

Ideological aspects of capitalism in Contemporary Society: A critical analysis on the discursive field of politics

Os aspectos ideológicos do capitalismo na Sociedade Contemporânea:
Análise crítica do campo discursivo da política

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Abstract

This article presents key aspects of ideological conflicts that take place in the discursive field of politics. It is the field where strategies of ideological domination of the ruling classes over the others come up. Also, there appear in that field ideological strategies which call the subject of the unconscious to take a position other than the dominated one. For this purpose, we have referred to theoretical postulates of authors who have a theoretical commitment to articulate psychoanalysis and Marxism with a view to find both theoretical and practical stands about the present political issues. It has been found that the discursive field of politics may aid us to comprehend and dismantle ideological constructions which try to oppress workers even more. That field may also make it possible for subjects to organize and build a more efficient political project against the capitalist model.

Keywords: *discursive field of politics, desire, ideology.*

Resumo

O objetivo deste artigo é demonstrar que no campo discursivo da política os embates ideológicos acontecem e as tramas ideológicas são feitas e desfeitas. Diremos ainda que nesse campo se instalam as estratégias de dominação ideológica das classes dominantes sobre as demais. Também neste campo se apresentam as tramas ideológicas que convocam o sujeito do inconsciente a ocupar outra posição que não seja a do dominado. Para isso nos referenciamos nos pressupostos teóricos dos autores que se comprometem teoricamente em articular a psicanálise e o marxismo na perspectiva de buscar posicionamentos teóricos e práticos para as questões políticas da atualidade. Verificamos que o campo discursivo da política pode nos auxiliar a compreender e a dismantelar as construções ideológicas que buscam oprimir ainda mais o trabalhador, como também pode possibilitar que os sujeitos se organizem e construam um projeto político mais eficiente contra o modelo capitalista.

Palavras-chave: *campo discursivo da política, desejo, ideologia.*

Introduction

For Žižek there is a certain degree of abandonment, by the Social Sciences, of the study of ideology as an important category to understand social formation as well as to provide a critical analysis of capitalism. This is especially relevant nowadays, when capitalism itself offers a challenge in which it becomes

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important to consider alternatives to this model. Alternatives have been implemented in many countries; nonetheless, they have not provided possibilities for a free and responsible action of citizens in their exercise of democracy, since the latter has become "ideologized", as will be seen below.

The theme of ideology is quite broad, as many theories refer to it from perspectives quite distinct from each other. Hence, it is necessary to contextualize the theoretical background employed here in order to avoid the possibility of getting theoretically lost. As Žižek (1999, p. 9) argues,

'Ideology' can designate anything from a contemplative attitude that misrecognises its dependence on social reality to an action-orientated set of beliefs, from the indispensable medium through which individuals live out their relations to a social structure to false ideas which legitimate a dominant political power. It seems to pop up precisely when we attempt to avoid it, while it fails to appear where one would clearly expect it to dwell.

In this article, we refer to ideology based on Mouffe's, Laclau's, Lacan's and Žižek's approaches to the field. These authors articulate psychoanalysis and Marxism in order to analyse politics. We consider that these authors, as far as political reflection is concerned, provide a way of taking the subject as the main agent in the ideological process, thus avoiding a victimization or fatalism.

We argue, in this direction, that it is in the discursive field of politics that ideological clashes take place, whereby ideological processes are made and unmade. We also point out that in that field the strategies of ideological domination of the ruling classes over the other classes are triggered. Further, when ideological processes call the unconscious subject to take a new position other than the dominated one, they arise in that field.

Ideology: oppression process – a lie with a status of truth

The capitalist system is structured in an ideological way, since it is a falsification of consciousness, an illusory representation of reality, that is, it tries to hide conflicts which are intrinsic in every political relation, by making up deceits that prevent us from thinking about the reality we are inserted in.

The social effectivity of the exchange process is a kind of reality which is possible only on condition that the individuals partaking in it are not aware of its proper logic; that is, a kind of reality whose very ontological consistency implies a certain non-knowledge of its participants – if we come to 'know too much', to pierce the true functioning of social reality, this reality would dissolve itself (Žižek, 1999, p. 305).

Regarding the "non-awareness" of reality, this is where the author places ideology, for there are many elements of so-

cial reality that the subject ignores. It is never possible to know everything, and there is always something that escapes from awareness. Hence, reality itself becomes ideological. But there is something that the subject knows about, which is the oppression that operates in unequal work relations. But the subject makes an effort to not know it, thus maintaining the master's discourse. This aspect will be further explored in the second part of this paper.

