



## The flower, the invention, the desire: towards a poetics of living

### *La flor, el invento, el deseo: hacia una poética del habitar*

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**ABSTRACT:** The flower and the invention will function here as two metaphors to account, on the one hand, for the real of the physis that does not adhere to language and, on the other, for what exists with the crossing of the signifier, that is, history. Both metaphors, however, are far from being treated as complementary opposites, as a binary system or as a dialectic of which it is possible to synthesize. The proposal is to think them in terms of a paradoxical relationship. The paradoxes do not contain a solution, on the contrary, their function is to invite us to think the relationships free of meaning, inconclusive, open; making possible to find something that changes the perception we have of a topic, a problem, a question. Here the paradox of the flower and the invention will be read in the light of what happens as a failure to be, a failure that causes desire, understanding the latter as a pre-ontological trait that separates living beings from need and instinct. The second part of the proposal consists on exploring the ternary of the flower, the invention and the desire as a poetics of living in the face of the shortage caused by the capitalist discourse. Our conjecture is: if this poetics of dwelling has a future as existence, it is as an unprecedented act in the ways of having a place in the world, without exalting, therefore, a model of being, an ideal of life or a pedagogy of existence. In other words, noting contingent acts that, in “solitude: common” inscribe a contrast to know-how existential subversions in the face of those voracious practices of capitalist living, voracity motivated by the pure drive for destruction.

*Keywords:* Nature; Signifier; Drive; Capitalism; Poetics of Living.

**RESUMEN:** La flor y el invento funcionarán aquí como dos metáforas para dar cuenta, por un lado, de lo real de la physis que no se adhiere al lenguaje y, por otro, de aquello que existe con el atravesamiento del significante, es decir, la historia. Ambas metáforas, sin embargo, distan de tratarse como opuestos complementarios, como sistema binario o como una dialéctica de la cual es posible hacer síntesis. La propuesta es pensarlas en términos de una relación paradójica. Las paradojas no contienen solución, por el contrario, su función es la de invitarnos

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a pensar relaciones libres de sentido, inconclusas, abiertas; posibilitando el hallazgo de algo que cambie la percepción que tenemos de un tema, un problema, una pregunta. Aquí se leerá la paradoja de la flor y el invento a la luz de aquello que acontece como falla en ser, una falla que causa el deseo, entendiendo por esto último un rasgo preontológico que separa a los vivientes hablantes de la necesidad y del instinto. La segunda parte de la propuesta consiste en explorar el ternario de la flor, el invento y el deseo a manera de una poética del habitar ante la penuria provocada por el discurso capitalista. Nuestra conjetura es la siguiente: si esta poética del habitar tiene un porvenir como existencia, es en cuanto acto inédito en los modos de tener un lugar en el mundo, sin exaltar, por lo tanto, un modelo del ser, un ideal de la vida o una pedagogía de la existencia. En otras palabras, advirtiendo actos contingentes que, en "soledad:común" inscriben un contraste para saber-hacer subversiones existenciales ante aquellas prácticas voraces del habitar capitalista, voracidad motivada por la pura pulsión de destrucción.

*Palabra clave:* naturaleza; significante; pulsión; capitalismo; poética del habitar.

### ***1. The flower, the invention, the desire: a paradoxical ternary***

The reference that entitle this text comes from a beautiful work called "The world as a flower and as an invention" written by the Guatemalan guerrilla Mario Payeras (1987). It's a series of stories structured in terms of paradoxes strung together between the real of the physis and the physis historicized by a living being that produces signs. Aesthetically speaking, the work of the guerrilla fighter allows us to problematize the disagreements between life invented as an effect of a symbolized world and what cannot be captured within the composition of language: pure physis, but that, even so, something is woven as existence.

To think about what we are enunciating, take as an illustration what Kant (2012) articulated between the phenomenon and noumenon. Two expressive resources with which he explored the

problem of the constitution of subjectivity before the real of the thing. According to the philosopher, phenomena are "objects of a possible experience" (Kant, 2012, p. 180), on the contrary, "what is not a phenomenon cannot be the object of experience" (Kant, 2012, p. 183), because "the noumenon [...] completely ceases all use and even all meaning..." (Kant, 2012, p. 187)<sup>1</sup>. What happens, however, between the phenomenon and the noumenon is what is realized as subjectivity, as desiring existence. Hence, it's interesting to problematize those effects produced by the paradoxes. The Kantian paradox, in this context, allows us to notice that, despite the fact that the invention is doomed to failure because it is made of history, there is a certain juxtaposition between the invention and natural life that is not synthesized, but existential places are opened for those who depend on the production of signs and for those who live otherwise. The first<sup>2</sup> are drivers living beings devoid of any type of experience possible to

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<sup>1</sup> Here we think of the problem of the constitution of subjectivity as that which is produced between the subject of language, the signifiers and the desire of the Other, that is, we do not speak of this dimension of human life in terms of a psychology of the individual or a phenomenology of intersubjectivity, but of subjectivized existence around the "materiality" of a being in lack.

<sup>2</sup> When we mention "the first" here, we do not do so in opposition to "the second", but we propose to situate the difference between the ontological and the real of the physis.

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live the world from instinct. The Trieb<sup>3</sup>, as Freud (2013a) coined it, is one that cannot be satisfied, a condition of suffering and pain of being in the world or, rather, of unrest of being in the world.

Those who speak are involved between historical, sociological, cultural worlds; worlds that, among themselves, are equivocal, confronted, devoid of a single meaning. Likewise, the worlds of language contain singularities that inhabit bodies in an unrepeatable way because, although they live between bodies -Nancy (2003)-, they are not confused with each other and with others, since the drives mark each speaking body in its difference, being non-transferable the achieved experience of *jouissance* one by one.

