

## **Culture as a pathological element in popular sectors**

### **La cultura como elemento patológico en sectores populares**

### **A cultura como elemento patológico nos sectores populares**

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#### **Abstract**

This article analyzes the relationship between territory, subjectivity, and the body in contexts of urban marginality, from an interdisciplinary approach that articulates social ecology, the theory of the production of space, and psychoanalysis. It argues that issues associated with crime, violence, and mental health cannot be understood in isolation or reduced to individual or economic variables, but must be situated within the web of social, spatial, and power relations that shape everyday life. In this sense, the article examines how public policies oriented toward security and social control have contributed to the production of segregated territories and subjectivities marked by exclusion. Likewise, it proposes a reading of habitat as a generator of psychopathological conditions, incorporating the concept of “psycho-space” and its influence on the structuring of the internal world. Finally, the body is addressed as a site where these experiences are inscribed, highlighting its social and historical dimension. The article concludes that understanding mental health in contexts of poverty requires a critical approach that integrates territory, ecology, and subjectivity, opening possibilities for the development of more comprehensive and situated policies.

**Keywords:** Social ecology, territory, subjectivity, poverty, mental health, body, critical urbanism.

#### **Resumen**

El presente artículo analiza la relación entre territorio, subjetividad y cuerpo en contextos de marginalidad urbana, a partir de un enfoque interdisciplinario que articula la ecología social, la teoría de la producción del espacio y el psicoanálisis. Se sostiene que las problemáticas asociadas a la delincuencia, la violencia y la salud mental no pueden ser comprendidas de manera aislada ni reducidas a variables individuales o económicas, sino que deben situarse en el entramado de relaciones sociales, espaciales y de poder que configuran la vida cotidiana. En este sentido, se examina cómo las políticas públicas orientadas a la seguridad y al control social han contribuido a la producción de territorios segregados y subjetividades marcadas por la exclusión. Asimismo, se

propone una lectura del hábitat como generador de condiciones psicopatológicas, incorporando el concepto de “psico espacio” y su incidencia en la estructuración del mundo interno. Finalmente, se aborda el cuerpo como lugar de inscripción de estas experiencias, destacando su dimensión social e histórica. El artículo concluye que la comprensión de la salud mental en contextos de pobreza requiere un enfoque crítico que integre territorio, ecología y subjetividad, abriendo posibilidades para el desarrollo de políticas más integrales y situadas.

**Palabras clave:** Ecología social, territorio, subjetividad, pobreza, salud mental, cuerpo, urbanismo crítico.

## Resumo

O presente artigo analisa a relação entre território, subjetividade e corpo em contextos de marginalidades urbana, a partir de uma abordagem interdisciplinar que articula a ecologia social, a teoria da produção do espaço e a psicanálise. Sustenta-se que as problemáticas associadas à criminalidade, à violência e à saúde mental não podem ser compreendidas de forma isolada nem reduzidas a variáveis individuais ou econômicas, mas devem ser situadas no entrelaçamento de relações sociais, espaciais e de poder que configuram a vida cotidiana. Nesse sentido, examina-se como as políticas públicas orientadas à segurança e ao controle social são contribuídas para a produção de territórios segregados e subjetividades marcadas pela exclusão. Do mesmo modo, propõe-se uma leitura do hábitat como gerador de condições psicopatológicas, incorporando o conceito de “psicoespaço” e sua incidência na estruturação do mundo interno. Por fim, o corpo é abordado como lugar de inscrição dessas experiências, destacando sua dimensão social e histórica. O artigo conclui que a compreensão da saúde mental em contextos de pobreza requer uma abordagem crítica que integre território, ecologia e subjetividade, abriendo possibilidades para o desenvolvimento de políticas mais integradas e situadas.

**Palabras-chave:** Ecología social, territorio, subjetividade, pobreza, salud mental, cuerpo, urbanismo crítico.

## I. Introduction

Entering the 21st century, one of the primary concerns for those who control the media -and therefore influence the construction of public opinion- has been the increase in crime. Through the dissemination of high figures, the media has instilled in the citizenry a perception of ever-present danger, localized within their own neighborhoods and communities. This process has contributed to the construction of a social imaginary where the "threat" is associated with poverty and immigration,

simplifying complex phenomena and shifting focus away from structural causes toward their most visible manifestations.

