What about you? The "utopian" soccer team of the not-yet

¿Y tú qué? El “utópico” equipo de futbol del todavía-no
E tu que? O time de futebol "utópico" do ainda não

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Abstract: This article presents two different, even antagonistic, visions of observation of "reality": one that ponders on reality and the other that reflects on reality. In this sense, the objective is to show in more detail some of the characteristics and implications of the view that reflects reality. To smell the reality implies to reflect on the social struggles, to bring out categories to "open them" for the utopian time of the bulletin, keeping hope; as well as to think about the social struggles implies to recognize the solidarity among them, and the incompleteness of the rebellious soccer time.


Resumen El presente artículo presenta dos miradas distintas, incluso antagónicas, de observación de “la realidad”: una que reflexiona sobre la realidad y otra que reflexiona desde la realidad. En ese sentido, el objetivo es desplegar más a detalle alguna de las características e implicaciones de la mirada que reflexiona desde la realidad. Mirar desde la realidad implica
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reflexionar desde las luchas sociales, agrietar las categorías para “abrilas” al tiempo utópico del reloj de arena, mantener la esperanza; así como pensar desde las luchas sociales implica reconocer la solidaridad entre las mismas, y la incompletud del equipo de futbol de la rebeldía.

**Palabras clave:** Teoría crítica, pensamiento crítico, subjetividades anticapitalistas, zapatismo, utopía.

**Resumo:** Este artigo apresenta duas visões diferentes, até antagonicas, de observação da "realidade": uma que pondera sobre a realidade e outra que reflete sobre a realidade. Nesse sentido, o objetivo é mostrar com mais detalhes algumas das características e implicações do olhar que reflete a partir da realidade. Olhar da realidade implica refletir sobre as lutas sociais, rachar categorias para "abri-las" para o tempo utópico da ampolheta, mantendo a esperança; Assim como pensar nas lutas sociais implica reconhecer a solidariedade entre elas, e a incompletude do time de futebol rebelde.

**Palavras-chave:** Teoria Crítica, Pensamento Crítico, Subjetividades anticapitalistas, Zapatismo, Utopia.

**INTRODUCTION**

As the humanity we are trying to be, we are in crisis. Crisis of the capitalist world-economy (Wallerstein, 2001) civilizational crisis (Echeverría, 2011a) or crisis of the way of doing work (Holloway, 2011) crisis that is expressed in the appearance and perishing of many of us. Countless studies and journalistic articles alert us and ratify, day by day, that the religion of capital and its god Money, continues demanding and demanding for its existence our past, present and future sacrifice, in the form of debt, blood, sweat, dreams
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and bodies. Numerous approaches and narratives account for the dispossesssion, devastation, exploitation and death that the Juggernaut-Yaganatha chariot of capitalist progress and development leaves in its wake. The immense warehouse of merchandise into which the world has been transformed, and with it our existences and nature, appears at the mercy of a storm determined to transform into commodity-thing everything it finds within its reach, and to annihilate all those who resist transformation. The "fourth world war", as the Zapatistas call it, now appears with the image of the world as a farm, directed by the capitalist boss, watched over by the governments-captains, butlers and stewards; farms in which "all the time of our lives is given to labor", to capital. (Moses, 2017).

The capitalist finite economy demands, as a sacrifice, the lives of docile, "atomized", "flexible" and "multi-skilled" subjects, who know how to carry out any job, at all hours, in the worst conditions. Beyond the juridical-normative orb, the globalization of the homo sacer (Agamben, 2007) produces and reproduces bodies denied of any existence other than that of things or cases for exploitation and domination. Precarious lives (Benjamin, 1995; Butler, 2010) are normalized and homogenized through the violence of the market and of capital when the state of exception is the rule. (Benjamin, 2005a; Agamben, 2005). The politics of capital, more and more congruent with itself - with its history, constitution and existence - is the politics of exploitation and domination for profit, it is the politics of death and war for and by capital. (Esposito, 2006; Mbembe, 2011; Valencia, 2012; Bonefeld, 2013).

