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Capitalism also kills through the mouth: nutrition and Marxist critique. Contemporary challenges in the fight against hunger

O capitalismo também mata pela boca: alimentação e crítica marxista. Desafios contemporâneos para a luta contra a fome

El capitalismo también mata por la boca: alimentación y crítica marxista. Desafíos contemporáneos para la lucha contra el hambre

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Abstract

This article aims to analyze food from a Marxist critique, using the Marxian historical-dialectical materialist method to resort to historical and social processes as an investigation and exposition of facts, and through dialectical logic seeks to produce the analysis and interpretation of the daily reality of workers. The article is organized in two parts: the first part exposes the contradictions existing in the social tissue on the theme and the second part brings the historical analysis of the situation of hunger, food, availability and access to food for the working class, its highlighting political uses as a weapon of extermination and social murder of this class, and its potential to gather strength and produce revolutionary paths.

Descriptors: Capitalism, Hunger, Diet, Food, and Nutrition, Marxism, Food and Nutrition Security.

Resumo

Este artigo tem por objetivo analisar a alimentação a partir da crítica marxista, utiliza-se do método marxiano materialista históricodialético para recorrer a processos históricos e sociais como investigação e exposição dos fatos, e por meio da lógica dialética busca produzir a análise e a interpretação da realidade cotidiana dos trabalhadores. O artigo organiza-se em duas partes: a primeira expõe as contradições existentes no tecido social sobre o tema e a segunda traz a análise histórica da situação de fome, alimentação, disponibilidade e acesso aos alimentos para a classe trabalhadora, dando destaque para os seus usos políticos como arma de extermínio e assassinato social desta classe, e o seu potencial de arrematar forças e produzir caminhos revolucionários.

Descritores: Capitalismo, Fome, Alimentos, Dieta e Nutrição, Marxismo, Segurança Alimentar e Nutricional.

Resumen

Este artículo pretende analizar la comida desde la crítica marxista, utilizando el método materialista histórico-dialéctico marxiano para recurrir a los procesos históricos y sociales como investigación y exposición de los hechos, y a través de la lógica dialéctica busca producir el análisis e interpretación de la realidad cotidiana de los trabajadores. El artículo está organizado en dos partes: la primera expone las contradicciones existentes en el tejido social sobre el tema, y la segunda aporta el análisis histórico de la situación del hambre, la alimentación, la disponibilidad y el acceso a los alimentos para la clase obrera, destacando sus usos políticos como arma de exterminio y asesinato social de esta clase, y su potencial para convergir fuerzas y producir caminos revolucionarios.

Descriptorios: Capitalismo, Hambre, Nutrición, Alimentación y Dieta, Marxismo, Seguridad Alimentaria y Nutricional.

Introduction

The situation in the world at the (trans)pandemic moment in which we live has demonstrated how food, from its production, access and consumption, has been central in understanding this health emergency scenario, in which the pandemic and agribusiness continue hand in hand.¹ Since the production of virulent pathogens arising from the production method of global agri-food systems^{2,3} to the lack of access to adequate food, from the destruction of food crops to the political uses of hunger,^{5,4} food plays a central role in this debate.

Feeding has been the producer and product of attacks of various orders,⁶ this fact justifies a critical look at food from this crisis of capital sociability.

In capitalist sociability, man is separated from the means of production, that is, he does not have the land, the hoe, the plow or the forest, nor the bow and arrow. Thus, you are left with the labor force with which you can offer your strength to the capitalist market as an element of exchange to guarantee the **food-commodity**. It is in this context that food becomes a commodity and can only be obtained through another commodity: money.⁷

There is no doubt that human nutrition is a complex, multidimensional and essential issue for life. However, this puts pressure on how one should think about food not only in the act of **eating**, as a daily frequency that each living being needs, but also how this act is structured and rooted for the construction of the food production system in the capitalist mode of production. It is in this way of producing in which there is concentration of the means of production and there is the fetish of encouraging the consumption of **food products**, such as ultra-processed foods^{8,9} of modern life. It is in this capitalist mode of production that foods such as rice, corn, coffee, beans, soy, cocoa, sugar, meat and fruit juices become commodities and the central focus becomes the international market, prioritizing the export of these products. agricultural and agricultural sectors¹⁰ to imperialist capitalist countries.