The point is that the invented world becomes deeply problematic, enigmatic and impossible. Giving rise to intuitions<sup>4</sup> from which we intend to say what a world is, how to have a world, when to live in a world. We respond to the "mystery of the physis" from the discourse that enables us to live or embody our intuition of the world, but this does not mean that we close ourselves to the future of another one. As Hans Blumenberg (2007) says about the Kantian concept of "the composition of the intuition of the world [Weltanschauung]" (Blumenberg, 2007, p. 11). The world of the speaker is:

the ideal totality of phenomena, which can never be established for any type of experience, but which,

nevertheless, drives the indefatigable commitment of all experience and this is: that in its quality of absolutely unattainable it cannot be in any way a thing of intuition [Anschauung] (Blumenberg, 2007, p. 11)

Here is the cornerstone of the problem that we are interested in addressing about the difference between the world as a flower and as an invention. On the one hand, for Payeras the metaphor of the flower is the real of the physis, a flower placed in the "unreachable reference point of human experience" (Blumenberg, 2007, p. 12) because nature always turns around the history. In such a way that the speaker historicizes the real of the noumenon without ever seizing that real in the structure of his lacking being.

On the other hand, with the metaphor of the invention, Payeras locates a place where subjectivity is constituted, thus acknowledging its deeply historical, let's say, finite value. Thus, between the flower and the invention, paradoxical movements occur that are neither ontologically nor topologically because they are not strung together as One. Let us try to illustrate this through a brief description of story number three that Mario Payeras tells in *The world as a flower and as an invention*: "Story of the master musician who took a lifetime to compose a marimba piece":

Patrocinio Raxtún was a master musician who began building a marimba towards the end of his

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<sup>3</sup> One of the most recurring misunderstandings regarding what Freud called Drive (Trieb) is that it is confused with Instinkt. Instinct cannot be incarnated in the living being that speaks, because he never fixes its existence to the needs of the same genetically transmitted object. When speaking of the drive, on the contrary, a certain impelling psychic force is at stake that is directed towards an "object" that never is; however, the living being with the drive obtains satisfactions of pleasure or displeasure, experiences of life or destruction. This will be addressed later.

<sup>4</sup> In its etymological root, intuition does not have to do with its modern meaning understood as a certain perception absent of reasoning, but rather, in (inwards) and *tueri* (to look for something or protect it) points towards a way of contemplating, observing or listening to what happens in the world and, of course, with subjectivity itself. On the other hand, when we speak here of intuitions, we do so to account for the historical limits of each one of them, that is, without the possibility of universalizing the intuition that one has of a world or of a way of inhabiting it.

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life. He abandoned the daily life routine to go into the depths of the jungle searching for an hormigo stick. During his journey he found an abandoned house where mousetrap boa rested and who escaped warned of the invader's footsteps. Patrocínio managed to repair the battered structure and meet its basic needs before starting the construction of his musical instrument. With ax in hand, for two days he cut down the hormigo stick to obtain twenty-six keys. He tuned his instrument to the sounds of the world, but the work got complicated because he got sick. For a time, he interrupted his project. After recovering from his illness, the marimba master finished the keyboard. He spent the next few days of his life accompanied by his musical work while he became aware of a great movement inside his soul: the emulation of nature allowed him to experience that "music is a mathematics of feelings" because "for to express the movement of things in the spirit, numbers that flow are necessary" (Payeras, 1987, p. 28). Finally, something happened with Patrocínio:

In April he came to the conclusion that all his music would last in time less than a downpour. When the rains came again, he got the marimba indoors and shut herself in to pass the water. His body sought the bunk and his spirit remained from then on in the remote reality of winter parrots. The musical instrument suffered the fate of common objects. Day by day the house flooded, and the humidity of life rose to the marimba's legs. Months later, the wood sprouted new shoots. In October, a mousetrap boa settled in the house (Payeras, 1987, p. 28).

This ability of Mario Payeras to describe the paradox between the real of nature and the living beings traversed by the signifier contributes a lot

to thinking about how things exist when a missing being historicizes -hysterizes?- the real of the flower; a real that we understand to be prehistoric. Here, prehistoric does not have to do with a chronological time located millions of years ago in the past, but with a logical time that contrasts life before the entry of the signifier into the real of the world.

Jacques Lacan (2009), in his Introduction and response to an exhibition by Jean Hyppolite on Freud's *Verneinung*, describes the conditions that the speaking living being weaves for something to exist on the horizon of his subjectivity; one of these conditions "is that there be *bejahung*..." (Lacan, 2009, p. 97). The *bejahung* is articulated as an attribution judgment supported by the signifier. With the *bejahung* "something of the real" tries to be "ripped off", symbolized. In this order of ideas, therefore, what is not invested by the signifier, says Lacan, is "a primitive real, a non-symbolized real" (Lacan, 2009, p. 97) or, as we think of it here, a real prehistoric that escapes any history.

Returning to Payeras's story, we can say that the mousetrap boa is what illustrates the place of nature. The boa has a correspondence with the metaphor of the flower, that is, with the reality of the jungle, with "the noisy universe of winter parrots...torrential rains...where there seemed to be no one...". (Payeras 1987, p. 25); with the boa "Life passed in the shade of large zapote trees." (Payeras, 1987, p. 25).

In this story, the real of nature is situated as an undifferentiated whole, precisely because life in the physis does not need the symbolic. The flower describes the univocal<sup>5</sup> of a pre-symbolic world, without the mortification of the signifier. In such

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<sup>5</sup> If we think of the Univocal as a real, it is because the real "does not allow itself to be mistaken" by the signifier. This allows us to differentiate between the real and the reality(s); any reality is equivocal because it is made up of signifiers, while the real escapes the signifying chain.

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a way that life in the prehistoric real is possible without the intervention of language.