The ideological field here is seen as where political conflicts take place. In this field, the domination and oppression strategies are hidden from the subject (non-awareness), so that they can be established more effectively. This creates a society of obedient subjects who do not question the market rules. Hence, subjects alienate themselves both from the reality in which they live and even from themselves. In this way, it becomes easier to lie about the disguise of the truth, in that there is no confrontation. As Sennett (2001) puts it: a flexible and non-conflicting society is thus created. For example, when the United States invaded Afghanistan, then President George W. Bush used the discourse of fighting terrorism and totalitarian systems in order to justify the invasion. However, he hid his interest in putting the US economy back on the right track by encouraging war as well as taking over the oil that was in that country.

Bush used the justification that the presence of the USA in that country was essential to ensure human rights and democracy. The plans of political, social, economic, etc. domination were distorted into the form of truth in order to make people believe that domination actually is a project powered by bombs, mortars, and grenades. Lying (about the domination) gains the status of truth, thus becoming legitimate in social and political relations.

In this regard, Laclau insists that it is not possible to abandon the concept of distortion in the analysis of ideology. This is so because the concept of distortion indicates exactly the ideological processes that constitute the reality. This brings about deceits that prevent subjects from knowing the real extent of the exploitation to which they are subjected. Considering distortion in the ideological analysis prevents us from confirming the existence of a distorted analysis about reality. Accordingly, in consequence one does not lose touch with the real and material facts which constitute society.

In case one does not realize the distortion process, a question is transferred to the field of discursivity which should be treated as real (the USA's economic domination). With that, another discursive illusion is eventually created (fighting terrorism), which becomes a strategy of domination and oppression (USA's imperialism). That is why the notion of "distortion cannot be abandoned, once it becomes a main tool in the dismantling of every metalinguistic operation" (Laclau, 2002, p. 14).

The notion of distortion becomes then necessary to approach ideology, so that it is possible to understand the whole process of alteration of the primary meaning of the discourses. Since on corrupting the primary meaning, other elements are projected onto where the distorted ones were. In this way, ideol-

ogy can be seen as the appropriation of the corrupted discourse which establishes, thus, an equivalent chain from a distorted premise. This is why the discursive distortion presupposes a meaning which is "original and illusory, and the distortive operation consists in precisely creating that illusion—that is, to project into something which is essentially divided the illusion of a fullness and self-transparency that it lacks" (Laclau, 2002, p. 17).

The notion of distortion must be kept as an important category in the dismantling of every metalinguistic ideological operation (taken as the discourse which is beyond the everyday-life struggles). This explains why critiques and analysis of ideology must be settled on the ideological dimension *per se*. Such dimension constitutes the reality created by the subjects rather than by extra-ideological categories like God, the system, etc.

The capitalist strategy of displacing the ideological from the everyday relationships of domination which are set in society to an extra-ideological category makes us see that "we find ourselves knee-deep in the already mentioned obscure domain in which reality is indistinguishable from ideology" (Žižek, 1999, p. 20).

Thus, by moving the conflict to beyond the class struggle and introducing oppression as something intrinsic to the fact that we live in society, as if it were a genetic or cultural heritage, causes the loss of the possibility of establishing antagonisms. Consequently, this does not allow the subject to take a stand in the political field because of the oppression that plagues him/her. Therefore, the worker is left only with the possibility of obeying his boss, because "God wants so", for example.

For Mouffe (1999) and Laclau and Mouffe (2004) it is essential to consider antagonism for the political analysis, for the former makes it possible to recognize, in the contradictions of the capitalist system, a chance to oppose, in the discursive field of politics, a lack of equivalence of rights. This is feasible inasmuch as subjects build a collective identity which offers them elements of identification capable of uniting them in a political party, union, social movement, etc. Thus, political boundaries are set by means ideological clashes between antagonistic groups.

In this dynamics of identity, it is not enough to recognize the subordination which is placed in the relationship. Rather, it is necessary to break up with this stage and to launch oneself into the politicization of the relationship which oppresses the subjects in the society. In this perspective, the "political" may be understood as the space for the articulation of identifications.

When antagonism is not present in political relations, the ideology of authoritarianism is perpetuated. The latter brings the subordination of subjects, that is, there is the one who commands, oppresses and holds the State's Ideological Apparatus (Althusser, 1970) (the master) as well as the Repressive Apparatus of the State, and there is the one who suffers the actions of these apparatuses and who is forced to obey and work (the slave). For this reason, there is no room for antagonisms, which makes the discourse of the capitalist master hegemonic.

