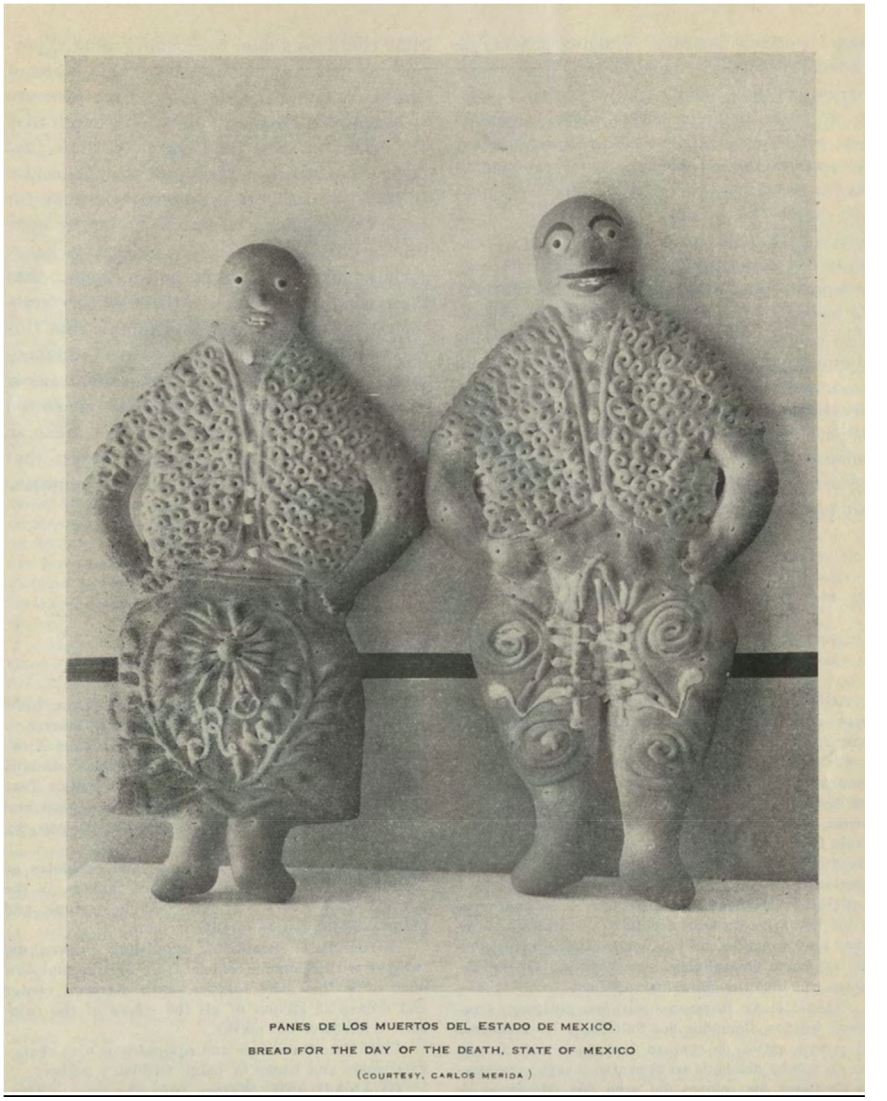

Figure 6. Álvarez Bravo, Lola Bread for the Day of the Dead, 1935 © Center for Creative Photography, The University of Arizona Foundation / DACS 2023

The company succeeded, in part, by constantly associating the sewing machine with the idea of "modern" womanhood in Revolutionary Mexico. The company, despite rampant anti-Americanism forged a positive rapport with the Mexican government by promoting a certain ideal of a female contribution to the revolution: Singer worked hand in hand with government officials in their education programs for women. The company also endorsed private initiatives that promoted the ideal Mexican woman as a

Figure 7. Álvarez Bravo, Lola Pespunteando en la Brisa, c. 1930 © Center for Creative Photography, The University of Arizona Foundation / DACS 2023

> mother, wife, and homemaker, and created new marketing spaces and tools—such as schools and manuals in Spanish—to support that ideal.

Therefore, we can either assume that Lola Álvarez Bravo's photograph represents an anomaly to prevailing social trends or it was composed as a radical feminist statement of de-gendering labor.