In this war of capitalism against life, of capitalist social relations against life, of ourselves against ourselves and nature, life; the decisive step lies in the radical separation of the means for life from those of us who give life to those means and use them to live. The "logic of separation (Bonefeld, 2013) is what
constitutes and reproduces the existence of capitalist social relations, its historical particularity so to speak. The "alienation", the separation between object and subject, and the continually separated existence of the same, makes possible the configuration of "fetish-mediations", figures or forms that abstract the "object" from the "subject". figures or forms that abstract subsume the "flow of the concrete sociality of doing", and that make themselves appear as plentiful subjects. (Echeverría, 2011a; Holloway, 2002) and that make themselves appear as subjects full of will and decision (Postone, 2007; Wallerstein, 2001; Zavaleta, 2009). such as: the State, the Nation, Democracy, Citizenship, Reason, Money, Gender, etc.

The forms that social relations acquire keep the primordial sense of hiding, behind a veil of oblivion and supposed normality, normativity, legitimacy and legality, capitalist exploitation and domination. Each of these fetishes are some of the heads of the capitalist Hydra, forms in which capitalism attacks and assaults us. (EZLN C. S., 2015, p. 183 ss.).

Capitalist social relations also produce us as atomized subjects and, as such, as personifications in which we internalize a set of demands that are in accordance with and useful for the reproduction of these relations. We could say that social relations build walls between us so that, in individualized and individualizing solitude, we survive our capitalist confinement. (Bonnet, Holloway, & Tischler, 2005).

Everyday walls are not necessarily tinged with blood and pain, they can also have the appearance of diverse dreams and longings; but the fundamental thing is that they are individual dreams and longings, personalized utopias for sale and individual consumption. It may even happen that the walls lose all semblance of walls, their solidity and rigidity, that they become internalized to such a degree, with such intensity, that they produce the fiction of a life...
worth living as it is; that it can be improved here or there, but that, in general, it appears achievable.

The purpose of these recreation-walls - of all of them, exterior and interior - is to proceed to a greater fragmentation and rupture of the flow of the concrete sociality of doing: to cloud our gaze more and more, to encircle our dreams more closely, to stifle our cries more effectively and efficiently; so that we may better internalize our domination and our exploitation, so that we may forget to imagine others, so that we may happily transform ourselves into Robinson Crusoe.

The internalization of these assumptions has reached such a degree that the very notion of Revolution has become trapped and identified with certain images that correspond, historically, with inherent or internal criticisms of the capitalist totality itself.

We can think, for example, of the time inaugurated by the Russian Revolution in 1917. In it, the Revolution ended up being identified with the historical image of the Party and its vanguard; the State was understood as the neutral tool at the service of the one who holds power and, therefore, it was supposed that the Revolution passed, necessarily, through the assault or the seizure of the State. Likewise, this notion identified the revolutionary subject with a pure subject -the conscious proletarian class-, external -in its consciousness, the proletarian vanguard at least- to capitalist domination and exploitation, and which had the historical mission of creating, ex nihilo, a new society based on the notions of progress and development achieved through work and social sacrifice.

Then, with the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989, of the really existing socialism and of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, the vision of the victors declared, from the think tanks of the central countries and with the submissive approval of the national bourgeoisies, "the end of utopias and of history" and
the entry into a victorious era of liberal democratic formalism, of the "division of powers" and of "full globalized citizenship" sustained by the "International Rule of Law".

For this vision, which draws from and owes too much to Western social democracy, the path is clear: the State continues to be the instrument to be used to hold power. Only that, unlike the Soviet socialist image, they make an act of faith towards liberal institutions and the procedures of formal capitalist democracy.

This view distrusts insurgent violence and everything that proposes itself as autonomous, sustaining the Hobbesian maxim that "politics -institutional, of course- is the pacification of social war" and that the "imperfections" of democracy and other institutions can be "cured", through the use of instrumental techno-scientific reason, of "professional politics" and the application by THEM of that knowledge in decisions of "socio-institutional engineering".

For the gaze that reinforces the walls, politics is a matter of information, knowledge and professionalization, of rational decisions based on the measurement of risk and contingency. Therefore, the political subject it seeks is a man, educated in the best Western universities, with "multiple competencies" that allow him to lead a company as well as a nation, a citizen of the world or a cosmopolitan who can speak about art as well as politics, religion or economics.