As a social fact, food is intertwined with the economic, cultural, socio-historical and political order that directly affects the biological and nutritional variables that this phenomenon carries.^{7,9,11} Although something elementary human life, food has been reconfigured and acquired new contours in the contemporary context, especially within the science of nutrition which still emphasizes and guides the production of knowledge to understand the interaction of food with the organism, how nutrients act and their biological utilization. Furthermore, nutrition is dedicated to studying food sources, food groups, maintaining the centrality of nutrients (nutritionism) and, sometimes, forgets to know, problematize and debate food issues in the contemporary context. Instead, the biological understanding of nutrition is strengthened through the relationship between food, health and the body based on its aspects of biological use in individuals.^{11,9}

In this sense, there is an exacerbation of the bodily and sensorial experience of commensality (the act of eating) associated with overweight and obesity, which is little associated with hunger. This biomedicalized narrative about **eating**, focused only on abundance and sufficiency, displaces food from its essential place in human life, emptying understanding about eating as a social process and reducing it to what we call today **healthy eating**.¹³ In addition to depriving it of its political place (of exercising power) in the lives of individuals and society, this narrative obscures the vulnerabilities or

precariousness generated by the capitalist mode of production on the act of **eating** as if it had annulled the inherent role of the subjects who eat as: the habits, practices, identity and food culture of peoples, groups or people.^{9,14}

It is in the midst of the epidemiological, demographic and nutritional transition in which an increase in chronic non-communicable diseases (NCDs) is observed, such as diabetes, hypertension, metabolic syndrome, kidney diseases, and the global phenomenon of the emergence of the epidemic of obesity, which the World Health Organization lays the foundations at the international level to consolidate the notion of **healthy eating**. Nevertheless, this narrative (attributed to the centrality of energy imbalance in the causal relationship between risk factors, in this case food and NCDs) helps, once again, to embed this notion of food in the formulation of policies and action plans of States,¹³ lateralizing the debate on the structural element of the issue: the food industry and its relationship with agribusiness, with the State and its agents as mediators to its reproduction in the capitalist system.

Food and nutrition, in addition to their biophysical-chemical attributes, are, more than anything, global and local issues relevant to public health and, in particular, to understanding the capitalist mode of production. Since, in the contemporary scenario, food has raised the centrality of emerging problems in the way of production,² it becomes more evident that it is capable of revealing the geopolitical tensions, climate and socioeconomic crises, in addition to the emergence of new diseases as in the case of the recent coronavirus (covid-19). In this sense, food allows us to rethink and reflect the light of a critical view: human action and the hegemonic model of production, which is capitalism.

Thus, this article aims to analyze food from a Marxist critique, using the historical-dialectical materialist method to resort to historical and social processes about the place of food in the sociability of capital. The article is organized into two parts: the first exposes the contradictions existing in the social fabric on the subject and the second brings the historical analysis of the situation of hunger, food, availability and access to food for the working class, highlighting its uses politicians as a weapon of extermination and social murder of this class, and its potential to gather strength and produce revolutionary paths.

The unspoken or "invisible": the contradictions produced in the effervescent depths of the social relations and the political struggle in the food sector

To ratify the centrality of food in the class struggle, the crisis of neoliberal capitalism in 2008 had consequences for several sectors and, certainly, one of them was the agri-food sector. One of the most heinous aspects of the consequences of financial speculation not only in the **real economy**, but also

in life in general is the food crisis that has approached, arrived and increased the rate of production on large capitalist farms in order to print a pace of recovery in the financial sphere.¹⁵ In addition to the consequences on the increase in food, this acceleration promoted the disruption of the ecological balance of pathogens confined to animals, generating diseases such as the coronavirus,¹ that international organizations such as the World Health Organization - WHO has sought to identify its zoonotic origin and the route of introduction to the human population.¹⁶