Interestingly, in Breton's 'Souvenir de Mexique' a photograph of sewing machines is also featured, this time in a military camp in Monterrey that Breton toured with a revolutionary General. In this photograph, no one is working at the sewing machines, de-gendering this activity to a certain extent (Figure 8). However, in his accompanying text, Breton reveals that families live together at the military camp. We can perhaps read between the lines here, that the sewing machines were employed on the military camps as what De La Cruz-Fernandez (2015:544) terms as 'labores femeniles'. De La Cruz Fernandez explains in a post-revolutionary context: 'the Secretaría's Department of Industrial and Technical Education provided additional courses in "feminine labors" (*labores femeniles*), which included

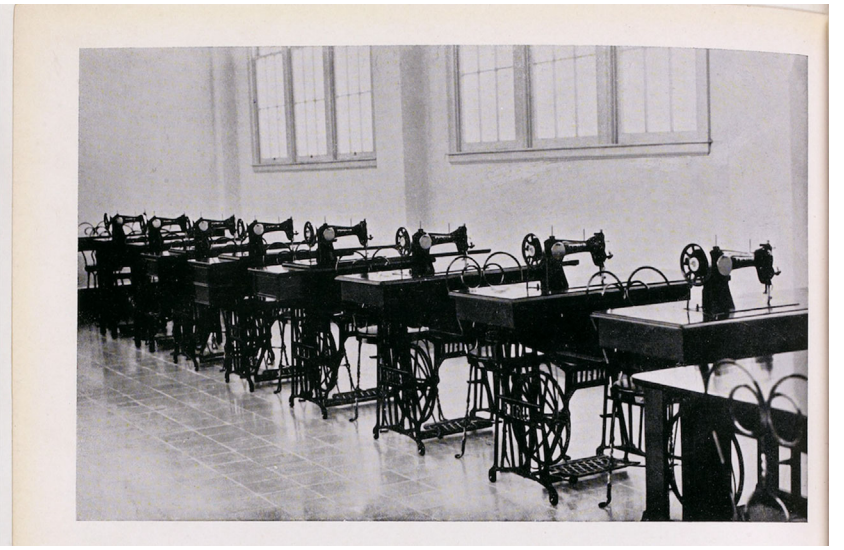

Figure 8. Anon (1938) *Monterrey: Cité militaire* (photograph) in *Minotaure* no. 12–13 (May 1939) p. 50. Source: gallica.bnf.fr/Bibliothèque nationale de France

lessons on basic embroidery, cooking, and childrearing. It also created Escuelas de Hogar, or Household Schools, which trained women in professions such as cooking, cleaning, and clerical work'. Breton (1939:45) highly romanticizes such an activity being part of a military camp, commenting on 'The clothes workshop, where the design of the wheel and machine pedal is complemented by a crafted iron chair with a backrest'[26] . When Breton regales the family-orientated atmosphere of the military camp to Trotsky, he rebukes 'And if you needed such an army, what would you do with them?'[27] (Breton 1939:45), Trotsky clearly fearing that the atmosphere of a military camp had somehow been 'feminised.'

Moving forward a decade to the 1950s, Lola demonstrates another carnivalesque reversing of gender roles through an unambiguously performative photograph, a classical nude mannequin is positioned by the side of a vehicle in the guise of a car mechanic, a traditionally male dominated field of employment (Figure 9). Here, Lola does not gesture toward any pretence of realism but rather alludes to the very absence of woman in such a role. She was able to find a man that could sew, or was at least willing to be photographed sewing, during the 1930s but it appears she could not find a female mechanic to document in 1950s Mexico. This image has been analyzed by Allmer (2020) as 'a mannequin and the shell of a car, precisely the kind of random and poetic juxtaposition celebrated by the Surrealists.' Indeed, Lola is clearly using the surrealist technique of incongruous juxtaposition here, but also subverting it by making us question the purported randomness of this juxtaposition given the overarching social context in Mexico at the time – should a woman fixing a car really be so strange? The mannequin is in a contrapposto position which alludes to movement and psychological individuality; moreover, she is positioned as actively engaged in labor holding what appears to be a tyre pump. Rather, it seems that Lola is more militant here, espousing a future possibility of degendered labor.