The view that has been reinforced in recent years has concluded that "revolution" is, in the existing reality -in the best of all possible worlds-, an anachronism that makes no sense. Politics should be directed by professionals and consumed by the rest of us, ensuring, in the best of cases, that the participation of civil society is limited to generating government controls and directing social demands in terms of effectiveness and efficiency of public
spending, aimed at specific products that are consumed -justice, telecommunications, energy, education, health, etc.-. The struggle and social antagonism are reduced, from here, to a mere matter of technocratic reforms to the system of government administration and control, of domination and exploitation.

What these images illuminate, what these historical experiences lay bare, is the living antagonism constitutive of social relations in capitalism. They also show that the field of knowledge -scientific, pseudo-scientific and critical-, and of language, are a moment of struggle and that we must stop ignoring their supposed neutrality.

Knowledge and language, like the State or law, are forms of capitalist social relations, the concepts and categories they throw up to "explain the real" serve to build more walls, higher and thicker. The categories of totality and revolution have served and are used to reproduce relations of domination and exploitation. (Gunn, 2005).

But not everything is domination and exploitation, the very fact of the existence of crises implies that the process of totalization of these figures or forms is always incomplete, and even that there are ruptures that are engaged in confronting the processes of totalization, but that, also and mainly, create other senses beyond the existing ones; that, from time to time, it "dawns on us" and we can talk and listen to ourselves, give ourselves a sense - in our daily experience - that something is not as it is supposed to be, that something of what exists is not correct or desirable, that something is not as it should be. That something not that we experience, perceive and elucidate, sometimes also takes force and overflows the social relations that deny us. That something not is expressed in such a diverse and multiple way as the different geographies and calendars -as the Zapatistas would say- from which they
emerge, it emerges in such apparently contradictory forms as silences or screams, boredom, rejection and festivity, as resistance and rebellion.

Now then, if the very categories with which we think have historically served to reproduce and thicken the walls, to fertilize the separation between object and subject, and to identify and petrify the gaze that pretends to account for capitalist social relations: how do we go about thinking categories that, instead of closing, open our gaze towards new horizons? Is it possible to generate categories that illuminate, like Benjamin's lightning the instant of danger of the state of exception in which we exist and that, dialectically, ignite the spark of hope? What is the type of fertile reflection to think against-and-beyond capitalist revolution and totality? Who is the historical subject of such reflection?

Benjamin charges that "the subject of historical knowledge [of radical transformation] is the oppressed class itself, when it fights... [and that]... The consciousness of blowing up the continuum of history is proper to the revolutionary classes in the instant of their action." (2005a, pp. 27,28) . In the understanding that, as previously expressed, reflection is a moment of struggle, of revolutionary praxis, I have decided to take up again two reflections that "make epoch": that of Marx and that of the Zapatistas.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Marx recognizes that "science begins a posteriori", it always appears post-festum of historical events (1975, p. 92) . What the author is referring to is that as "scientists" our reflections start from what we observe as consequences of previous acts, events and processes that configure what we could call "effective reality" -that which is already the effect or product of something-. Our immediate gaze recognizes the forms that organize human life as natural, ahistorical forms.
In this respect, two problems arise: is it possible to analyze the acts, events and processes that configure "effective reality" as they happen? Do we have categories that allow us this movement, that account for the processes of totalization at the same time as they rescue, in the instant of danger, the processes of rupture with the capitalist totality and, even more, the processes of creation of anti-capitalist conditions? Formulated differently, are there categories that allow us to look at the flow of capitalist totalization and to recognize the social flows of rebellion?

In my opinion, it is possible to understand and apprehend the real movement of the processes of configuration of anti-capitalist social relations as they occur, in the present time. However, for this to be possible and fertile, I consider it necessary to rethink the very notion of temporality, in particular that which refers to the present time. The Dictionary of the Real Academia de la Lengua Española (Royal Academy of the Spanish Language) (2014) defines the present as an adjective -which is also used as a noun-, "which is the one in which the speaker is"; and in its grammatical use as "time that places the action, process or state expressed by the verb in a period that includes the moment of speech".