The establishment of antagonism, therefore, favors the constitution of collective identities which help subjects to col-

lectively create political ideologies of resistance. Consequently, they are able to face the hegemony of authoritarian discourses. In this process, the subjects recognize their lack of rights. Therefore, they also recognize that they are subordinated, but, as subjects, they fight to dismantle of authoritarian and oppressive relationships.

Public life will never be able to dispense with antagonism for it concerns public action and the formation of collective identities. It attempts to constitute a 'we' in a context of diversity and conflict. Yet, in order to constitute a 'we', one must distinguish it from a 'they'. Consequently, the crucial question of democratic politics is not to reach a consensus without exclusion which would amount to creating a 'we' without a corollary 'they' but to manage to establish the we/they discrimination in a manner compatible with pluralism (Mouffe, 1999, p. 16).

We believe that ideological processes emerge in the discursive field of politics. Melucci (2001), Mouffe (1999) and Lara Junior and Prado (2004) refer to the political field as a privileged space for the constitution of collective identities. In that space the demands from different groups can become public. This establishes antagonistic relationships which allow one to visualize the opponents within the conflict. In such a context, politics is taken as a space for political struggles in which the complex and intense match of ideological disputes occur.

In this regard, we judge that the movement that broke out in the United States called "Occupy Wall Street", which spread all over the world, has become an actual evidence of what we call here the discursive field of politics. The space that has been opened up by that movement aims at exposing the ideologies that are spread by the capitalist world as the only way to understand what society is. It is important to point out that this movement tries to avoid political parties, unions and other state-linked institutions, as it understands that those state institutions have become an Ideological Apparatus of the State and, often, a Repressive Apparatus of the State, and therefore they do not represent the people's demands. This is one form of establishing a collective identity and of differentiating oneself from those institutions directly or indirectly connected to the capitalist world, which represents national elites.

In Figure 1, we can see that, in the "Occupy Rio" movement and in other social movements around Brazil, there are people "*working for a better world*", which means that "the better world" that they are aiming for is certainly not offered by the capitalist system.

It is interesting to note that, in Figure 1, the effort made by the movement's members is towards the building of a "better world", herewith understood as the possibility to desire a society beyond capitalism's imposing norms. This fact alone (to desire something beyond capitalism's walls) is already political resistance in itself. And that must be taken in consideration so that we do not fall into the media's ideological trap of always showing the subjects who go out and demonstrate as idle fellows, rioters, or utopians. On the other hand, political



Figure 1. "Sorry for the inconvenience, we are working for a better world".

Source: Gasparini (2011).

parties secretly set up an ambush, that is, they infiltrate into the movement in order to weaken its ideological politics and they do so by making participants recognize them as part of the movement. The Brazilian State is supported both by the Ideological Apparatus of the State as well as the Repressive Apparatus of the State. The State offers the ideological discourse according to which the people's organizations bring disorder and blame them for being responsible for preventing our country from growing and developing like a "first world" nation. The same State uses the Judiciary and the police force to justify the violence against citizens. Violence and repression legally enforced.

Therefore, it is fundamental in the discursive field of politics that collective identities are established, since they are capable of setting political boundaries between several ideological groups – so that the dispute takes place in a democratic way and allows each group to follow its ideological discourses and so that there is not only one way of conceiving reality.

Keeping the discursive field of politics opened also means to respect each subject's individuality, avoiding the capitalist ideology according to which the other is only good as long as he/she is an object of satisfaction (sex, fun, violence) and consumption. In such a relationship, the other becomes a fetish object, like what happens with the brands and the designer brands that use men and women as objects which will be fancifully consumed.

According to Marx, in the subjects' relationship with the exchange commodities there is something beyond materiality

that hooks them and that somehow lures them to consuming, like a fetish. According to Freud, that is concealed but it may be explained by the logic of the unconscious, which can be found in dreams, jokes, and in Freudian slips. "Freud showed that the laws of the unconscious are present in all subjects: the neurotic, the perverted, and the psychotic" (Quinet, 2006, p. 13).

Consequently, these subjects of the unconscious gradually constitute the discursive field of politics in order to structure their political ideologies and, by doing so, they unveil the ideology that oppresses them. This process is understood as the way through which people relate and clash with each other in search of a political and subjective construction. It is subjective because, for Lacan (1992 [1969-1970]), people establish four discourses among themselves: the master's, the hysteric, the university, and the analyst. These discourses make it possible for the subject to create social bonds, which are the means to participate in the social reality. It is also political because, through social bonds, one searches for possibilities of social organization that may end that logic.