Intersectional feminism and El Maestro rural

El Maestro Rural was an official magazine of the Mexican government's education secretariat intended to boost the morale of rural-based primary school

Figure 9. Álvarez Bravo, Lola Untitled (mannequin fixing a car) © Center for Creative Photography, The University of Arizona Foundation / DACS 2023

teachers working in a post-Revolutionary context. In particular, the magazine espoused government educational policies and, in particular, encouraged teachers to focus on increasing literacy rates. In 1935, shortly after her divorce from Manuel, Lola Álvarez Bravo was named staff photographer for the magazine and contributed several works. Apropos her commission for this magazine, she comments in an interview with *El Nacional* on 7 April 1984:

> When I started to work with Hector Perez Martinez on *El Maestro Rural*, I also began to leave the city and relate to normal people, understand their feelings, and I felt that I had attained that desire for identification with my country and myself (LAB Archive: AG154:4) [28]

Lola Álvarez Bravo ardently denies any form of propagandistic activity in her work, despite this particular magazine being an organ of the government that was directly supported by President Lázaro Cárdenas. Lola states in an interview with *Uno más Uno* on the 10 January 1984 'Any commission that entailed mystifying something or engaging in propaganda was rejected, in the same way I refused to partake in any form of social demagogy' (LAB archive:AG154:4) [29]. There are times, however, when Lola's photography for *El Maestro Rural* verges on propaganda due to her reliance upon commissions to earn a living rather than enjoying international status as a fine art photographer like her husband.

In *El Maestro Rural*, the article 'Los libros del texto' [Textbooks], written by Professor Gabriel Lucio (Secretaría de Educación Pública:1936: VIII: 2) espouses a positive slant on the liberating potential Walter Benjamin sees in mechanical reproduction. The text relates the mass-production of a student textbook entitled *Simiente* (written by Lucio) which

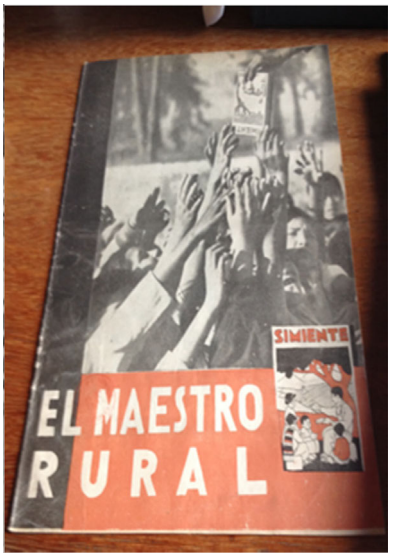

Figure 10. Álvarez Bravo, Lola El Maestro Rural, 1936 © Center for Creative Photography, The University of Arizona Foundation / DACS 2023

can be translated as 'seed,' evidently affirming hope in the potential of the future generation. According to the article, the book costs only seven cents a copy whilst explaining that the situation of the countryside is 'More limited to what books they could buy than those in the city' [30]. One and a half million copies of the textbook were distributed by the socialist government to the countryside covering the first four years of elementary school education, a truly noble program of educational outreach.

Lola Álvarez Bravo's accompanying photography transforms mass production into art. A full-page iteration of stacked reproductions is truly vertiginous. As I previously mentioned, for Benhabib the concrete other is incompatible with an ideological fervour which it would seem Lola Álvarez Bravo literally buys into through this commission, many pieces more reminiscent of Soviet constructivism as opposed to surrealism. In another photograph to accompany the text, Lola Álvarez Bravo depicts a circle of children avidly clustering around the textbook, eager to learn. The focus on the production process by the author undoubtedly has Marxist resonances, but amidst the impressive statistics, Lola Álvarez Bravo's photography substantially humanizes the enormous process. Indeed, the first photograph in Lola Álvarez Bravo's sequence shows contented children reading the text. The picture of the copious textbook copies itself is artistically astute, shot from a low side-angle. Given the camera's perspective, the viewer can intuit there are more stacks of books out of shot which widens the scale of production beyond the confines of the lens. Lola Álvarez Bravo also shoots the front cover of the magazine which uses the human hand as a synecdoche for children's yearning to learn, pairs of hands outstretched in a pyramid-like composition toward a single copy of the textbook (Figure 10). Whilst this displays positive iterations of the generalized other in terms of highlighting the common plight of all impoverished children, it also espouses a didactic form of education across a whole country with different contexts and individual abilities.