In this definition, the present time is identified with a temporality that is configured from the moment in which speech and action are articulated, as if the realization of the process itself occurred at the moment in which it is named or narrated. For this gaze there seems to be nothing before or after, everything appears as if it had always been there and as if it would be there forever, naturalized and essential. For this narration there is nothing strange or contradictory, it only speaks of harmony and order; the speaker does not doubt, he acts, he is an act that affirms himself at the same time as he affirms what exists in fact.
But then, from this present, the only thing we can do is to affirm what has been done and to affirm ourselves in it; it would only be possible to describe the act but not to explain it. The subject that is affirmed in this practical discourse is a finished one, it is a linguistic and practical but ahistorical subject. Time thought of in this way is of no use to us, it is part of a notion of totality in which there is no transformation, contradiction or antagonism.

On the other hand, according to Benjamin (2005a) the concept of the present is simultaneously defined by two temporal orders: "the existence of classless society", as "redeemed humanity", which cannot be thought of without "the time of the struggle for it". With this definition, a homogeneous and empty concept of time is transformed into a concept charged with political meaning that appears as a correlate of "that history that only makes its appearance as in a flash of lightning".

The "knowable now" of the present is expressed in the image of Paul Klee's *Angelus Novus*, in which the class that experiences the struggle manages to recognize everything and everyone that we have been denied. That is why it turns its back on its epoch. The subject of this time of the here and now is a subject full of historical sense that, in the instant of danger, manages to reflect, translate and resignify the denied past, recognizing that in the present "what is missing is missing", to launch it into the present-future, transforming it.

The "here and now" is a reading key that allows us to rethink the present struggle and the proposals that emanate from it. If the instant of danger is understood as the constant and systematic abstract flow of totalization, the anti-capitalist struggles show us, in certain moments, the processes of translation that they make of past experiences and their relaunching towards the possibility, not yet existing as such, of a "classless society".

From this I have a few more questions to answer: Which is the reality we want to analyze? Do we analyze "the effective reality", the storm, which imposes...
itself as domination and exploitation, and which closes the horizons of those who try to look inside it? Or do we effectively analyze "Reality", the cracks, which propose the organization between social antagonisms, and which try to open the horizons to recognize-transcend-and-think beyond the storm and the utopia?

Recall that, for Benjamin, "the subject of historical knowledge is the oppressed class itself, when it [struggles]." (2005a, p. 27). From here, the tendency of the analysis becomes clearer: I am not interested in focusing on the processes and institutions of domination; on the contrary, I am interested in looking at the processes of anti-capitalist struggle, in trying to attend to the illumination that allows the gaze interested in the instant or the dialectical image, which shines from below, from the social flow of rebellion.

The position I support is in accordance with a demand posed by John Holloway of what is intended from critical thinking. This demand is no more than: the need to account for the "impulse to change society in a radical way", to criticize the inverted world that confronts us and to shed light "on the vulnerability of domination" (Holloway, 2002, pp. 69, 70, 83). The translation of the present necessarily passes through the political sense of rupture that underlies the instant of social struggle.

The clarification of the gaze is in concordance and resonance with the Zapatista method itself. The so-called truco (Sub-Moises), maña (Sub-Galeano) or magia (Sub-Marcos) of the Zapatista method of reflection, goes through the question of how to observe and how to work the gaze from the

What about you? To this provocative question we answer: We from here, from the academic research and university teaching in Puebla, we ask ourselves: How to approach to analyze the social flow of rebellion without emptying it of meaning?
What is fundamental for this proposal is to break the *continuum* of homogeneous thought, to break with the appearance of identity or full exactitude between concepts and phenomena. To think the phenomena means to go beyond them, to discover the concrete particularity of each one of them in order to construct an explanatory model -constellation- that extrapolates their contradictions, clarifying them, not solving them. "The categories of the critique of the system are at the same time those that conceive the particular... they would be representations in the particular of the totality as such unrepresentable." (Adorno, 1984, p. 37).