To justify the food crisis, bourgeois economists, for example, cite objective factors, such as: global population growth, global warming, increasing desertification of arable land, exceptional drought in Australia and development in large poor countries such as China, India, etc.¹⁵ On the other hand, a decadent petty bourgeoisie that still has enough income to maintain its food consumption, does not worry about the insecurity and hunger because for her this is a problem **solved**. However, data from the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations - FAO, demonstrate the worsening of food conditions, in this case hunger, in countries on different continents.¹⁷ The report Panorama de la seguridad Alimentaria y Nutricional en América Latina y el Caribe 2020 details the inequality in the geographic distribution of poor nutrition in Latin American countries. It is also noteworthy that the impact of the pandemic occurs at a time when regional food security was already clearly deteriorating: in 2019, 47.7 million people, 7.4% of the population, were living in hunger, an increase of more than 13 million in the last five years alone. Furthermore, more than 190 million people lived in a situation of moderate or severe food insecurity, which means that one in three inhabitants of Latin America did not have access to sufficient and nutritious food.¹⁸

Josué de Castro¹⁹ in his writings has already demystified mistaken ideas about the lack of food for the entire population and contemporary ideological formulations (neomalthusian) that naturalize the phenomenon of hunger. Castro¹⁹ and George²⁰ exposed hunger as a harmful consequence of the way capitalist production; argue that hunger does not only come from the consequences of natural disasters (earthquakes, droughts, typhoons), overpopulation, food shortages, the inferiority of some racial groups and even geographic determination. The authors highlight that hunger is predominantly generated by political and social choices, as humanity produces enough for everyone to satisfy their nutritional needs, in reality the world produces more than it needs for human nutrition. Hunger is in fact a capitalist social production that reaches the oppressed and segregated population more quickly, reducing their life expectancy. In 2019, according to FAO data, hunger affected more than 820 million people around the world.²¹

Another important feature of contemporary capitalism related to agribusiness is financial capital, arising from the fusion between industrial capital and

banking capital, which contributed to the development of large monopolies and the increase in the power of banks under the States, through of capital circulation through speculative money (financialization).⁸ It was in this context that agribusiness took its share, with the transformation of food into commodities and as a new business managed by the globalized chain, with large participation of financial market agents, food speculation was created. Although little visible or even veiled to the consumer, food speculation produced by agribusiness has also experienced its financial expansion. Financialization occurs through the entry of pension funds and investments into businesses in the agricultural chain. The funds can participate directly in the acquisition of land, property leases and investments can be made in machinery companies, inputs, storage mechanisms, marketing of products on the international market, industrialization processes and the formation of new chains.²² Thus, we are witnessing a growing wave of land privatization (purchase by foreign governments, transnational agribusinesses or investment funds), the expansion of **new agricultural frontiers** - in many countries such as Africa, Asia and Latin America - has seen their ability to self-supply reduce, reducing their food production capacity.⁸

It is in this scenario in which the critical perspective can analyze the triad **food-commodity-disease** as a product and producer of economic inequalities, political and social policies that support and serve for the reproduction of capitalism; generating hunger, poverty and misery for the working class. In this sense, identifying contradictions, tensions and giving legitimacy to social struggles with more grassroots resistance and more political strength means enlisting transformative forces and revealing the restriction of public debate on existing issues, such as hunger. It is also looking at what is not being said or made visible, but which is in effervescent production in the depths of the social fabric and the political struggle: the domination and constant expropriation of the working class.

Another important point is the way in which actions are strategically defined to address existing issues (be they food or health): whether through individual or collective actions; forces are organized or the possibilities for collective struggle are fragmented (segmenting political practices). The definition of actions and the opening of spaces for reflection deserve to be highlighted, because they are the ways in which it is constructed and said how to face existing problems, especially here, translated into the production of knowledge on the topic, as the most recent reviews on food from a social science perspective, point out that it is necessary to develop new forms of criticism of agri-food systems and (re)politicize the issue of food, suggesting taking into account the social and human aspects of technical transitions and the importance of the link with food and consumption .²³

Cheney²⁴ recalls that the use of Marxian categories such as alienation, division of labor and the production of consumption can strengthen the argument for food sovereignty and, at the same time, mount a critique of gastronomic culture. According to the author,²⁴ just as food can be a place of oppression, it can also be a place of struggle against capital and therefore, it is essential to understand food and nourishment in the dynamics of the critique of capitalist political economy.