The world of invention, on the contrary, is a differentiated world, traversed by histories, cultures, singularities; the world as an invention is profoundly mistaken because it is constituted symbolically. The symbolic order is the third register with which the speaker separates the imaginary from the real, because language inscribes relationships and differences.

And yet, there is another feature that we propose to place in order to contrast what happens between the flower and the invention: the existential difference between those who inhabit the world with their instinct and those who do it instinctively.

Instinct is a way of naming what? It is a way of naming living beings that do not have a “death drive”. Lacan says that these are accomplished animals. The instinctual beings are devoid of this animal achievement, because while the instinct is satisfied, the drive is not. When speaking of the drive, Freud does not stop pointing out the obscurity of this notion, but, even so, he tries to describe it:

a frontier concept between the psychic and the somatic, as a psychic {Repräsentant} representative, of the stimuli that come from inside the body and reach the soul, as a measure of the work requirement that is imposed on the psychic as a result of its interlocking with the corporeal. (Freud, 2013a, p. 117)

It is worth “distinguishing four terms in the drive... the Drang, the push. La Quelle, the source. The Objekt, the object. The Ziel, the goal.” (Lacan, 2013, p. 170) The “effort {Drang}” of a drive refers to “its motor factor, the sum of force or the measure of the work requirement that it represents {repräsent-

tieren}.” (Freud, 2013a, p. 117) “The goal {Ziel} of a drive... can only be reached by canceling the state of stimulation at the source of the drive.” (Freud, 2013a, p. 118) As for the object {Objekt} of the drive, “it is that in or by which it can reach its goal.” (Freud, 2013a, p. 118) “The source {Quelle} of the drive is understood as that somatic process, internal to an organ or part of the body, whose stimulus is represented {repräsentiert} in the mental life by the drive.” (Freud, 2013a, p. 118)

And here let's pause a bit because it is the object of the drive that we are going to hold onto to think about the difference between achieved and unachieved living beings. The latter, the speakers, the unachieved, constitute their existence on the horizon of the paradoxes between the drive and its object insofar as they never meet. The “objekt”:

It is the most variable in the drive; it is not originally linked to it, but is coordinated with it only as a consequence of its ability to make satisfaction possible. It is not necessarily a foreign object; it can also be a part of one's own body. In the course of the vital destinations of the drive, it can undergo any number of changes of path {Wechsel}; The most significant roles correspond to this displacement of the drive.” (Freud, 2013a, p. 118)

The drive, then, warns us that living beings alienated from language constitute their existence from the lack of a certain lost object. It is about the object of the drive that exists as non-existent, without neglecting the fact that this psychic object is labile, prolonging the dissatisfaction of the speaker, but, in turn, causing the endless search for its satisfaction provided that the living being desiring position. From here comes another problem: desire. For Lacan:

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Desire is that x of the subject that is captured in the signifying network, in the meshes of the signifier, which is subjected to filtering, to the screening of the signifier. Our goal is to reveal it, to reconstitute it, to restore it, in its discourse. (Lacan, 2015, p. 158)

It should be clarified that, although structurally the subjective desire is the desire of the Other, it is always possible that a singularity wonders about the object that causes its desire. The issue is that a desiring living being punctuates his existence with what provokes him, that causes him to do something with his lack -in being-. Its object cause, in this understanding, is a kind of invention so as not to be crushed by the anguish that makes the movement of its subjectivity impossible.

In the story mentioned above, the master musician does other things to inhabit the world. It is not just that his lacking being is caused by a marimba, it is the logic of his search: giving up his old lifestyle, repairing a house, finding a specific tree to form his keyboard or putting into practice the music that occupies a privileged place in the horizon of his neocreations. This means that "the act of Sponsorship" is nothing more than the commitment to another know-how that articulates "many-doin-gs", components of an unknown desire, but which appears reintegrated on the world scene - a desire that emerges as singularity in a historicized world. The problem is that for language beings the object that causes desire never is. For this reason, the tale of the master musician honors his status as a desi-

ring subject, that is, when he realizes that his music would not last more than a downpour, when he glimpsed that his work had limits and that it was not eternal, because his music it was made up of time. Only then did he recognize that his neo-creation was historical and, therefore, finite. It was a movement corresponding to the position of the subject in front of the lack. We might think that Patrocinio Raxtún took charge of what we humans call anguish. Only then was he able to rest on his cot. Meanwhile, the marimba ceased to be and returned to the world without signifiers, the real of life sprouted again. Although it is true, this is the tragedy of desire in human history, at the same time it is its most sublime trait, because by assuming the constitutive lack of the subject, existence or inhabiting turn towards a kind of ethical-political vitalism, this is what can be seen in the history of Patrocinio Raxtún.

Well then, when pointing out this disagreement between the historical living being and the real of the physis, we must not lose sight of the fact that we are situating a paradoxical relationship and not a sharp opposition: the speaker is the effect of language and the real is beyond language: As Jacques Alain Miller (2013) says: "being depends on discourse and is not separable from it." (Miller, 2013, p. 44), while the real "is what would not have adherence." (Miller, 2013, p. 45). The issue is that the existence of "being" is an effect of discourse<sup>6</sup>, because "with the word being there is always a meaning" (Miller, 2013, p.44), placing it "in the

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<sup>6</sup> When Lacan argues that "the signifier is first that which produces meaning effects..." (Lacan, 2019, p.27), he realizes that: "The subjectivity that brings into play the fact that man is captured in language, that he is captured in it whether he wants it or not, and that he is so far beyond the knowledge he has about it, is not immanent to a sensibility..." (Lacan, 2015, p.19). Precisely because the subject is an effect of a discourse that houses a field of signifiers. The signifier, in this understanding, is before and after any sensitivity of being to the world. Hence the metaphorical feature of the invention that we are interested in capturing: an invented world is one that is made up of chains of signifiers articulated in the field of language, language being the abode of animals summoned to live as an effect of a historical discourse.