This notion of category makes sense with Kofler's elaboration in *History and Dialectics* (1974). For the author, "the great importance of the recognition of the role of categories ... lies in the fact that they represent and express the points of fracture of the process in which being and consciousness are mediated." (Kofler, 1974, p. 61). That is to say, bringing together the two authors, we can point out that the category is characterized by the capacity to account for the representation, from the specific difference of the concrete particularity -thought as a moment of the totality-, of the antagonistic and contradictory character of capitalist social relations. It shows: on the one hand, the objective, cosmic and necessary character of fetishized social forms; and, on the other, the subjective, disruptive, contingent and experiential character of human activity.

**RESULTS**

At the end of the first section I close by suggesting that not everything is domination and exploitation, that, also, the existence of crises can be understood as the manifestation of the inadequacy of our lives and experiences to the rhythms and temporalities of capital. The inadequacies or
ruptures are not always conscious or collective, reasoned or reasonable, clear or concise, but rather, most of them arise in spontaneous, diverse and different ways, in the form of a denial of something, as cries in front of or against something, as disagreements, in the image of the cry of and from denial, of and from a "NO! or an "Enough is enough!". Many of these moments of negation, of these "no's", express what does not fit in the times and forms of capital, but also, even, overflow them. They manage to configure themselves, through organization, as images that overflow, dismantle and disarrange the established, the instituted and the normalized; they open currents that increase the flow of the social flow of rebellion.

Now, we are not claiming that these cracks are clearly expressed in terms of "conscious" anti-capitalist struggles. Many times, perhaps more often than not, the process of existing as an organization and reflecting on it and on how we do it and where we are going, is part of the very process of organization. In particular, I am not interested in the quantitative aspect of the cracks or, even, their apparent strength and size; rather, what I prefer is their qualitative character, the fact that they start from the existence of concrete negation and that, for this reason, they cannot be fully affirmed but, rather, it is in their contradictory movement of ruptures that they build the road to walk.

It seems to me that this is an important lesson from the Zapatista experience to be able to rethink and continue thinking about the cracks and, therefore, the revolution. They begin their journey, they come to light, raising as a starting point the struggle for the dignity of the nobodies, of all of us; and in their questioning journey they have been listening, gathering and apprehending the different and diverse struggles, launching them, even, as anti-capitalist organizations. And although this we-nobody has been expanding -at times- and contracting -at others-, thanks to the fact that it has
as its articulating center something so common to the daily experience as the denied dignity, on the one hand, and the rage of "Enough! No more! Let them all go!"

The Zapatistas share with us, in the words of Sub Galeano, that: "The girl, it is clear, is recruiting elements to challenge whoever loses. Yes, because here, when the team wins, they go to hit the wall. And the team that loses keeps on playing, 'until it learns', they say..." (EZLN C. S., 2015, p. 203). What I hear from this reflection is that, if a team wins, it wins because it is organized, that is why it is going to hit the wall, to make the crack bigger. But the one that loses, does not lose in the military sense of war, but rather wins in the sense of experience; therefore, it is necessary to return to the encounter, to continue "training" and "learn" to organize in a better way.

It seems to me that, following the position of this to and fro that the Zapatistas have been walking, another question arises: Do those who win and are already making the crack bigger, continue or will they continue until the wall falls? If we answer in the affirmative, we would be assuming that those teams that won are organized once and for all, and that they are clear that the final game is still to be played, but that the objective and the ways to reach it are clear.

If, on the contrary, we maintain the notion of the questioning we walk, we deny the existence of a pure revolutionary subject and of a privileged form for the transformation of capitalist social relations. What emerges is an understanding that neither the teams are complete and organized forever -that among them there are those who decomplete the team, either because they get tired and leave the struggle to make the cracks bigger, are co-opted, or because they die, are murdered and disappear-; nor the ways to further crack the wall are always clear or prescriptive -that it is not this or that way how the wall should be broken, but the constant back and forth from defense to offense, is how the experiences are organized and the teams are strengthened-

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. It even shows that the game and its rules change, and that it is therefore necessary to be attentive to these modifications.

**CONCLUSIONS**

It seems to me that the headings speak for themselves. There is really little to add, although this does not mean that concerns and questions do not arise. To continue with the analogy of the soccer team, which pleases the "Zapatista defense girl" so much, it would be necessary to think that playing a game that develops, without ceasing, in the time of daily life is extremely exhausting, if not impossible.