For this, Foster,²⁵ when rescuing Marx, already revived us that in the midst of abundant food production, hunger continues to be a chronic problem and food and nutrition insecurity is now a pressing concern for many people around the world. It is in this destructive logic of the current economic model expressed by its ultra-neoliberal form^{26,27} especially in countries with dependent capitalism, is that production and consumption patterns, their anchoring of exploitation, expropriation, growth of inequalities, precariousness of work and the logic of socialization of losses and privatization of profit have been the focus. These are the characteristics of the project of destruction (human and environmental) that is underway, whose target is the annihilation of human possibilities for a dignified existence, for the construction of solidarity and social justice, which has in the **feeding** the way of reproducing itself based on its logic of decimating people. Despite the **metabolic rift** and the new food production regime²⁵ This has been the current project on a global scale, which has also reached quite strongly in the territories of Latin American countries.

In terms of dependence on Latin America, the concentration of rentier productions is the product of the historical construction of its insertion in global capitalism, as suppliers of raw materials, especially food as a dynamic component of a colonial tradition of subservience.²⁸ High fixed volumes of constant capital are invested in extractive production and this creates enormous pressure on the peripheral economy²⁹ and, as a result, generates overexploitation of work. According to Osorio,³⁰ superexploitation does not mean that workers should die at age 40 or 50. The appropriation of future years of life and the abnormal sale of labor that leads to superexploitation are reflected in the fact that this sale will be carried out under worse conditions. For capital, a worker who is super-exploited from a young age, at 45 or 50 years old, is a worker who can receive a job, but with lower wages, as it is a prematurely exhausted workforce. And one can live for several years close to the new average life expectancy, but with illnesses and diseases, the result of a life wasted and/or poorly recovered in nutritional terms.

Thus, this is the movement that is taking hold in Latin American countries, in these times of crisis. This is the rooting of dependent neoliberalism, in its contemporary form **ultra-neoliberal**,^{26,27} with the option of their governments to reconfigure the capitalist State as a means for the reproduction of capital and some examples of the concrete consequences of this are: reduction in

public spending, significant cuts in social investments to guarantee rights, the dismantling of these social rights via counter-reforms led by the State, which directly affect public policies, programs and social actions, which annihilates the living conditions of the working class.³¹

The political scenario in Latin America and particularly in Brazil involves the denial of food as an essential human need for life, as well as the denial of food culture and disrespect for the population's commensality. Through this, they also generate the denial of hunger as a structural problem, that is, the evident notion that the bourgeoisie has, that by touching food it causes irreparable and purposeful damage to generations of the working class. Forcing the population to experience hunger and the consumption of ultra-processed food is a purposeful action to forge the political use of food as a maneuver of bourgeois interests in this capitalist sociability that has always been used in capitalism.

The political uses of hunger as a weapon of extermination and social murder

The paradox between exacerbated food production, poverty and hunger that plague a significant part of the world's population is not new.³² Hunger is a social production of capitalism since its inception. The first analyzes of food as a commodity and hunger as a form of massacre of the working class appear in Marx and Engels in their writings on the capitalism of their time. Marx portrays the problem in the *Grundrisse* (1857-1858), the initial version of the economic manuscripts of the critique of political economy that preceded the work "Capital"; and Engels (1845) in his book "The situation of the working class in England", which addresses hunger and lack of food as a form of **social murder** of working class.

The idea of **social murder** portrayed by Engels is the fact that it would be configured by death by hunger. The description of the living conditions imposed on the class that owns none of the means of production will be made in this book based on three major needs: (i) housing; (ii) clothing; (iii) food. As for food, it is clear that in big cities you can find everything in great supply and variety, but how will a person who survives with so little pay for food? Another point raised is that quality products arrived at the market in the morning and the workers received them - some - on Friday night and many only at the end of Saturday, but the reality is that even if they managed to arrive early they would not be able to buy. Some even resorted to goods that could no longer be sold, buying meat in a state of putrefaction. Products such as butter, cocoa, coffee and tobacco cigarettes were adulterated before reaching the hands of workers, who, as they were not accustomed to **good food**, did not realize. However, the poor do not only suffer in terms of food quality, they also suffer in terms of quantity, when deceived by false weights and rigged scales. This was the food situation of the working class in England.