These narratives have been adopted by Chilean state agencies, translating into the implementation of predominantly repressive policies. These include drug policies, community security programs, the strengthening of surveillance systems, an increase in the personnel of the *Carabineros* and the Investigations Police (PDI), and a proliferation of studies and interventions centered on the relationship between poverty, migration, and crime.

Right-wing think tanks are the ones drawing this connection; for instance, the *Fundación Para el Progreso* published a study titled "Immigration and Crime in Chile" (Ugarte, 2025). This is a complex relationship; nevertheless, these measures have involved enormous economic investment that has demonstrated neither effectiveness nor efficiency in reducing criminality or marginality. Instead, they have consolidated a narrative that directly links poverty and insecurity, as proposed by Kiepek, despite prohibitionist policies, awareness campaigns, and imposed sanctions, drug consumption remains a persistent issue in many societies. This suggests that public policies and explanatory models of addiction are ineffective in addressing the complexity of the phenomenon today. They perpetuate a simplistic, stigmatizing approach sustained by a moralizing language that will remain rooted as long as there is no reflection upon it (Diego Fernández Piedra et al., 2025).

In this context, violence has begun to be internalized among certain youth sectors as part of a neighborhood culture. Gangs emerge not only as expressions of social conflict but also as forms of emotional containment and collective identification, especially in contexts where community bonds are weakened. This phenomenon is reinforced by increasing state intervention through psychosocial and control programs, which tend to fragment the social fabric rather than strengthen it.

As Bonilla-Molina and El Troudi argue, "the State generated a thinking elite it called the *intelligenzgia*, normalized forms of social control synthesized in the government, and an institutional framework that transmits and guarantees this domination" (2004, p. 26). Within this framework, many public policies operate more as mechanisms of control than as tools for social transformation, prioritizing the visibility of state action over its real impact. This contributes to a progressive disarticulation of the social fabric and the configuration of subjectivities marked by exclusion, violence, and antisocial counterculture.

From this perspective, it is fundamental to understand that human behavior and the environment are configured in a relationship of mutual influence. As Fiasché posits, the spaces we inhabit -housing, urban design, the availability of green areas, and territorial organization- directly affect the constitution of subjectivity (2003). It is essential to recognize that people's behavior and the environment are mutually influencing elements (Fiasché, 2003): the way we are influenced by a green area, the construction of a building, the design of spaces, the walls of a room, or a new street meters from our

home. In this way, it is possible to contribute from another perspective to the neighborhood programs that the Chilean government is promoting, contributing to a new conception of the working-class neighborhood (*barrio popular*) that is ecologically healthier, rather than a camp of bricks or fiber-cement sheets.

The analysis is supported by psychoanalytically oriented psychology, particularly Melanie Klein's object relations theory, which understands personality as a continuous development process structured in the early years of life through the resolution of intrapsychic conflicts and relationships with others. Melanie Klein considers that "internal objects and unconscious fantasies produce meanings within psychic reality, and these meanings are what are projected onto external reality, giving it different senses in every lived moment" (Ramírez, 2010, p. 226). The contributions of Otto Kernberg (Hoffman, 2022) are here, highlighting the role of affects in the organization of psychic life, moving from initial bodily experiences toward more complex relational configurations.

In this framework, the constitution of personality cannot be reduced to quantitative explanations or approaches focused exclusively on the material overcoming of poverty. On the contrary, it requires considering the historical, social, and spatial conditions in which the subject develops. In this sense, phenomena such as the 2019 social uprising in Chile demonstrate that social problems are not limited to economic indicators but refer to deeper forms of exclusion.

However, the possibility of a resurgence of what some have called the "destituent" remains open, as evidenced in the 2019 social outburst. The task, therefore, is not to repeat the formulas of the past but to open spaces for permanent critical reflection that allow for the identification of when and how to act without falling into automatic actions that can be co-opted or absorbed by the logic of the neoliberal model (Torres, 2025).

The objective of this article is, therefore, to analyze the relationship between territory, subjectivity, and the body from a critical perspective that allows for an understanding of the conditions of the production of pathology in contexts of marginality. To this end, it proposes moving beyond approaches focused exclusively on observable behavior, incorporating an interpretive gaze aimed at understanding underlying processes.