The article clearly contains some questionable propaganda in which Lola Álvarez Bravo is undoubtedly complicit. The author, Lucio, states 'Mexico, like other developed countries, recognises the importance of feeding young children and teenagers with new ideas' [31]. Whilst Mexico is dubbed an advanced country, in Breton's *Souvenir du Mexique*, he states that the infant mortality rate was 75**%**. Indeed, Breton used Manuel Álvarez Bravo's images in *Minotaure* to conjure a country of revolution, indigenous myth but also abject poverty and a place where the boundary between life and death is very porous. Mexico is a country where 'the wind of liberation still blows' but that also has an 'infant mortality rate of 75**%**.' To demonstrate this, Breton includes Manuel Álvarez Bravo's 1931 photograph *Ladder of ladders* depicting a child coffin perched atop a ladder alongside a phonograph horn. In the background, much like the stacks of books photographed by Lola, we see coffins vertically piled on top of each other, gesturing toward the shameful banality of death in childhood (Figure 11). Overall Lola's photographs highlight a yearning to learn, which is correctly depicted as universal. Notwithstanding, when combining the ideological

Figure 11. Álvarez Bravo, Manuel Ladder of Ladders, 1931 © ADAGP, Paris and DACS, London 2023

affect of both text and images, an in depth-understanding of the socio-economic problems facing Mexico in spite of the revolution is brushed aside in favour of impressive statistics.

In 1935, two photomontages by Lola were printed in *El Maestro Rural*, her first foray into this new media. Taking the opus of *El Maestro Rural,* as a whole, photomontage is a common medium throughout the magazine. Photomontage is unique in that it can both psychoanalytical and political in nature much like Surrealism and its commingling of both Freudian and Marxist thought. Indeed, Photomontage was co-opted by Russian Constructivist and the Soviet Union for propaganda purposes whereas the Surrealists often used it to invoke incongruous juxtapositions. Ostensibly,

much of Lola's photomontage practice resides somewhere between these two poles. Spanke (2013:138) cites Lola herself on photomontage, stating 'Sometimes I wanted to say something and photography didn't fully allow me to do it. So I'd take a sheet of cardboard, make a drawing, select the negatives, print them on the necessary size, then cut and paste.' In other words, photomontage could help Lola instrumentalize Surrealism's dialectic of the 'real and the imagined' in the Second Manifesto of 1929 (Breton 2012: 123) to invoke a greater truth.

It is important to note that these works exhibited at a woman-only exhibition namely, 'el sector femenino del profesorado de la sección de artes plásticas, auspiciada por el departamento de bellas artes' [The female sector of Fine arts teachers, sponsored by the Fine art department]. The works do not contain an exclusively feminist message despite being exhibited at a feminist exhibition. Hence, the female artist is imbricated in national issues and not exclusively identity-based politics.

El Sueño de los Pobres (1935) is arguably Lola's most famous work. She depicts a small downtrodden infant wearing rags who is sleeping rough (Figure 12). Couched in a Surrealist dream, above the boy stands a machine pouring swathes of money down into the street. The inclusion of a machine is no coincidence as Giraud (2015) notes that: 'The implicit evil of the machine, symbol of capitalism and its unrelenting cruelty' also has 'Surrealist undertones' [32]. Moreover, Hernandez (2018: 24) conducts a feminist reading of the piece, stating:

> Lacking a mother figure, the child is left to sleep in a pile of debris. The motherless child can thus be seen as an allegory for poverty. Álvarez Bravo, however, does not place blame on the absence of a mother figure. Instead she includes the oversized minting machine, which can be interpreted as an allegorical representation of masculinity, overtaking the helpless child. The massive force of capitalism, both intrusive and aggressive, can be interpreted as a nuanced criticism of the virile nationalism and gender inequality.

This is certainly a valid reading of the piece, but I would propose a more intersectional reading of the work – the title is in the Spanish plural 'pobres', the plural here incorporating both masculine and feminine subjects. The poor male child could easily be replaced by other disadvantaged communities, the indigenous and woman, the machinery of capitalism lingering overhead designed to ensure their marginalization.

El sueño de los pobres is probably the only work by Lola Álvarez Bravo which has already received substantial critical commentary by several scholars. Many of her other photomontages merit the same treatment. In 1935, Lola creates a photomontage entitled *El capital hambriento de sobre trabajo* [The Hungry Capital of Hard Labour], also published in *El Maestro Rural* (Figure 13). The spectre of hunger is personified through a suit-clad corpse presiding over haggard workers pushing and lifting heavy objects. The spectre of evil is clearly male, representing the capitalist bourgeoisie. Moreover, Hernandez (2018: 24–25) draws attention to 'a barefoot female corpse that lies atop the engine of the composition.' Clearly this is a working-class woman who has died due to exhaustion and starvation enacted by the male-dominated managerial class. Whilst in the bourgeoise circles Lola was lucky enough to be born into, she was forced to make ornate cakes, the working class women she depicts is forced to work in order to survive. In other words, it is necessary to adopt an intersectional approach by taking social class and gender as countervailing forces – would Lola have succeeded as a leading Mexican photographer if born into a working class milieu, or would she have suffered the same fate as the lifeless woman in this photomontage?