In that sense, the discursive field of politics questions the capitalist logic. Thus the subject is not bound by ideologies that oppress him/her. Rather, he/she looks for other subjects so that, together, they may fight for something, be it land, housing, health, education, etc. Perhaps that is exactly why they are so harshly criticized.

Ideology: The unconscious process of oppression – (not) wanting to be aware

The Lacanian discourses² consist of four discursive structures which delimit positions that are instituted by social relationships. The four discursive structures are represented by an algebraic apparatus. Each Lacanian discourse is formed by a four-place general formula which represents an "agent", speaking to "the other", so that the latter one may carry out some "production", but what is concealed is the "truth" which propels such a relationship. Such a relationship, in turn, almost always implies an attempted domination.

agent	→	the other
truth	//	production

In each one of the four places delimited by the four-discourse general formula, four elements take turns as they permanently turn clockwise, thus outlining four discursive possibilities. The four elements are: S1 (master signifier), S2 (slave/knowledge), a (surplus enjoyment³), and \$ (the subject). And the four discursive possibilities are the Master's Discourse (M D), the

² At this point, Kyrillos Neto (2007) and Lara Junior (2010a, 2010b) already show how these discourses take place inside institutions and social movements, which is why we will not go deeper into the matter.

³ "Jouissance" in the original Lacanian French expression.

Hysteric's Discourse (H D), the Analyst's Discourse (A D), and the University Discourse (U D).

M.D.:	H.D.:	A.D.:	U.D.:
$\frac{S_1 \rightarrow S_2}{\$ // a}$	$\frac{\$ \rightarrow S_1}{a // S_2}$	$\frac{a \rightarrow \$}{S_2 // S_1}$	$\frac{S_2 \rightarrow a}{S_1 // \$}$

Nevertheless, we shall point out the master's discourse⁴ because it is understood as the founding discourse of the subject. It is so because that discourse marks the subject's entry into language. It is also the discourse of political governance. Now let us see how this matheme applies to this discourse:

$$\frac{S1 \rightarrow S2}{\$ // a}$$

<u>master (agent)</u>		<u>slave (other)</u>
barred subject (truth)	→	enjoyment (product)

The agent's place is occupied by the master (S1), who represents the law, the projects, the government's program. That is why he claims to hold the power, thus justifying the total dominion over the other (S2). The barred subject (\$) is the master himself. He is castrated, hence he is in the truth field. This is the reality (castration) which the master wants to hide from the slave. Therefore, in order to produce surplus value or surplus enjoyment, he needs the slave's knowledge (S2) which is in the other's field.

This notion of totality is immanent in the political as such. This notion is always used in the speeches of political parties to convey the idea of satisfaction and completeness. To this idea we ought to oppose ourselves, otherwise we lose direction – which maintains the master's discourse (Lacan, 1992 [1969-1970], p. 29).

The master's discourse is the one that can be used as reference for the other Lacanian discourses. According to Lacan (1992 [1969-1970], p. 29), the subject inaugurates him/herself into his/her relationships based on this first alienation from the master, the one who holds power.

In the master's discourse, S1, lies the signifying function which supports the master in his domination process over the slave. In the S2 field lies the slave who possesses the "savoir-faire." In his theoretical formulations, Marx outlines the role of the class struggle and the resulting logic of maintenance of the master's discourse. Nevertheless, Lacan (1992 [1969-1970], p. 29) points out that there is a move of place of knowledge in the feudal lord's discourse when compared to the capitalist lord. The working class (the proletariat) is placed in the position of not possessing the communal property, which justifies the undertaking and the success of the revolution.

Is it not tangible that what is restored to him is not necessarily his share? Capitalist exploitation in effect frustrates his knowledge by making it useless. But what is given him through a type of subversion is something different – the knowledge of a master. And that is why he has only changed the master. What remains in this changed is the essence of the master, namely, that he does not know what he wants because this is what constitutes the true structure of the master's discourse. The slave knows a lot of things but what he knows above all is what the master wants, even if he himself does not know it, which is the usual situation, because otherwise he would not be a master. The slave knows and that is his function as slave. That is also the reason why things work, because all the same, things have been working for rather a long time (Lacan, 1992 [1969-1970], p. 30).