This also implies an epistemological reflection on the limits of traditional explanatory approaches. As Saltamacchia points out, such hypotheses are investigated, and the acquired knowledge allows for the initiation of an inductive process that will lead to empirical generalizations that we will maintain as long as their falsehood or inefficiency is not proven (2008). Along these lines, Otto Kernberg addresses a diagnostic approach that grants relevance to that which is not immediately visible,

allowing the analyst to delve deeper into the relationship between environment, psychic structure, and disorder.

The patient's social environment is another parameter to consider; in a stimulating and high-level cultural environment, the incapacity for enjoyment and the absence of creativity in the borderline patient may be disguised by their apparent adaptation to an optimal environment. Conversely, patients chronically submerged in a severely deprived social environment may appear weak, uncreative, and incapable of enjoyment, despite which they do not necessarily present the most serious manifestations of incapacity for sublimation at a deeper level (Kernberg, 1979; Riquelme y Oksenberg, 2003).

The article is organized into three sections. First, it addresses neighborhood ecology within the framework of social ecology, analyzing the relationship between territory, power, and inequality. Second, it examines the social habitat as a generator of pathology, integrating contributions from the theory of the production of space and psychoanalysis. Finally, it analyzes the body as a depository of these experiences, understanding its dimension as the site where social, economic, and affective tensions are inscribed.

## **II. Neighborhood Ecology within the Framework of Social Ecology**

To advance toward a definition of neighborhood ecology, it is necessary to situate it within a broader field of socio-ecological relations. These are understood not merely as links between human beings and their surroundings, but as historical configurations where material, symbolic, and political dimensions are articulated. From this perspective, ecology ceases to be a strictly natural sphere and is conceived as a relational web involving both human and non-human actors under specific conditions of social life production. By placing this discussion at the neighborhood scale, these relations acquire a situated character; the territory emerges as a space where processes of inequality, conflict, and collective organization are condensed.

In this framework, the notion of modernity/coloniality developed by Aníbal Quijano (2012) allows us to problematize the historical foundations upon which the relations between society and nature have been structured. Following this perspective, it is impossible to address proposals such as *Buen Vivir* (Living Well) without questioning the modern rationality that has tended to subordinate the natural world to logics of domination, exploitation, and accumulation. Thus, the contemporary ecological crisis can be read as an expression of this historical pattern of power: "The exploitation of nature as something that requires no justification whatsoever, fully expressed in the productivist ethics engendered alongside the Industrial Revolution" (Quijano, 2012, p. 83).

In dialogue with the above, the social ecology proposed by Murray Bookchin (1999) offers conceptual tools to delve into the structural nature of this crisis. From this approach, nature is not a static entity separate from the social, but a dynamic process in permanent transformation:

My purpose in developing social ecology during the past decades has been a frankly ambitious one: to present a philosophy, a conception of natural and social development, a deep analysis of our social and environmental problems, and a radical utopian alternative -to this day I have never avoided the use of the word utopian- to the current social and environmental crisis. (Bookchin, 1999, p. 56).

Based on this foundation, it is possible to argue—following Bookchin—that so-called environmental problems cannot be understood in isolation from the forms of social organization that produce them. In this sense, the relations of hierarchy and domination present in social life find their corollary in the ways we intervene in the environment. "Otherness" must be conceived as a gradual phenomenon, a phenomenon, certainly, that can result in any of the different classes of society (Bookchin, 1999). In this way, the exploitation of nature does not appear as an independent phenomenon, but as part of a broader web of power relations that cross both bodies and territories.

This reading enables a broader critique of capitalism, not only as an economic system, but as a historical form of life organization that institutes specific ways of relating to the environment. In this context, the tendency to explain the ecological crisis based on factors such as population growth or technological development can be understood as a form of displacement that renders structural causes invisible. Therefore, responses focused exclusively on effects -such as pollution or environmental degradation- are limited if the social conditions that make them possible are not addressed.

At this point, the articulation between social ecology and the notion of the coloniality of power (Quijano, 2012) adds complexity to the analysis. Both perspectives agree that social hierarchies have historically operated as the foundation for various forms of domination. Thus, the ecological crisis can be interpreted as part of a civilizatory pattern that has naturalized exploitation as the organizing principle of social life.

When this approach is shifted to the neighborhood scale, these dynamics find concrete expression in urbanization processes and the configuration of inhabited spaces. The growth of cities and the production of human settlements do not respond solely to demographic dynamics; they are permeated by political, economic, and technical decisions that reflect power relations. In this sense, the neighborhood -and currently, the *tomas* or *campamentos* (informal settlements)- are configured

as privileged spaces for observing the overlapping of social inequality and environmental degradation.