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register of fiction" (Miller, 2013, p. 44); symbolic fiction that can reveal neither the truth of the being of being, nor the enigma of the physis.

This symbolic fiction, the invention, is not of the order of nature because with language, history, the symbolic order, the signifier, etc., we have woven a world -a fictitious space- that did not exist before. Take the following contrasts as an illustration: in nature -understood as that flower corresponding to a prehistoric real- there is no violence between animals without language, precisely because there is no symbolic support that enables them to exercise power relations; In nature, death is not named to try to signify an event that cannot be represented for life; in nature that demand that is always unsatisfied when love is requested is not enunciated; in nature there is no deceit, lie or joke because there is no psychic reality through which to play with meaning. And it is that meaning is at the center of the problem of the unconscious.

When Jean-Luc Nancy (2003) states that "The unconscious is the world as a totality of significance..." (Nancy, 2003, p. 78), he does so under the thesis that "the world is the space where meaning compromised or invented" (Nancy, 2003, p. 78). In such a way that, at the symbolic level: "the "introduction" of a sense... is the opening of a world, of someone's world (of a "subject", as the Lacanians understand it), since someone, each one, makes the world to the extent that that is in the world." (Nancy, 2003, p. 78-79).

With this quote we can redimension the problem of the historically constituted world, precisely because a place is opened to the unconscious that, as the speaking being passes by, comes out -in his walk- a landscape invested with signifiers; a landscape that: "designates... the inexhaustible, endless

abundance of significations that are not ordered to a sense, that proceed from a turbulent signification [...] around an empty point of dispersion, and that all of them circulate affirmed simultaneously, concurrently, contradictorily, without having another vanishing point or perspective than the void of truth, very superficial and provisionally masked by the thin film of an I" (Nancy, 2003, p. 77)

Let's not lose sight of what Nancy is pointing out here: a world loaded with meaning is a world empty of truth because it is produced by equivocal significations or, to put it in the words of Jacques Alain Miller (2003), because meaning always escapes; and it is that "the escape of meaning is a structural property of meaning." (Miller, 2003, p. 19). It is a real in language because "it is the lost object of language..." (Miller, 2013, p. 19); it is the object that does not allow itself to be symbolized in the process of symbolization itself.

In this not getting caught up, the desire for an existential meaning emerges. Although it always escapes, the temptation that occurs is to produce meaning. In the epigraph of Hilda Hilst's book of poetry (2020) "Of desire", there is an attempt to describe its consistency-inconsistency: "Who are you? I asked desire. It replied: lava. Then dust. Then nothing". The desire enunciated by Hilst is discovered in the existential void of the speaker; a desire accompanied by psychic energy that appears and disappears until it is discovered as nonsense, but it is a desire that, as a singularity, is the mark of a radical difference.

Under this order of exposition, we can now say that the difference between the flower and the invention occurs not only at the level of the signifier and the real of the physis, but in terms of the fact

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that there are living beings that house desires and drives, and other instincts.

Well, at this point, now we have to ask what place our paradoxical ternary retains within the question of living in capitalist discourse.

## ***2. The poverty of living in the capitalist discourse: what place for the flower, the invention and the desire?***

In "Build, Live, Think", Heidegger (1994) proposes that inhabiting is a poetic act supported by a being with the ability to metaphorize the landscape of things. This poetics of inhabiting is for him that with which the speaking living being makes his being pass through history. However, the philosopher points out that habitare as a way of living on earth is already disjointed from its poetic function within the capitalist discourse: "inhabiting is not experienced as the being of man; dwelling is never fully thought of as a fundamental feature of man's being. (Heidegger, 1994, p. 130) And if this is so, it is because with the advent of the commodification of the world the speaker stopped experiencing living as an unraveling of his being with and in the world. The being-there was captured in the metonymic process of the merchandise, reducing the experience of living to its utilitarian function in terms of profit, because under the mercantile logic the social imaginaries assume that their living refers to the objectivity of the spaces that transit with regularity; to the places of coexistence that they define by their social classes and, of course, to their consumption capacity to establish themselves in "houses-rooms" that function as private properties within territories controlled by an economic-political power. What

we are trying to say is that the problem of "living" in capitalism is reduced to an essentially economic activity because it depends on the appropriation of spaces on the condition of their consumption, making living a practice that no longer involves the act of unraveling a way of being in and with the world. Today, inhabiting is synonymous with the means of production; a disjointed means of production of poetic existence on earth; commodifying it while the same thing happens with the social bond and subjectivity. Heidegger called this phenomenon the authentic penury of modern living. Wrote the philosopher: "the real hardship of living does not consist in the first place in the lack of housing... The real hardship of living lies in the fact that mortals first have to go back to search for the essence of living, that they have to first learn to live" (Heidegger, 1994, p. 142).

According to the latter, the shortage in the world occurred when it was no longer possible to pass off the experience of being as a possible way of being-in-the-world, of inhabiting it. Fact that took its full form with the arrival of the capitalist discourse. A discourse that displaced the habitation of the living being of language -in its way of living the world- towards its status as a means of production. Said displacement opened a place for fatal disagreements between those who are spoken of through the discourse of the commodification of the landscape and those who have inhabited the world through other links with nature. Consider a passage from the book by Wilbur R. Jacobs (1973) "The looting of the North American Indian", where not only the process of colonization of the native peoples is narrated, but also a series of discourses that exemplify a violent clash between two cultures

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as an effect of the meaning they assign to nature. Here a quote:

For us money is useless and for most of us it is unknown. And as no consideration can induce us to sell the lands on which we support ourselves for our wives and children, we hope that we may be allowed to point out a way of easily removing the settlers, and consequently that peace may be obtained. We know these settlers are poor, since they would never have ventured to live in a country that has been in constant turmoil ever since they crossed the Ohio. Divide, therefore, this large sum of money that you have offered us, among these people. Give each one a proportion greater than what you have told us you would give us annually and we are convinced that they would accept it more easily than the land you sell them. If you also add the large sums you spend to raise and pay for armies, thinking of forcing us to leave our country, you will certainly have more than enough to compensate these colonists for all their labor and cultivation. (Jacobs, 1973, p.106)

There is here a disagreement between two radically opposed symbolizations of nature. While for the original peoples it is about an existentially primordial bond of life –nature understood as a non-human entity that creates the things that exist in the world–, for the settlers the problem is in the economic value of the land –the nature is merchandise. The practical consequences of war, then, are the result of the impossibility of assigning the same meaning related to what each culture took as part of the signifying nature, exposing two different logics to apprehend the world. While on one side a link is played where nature is not reduced to a simple resource, on the other, a merely utilitarian treatment. But from the latter, what we are interested in situating is what was produced with the displacement of the understanding of living towards

what Marx called surplus value -a surplus that circulates and is extracted from within the social bond. It is worthwhile, in this context, to attempt a brief description of the capitalist discourse based on what functions there as "surplus", as "plus". We can orient ourselves with the reading that Jacques Lacan made of the capitalist mode of production.

For this psychoanalyst, "a discourse is what manifests wanting to dominate" (Lacan, 2008. p. 73). Master what? A possible way to make a social bond; his "notion of discourse must be taken as a social bond, founded on language" (Lacan, 2019, p. 26). In such a way that, for Lacan, the discourse is lived in the facticity of social reality, it is inscribed as a social practice.

Now, in his XVI seminar, when describing the functioning of the capitalist discourse, he warns that it is sustained by extracting from the social bond "a remainder" that the psychoanalyst called surplus-enjoyment. It is a notion that he homologated between the concept of surplus value as introduced by Marx and the death drive as thought by Freud. For the latter, the death drive is what inhabits subjectivity as experiences of radical displeasure; experiences that insist on "reestablishing a previous state." (Freud, 2013b, p.56) to life. Hence, for Lacan "jouissance" has a direct correspondence with a satisfaction of pleasure in radical displeasure. But the psychoanalyst observes that this quality is also articulated in the process of production of surplus value. The metonymy of the commodity illustrates that it is in the same production process that these given contradictions between capital and labor operate to obtain surplus value. In other words: if capitalism generates wealth by extracting that remainder, it is because the working class produces merchandise under super-exploitation conditions, their own

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body being merchandise number one. Hence the homologation that Lacan proposes: "a plus" arising from a structural failure on which the market accumulates profits. Surplus value, in this order of ideas, functions as the "object a" that emerges from this articulated failure in the production process; It is a failure that must be repeated infinitely on condition of enjoying -unlimited- labor power. Lacan says it like this: "In this failure, what is called surplus value is produced and falls... Something is lost and it is called plus of enjoying..." (Lacan, 2010, p. 20).

The surplus-jouissance is a function of the renunciation of jouissance due to the effect of discourse. That is what gives its place to the object a. To the extent that the market defines any object of human labor as a commodity, this object carries within itself something of surplus value. Thus, the surplus-jouissance makes it possible to isolate the function of the object a. (Lacan, 2008, p.18-19).

At the same time, Lacan warned that surplus value -as a surplus remainder- is caused by the desire from which the capitalist discourse makes its beginning. How is this? Jacques Alain Miller argues that if at the level of discourse -of the social bond- capitalism penetrated the field of desire, it is because it succeeded in reorienting demand towards the traces of what is insinuated as desire on condition of weaving it into market offers. Miller writes: "There is desire destined to be manipulated in the sense of demand. The condition to recognize desire is to reduce it, redirect it, falsify it in the sense of demand, convert it into demand, for which an offer is proposed, determined." (Miller, 2013, p. 82).

This quote helps us not only to think about how the capitalist discourse passes desire in the sense of a demand determined by the laws of the

market where the offer has its place, but also allows us to notice that this demand has been created by covering up the fact that it emerges from the very contradictions of the capitalist mode of production. Today, this demand for surplus value exhibits the cruelest mechanisms to obtain profits, unfortunately, taking life itself. From here the following question arises: what is there in the capitalist discourse that opens the possibility of inhabiting the world under a demand of death? What there is is the radicalization of a way of living without social ties. Capitalism is already a cynical discourse that weaves the existence of subjectivities with what is beyond the pleasure principle. It openly calls for inhabiting the drive for destruction, precisely because it is a discourse that excludes ethical responsibility, understood as the responsibility that comes with taking charge of life limits. This inability to give life a place under the axes of pleasure is what, in the capitalist discourse, opens as an apology for death embodied in the poverty of living, whose most radical expression is found in what Aquille Mbembe called "topographies...of cruelty" (Mbembe, 2011, p. 75), a place where the being inhabits "contemporary forms of submission of life to the power of death" (Mbembe, 2011, p. 74). In the logic of this ominous power is what Mbembe calls necropolitics; an obscene and cruel policy through which surplus value is generated. Of course, provided that:

"maximum destruction of people and the creation of worlds of death, unique and new forms of social existence in which numerous populations are subjected to conditions of existence that confer on them the status of living dead" (Mbembe, 2011, p. 75).

In this order of ideas: what is the place for the flower, the invention and the desire within these

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topographies of cruelty? In reality, historical capitalism has shown that the flower refers to an external object in which life is produced and reproduced in market terms. Its commercial significance places it both as a container of life and a resource for generating wealth. The problem, however, is sizing up the catastrophic effects of what is revealed as excess from modern technology whose purpose is to tame nature.

When it is said that the industrial revolution marked the beginning of another way of naming existence, it is while the possibility of understanding and making a world with the market technique was stitched together. This means that this technique no longer refers to the creative disclosure of singularity, let's say, as happens in art or agriculture.