In the logic of the master's discourse, the slave knows a lot of things, mainly "savoir-faire." However, the master does not want him to actually know the plots in the relationship, so that his dominance may go on. In the master's logic, truth is opaque (covered by a bar), making way for a deceit. In such tyranny of knowledge, a certain impossibility emerges in the course of the historical movement – the truth, which had been covered by a bar. This causes it to be presently produced by the ones who are the substitutes for the old feudal slave, that is, the proletariat.

Consequently, in the final analysis, the subject knows that he is being exploited. In order to illustrate that Figure 2 shows a sentence in Spanish which reads: "Your life is a piece of shit... (And you know it)." This sentence may shock us at first, however it contains a message which is not hidden anymore – it is the unbarred truth. This is what the master hides in his logic of domination: that the life of those subdued becomes excrement, nothing, nobody, like in companies, that is, the worker may become unnecessary and unwanted, a nothing, like "shit".

In everyday language, calling someone "shit", besides its strict sense, also means that that subject is equivalent to nobody, someone dispossessed of everything: no identity, or reason, opinion, personality, etc. He/she is in society only to strictly follow the rules. We consider that in this master/slave relationship, the one who keeps him/herself subdued in this domination logic eventually becomes "shit", a nobody, dispossessed of him/herself.

We can assume that this dispossessed person is someone who is stuck in the domination logic in the master's discourse. Therefore, someone who is taken over by a voracious demand for consumption, is being removed from his/her desire: his/her truth. In this way, he/she sustains the surplus value and enjoyment with his/her own work. We ask the question: if the exploited subject is aware that his/her life subdued to a master is "shit", then why is such a situation kept? Why doesn't he/she break up the domination/submission logic?

In this master/slave relationship, there is a place where knowledge is always allowed to become a master's knowledge

⁴ For a deeper understanding, we suggest reading Jacques Lacan's XVII seminar as well as Lara Junior (2010a, 2010b).

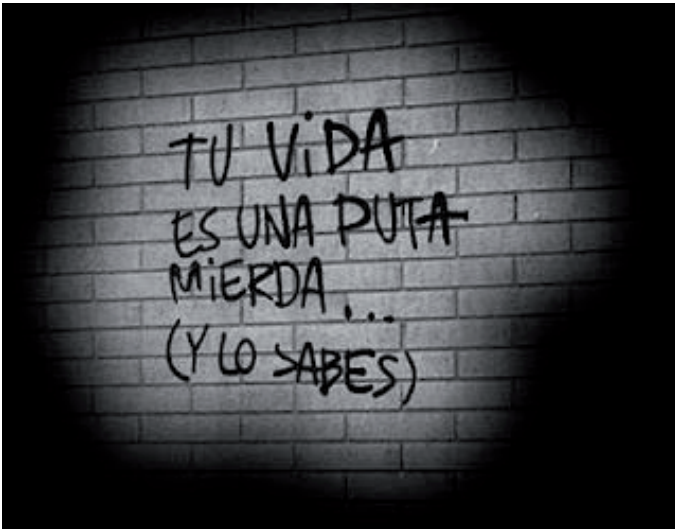


Figure 2. "Your life is a piece of shit... (And you know it)."

Source: Las fotos más alucinantes (2011).

in order to perpetuate the domination-submission logic. Nevertheless, the slave, when inquired about this relationship, shows through his/her answers that he/she knows that his/her life is a piece of shit. The "bar", however, allows him/her to say ideologically that he/she is not aware of his/her state of subservience nor of the resulting maintenance of the master in his position. In this sense, we believe that the ideological in this discourse lies in the role of the bar, which is to hide the truth (*su vida es una puta mierda*). That is why there is room for consecutive deceits which push the subject towards a logic of enjoyment.

Consecutive deceits produce enjoyment, for the latter needs repetition in order to establish itself as such. And Lacan (1992 [1969-1970]) reminds that Freud associates repetition with the death drive, which is understood as a fault, a failure. In that sense, something is lost in any repetition (speed, power, etc.). For psychoanalysis, there is a waste of enjoyment in repetition, like something that gets lost. It is in the place of loss (repetition) that the function of *object "a"* (lost object) comes up.

Still according to psychoanalysis, knowledge is seen as a means of enjoyment, since it produces entropy through working. Thus, it is exactly in this shattering that the signifier introduces itself as an enjoyment apparatus. Entropy tries to retrieve a surplus enjoyment, since the latter indicates loss, a negative number which keeps on repeating itself and making it enjoy itself.