It is worth noting that some of these concerns were already present in urban planning debates of the early 20th century. Proposals aimed at planning working-class neighborhoods incorporated criteria linked to well-being, such as ventilation, natural lighting, and the availability of green spaces (Masjuan, 2000). These approaches, though limited by their historical context, can be read retrospectively as attempts to integrate environmental dimensions into the organization of urban space.

Nonetheless, from a contemporary perspective, it is necessary to problematize the scope of such proposals, as they did not always question the broader structures producing inequality in territorial access. In this sense, social ecology allows for a reinterpretation of these precedents, highlighting both their contributions and their limitations.

In synthesis, neighborhood ecology, understood from a critical socio-ecological perspective, allows us to approach the territory as a contested space (*espacio en disputa*) where ecological and social processes converge. This approach displaces readings that reduce the environmental crisis to a technical problem, proposing instead to understand it as an expression of historical forms of social organization. From here, the possibility opens to think of alternatives oriented toward social justice, territorial autonomy, and sustainability.

These transformations can also be situated within the context of what Neil Brenner calls planetary urbanization (Mendes, 2024), a process through which the dynamics of capital extensively reconfigure territories beyond the traditional limits of the city. At the same time, the contributions of Arturo Escobar (2015) deepen this critique from a Latin American perspective, suggesting the need to move toward horizons of interconnected worlds based on relational ontologies and the defense of territorial autonomy.

### **III. Social Habitat as a Generator of Pathology: A Reading from Social Ecology and the Production of Space**

To approach the social habitat as a factor in the production of pathologies, it is necessary to shift the focus from individual-centered interpretations toward an analysis that considers the historical, social, and material conditions in which everyday life is shaped. In this sense, subjectivity cannot be understood in isolation, but rather as part of a web of relationships articulating territory, power, and social organization. From this perspective, the social ecology proposed by Murray Bookchin allows

the problem to be situated on a structural level, arguing that environmental crises -and, by extension, the conditions of the habitat- are linked to historical forms of hierarchy and domination.

Under this approach, habitat is no longer conceived as a mere physical support but becomes a concrete expression of the social relations that produce it. Thus, living conditions in contexts of poverty -characterized by material precariousness, high housing density, and territorial segregation- do not constitute exceptional deviations, but rather manifestations consistent with a social structure that unequally distributes resources and opportunities.

This proposal can be further explored through Henri Lefebvre's theory (2013) of the production of space, which suggests understanding space as a social construction rather than a neutral container. From this perspective, urban space is configured through practices, representations, and interests that reflect power relations; along these same lines, Karen Andersen (2025) emphasizes the distance between spaces designed through institutional planning and those actually lived by communities, pointing out the need to articulate public policies with concrete territorial experiences.

In this way, marginalized sectors can be understood not as deficient spaces, but as territories produced under specific conditions of exclusion.

Following this line of analysis, David Harvey (2008) posits that the configuration of urban space responds to the dynamics of capitalist accumulation, where certain territories concentrate investment and resources while others are relegated to precarious conditions. This unequal distribution not only affects access to material goods but also influences ways of life and processes of subjectivation, shaping differentiated experiences according to one's position within the social structure.

In this context, the concept of "psychospace" developed by Ángel Fiasché (2003) allows for a more direct articulation of the social and psychic dimensions of the habitat. From this perspective, space is not external to the subject; rather, it actively participates in the organization of their internal world. Consequently, the material conditions of the environment affect the constitution of subjectivity, influencing how bonds are established and experiences are processed.

Conditions of overcrowding and housing precariousness, common in impoverished urban contexts, generate concrete limitations for subjective differentiation and the establishment of healthy interpersonal relationships. The inability to regulate physical and symbolic distances fosters dynamics marked by role confusion, overexposure, and constant tension. These experiences, especially when they occur in early stages of development, can consolidate into relational patterns that contribute to the emergence of various forms of psychic distress.

Similarly, the contributions of Donald Winnicott (1990) are particularly relevant, as he underscores the importance of a sufficiently stable and containing environment for emotional development: "the care of the whole child, who is a human being with a constant need for love and understanding" (p.

30). The constitution of the subject involves a progressive transition from dependence toward higher levels of autonomy, a process that requires environmental conditions to sustain it. However, in scenarios marked by structural precariousness, these conditions are often restricted, hindering the symbolic processing of experiences and favoring more primitive defensive responses.