We cannot, nor do we want to, be in the game all the time, it is simply physically impossible. If it happens that our pride demands that we stay on the field, on the front line of the fight, it is more than likely that as time goes by I will start to miss passes, stop moving and following the game, get angry with the others and stop communicating with them, and they will no longer want to pass me the ball or avoid playing with me.

Something similar happens with anti-capitalist organizations. The game is constantly changing in dynamics, intensity, players, atmospheric and field conditions, strategies, etc. For this reason it becomes indispensable that the organization itself transforms itself, that it opens itself to the time of change, to the modification of the strategies of the game, that it learns new moves.

The temporality of the struggle is multiple. Sergio Tischler reminds us, every chance he gets, of his experience in the "little Zapatista school" when he was told of at least four times. Perhaps that is why they can provoke us with poetic and playful notions such as the hourglass time.

The time of the hourglass, we are told (Galeano, 2017) is that time in which the main thing for existence is not time itself, quantifiable, but its passing in each of the grains of sand. The grains of sand are the struggles that slip into
the present but are still there, as if waiting for the moment to reappear to re-incommodate, in the here and now. That is why the Zapatistas, with the mocking and provocative spirit that characterizes them, shake the clock over and over again, turning it over without emptying it.

Perhaps the point of the hustle and bustle is to remind us, to make us uncomfortable, to question the assertions that the time for revolution was a past and failed one, or that it is an idyllic future that is hypostatized as a promise for a dying man. Perhaps revolutionary time is here, with us, in the possibility of turning the clock over and over again. It also points out that the calendars are multiple and the geographies diverse and that, precisely because of this or in spite of it - depending on the case or thing - we still cannot rest, we have to keep on wondering, fighting.

This, I think, is what is meant by incomplete alignment or when what is missing is always missing. One never knows what is missing because utopia is not there clear and sharp after the wall, but in the imagination of those who walk it, who with their struggle build it. Benjamin also refers to this (2005a) that we have to work with our gaze in order to perceive emancipated humanity and the struggle for it.

All struggles, in our walk, we build and transform the conditions of possibility of emancipated humanity; in the encounter with new cracks we discover other fields of struggle that we did not know about, but that enrich and make more fertile and complex the relay and the step towards the transformation of social relations.

That is why utopia is not an ideal to follow, but one that is walked. To understand when we many organize ourselves against capitalist social relations, where truth is a moment of the false or the obvious a moment of the absurd, is to explain the processes by which antagonistic subjects, through their contradictory movements, walk their word: it is, therefore, to give an
account of both the word and its path in the very contradiction of its walk, in the absurd staggering of the organization of the cracks with which it appears before the walls.

Resistances and rebellions will continue to emerge and re-emerge, not because capitalism will live forever or because this or that is the apocalyptic time of the end of stories and utopias; but because of a simpler non-reason that confronts the always threatening gaze of identity: because "the fault is of the flower"; because the principle of inadequacy of life itself, the intrinsic diversity of gazes, always respond to the imminent danger of oblivion with a "NO!" (Galeano, 2016) because the principle of inadequacy of life itself, the intrinsic diversity of looks, always responds to the imminent danger of oblivion with a "NO! It is for this simple and plain unreasonableness that it is improbable, or at least contemptible, that the mere possibility of a universally abstract consensus in a dystopically homogeneous institution should be accepted with approval and not criticized at its root -ad hominem we say-, or at least having cast a glance with the suspicion of the condemned to death who walks towards his executioner1.

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1 In this sense, Marx has a terribly topical phrase. Once he has criticized, to the point of boredom, the universalist and essentialist absurdities of bourgeois political economy, science and law, which conceal the real face of exploitation and domination of one class by another, hidden behind their robinsonades, he points out: "the physiognomy of our dramatis personæ [characters]. The former possessor of money opens the march as a capitalist; the possessor of labor power follows him as his worker; the one, significantly, smiles with conceit and advances impetuously; the other does so warily, reluctantly, as one who has worn his own skin and can expect but one thing: to be tanned. (Marx, Capital. Critique of Political Economy, 1975, p. 214)


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