Lola's interest in education gained during her commission for *El Maestro Rural* reaches its apotheosis in *Universidad Femenina* (1943), a photomontage that fictitiously constructs an institution of

Figure 12. Álvarez Bravo, Lola El Sueño de los Pobres, 1935 © Center for Creative Photography, The University of Arizona Foundation / DACS 2023

women-only education and clearly her most overtly feminist work (Figure 14) Hernandez (2018: 47) states: '*Universidad Femenina* is a visual representation of the changing role of women, who now train for jobs as teachers, scholars, writers, scientists, and artists'. This photomontage again leans more toward a soviet style similarly to her photographs of the *simiente* textbook in *El Maestro Rural.* Photomontage as a form, of course, transcends both the avant-garde, constructivism and even socialist realism. Ades (1986: 87) cites and explains Russian filmmaker Kuleshov's theory of montage: 'every art form has two technological elements: material itself and the way that material is organized. The methods of the cinema are very complex but basically, Kuelshov assumes, its material is reality and the structure given

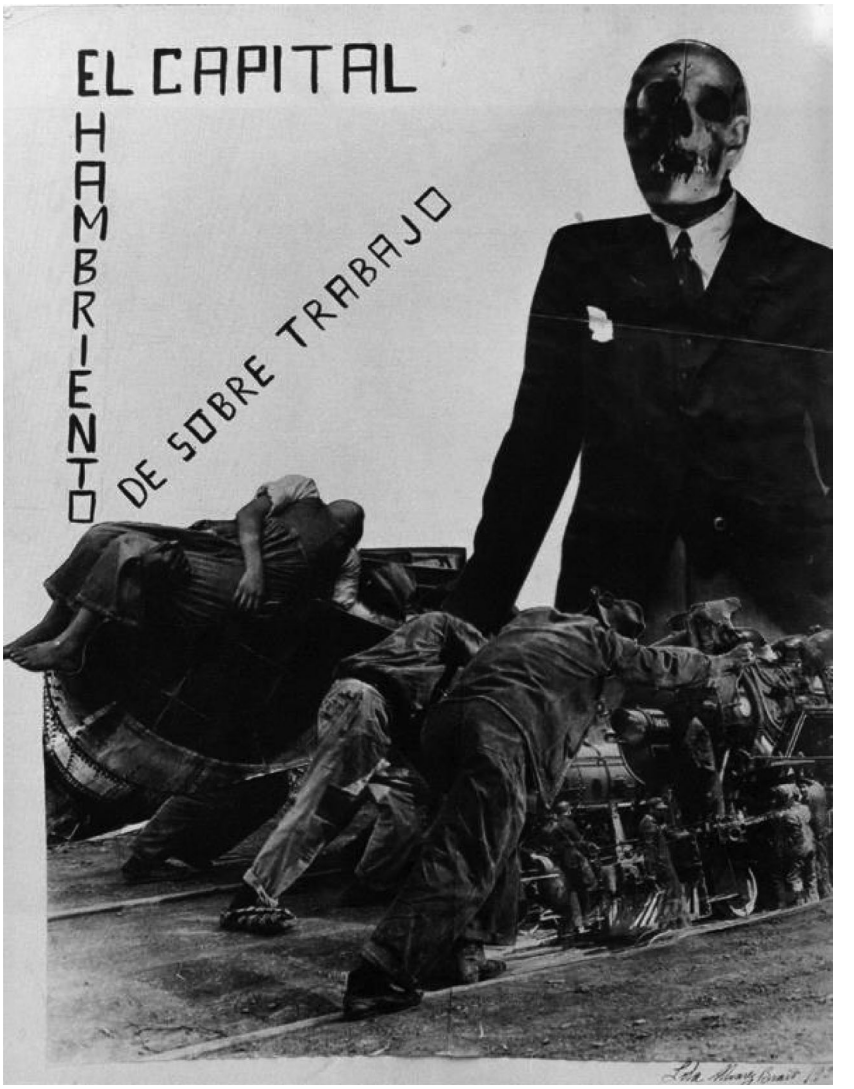

Figure 13. Álvarez Bravo, Lola El capital Hambriento de sobre trabajo, 1935 © Center for Creative Photography, The University of Arizona Foundation / DACS 2023

to it us all-important in determining how that reality is perceived.' It would seem that here Lola wants to couch the vision of a woman's university very much as a synthesis of reality, collated into one single frame. *Universidad Femenina* is devoid of the oneiric devices and incongruous juxtapositions synonymous with surrealist photomontage which was clearly at work in *El Sueño de los Pobres* and *El Capital Hambriento de Sobre Trabajo*. In *Universidad femenina,* there is no ludic intent, perhaps indicative of the limitations of surrealism when depicting ideological fervor.