Based on the articulation of these approaches, it is possible to maintain that the forms of suffering associated with poverty should not be interpreted as inherent attributes of certain social groups, but as the result of historical processes linked to the production of space and the unequal organization of society. In this sense, notions such as the "culture of poverty" require critical revision, as they can contribute to naturalizing conditions that are the product of power relations.

Furthermore, the social practices that emerge in these contexts -including those often labeled as deviant- can be understood as situated responses to specific structural conditions. As Claude Lévi-Strauss (1995) suggests, social structures operate at deep levels, organizing practices and meanings. Nevertheless, these structures are not neutral; they participate in the reproduction of inequalities.

In this scenario, forms of cultural and community organization also arise, seeking to generate alternatives to social fragmentation. These expressions, particularly visible among youth sectors, can be interpreted as attempts to reconstruct bonds and produce meaning in adverse contexts. However, their development exists in a state of tension between their transformative potential and the possibility of reproducing dynamics of exclusion. These conditions can also be analyzed through Achille Mbembe's (2011) notion of necropolitics, as it helps explain how certain groups are systematically exposed to living conditions that limit their developmental possibilities.

On the other hand, the progressive reduction of public spaces—associated with processes of privatization, securitization, and urban commodification—restricts the possibilities for encounter, participation, and collective construction. In the terms of Henri Lefebvre (2013), this implies a limitation of the "right to the city," understood as the ability of inhabitants to appropriate, inhabit, and transform their environment.

In synthesis, the analysis of the social habitat from a socio-ecological and critical perspective allows for the understanding that spatial conditions do not merely frame social life, but actively participate in the production of subjectivity and the emergence of psychic distress. Thus, such problems cannot be reduced to individual dimensions; they must be understood as expressions of the material and symbolic conditions in which life unfolds. In the Latin American context, these processes are intensified by growing financialization, with the entry of finance capital into the housing market, a phenomenon analyzed by Raquel Rolnik (2019). The pioneering example in Latin America was carried out by Chile in the seventies following the military coup. In 1979, the Chilean Ministry of

Housing defined homeownership as an asset acquired through the savings efforts of families, with state contribution through subsidies, evidencing how access to habitat has been progressively subordinated to the dynamics of global finance capital.

#### **IV. The Body as a Depository of Pathology**

In continuity with the analysis of social habitat, it is possible to deepen the understanding of the body as a space where social conditions materialize and acquire visibility. From this perspective, the body cannot be reduced to its biological dimension; rather, it must be understood as a site crisscrossed by historical processes, power relations, and symbolic experiences. Within it, the traces of inequality, violence, and exclusion are persistently inscribed.

In this sense, the propositions of Wilhelm Reich (1986) allow us to understand how unelaborated psychic experiences find a form of expression in the body. According to this approach, emotional conflicts tend to become fixed in muscular structures that take the form of chronic tensions, generating a defensive organization that limits affective expression. This configuration, known as the "character armor" or "armor of the ego" (Serrano, 2011, p. 131), not only protects against suffering but also restricts the subject's capacity to process their experiences. On the other hand, Pedro Ruiz and Agustín de la Herrán (2024) state that the ego has been thrown into an inner struggle with itself where, influenced by the culture of labor and social performance, it ends up self-submitting.

Thus, the body acts not only as a support for trauma but also as a structure that enables adaptation in adverse contexts. Within this framework, bodily tensions can be interpreted as registers of a history marked by the need to adjust to specific social conditions. In contexts of precariousness, these inscriptions acquire a particular intensity, evidenced in bodily dispositions that reflect emotional burdens sustained over time.

From a contemporary approach, the contributions of Byung-Chul Han (2018, 2022) allow us to situate these dynamics in the context of current capitalism, characterized by forms of self-demand and self-exploitation that are internalized by the subject. In this scenario, malaise does not always express itself as open conflict; instead, it is embodied in forms of exhaustion, tension, and bodily wear and tear.

By articulating these propositions with Murray Bookchin's social ecology (1999), it is possible to argue that bodily configurations cannot be interpreted solely in an individual key. On the contrary, they respond to structural conditions that organize both social life and the ways of inhabiting one's own body. Relations of domination do not only distribute resources; they also model sensibilities, affects, and bodily dispositions.