After observing these aspects together, something very important is clearly put on the agenda: the health of workers. Putting these aspects together, it is possible to perceive the scale of different living conditions that Engels highlights and the instability of this worker in the face of it. This makes it possible to understand that the health of workers, along with their hygiene, housing and food situations, always remained very weak, ranging from modest comfort to extreme deprivation, with the risk of death from hunger, having to submit to more degrading situations to survive. The living conditions created by society (in that historical period) that led to the murder of the working class and that did not even allow for self-defense may not seem like murder, but in reality it is. Clothed in the appearance of **naturalness**, hunger, inadequate nutrition is one of the main causes of this mass murder, as Engels describes in England.

The numerous deaths caused indirectly by hunger became invisible, the systematic lack of food that causes deadly diseases, left the victims so weakened by illnesses that, in other circumstances, they could evolve favorably, but in these cases they determined the severity they suffered the death. The English workers call this **social murder** and accuse society of continually practicing it. Will they be wrong? They died of hunger, it is true, isolated individuals, but what security did the worker have that tomorrow the same fate would not await him? Who could guarantee him that he wouldn't lose his job? Who assures him that tomorrow, when the boss - with or without reason - threw him out on the street, he would be able to support himself and his family until he found someone else to **give him bread**? Who assured the worker that, to find a job, all he needed was a willingness to work, that honesty, diligence, thrift and all the other numerous virtues that the judicious bourgeoisie recommended to him are really the path to happiness for him? Nobody. The worker knows that, if he had something today, it was not up to him to keep it tomorrow; he knows that the slightest sigh, the simplest whim of his boss, any unfavorable business situation could throw him into the vortex from which he momentarily escaped and in which it is difficult, almost impossible, to stay afloat. He knows that if he had the means to survive today, he might not have them tomorrow.³³

Later, Engels will say that the workers would be left with what is repugnant to the owning class. In the big cities of England, everything and the best quality could be had, but at prohibitive prices for the worker, who, as he survived with few resources, could not afford them. In general, the composition of the worker's diet was marked by the potatoes he acquired, which were of poor quality, withered vegetables, aged cheese, rancid bacon and dry, lean meat, often from sick animals and even already in decomposition. Often, the sellers were small retailers who bought ordinary goods in quantity and resold them at a low price precisely because of their poor quality.

Facts portrayed by Engels are very similar to what we experience today, subject to the appropriate historical location: such as the adulteration of sugar with a mixture of rice flour or other cheap foodstuffs; mixing chicory or other low-priced products with ground coffee; and pepper adulterated with ground walnut shells. Can't we say that these are the ultra-processed products of the 19th century? Food products that originally contain little or no **real food**. In this sense, the appearance may have changed. At the beginning of the 21st century, we are experiencing the supply of adulterated or indigestible food products that are rich in sodium, refined sugar, corn glucose, food additives, dyes and pesticides, which are not food or have any of their original composition.^{34,35} Despite the differences between historical times, the tactic of slow and gradual **social murder** seems secular.

At that time in England, each worker's usual diet varied naturally depending on their salary. The best-paid workers, especially factory workers, in whose family all members managed to earn something, had - while this situation continued - a good diet: meat every day and, at night, bacon and cheese. In families that earned less, meat was only available on Sundays or, sometimes, on two or three days of the week; on the other hand, they ate more potatoes and bread (foods rich in carbohydrates). As you went down the salary scale, you noticed that meat-based food was reduced to a few pieces of bacon mixed with potatoes; going down even further, even the bacon disappeared, leaving the cheese, potatoes, bread and oat porridge; When the Irish arrived, they only had potatoes as their only food. Generally, the food was accompanied by light tea, mixed with a little sugar, milk or brandy. In England, and also in Ireland, tea was seen as a drink as necessary and indispensable as, among us, coffee - and, in the house where tea was not drunk, the cruelest aspect of misery always reigned. But all this was only true if the worker was employed; unemployed, he was at the mercy of luck and ate what he was given, what he begged or even what he stole - and if he found nothing, he simply died of hunger.³³