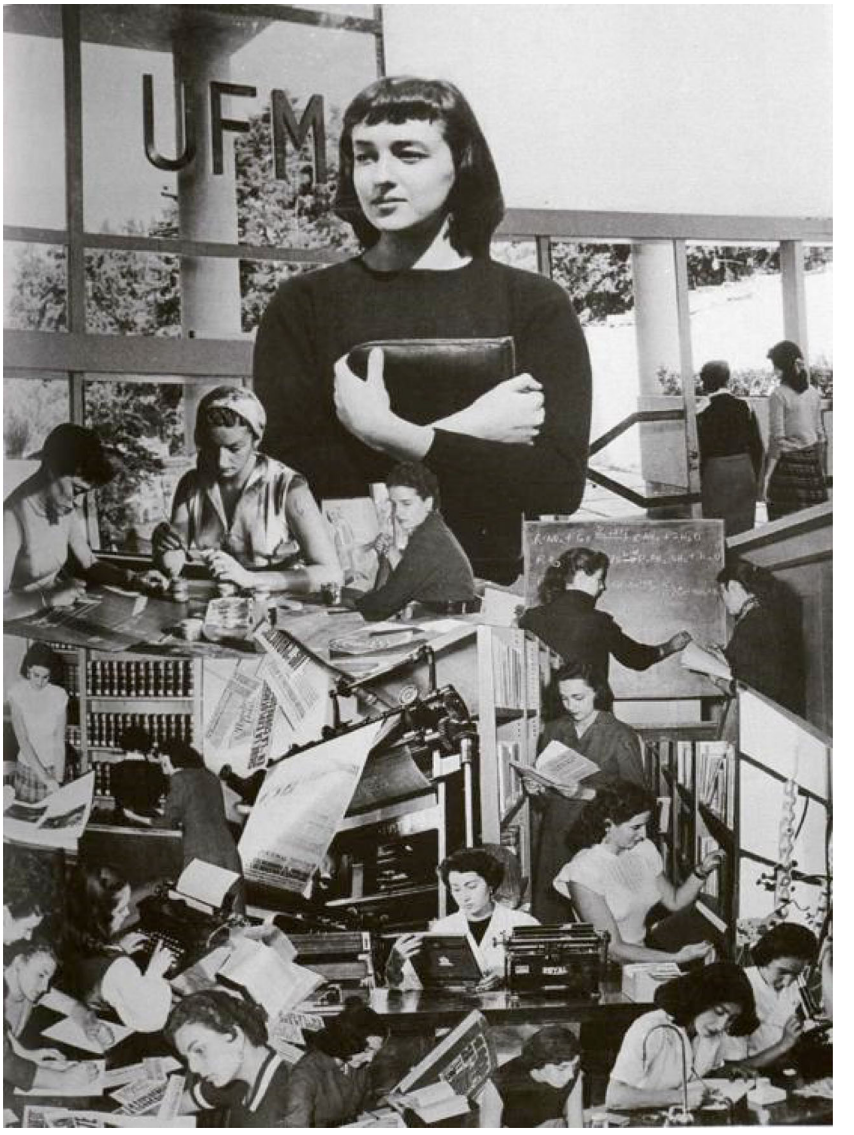

Figure 14. Álvarez Bravo, Lola Universidad Femenina, 1943 © Center for Creative Photography, The University of Arizona Foundation / DACS 2023

Conclusion

Over the course of her career, Mexican photographer Lola Álvarez Bravo subverts surrealism, divorces her chauvinistic husband, deconstructs the 'male gaze' and champions indigenous art. Lola certainly embraced the transcultural exchange of the modern era that Surrealism was a vital part of. Indeed, she comments in *El Heraldo de Mexico* on the 26 November 1982 that:

> Emotions can be localised, they can be very beautiful, magnificent and hence metamorphose into something universal. So, when there is a transmission between the author and the viewer, it is possible that the sentiment is universalised to a great extent, because it is not a specific language, it is not Mexican, French or Spanish. It is a language of the spirit. (LAB Archive: AG154:4) [33]

Further to this, Lola Álvarez Bravo adds in an interview with *Activa* magazine in 1984: 'I don't have a specific subject matter, I always ensure I include the human being' (LAB Archive: AG154:4) [34]. At first glance, Lola Álvarez Bravo appears to embody the Kantian Universalism that Surrealism espouses but Benhabib rejects, however, it is through the intimacy of the photographic medium that she reconciles her Universalist ideals with the subjectivity of individual being, operating at the interstices of surrealism, socialism, feminism and *indigenismo*.