Regarding the latter, Heidegger said that the technique is: "a way of bringing out the occult. The essential technique in the region in which the revealing of the hidden and the state of disclosure occur, where the [...] truth occurs." (Heidegger, 1994, p. 16).

But: "The revealing of the hidden that prevails in modern technology is a provocation that places before Nature the demand to supply energy that as such can be extracted and stored." (Heidegger, 1994, p. 17).

The capitalist technique demands to reveal what is hidden in life itself, even at the cost of losing it. To do so, today you need to conquer subjectivities that justify these ways of enjoying existence. This way of producing subjectivity in the field of technique conditions, in turn, a position of subject in relation to the place of his desire that, so to speak, places him towards his "freezing" – when the desire is frozen there is no more subject desiring.

Jorge Alemán (2016) says that, unlike industrial capitalism, the triumph of neoliberalism depends on the fabrication of the subjectivity of his time, a statement he makes evoking Margaret Thatcher under the thesis that the economy is the method, but the objective is the soul So that:

The relationship established by Marx between capital and labor has been broken, and the worker is no longer exploited to extract surplus value, but rather is condemned to produce surplus enjoyment. This is, for me, the true conclusion of the capitalist discourse. It is not about an unemployed person, because an unemployed person is someone who can be employed again. It is a new form of exploitation that generates an unemployed person who does not produce surplus value in the capital-labour relationship but does produce surplus enjoyment. That does have to be recruited. In Latin America he is recruited by drug trafficking... (Alemán, 2016, p. 67)

This reading made by the Argentine philosopher and psychoanalyst is interesting because it shows us a way to think that contemporary capitalism needs bodies subjected to obscene imperatives to enjoy taking the life of other bodies, violating them, disappearing them, torturing them, taking away their territories of life. In other words, it is a cruel capitalism that uses bodies-of-jouissance to reproduce capital on condition of circulating the death drive. And this is what in today's capitalist discourse is promoted as an existential imperative: Enjoy! Enjoy! Enjoy! If with the latter we seek to illustrate the ominous dimension through which contemporary capitalism reproduces itself, it is because it is no longer enough for this discourse to break the social bond, but to exterminate it.

Well then, to close this second context of problematization, let us maintain, in broad strokes, that,

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currently, the places of the flower, invention and desire are revealed under the logic of a mercantile discourse that exercises cruelty with the purpose of enjoying existence itself. Producing subjectivities without the possibility of historicizing their environment beyond an economic sense and, therefore, without the possibility of creating other inventions to warn of the finiteness of life without annulling it; without registering creations accompanied as an effect of what causes desire; cause to live life under an ethical horizon.

### ***3. Longing for the impossible. Glimpses for a poetics of living***

Mexico embodies its own shortage of living, a shortage expressed in processes of accumulation by dispossession (Harvey, 2005), perpetrated by what Carlos Fazio (2016) calls "criminal configurations of contemporary capitalism" (Fazio, 2016, p. 11). The fact is that today "we live in an era of criminal capitalism; in criminal or mafia democracies." (Fazio, 2016, p. 11). Hence the role and place that drug trafficking has in our country. It must be clarified, however, that this phenomenon is not a mere circumstance of late capitalism because, "ontologically", in order for it to be sustained in the way it needs to be, capitalism sharpens its internal contradictions. As Slavoj Žižek (2007) says:

"The "normal state" of capitalism is the permanent revolution of its own contradictions of existence: from the beginning capitalism "rots", it is marked by a crippling contradiction" (Žižek, 2007, p. 84).

If we correlate the latter with the problem of Mexican drug trafficking, we will notice that, in the case of the topographies of cruelty, the hardship of

living is expressed through a territory that circulates the death drive to generate wealth by annulling life, reifying it, destroying it; making life insignificant, childish or banal.

When Hannah Arendt (2016) coined her notion of "banality of evil", she did so thinking of a signifier that would enable her to name a certain existential condition, focusing her attention on the statements of Otto Adolf Eichmann. It was thus that he heard the lieutenant colonel's inability to assign an ethical place to otherness. Hence, the philosopher stated that there are singularities "before which words and thought feel impotent" (Arendt, 2016, p. 368), but the philosopher did not reduce the problem of the banality of evil to a psychological phenomenon, but rather that redimensioned its status at the level of the social bond as a discourse of cruelty or, as we have already stated with Achille Mbembe, under a necropolitical discourse represented in a double procedure: brutalizing subjectivity and breaking the social bond, two constitutive features of penury of living in our contemporary Mexico.

And yet, is there any place to think about the reverse of this poverty of living? Here we propose the future of a poetic project.

It is about inventing a way of passing existence with that which is located between the "poiesis" -creation of something- and the "ethos" -a way of doing things. In such a way that poiesis and ethos are two signifiers to speak of an ethical neo-creation; a neocreation that we locate within what Jorge Alemán calls "solitude: common" (Alemán, 2018, p. 91). Note that: "The two terms appear separated by a colon, and this is very relevant, indicating a relationship of conjunction and disjunction between the two terms or a «sameness» in the difference." (Alemán, 2018, p. 91).

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For us, this phrase is important because it does not erase the paradox between "the solitude of the subject in its empty constitution" (Alemán, 2018, p. 92) and the neologism that Lacan coined as *Lalengua*: "an apparatus where signifiers are amalgamated and the drives. (Alemán, 2018, p. 93). Which means that "*Lalengua*" is "the Common condition" (Alemán, 2018, p. 94) to the living being produced by a discourse and by the drive logic that is housed there.