In this way, it is easy to understand that both the quality and quantity of food depended (and depend) on the salary (income) and that, among the lowest paid workers, especially among those who have a large family, hunger prevails, even in periods when there are jobs. It is worth noting that the number of poorly paid workers was enormous. Nothing very different from what we experience today, in the 21st century in the context of the covid-19 pandemic, in which the super-exploitation of workers is recurrent and, in which the infoproletarians of apps, such as Rappi, Ifood, UberEats, etc.,³⁶ as the most degraded part of the working class (like the Irish in 19th century England) suffer from the worst possible diet. But, with a nefarious contradiction, they deliver higher quality food to those who can pay for it.

But, returning to London, almost all the workers had an affected stomach and, nevertheless, were forced to stick permanently to the diet that is itself the cause of their ills. Besides, how could they know the consequences of their poor diet? And even if they knew them, how could they follow a more appropriate diet without changing their living and educational conditions? In fact, this would only be possible if they fed on another nutrient. "Nurture the most ardent hatred against their oppressors, against a social order that imposed on them a situation that degraded them to the level of machines."³³⁽¹⁴¹⁾

Revolution scenarios are fertile ground for historical insights into food. Russia, still czarist under Alexander II (1858-1881) and Nicholas II (1894-1918), was already experiencing frequent food supply crises. Viana³⁷ demonstrates how in pre-revolution Russia, the poverty of the working class was felt due to food: "wages, including those of qualified workers, were constantly falling, while the prices of basic food items rose, and so from October 1903 to 1904".³⁷⁽⁴⁹⁾

We cannot forget the scenario of the Russian Revolution of 1917 in which hungry workers who demanded their right to life, looted food throughout Russia - generating the Bread Revolt. Among the soviets that demanded better food were, mainly, soldiers and sailors and it is at this moment that the right to food as a fundamental right is demanded by the revolutionary front.³⁸ This is where the historical inflection point lies where access to food is conceived, still in a rudimentary form, from the perspective of a human right. Episodes like this in the history of class struggle show how intense indignation is over hunger and that, when intensified, it has great potential for the outbreak of a revolution. Panik³⁹ justifies that proletarian adherence to the socialist strategy depends on this ability of revolutionaries to address concrete everyday issues of which the famine experienced in Russia was one of them.

Thus, the "Peace, Earth and Bread" in the workers' struggle against tsarism. Once again the food (bread) highlighted the call to fight. However, the counter-revolution took hold and the civil war of (1918-1921) began between the White Russians (in favor of tsarism) and the Red Russians (in favor of the revolution). The war environment also accentuated gender roles, in which it was women's responsibility to look for food in the clandestine market as famine and lack of food made life unbearable, especially for women from the poor classes.⁴⁰

In this course, the Code of 1918,⁴⁰ delimited some substantive changes in the life of the working class with regard to food, such as , when establishing alimony in the event of incapacity or poverty of either spouse. Furthermore, given the difficulty of food production that has arisen, a solution for this purpose was, firstly, the installation of the collective food system.⁴⁰ Thus, the victory of the revolution with the Bolshevik army was a very important legacy

for the working class, but it left this balance difficult to pay related to food production and supply, especially due to the massive area of destroyed plantations with reports including cases of cannibalism.⁴¹

If in **times of war** the revolutionary transition to socialism led to a scarcity of resources and, in the case of food, to a crisis in agricultural production which manifested itself in hunger among the great masses, this event is a fatality, a consequence of the struggle for liberation and the need for political reconstruction. Differently, capitalism socially produces these conditions in **times of peace**, which is, in itself, a difference in content over **social production of hunger** quite relevant.