This knowledge is a means of enjoyment. And I repeat, when it works, what it produces is entropy. This entropy, this point of loss, is the only point, the only regular point by which we have access to what is involved in enjoyment. In this there is expressed, there is completed, there is justified what is involved as regards the incidence of the signifier in the destiny of the speaking being (Lacan, 1992 [1969-1970], p. 48).

In the master's discourse, knowledge as a means of enjoyment comes to be because knowledge is at the slave's level. The slave's work brings the master's truth, which S1 tries to hide with a bar. The master's truth lies in the fact that he is castrated, and thus he puts up an ideological strategy to prevent subjects from realizing that fact. For this purpose, he uses power and domination to arouse in the slave a certain feeling of comfort and protection before hardships of nature and society. That is why we often hear people say that a good job gives them safety and allows them to be able to support their family.

In the capitalist logic such statement is coherent since the safety necessary for the maintenance of life lies in those who hold the means of production rather than in those who actually work to produce capital. Hence, Marx stresses the importance of work and workers in the capitalist logic for they are at the center of the engine of the capitalist production economy. If proletarians stop working and consequently stop producing surplus value, the capitalist system collapses. For that to happen, they need to overcome the master-slave dialectic and to institute another logic. For Marx it was communism, or simply as the sentence in Figure 1 reads, "to build a better world."

To prevent workers from stop working and thus putting profit and surplus value at risk, capital owners have forged strategies that make workers keep thinking that their safety is within the limits of the "nice job" logic. In that sense, Sennett (2001) warned us about such flexible and "conflictless" capitalism. This form of capitalism needs subjects who are carefree and uncommitted to their cultural and political origins. The subjects have to be available for the demands of the globalized market. Thus they do not create personal bonds nor can they gather as a class (race and gender). With such bonds and gathering they would be able to question the capitalist way of production.

Consequently, to feel fulfilled by means of work, or to feel that one is contributing to society through his/her work is not part of the aspirations of today's subjects anymore. In today's context, the most important is to work, preferably without reflecting about what is being done in order to ensure money to support one's family and to be able to enjoy oneself, through the consumption of vacations, commodities, and gadgets.

This flexible capitalism ends up having an influence on the structure of the subjects' psychological apparatus. Safatle (2005) stresses that cynicism has become the proper "profile" for the new demands of capitalism. The Freudian superego is a structure that represents the father's authority and that puts blame on sexual pleasure, thus repressing enjoyment. In capitalist society there is the establishment of the enjoyment imperative in the superego, which calls subjects not to repress their impulses anymore, but rather to fulfill them at any cost.

The result is the psychological internalization of a moral instance of observation, in this case, the superego which derived from it, for the drive satisfaction provoked necessarily

a feeling of blame coming from the sadistic pressure of the superego over the Ego. This feeling of blame does not provoke in a neurotic way of enjoyment as a secondary benefit (Safatle, 2005, p. 120).

Freud insists that the representatives of the law in our society help to build up the symbolic universe of subjects. On the basis of the law, they can create social bonds and so social living is possible. In such a society, socialization processes take place in order to convey its norms, laws, values, etc. to the subjects. And the superego is structured precisely on the basis of that process. Therefore, by changing the socialization process, the characteristics of the superego's structuring are changed. If society, ruled by capitalism, claims that it is not repressive, tied to the universalization of consumption habits, the subject will be directly affected by that.

That is why the superego no longer plays its role of making the subject feel guilty about getting round those norms. If the subject broke the norms, the superego would make it feel guilty, because its imperative is enjoyment, thus entangling itself in the ideological process of this discourse. Hence we have a subject blameless in regard to moral/ethical issues, a subject who takes a lie as the truth, and who finds enjoyment in the small oppressive powers that have been appointed to him. The cynical is the one who knows that his/her life is a piece of shit (*su vida es una puta mierda*) and finds enjoyment in it. This way, he/she works for the maintenance of the master's discourse.

According to Lacan, one way of breaking up the logic of the master's discourse is to institute the logic of the analyst's discourse, which tries to unveil the master's truth that was covered by the bar (\$1/\$). In the analyst's discourse, the truth is impotence and weakness. This leads subjects not to see a master in the analyst and leads them to start working for a "better world" or the socialist revolution, etc. "As I've said before, love is to give something that you don't have, that is, what could repair this original weakness" (Lacan, 1992 [1969-1970], p. 49).