The *soledad:común* paradox, then, is what we propose to think of as the place to create a poetics of living. There, a way of inhabiting the world can be gestated and passed off as a creative act of life; this is where the questions should be opened to situate other ways of linking with the flower, with the production of other inventions and with the cause of a desire or, to put it in terms of what we have been clearing up: it is about the commitment to explore unprecedented ways of inhabiting the ternary of the flower, invention and desire in a different way than the democratization of waste.

It should be clarified, however, that if this poetics has a future as existence, it is on the condition that it does not exalt a model of being, an ideal of life or a pedagogy of existence, but rather inscribing an act that in its difference it is already a contrast to live before the voracious practices of capitalist living; voracity motivated by the pure drive for destruction.

Likewise, we think that this poetics separates from some anti-capitalist discourses; it moves away from those enthusiastic worldviews that idealize the human condition, suggesting that at some point in history the balance with nature was lost; worldviews that make a semblance of existence betting on a place of living without fail.

The poetics of inhabiting, as we think of it here, cannot be done where the Ideal that non-Westernized cultures are free from human cruelty is sustained; this poetics is not done where it is assumed that there is no difference between nature and the symbolic. In addition, this poetics is not strung together under the Ideal of an alleged revolution that managed to establish "harmonic" links with society and nature.

Regarding these two points, Sigmund Freud said the following:

They say that in happy regions of the Earth, where nature profusely provides man with everything he needs, there are races whose lives are spent in meekness and are unaware of compulsion and aggression. I find it hard to believe, I would like to find out more about those lucky ones. The Bolsheviks also hope to make aggression between men disappear by assuring them the satisfaction of their material needs and otherwise establishing equality among the participants in the community. I consider it an illusion. (Freud, 2013c, p. 195)

The poetics of living that is yet to come is that which is woven where there is a failure to be. If we think this, it is because while Freud discovered the flaw in the subjective division, Lacan did so at the level of the symbolic order, characterizing it as full of holes. By posing existence in these terms -in its failure to be-, we seek to provoke another way of thinking about both subjectivity and the social bond -both are divided. So that the subjective vacuum is in its singular and radical difference, while the social in its impossibility of articulating a collective logic under the enunciation of "for all".

The poetics of living that are to come have the slogan of inventing a know-how with both impossi-

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bilities, and it is in this context of problematization that the future of poetics that we enunciate here yearns for the impossible. Let's move on, then, to briefly describe some of its creative and ethical glimpses.

What do we understand by ethics? The question is pertinent, especially when today we speak of ethics as if it were a "common and necessary good"; Is it a ghost that enters the neurotic life of the time? From the neurotic ghost of modernity, ethics works as what is offered to us for the enjoyment of the Other, enjoyment that is produced in the name of a Moral Knowledge. On the contrary, ethics as far as doing becomes like a sudden act, like a radical rupture that takes us by surprise. Those who feel summoned to try living with the unexpected make decisions before the reality of a subjective wound, but also before the holes in the socio-symbolic order to which they respond. How to think this?

In the introduction to "Being and the event", Alain Badiou (2015) distinguishes two philosophical traditions interested in the problem of the subject. The first of these proposes a "founding, focused and reflective subject, whose theme circulates from Descartes to Hegel and is still legible up to Marx and Freud (and even Husserl and Sartre)" (Badiou, 2015, p. 11). The second posits that the subject is "empty, divided, a-substantial, unreflexive. (Badiou, 2015, p. 11). But within these differences, the philosopher recognizes that the Freudian discovery was the one who managed to subvert the logic of the Cartesian ego. Here the quote: "What locates the subject is the point at which Freud only becomes intelligible in the inheritance of the Cartesian gesture and at which, at the same time, he subverts it, delocalizing it from pure coincidence with himself, from relative transparency." (Badiou, 2015, p. 473).

What is interesting about this epistemic disagreement is that both notions of the subject function as points of reference to think about two discourses on the field of ethics. In this case, the ethics of judgment (with the Cartesian subject) and the ethics of the decision (with the Freudian subject). The first is gestated in the identifications that the contemporary subject has with the civilizing ideals of modernity; universal ideals turned imperative, for example, inspired by Kantian philosophy. Imperatives that, presumably, must function as the symbolic support of "all social practices". From here, morality and ethics are almost synonymous. Kantian ethics is played out where ideals proposed as existential guarantees operate. It is more of a semblance than an ethical act. Its purpose is to morally mediate our behavior, presumably, under a Universal Good that is always given to us beforehand.

The ethics of the decision, on the contrary, comes from subjective responses to the contingent. Badiou reads this as a position close to Hegel's political philosophy. Here, ethics is the effect of imminent acts, for example; "risking life" when two conflicting consciences dispute their recognition. This other way of considering ethics is what the French philosopher calls "the ethics of truths." It is worth saying that his notion of truth is very close to what Lacan understood as a symptom: "the return of truth...in the failure of a knowledge." (Lacan, 2011, p. 227). Such is the approach that, for Badiou, what is at stake is the "status of truth as a generic hole in knowledge" (Badiou, 2015, p. 474). The truth, in this understanding, appears as a breaking point in the discourse, a "lapse", a "short circuit", that which cannot be translated as "what is reasonable".

This second notion of ethics is the one that we are interested in supporting when we propose

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to speak of a poetics of inhabiting, two features being interwoven:

- 1) the truth is articulated in the composition of a decentered subject of any universal imperative and
- 2) there is no experience ethics without the "irruption" of a truth.

Thus, we can discuss the problem of an ethical position at the level of decisions and creative acts. Consider, for example, what happened in Cherán Michoacán in April 2011. Faced with an extreme situation caused by drug trafficking, the inhabitants decided to risk their lives. Civilians armed themselves to defend their territory, their community, their culture; resorting to its history, its symbolic referents and its social practices; they weaved together an unexpected act in the experience of a decision. This is how they created the community rounds.