When observing Nazism, as a particular form of fascism that ultimately expresses the most violent form of capitalist political domination, hunger was an instrument for managing the death of subaltern classes and of a eugenic nature. According to Silva⁴² the **hunger plan** implemented by Hitler was a program that, in addition to racial discrimination, there was food discrimination in which populations were subdivided into four categories or groups: (i) population **well fed**, which had a role in progress of the war; (ii) population **insufficiently fed**, whose food satisfaction only reached one thousand calories per day per adult; (iii) The **hungry** were people who received food below the survival level with the simple objective of reducing the population, as was the case the case of residents of Jewish ghettos; and (iv) those destined to be **exterminated by hunger**, groups on which hunger was imposed as a way of decimating them.⁴²⁽²¹⁾

With the characterization of the political use of food as a weapon in capitalism, as a way of controlling the death of the masses and artificially produced social stratification, it was that, after the atrocities that this scenario produced, the defense of food became an important synonym for the defense of humanity. Thus, in guaranteeing the **reestablishment of peace** (under capitalist models), an international human rights protection system was set up, resulting in the "Universal Declaration of Human Rights" in 1948.⁴² This declaration points to its articles 3°, 23° and 25°, which deal respectively with the right to life, the right to work in satisfactory conditions, which allow the individual and their family a dignified existence protected from unemployment and, finally, the right to a standard of living that ensures health and well-being for the individual and their family, especially in terms of food.⁴²

Even in this framework, the global division between capitalism and socialism was demarcated in the production of the two documents derived from the Declaration of Human Rights. One, aimed at people (International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights) and the other aimed at States (International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights). In these pacts, the right

to food was included in the second and, around this idea, the rudiment of what can be understood as **social protection** was built in terms of a set of policies in which the State must operate so that social rights, including the right to food, are realized.³¹

However, with global political polarization with the Cold War and the reconstruction of Western European countries, civil and political rights gained more importance in the advancement of capitalism than economic, social and cultural rights. Even with the construction of Capitalist Social States with generous social protection systems in imperialist capitalist countries (France, Germany and England) this form of use of the **social** It has always been linked to the strengthening of capitalist businesses. Lessa⁴³ reinforces that:

the theses that try to explain the Welfare State based on a 'commitment' between work and capital are based on the assumption that the public policies of imperialist states in the post-war period were truly and genuinely aimed at meeting the interests of workers and the needs of those most in need. We saw how this never happened; There has been no public policy that has not been, above all and primarily, a good deal for capital.⁴³⁽²¹⁰⁾

In this scenario, the political dispute over food attempted to obliterate the use of the term **hunger**, placing it under the umbrella of scientific rhetoric, depoliticizing its content, justifying that what exists in capitalism are **scenarios** of food and nutritional insecurity, and not hunger itself.

This is where the historical conceptual dispute about food and nutrition from the perspective of ensuring food and nutritional security (SAN) scenarios appears linked to the ability of each country to produce its own food so that it is not exposed to problems related to issues political or military during the period of World War I (1914-1918). After the post-war period, the lack of SAN began to be understood as a question of insufficient food availability and with this several actions of support and assistance to food began, generally using excess production from imperialist countries for the countries of dependent capitalism.

Later, in 1950, the **Green Revolution** caused an increase in food production promoted by the use of transgenic seeds, the use of pesticides and fertilizers, technological innovation of agricultural planting and harvesting machinery. Since then, as Krauser⁴⁴ points out, a mixture of food regimes provided by the logic of protection-disprotection within the scope of monopoly capitalism until the period of neoliberalism in that the accentuation of the commercial character of food has intensified. Especially the North American food regime

and the corporate food regime are the main recent historical forms of food supply under capitalism and its consequences.

Final considerations

Currently the food situation in the world is going through a **Global Syndemic** of obesity, malnutrition, hunger and climate change that coexist, intensify and have generated disastrous impacts on health and the environment and has produced social costs that overshadow the economic costs. The Lancet Obesity Commission Report demonstrates that in addition to this pandemic scenario, another challenge for human beings is our relationship with the environment.⁴⁵ Given that we are maintaining an unsustainable global agri-food system, this report shows that the common factors of the Global Syndemic arise from food production, land use systems, transportation and urban design that derive from nature and they are shaped by policies, economic incentives and disincentives, and norms established through governance mechanisms.