Lola's odds were unquestionably stacked against her due to her gender. Her former husband, Manuel Álvarez Bravo wrote in a letter to her dated 30 October 1922 'You told me that you think fate is against us. I believe that fate is a bit like a project, it is established beforehand, but anyone can modify it' (LAB Archive: AG154:1) [35]. Fate was certainly against their relationship; however, Lola managed to modify her fate as a woman, using Surrealist contacts, techniques and iconography originally introduced by Manuel to further her own photographic career.

Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author(s).

Funding

This work was supported by Center for Creative Photography, University of Arizona.

Notes

1. It is important to note that the Mexican Revolution (1910–1920) did not lead to a Communist State. The Institutional Revolutionary Party (IRP) in government, whilst engaged in sweeping social reforms (Agrarian Reform, Nationalisation of the Oil Industry, expropriation of foreign-owned industries, and the celebration of indigenous peoples) during the 1930s were part of an elected democracy of competing parties, including the Mexican Communist Party which Kahlo and Riviera were part of.
2. André Breton dubbed Kahlo a Surrealist during his tour of Mexico in 1938. Kahlo famously responded that she 'painted her own reality'. See Hayden Herrera *Frida: a biography of Frida Kahlo* (New York: Harper and Row 1983) p. 266. Whilst never officially joining the Surrealist group, Kahlo and her husband the Mexican muralist Diego Riviera participated in the International Surrealist Exhibition in Mexico in 1940. Moreover, there are strong parallels between her work and Surrealist notions of the dreamscape, revolution, and reverence for indigenous art.
3. 'Por qué era muy mujeriego (…) Una vez que íbamos en un camión los dos sentaditos y me dijo 'Mira qué guapa muchacha. Esta muy buena para que le haga yo un retrato ¿Verdad?'
4. All archival material pertaining to Lola Álvarez Bravo used in this article comes from the Lola Álvarez Bravo Archive, Centre for Creative Photography, Tuscon, Arizona who kindly funded my research expenses through awarding me the 2018 Gary Metz research fellowship. All in-text citations of this archive are subsequently abbreviated to LAB. Some of this research contributed towards my Phd thesis which was awarded in 2019.
5. The Kahlo photographs have been published whereas the Riviera works are only available as contact prints and negatives in the Lola Álvarez Bravo Archive, Centre for Creative Photography, Tuscon, Arizona.
6. Lola Álvarez Bravo Archive reference AG154 8/5 1 1–37. Lola did not present work at this exhibition but attended.
7. Beyond André Breton's visit in 1938, several other European-based Surrealists visited Mexico with several female surrealists remaining there

permanently: Antoin Artaud (1936), Wolfgang Paalen (1939–1959), Alice Rahon (1939–1987) Benjamin Péret (1941–1947) Remedios Varo (1941–1963, Leonora Carrington (1942–2011) Kurt Seligmann (1943) and Paul Eluard (1949) .

8. Lola's first commission after divorcing Manuel was with the state-sponsored education magazine *El Maestro Rural*, having been recommended to the position by Lázaro Cárdenas himself. In 1937, she taught at the Universidad Autónoma de Mexico and in 1942 was appointed chief of photography to the government-run Instituto Nacional de Bellas Artes y Literatura post she held for the next 30 years. In contrast, Manuel Álvarez Bravo's work was exhibited abroad in France by André Breton. Over the span of his career his work was exhibited at 150 solo exhibitions throughout the world. Whilst he did hold government sponsored positions, (he taught at the Escuela Central de Artes Plásticas between 1938 and 1939 and the Centro Universitario de Estudios Cinematográficos in the late 1960s, he was not reliant on them.

9. La inteligencia consiste en saber vivir no en aprender y discutir teorías (a mi modo de ver quizá por mí misma falta de inteligencia y de estudio). Muy difícil creo esto, tal es la diversidad de ideas entre los pensadores y para saber vivir bien y alegremente ya tenemos las ideas fundamentales de la religión.

10. 'Pues no y no sé por qué. Sera que, como decía un amigo mío, yo ando con los danzantes, pero no soy danzante.'