In this sense, the body can be conceived as a territory where social inequalities are embodied. Following Henri Lefebvre (2013), social space is the result of historical processes that configure both material conditions and forms of experience: "(Social) space is not a thing among other things, nor a product among other products: rather, it subsumes things produced and encompasses their interrelationships in their coexistence and simultaneity —their (relative) order and/or disorder" (p. 129). The body, as part of this space, participates in said production, being molded by social practices that involve its use, its discipline, and its inscription in everyday life.

David Harvey (2008) allows us to understand how the dynamics of capitalism produce unequal spatial configurations that directly impact bodily experience. Urbanization processes, marked by the logic of accumulation, tend to concentrate benefits in certain sectors while exposing others to precarious conditions:

The absorption of surpluses through urban transformation has an even more sinister aspect. It has entailed repeated bouts of urban restructuring through 'creative destruction,' which nearly always has a class dimension since it is the poor, the underprivileged, and those marginalized from political power who suffer first. (Harvey, 2008, p. 33).

From a structural perspective, the contributions of Claude Lévi-Strauss (1995) allow us to understand that these configurations respond to systems of relations operating at deep levels, organizing practices and meanings. However, in contemporary societies, these structures are permeated by class relations that introduce tensions and conflicts, moving away from any logic of equilibrium or reciprocity.

In this framework, culture plays a central role in the configuration of subjectivity. Societies organized around consumption promote certain ideals -such as the valorization of labor or individual success- which, in contexts of exclusion, generate tensions that are difficult to resolve. The distance between promoted expectations and real material conditions can translate into forms of malaise that find a space of expression in the body:

Social practice presupposes a use of the body: the use of hands, members, sensory organs, and the gestures of work and activities external to it. It is the sphere of the perceived—the practical basis of the perception of the outside world, in the psychological sense. (Lefebvre, 2013, p. 99).

Thus, the relationship between poverty and psychic suffering cannot be understood apart from the system that produces it. Living conditions in marginalized contexts involve not only material

deprivation but also specific ways of experiencing and inhabiting the world, where the body becomes a privileged site for the inscription of conflict.

In turn, these dynamics are articulated with the emergence of cultural forms that can be interpreted as collective responses to exclusion. These expressions, far from being mere deviations, configure spaces of meaning and belonging in contexts of social fragmentation. However, their development is conditioned by the very structures that give rise to them.

Currently, urban reconfiguration processes tend to displace the most vulnerable sectors toward increasingly distant peripheries, deepening their isolation. This reorganization of space has not only material effects but also impacts the possibilities for bonding, organization, and subjective development.

In this scenario, state policies often oscillate between assistance strategies and control mechanisms, limiting the possibilities for autonomy. Nonetheless, community experiences emerge that, in certain contexts, manage to generate alternative forms of organization. Regarding situations where the state presence is weak or fragmentary, David Graeber describes scenarios in which institutional authority becomes intermittent, giving rise to forms of organization that operate on the relative margins of the state, using a concept he calls the "Provisional Autonomous Zone" (Graeber, 2025, p. 196).

Finally, the body, understood as the space where social conditions are inscribed, makes the embodied dimension of suffering visible. The articulation between habitat, social ecology, and the production of space allows us to understand that mental health issues cannot be reduced to individual factors. Currently, there is robust evidence that inequalities in living conditions are associated with lower life expectancy, poor self-perception of health, and less access to sanitary services, as well as a higher prevalence of mental disorders: anxiety and depression, alcohol and substance consumption, and schizophrenia (Jiménez-Molina et al., 2021). Thus, psychic malaise can be understood as an expression of historical, material, and symbolic conditions that find their form of manifestation in the body.

## **V. Conclusions**

In summary, this text concludes that the social habitat and the body constitute inseparable dimensions in the understanding of psychic suffering, as they express in an embodied manner the historical, material, and symbolic conditions that shape social life. Far from being reduced to a biological basis or a mere external context, both the body and the inhabited space are presented as territories crisscrossed by power relations, structural inequalities, and experiences of exclusion.

From a perspective that articulates social ecology, the production of space, and psychoanalytic and contemporary approaches, it is evident that subjectivity is configured in close relation to territorial and social conditions. The dynamics of precariousness, urban segregation, and the commodification of habitat do not only organize unequal access to resources; they also model affects, bonds, and bodily dispositions, inscribing tensions, defenses, and forms of malaise into the body.