There is a predominance of the contemporary idea that obesity is the major public health issue related to food, while hunger and malnutrition are considered residual realities, linked to extreme poverty, or present in social contexts far from the major centers and restricted to **rural populations, traditional populations** (such as, **indigenous and quilombolas**). The Covid-19 pandemic has revealed and exacerbated these contradictions, as this idea only reinforces and hides the economic, political and social aspects of food. Hunger is also on the outskirts of large cities, and we can no longer deny that; because under this rhetoric the possibility of discussing the heart of the issue is erased: the economic model of production and the human action produced by it.

Brazil has experienced a nutritional transition marked by the double facet of issues linked to dietary inadequacies that are inconsistent with the said **agricultural vocation** that impose themselves on him. Malnutrition and nutritional deficiencies coexist; overweight and obesity associated with a set of NCDs that are incompatible with the agricultural production scenario, if food were socialized. The scenario of nutrition-related diseases has burdened public health expenditures, due to the cost of treatment for individuals, families and, mainly, for health systems,⁴⁶ which was worsened by covid-19.

Particularly in Brazil, the current scenario of hunger in the pandemic can be verified through data from the "National Survey on Food Insecurity in the Context of the Covid-19 Pandemic in Brazil",⁴⁷ that of the total of 211.7 million Brazilians, 116.8 million lived with some degree of food and nutritional insecurity, and of these, 43.4 million did not have food in enough and 19 million face hunger. These facts do not make the elites who join the

Brazilian State at all calm, as they certainly fear that a food revolt will happen. Just follow throughout the pandemic, the strong maintenance and control of supermarket supplies, the maintenance of open-air markets, the prompt attention to the creation of a voucher card that replaced school meals in basic and technical education, the distribution of basic food baskets made by several industries in peripheral neighborhoods, the federal government's emergency action in an attempt to also subsidize the food on Brazilians' plates.

Food donation as an emergency action to combat hunger, in times of pandemic (and also outside of it), can take on different motivations, intentions and social responsibilities that they bring into the scene **who wants to make structural change** and **who wants to make generosity**. But, after all, what is hunger? This form of capitalist domination over the working class is often understood as malnutrition or poverty, which according to Boog⁴⁸ has important structural, conceptual and measurement differences. The simplistic idea that food satisfies the hunger of the poor must be analyzed with caution, as hunger does not necessarily present itself in its biological form, and can present itself as different hungers: hidden hunger, apparent hunger, acute hunger and chronic hunger. ¹⁹

Although donated food is always welcome, it is not always well appreciated, because it is not the one desired, acquired by free choice and which involves the act of eating in its complete commensality.⁸ Giving food to those who are hungry has always been considered an act of generosity, charity and solidarity.⁴⁸ If on the one hand **hunger does not wait**, welfare policies have forced the working class into subjection and conformity with its status quo of domination.< /span>

Thus, ruptures with the way food is produced and sold are necessary, a form of actions to structurally combat hunger, an example of what has already occurred in this pandemic is to highlight: the production and distribution of food produced by small family farming producers, through the importance of the Food Acquisition Program - PAA as a tool to mitigate the economic and social impacts of the pandemic caused by the new coronavirus, due to its dynamism in the local economy, access to new markets, the increasing and diversifying income, marketing and guaranteeing sales, access to quality food, encouraging the consumption of quality food and improving health.⁴⁹ Various forms of donation from agrarian reform social movements, such as the Landless Rural Workers Movement - MST (basic baskets with various **real foods**, fairs and lunch boxes) for outskirts and communities; in addition to building new forms of sociability for commercialization and local food supply, with a direct relationship between the small producer and the small merchant on the outskirts, without variation in price and quality; the organization and creation of several solidarity community kitchens led by the Homeless Workers Movement - MTST.

It is necessary to advance in radical criticism of the way of producing food in this capitalist system, as we cannot stop at the counter-hegemony of **conscious consumption**, in **reterritorialization of food**, in **food culture** or in **social recycling of taste**. The insistence on these discourses avoids the nodal point which is the criticism of food and the transition to a **critical feeding**. Therefore, it is not enough to (de)colonize, it is necessary to (re)radicalize.

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