11. 'No veo yo esa necesidad de estar siempre machaca a machaca con eso de las diferencias entre hombres y mujeres En el tiempo que empecé a trabajar, recuerdo, no se usaba que las mujeres trabajáramos, y para la gente, era insólito verme brincando con la camera y corriendo de acá para allá. Así pues, las mujeres que entonces nos dedicamos a proclamar que teníamos que vivir, y que podíamos vivir de nuestro trabajo y hacer algo, salimos adelante. Por eso, creo que esta es la única forma de demostrar la femineidad que vale y puede'

12. Notably through headlessless, fragmentation and dismembering of limbs.

13. 'Las mujeres que trabajábamos y lográbamos hacer algo, y que nos respetaran dentro de nuestro trabajo y por nuestro esfuerzo, éramos muy pocas'

14. 'Lola, sabes muy bien (creo) puedes suponer que la única hora que tengo para escribirte es en la noche o en la mañana antes de irme a trabajar, tú tienes todo el día.'

15. Walker (2014:2) states 'every commentator, both in Mexico and outside, sees Álvarez Bravo as a quintessentially Mexican artist.'

16. Thank you also to the anonymous peer reviewer for drawing my attention to this.

17. 'Antes de que fueras mi novia fuimos una vez juntos a una exposición de trabajos femeninos sublimas de allí temprano y nos fuimos a Chapultepec, yo ya te quería, pero lleno de preocupaciones y dudas no me atrevía a hablarte'

18. 'Cuando era niña me enseñaban a servir él te, a hacer pasteles y platillos franceses que, de tan decorados, se volvían infames y nadie quería probarlos. Nada de eso me gustaba. Se suponía que yo debía hacer esas cosas porque era señorita, pero a mi parecían denigrantes.'

19. Conely (1996:29) refers to Francis Picabia's (1920) *Saint Vierge* and Max Ernst's (1926) *Vierge corrigeant l'enfant Jesus devant trois temoins: André Breton, Paul Eluard and Max Ernst*

20. I would like to thank the anonymous peer reviewer for alerting me to this.

21. Painter Carlos Merida also contributed articles for the magazine as did Diego Riviera and Tina Modotti.

22. ¿Por qué será que este tipo de investigaciones siempre las hacen en México los extranjeros?

23. 'Porque son más ávidos y más valientes. Por otra parte, como carecen de un folklore propio, buscan el ajeno y así satisfacen una necesidad estética.'

24. Lola Álvarez Bravo Archive Reference 8/5:3:45

25. Merida also exhibited at the International Surrealist Exhibition, Mexico City, 1940.

26. L'atelier de couture, ou le dessin de la roue et de la pédale des machines va jusqu'a chercher son heureux complément dans celui du dossier et du siège de la chaise en fer.

27. 'Et que faire, *en cas de besoin*, d'une telle armée'

28. 'Cuando empecé a trabajar con Héctor Pérez Martínez en la revista *El Maestro Rural*, comencé asimismo a salir de la ciudad y entre en relación con

la gente y a penetrar su sensibilidad, y yo sentí que estaba alcanzado ese anhelo de realización e identificación con el país y conmigo misma.'

29. 'Cualquier encargo que implique mistificar algo o hacerle propaganda ha sido rechazado, de igual manera me he retirado de cualquier demagogia social.'
30. 'aún mas limitadas para la compra de libros que las de la ciudad'
31. 'Mexico como otros paises avanzados se da cuenta de la importancia que tiene alimentar la infancia y la juventud con las ideas nuevas'
32. 'la implícita maldad de la máquina, símbolo del capitalismo y de su crueldad implacable' has 'tintes Surrealistas'
33. 'Las emociones pueden ser locales, pueden ser muy buenas, magnificas, y así convertirse en universales. Entonces cuando hay una transmisión del autor hacia el espectador, posiblemente en grado superior puede volverse universal, porque no es un lenguaje propio, ni de México, ni de Francia, ni de España, es un lenguaje del espíritu.'
34. 'No tengo un tema especial, procure incluir siempre al ser humano.'
35. 'Me decías que te parecía que esta contra nosotros el destino, yo creo que esto del destino es algo así como un proyecto, establecido de antemano pero que cada uno puede modificar'

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AG154: four Clippings documenting Lola Álvarez Bravo's career

AG154: 8/5: 8: 1–59 French Paintings Exhibited in Mexico City.

AG 154: 8/5: 3: 60–99 Mexican Folk Art

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