Within this framework, the body appears as a space where unelaborated experiences materialize, while the habitat acts as a structure that conditions those experiences. Living conditions in contexts of poverty—marked by overcrowding, instability, and exclusion—limit the possibilities for subjective development, favoring the emergence of defensive responses and relational patterns that can lead to various forms of psychic suffering.

Furthermore, the transformations of contemporary capitalism—characterized by the financialization of housing, the unequal reorganization of urban space, and the reduction of the public sphere—intensify these problems, affecting both mental health and the possibilities for collective organization. In this context, social and cultural practices emerging in marginalized sectors must be understood as situated responses to structural conditions rather than individual deviations.

Consequently, psychic malaise cannot be addressed from individualizing perspectives but must be understood as a situated expression of living conditions. Integrating the analysis of the body, habitat, and social structure allows for a move toward a more complex understanding of human suffering, as well as toward interventions that consider not only its manifestations but also the social relations that produce them.

From this perspective, mental health cannot be reduced to individual or clinical variables; it must be understood as a phenomenon deeply linked to the social conditions of existence. However, this same framework opens the possibility of thinking about processes of resistance and transformation. Community practices, forms of neighborhood organization, and experiences of territorial autonomy can be understood as attempts to rebuild bonds and generate alternatives to social fragmentation.

The articulation between neighborhood ecology, social habitat, and the body allows for the understanding of the production of psychic suffering as a multiscale process in which structural, territorial, and subjective dimensions converge. In this framework, the body appears as the site where these determinations become visible, showing that mental health cannot be addressed apart from the historical, material, and symbolic conditions that configure social life.

While poverty may be one of the elements necessary for the rise of informal and illegal economic alternatives, it is not the only element present in the formation of gangs. Elements such as extreme need—not only on an economic level but also on affective and psychological levels—cause gangs to grow as a major alternative to compensate for those needs.

This situation, often viewed as a mere policing issue, can instead be seen from a political standpoint—due to a non-existent public policy to reverse the problem of violence in neighborhoods—and from a psychological or mental health standpoint, where one can observe a "pathology of poverty" (Fiasché,

2003). This is heightened by the social and political violence carried out since the 1980s; in other words, by generations educated to resolve conflicts through violent means.

Conversely, regarding the relationship between Territory-Body and mental health in Latin America, numerous social movements have developed political practices oriented toward the construction of autonomous forms of organization. Based on direct democracy, self-management, and community cooperation, these have not only established communal ways of life but have also shown that community relations provide regulatory elements for individual conduct, thus improving mental health. A relevant example of such experiences is the process of territorial autonomy driven by the Zapatista Army of National Liberation (EZLN) in Mexico, which since 1994 has developed forms of self-government based on community participation—including children in deliberative assemblies—and horizontal organization.

These experiences have contributed to broadening the understanding of social transformation processes by highlighting that relations of domination are not reproduced solely in the economic or institutional sphere, but also in everyday social practices. In this sense, the construction of alternative forms of social organization in the present can be understood as part of a broader process of social transformation.

In the Chilean case, various experiences arising during the post-military dictatorship period have taken up some of these principles. Since the 1990s, different collectives, autonomous spaces, and countercultural projects have developed political practices aimed at questioning hierarchical forms of organization and promoting collective action based on horizontality and self-management. These experiences have articulated critiques of the neoliberal economic model alongside challenges to the relations of domination present in daily life, including gender hierarchies, authoritarian forms of organization, and cultural practices inherited from a disciplinary society.

In cities like Concepción, these dynamics have led to the emergence of various political, cultural, and community spaces linked to anarchism and other autonomous currents, such as Social Centers and *Casas Okupas* (Squats). These spaces have functioned as sites of social experimentation where horizontal organization, independent cultural production, and alternative forms of sociability are tested. In this sense, the transformation of social relations in the everyday sphere appears as a central element in the construction of political projects oriented toward questioning the structures of domination present in contemporary society.

From this perspective, anarchism can be understood not only as a political or ideological current but also as a set of social practices oriented toward the construction of ways of life based on autonomy, cooperation, and freedom. In this sense, the transformation of everyday social relations constitutes a fundamental dimension of social emancipation processes, insofar as it allows for the questioning and dismantling of the multiple forms of domination reproduced in daily life, managing to introduce into the social habitat a way of inhabiting social spaces that is less pathologizing.

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