The analytical act requires that the subject be located in the place of *object "a"* – the other's enjoyment, for that is the place where truth is the non-knowledge that he/she has to put up with. Truth, therefore, is impressive due to a certain lack of sense which is noticed in dreams, jokes and Freudian slips. These manifestations, although apparently meaningless, bring up to light the absent truth which was settled in the unconscious. Then, the subject is always in a relationship with the truth. The truth, in turn, never ceases to denounce him/her, for the subject does not cope with it fully.

We understand that the function of the analyst's discourse expands beyond the setting because it points to actions in which lacking is established in the social bond (like in the hysteric's discourse), in opposition to the totalizing discourse of the master. This discourse aids the discursive movement, allowing the subject to take responsibility for his/her desire. Therefore, the contribution of the analyst's discourse in the

discursive field of politics is exactly not to make a pact with any hegemonic discourse. When this discourse becomes hegemonic, it may give in to the authoritarian dimension of the master's and the university discourse as well as to the nonstop demand of the hysteric's discourse.

So, the subjects who frequent this field are required by the discursive structure of that very field to take another stand before others (demarcation of political boundaries, antagonism, etc.) and the Other (the four-discourse policy).

In our society, where the capitalist discourse is understood as the only way to organize social ties, the political discursive field needs to maintain a position in the social bond in which the subject makes a commitment to his/her desire. Thus he/she may leave his/her position of object of the hegemonic discourses and may undertake the quest for freedom.

We also believe that this free subject may be able to create his/her own meaning for freedom, for he/she is a subject of speech capable of getting involved with his/her own desire, of analyzing his/her dreams which presuppose a singularity in this elaboration process (Lara Junior, 2010a, p. 12).

The four-discourse policy ensures that the subjects taking part in the political discursive field preserve their subjectivity, since the relationship with the others and the Other is unique. The same subjects are also capable of coming together in order to build and make social bonds, thus they can commit themselves to the policy of desire.

This policy opposes strongly the capitalist logic of treating the subject as the master's object of enjoyment, which reproduces the master's discourse. The discursive field of politics deals with the subject's issues and allows him/her to take on his/her desire which is placed in the relationship with the Other. About that, Lacan says:

This is why the Other's question – that comes back to the subject from the place from which he expects an oracular reply – which takes some such form as 'Che vuoi?', 'What do you want?' is the question that best leads the subject to the path of his own desire, assuming that, thanks to the know-how of a partner known as a psychoanalyst, he takes up that question, even without knowing it, in the following form: 'What does he want from me?' (1998 [1966], p. 829).

In that context, this field, by containing something of the analyst's discourse, gives the subject possibilities to cope with the questions regarding his/her desire, which is interwoven with the Other. From the moment the subject takes on his/her own desire, he starts taking a new position before the Other in the social bond.

The empty and ahistorical concept of the speaking being, it is not and would not be an eternal essence. May the subject on which it operates be the subject of science, according to a formula in the process of becoming a chorus, and this idea does not mean anything other than that the invention of

psychoanalysis, as well as its exercise and transmission are determined by the conditions of the discourse. This could be confirmed by the fact that it was the advent of modern science that made possible the invention of psychoanalysis, making the unconscious move from its status as a "hieroglyph in the desert" to that decipherable and interpretable text. If the unconscious is still consecrated by tradition, and with it its subject, this is due to its existence in the analytical discourse (Askofaré, 2009, p. 174).

In capitalism, magic, religion, and science provide ideological elements to build an Other strong enough to keep subjects always tied to a system of domination. This leaves them far from their desire, in a constant demand for love.

Desire begins to take shape in the margin in which demand becomes separated from need: this margin being that which is opened up by demand, the appeal of which can be unconditional only in regard to the Other, under the form of the possible defect, which need may introduce into it, of having no universal satisfaction (what is called "anxiety"). A margin which, linear as it may be, reveals its vertigo, even if it is not trampled by the elephantine feet of the Other's whim. Nevertheless, it is this whim that introduces the phantom of the Omnipotence, not of the subject, but of the Other in which his demand is installed (it is time this idiotic cliché was, once and for all, put back in its place), and with this phantom the need for it to be checked by the Law. But I will stop there and return to the status of the desire that presents itself as autonomous in relation to this mediation of the Law, for the simple reason that it originates in desire, by virtue of the fact that by a strange symmetry it reverses the unconditional nature of the demand for love, in which the subject remains in subjection to the Other, and raises it to the power of absolute condition (in which "absolute" also implies "detachment") (Lacan, 1998 [1966], p. 828).