Ethics does not become a "universal for all", because an ethical act is discovered before the event. Ethics is a condition of possibility when there is subjectivity determined not to renounce its singularity, when subjectivity is determined not to sacrifice itself, that is, to surrender to the ideal of a supposedly complete Other. Likewise, there is movement in the ethical act when the singularity is willing to take responsibility for its link with the other, when the otherness in its enigmatic dimension summons it to give it a place in its radical difference. In this sense, the poetics that is to come will be done in solitude: common as soon as there is singularity caused by its lack and as soon as there is a symbolic Other (family, culture, social ties, science, etc.) inconsistent, incomplete.

The poetics that is to come cannot be taken as an a priori or even a posteriori response. It will only

be possible to notice it in solitude: common, because of its marks in the singular from what causes a desire, but also because of its traces in the social bond, where it implies taking responsibility for otherness; responsibility that also challenges the speaker to take charge of what is beyond discourse: nature.

If the poetics of inhabiting that is to come implies loneliness, it is because it is not possible to turn the cause of a singular desire into a collective desire; the cause of desire is not for everyone, the singular cause is not universalizable. But this poetics also bets on collective political action that, in its singular differences, warns that the social bond is touched by a real. Hence, it is a poetics of impossibility in social bonds.

This poetics of living is another way of taking charge of the existential drama without falling into the temptation of "practicing a pedagogy of existence"; it is more of a historical response without identifying with any ideal of being. Faced with an unexpected event that trapped and confused the living being, it is a poetics of the contingent that we can never predict, that is why it is decided, it is risked in the face of an extreme situation.

The latter is significant because it is not possible to respond to a poetics of living from a moralizing position. Moralizing existence is also opening the door to a Master just as ferocious as the capitalist, because when there are subjectivities willing to support the ghost of the presumably complete Other, a place is made possible for the discourse of cruelty. Therefore, to try to respond ethically from a moral position is to place oneself at the service of a Master who can also become cruel, nullifying singular and cultural differences. Does this mean that you have to renounce any project of social emancipation and simply surrender to the appetite

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of the Master? Not at all, it is about passing off an ethical creation as an unprecedented know-how so as not to be captured or crushed by the power that is exercised in these topographies of cruelty. Hence the longing in poetics.

Yearning for a poetic link to inhabiting is not merging with the flower, because erasing the difference between the real and the symbolic annuls the possibility of making inhabiting an experience based on the failure to be; existential failure that summons the speaking living being to make ethical decisions before the limits of life. The speaker does not breathe only because he has a respiratory system, but because there is nature generating vital oxygen. Hence, once and every time a discourse that does not annul the life of the flower is longed for, this, despite the fact that the real of the physis does not adhere to any historical discourse, however, is longed for in opposition to the gluttony of a -capitalist- discourse that does not stop destroying the planet.

Yearning for a poetic link between inhabiting and the inventions of the speaking living being not only means going beyond gunpowder and steam, the internet and nanotechnology; but to make discourse itself -the pristine invention that produces speaking existence- the cause of its permanent reinvention. Once and every time it is a question of interrogating the discourses that give a place to the speaking living being, it is a question of asking from where the speaker speaks, how he is traversed by ideologies, worldviews, beliefs. Once and every time, it is about poking holes in the discourse of scientific, university, capitalist knowledge; but it is also necessary to pierce those symbolic pluriverses that proclaim themselves as authentic examples of harmonious existence.

Longing for a poetic link to inhabit from desire is discovered to be unattainable, and that is why it is wanted as impossible. In the desiring position, the living being who speaks allows himself to be embraced by his life drives, where once and every time, they are directed towards an object caused by desire, however, since the object never exists, the drives are relaunched. Once and each time the desirer performs acts to try to seize his desire, always failing, but historicizing his singularity. Once and every time, the desire to yearn for the impossible is threaded from a certain uniqueness inscribed as a feature that is not confused with the community or the crowd. Once and every time, a desire that yearns for the impossible of the social bond risks an ethical way of bonding with alterity in its singular and radical difference.

However, it must be insisted that poetic inhabiting from solitude: common will not be given without making the power of the Real of Life the cause of desire to establish a "dialogue of knowledge" (Leff, 2018) between different speeches that today try to respond to the cruelty towards life. As Enrique Leff says:

The Peoples of the Earth reinvent their identities in the face of the environmental crisis, in the face of the entropic death of the planet, from their "conditions of being in life", in their imaginaries and practices, through their survival and emancipation strategies that lead them to decolonize the reasons that subjugate them and to reappropriate their territories of life. (Leff, 2018, p. 608)

Between dialogues of knowledge and "solitude: common" is where we will have to think about the territorialization of the flower, the production of other inventions and the unfreezing of desire.

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Unfortunately, in the Mexican case, the examples are painful when it comes to building territories for life. Just think that, faced with the processes of accumulation by dispossession, today we have the creation of community police forces in Mexico. We do not overlook the fact that drug trafficking groups are confused with the legitimate community self-defense groups, but these territories resignified in the form of armed cultures function as authentic existential neo-creations. Thus, in the face of accumulation by dispossession, the community police build other ways to inhabit the flower; to territorialize it with life and not with the drive for destruction; to give new meaning to their inventions through which they maintain their social ties, resorting to the historical knowledge of their culture and, finally, not to give in to the anguish that knowing that they are dead means, but to insist and exist-in-the-world with a desire for life.

The future of a poetics of living already resonates with its elusive voice for the discourse of a ferocious Master who only wants to enjoy the self, the fellow man, the social bond, the speaking body, the speaking bodies. It is a poetics of the impossible because it makes the real the cause of a desire to live life, but not to be seduced by the ideal of being, by the ideal of correcting the failure to "become". This poetics of living is committed to introducing neo-creations where the differences between the flower, the invention and desire function as existential contrasts that meet and disagree, but making a place for life possible.

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