For psychoanalysis, desire moves the subject towards taking responsibility for him/herself and for the social bond to which he/she belongs. This logic, "in the desire lies the subject's truth" (Catroli *et al.*, 2009, p. 63), leads him/her to get rid of the logic of exploitation that has been imposed onto him/her and/or onto the group or society to which he/she belongs.

In this perspective, this process of making the subject desire creates a relationship of power between the subject collectively organized, who is claiming for something, and the hegemonic groups which, in the case of capitalism, are the capital holders. The political dimension, in the logic of desire, is experienced on the basis of respect for the subject's individuality (desire) as well as of the clash with representatives of the powers that be, while these are hegemonic. Hence, there is a chance for the subject to leave the fatalist victim position and move to the position of someone wronged, one who must fight for an equivalence of rights in an unbalanced relationship. This inaugurates the possibility for that subject to build his political ideology up as a support for the execution of political projects which do not cast him/her into a logics of endless enjoyment.

Final remarks

In this article we have provided some critical aspects on how the widespread concept of ideology, especially of Marx, is still important today for an understanding of the reality to which we are subjected. Such a concept allows us to see that contemporary society insists on "progressing" through exploitation, that is, at the expense of a worker's labor. However, the resources to get more and more surplus-value become ever more sophisticated over time. This is because they receive refinements both from science and religion, which allow an ever more assertive exploitation of a worker's labor.

We have also stated that this subject, who is involved in the reproduction of the capitalist system, is taken over by cynicism and, we could add, by greed, and the latter is mediated by an ethics of profit at any cost. On the other hand, there are subjects who contest such logics and, for this reason, are soon attacked by the very Apparatus of the State, which punishes and hurts these "rioters" exemplarily.

Therefore, when the "rioters" launch themselves into the discursive field of politics with a view to expose these ideological processes requires some courage of the subjects for them to face the consequent repressions. It also requires the formulation of a political project alternative to capitalism. For this purpose, it is necessary to take part in political organizations beyond the state control, thus creating, for instance, political events which question the *status quo operandi* and disarticulate it (Badiou, 2012; Parker and Pavón-Cuellar, 2014).

In this sense, we insist that the discursive field of politics may work as a political event capable of summoning subjects politically without disregarding the subjective dimensions, which are often forgotten by Marxist political theoreticians.

For that purpose, in this reflection, we take the fundamental contributions of Lacanian psychoanalysis. It has provided us, through the four discourses, with a movement for reflecting on such an articulation (politics and subjectivity), without causing some kind of prosaic dualism, which serves nothing else but the capitalist logic itself.

The Lacanian logic proposes non-stagnant political actions: the destination is never reached. In case one thinks so, the actions that were revolutionary and emancipating before, once consolidated by social and political constructions, become repressive in the same way or even worse than the previous regime.

Consequently, we point out the example of Stalinist socialism, in which tyranny became quite apparent against the very people who had supported the revolution. On the other hand, in Badiou's words, we have to look at the cultural revolution in China and the way Mao Tzé Tung led the revolutionary process, and, at the same time, saw the needs of the Communist Party and worked for its deconstruction, so that the party did not become the tormentor which it had so much opposed.

Thus, in order to work to establish the discursive field of politics, it is essential to broaden the possibility of removal of the capitalist State and its apparatus of control and repression.

One cannot insist on agreements and conventions with a State, like the Brazilian one, which set up an organization with the aim of regulating profit gain by means of slavery (throughout an official period of 388 years). After that, its laws were reformulated for the regulation of profit gaining by means of the exploitation of the worker's labor (supposedly free). Consequently, we cannot trap ourselves in the naive belief that this State, slave-based by nature, may hold any intention of changing itself on behalf of agreements and political reforms.

In Brazil, we see laws of control that rip off more and more money from the working class by means of taxes in order to finance rich agreements among allied parties (with public money, fruit of corruption), especially to invest in banks that have gone bankrupt. Many of these banks went bankrupt due to corruption of their executives. The money is also invested in the construction of stadiums for the World Cup and the Olympic Town in Rio de Janeiro, etc. However, the government's excuses are always the same when it comes to keeping public health care, education, and housing: there is not any money!

Thus, we live in a country marked by ever-growing stark social contrasts. Nevertheless, the little effort that the recent governments have made for a fair income distribution among the population has made the Brazilian middle class start identifying with authoritarian representatives who bring to public a racist (slave-based), sexist, and elitist discourse, which draws a quite clear boundary between the social classes. With that identification, the middle class admits that "*su vida es una puta mierda (y lo sabes)*", "their life is a piece of shit (and that they know it)".

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