Tools for the Sociological Understanding of Well-being: Analyzing the Forms of Social Precariousness and Making the Continuum of Inequality and Violence Visible*

⌈English Version⌉

Herramientas para la comprensión sociológica del bienestar: analítica de las formas de precariedad social y visibilización del continuo desigualdad(es) violencia(s)

Ferramentas para a compreensão sociológica do bem-estar: analisar as formas de precariedade social e tornar visível o contínuo da(s) desigualdade(s) e da(s) violência(s)

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Abstract

Objective: the aim of this paper is to test a sociology of welfare; that is, two analytical tools are argued to gain an understanding of the sociological content of welfare: 1) the identification of the forms of social precariousness existing in Mexico; 2) the idea of the continuum of inequality of violence and its visibility. **Methodology**: in defending their theory, the authors use analytical and qualitative sociology as a methodological perspective, where classical concepts of sociology function as reflexive tools to promote the elaboration of a qualitative, critical and normative thinking around the forms of precariousness and

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their opposite, welfare. **Results:** presented in two sections: 1) The emergence of violence as a structure for the precariousness of life, a section that reflects on the increase in the forms of violence and their importance when addressing the issue of well-being; 2) Analysis of the forms of social precariousness, which proposes a matrix of the main forms of precariousness that actually exist in Mexico, where the elements of the continuum of inequality of violence are identified. **Conclusions**: it is proposed that a qualitative sociological knowledge of social precariousness and violence, of the forms and dynamics of social action is necessary to understand the substantive meaning of welfare; useful knowledge to guide public actions in favor of welfare in democratic societies, especially to test innovation in the design of social policies.

Keywords: social precariousness; social inequalities; economic inequalities; exclusion; violence; peace; disaffiliation; social cohesion; poverty; marginalization; social policies; welfare; qualitative sociology; social action.

Resumen

Objetivo: el objetivo de este trabajo es ensayar una sociología del bienestar; es decir, se argumentan dos herramientas analíticas para conocer el contenido sociológico del bienestar: 1) la identificación de las formas de la precariedad social existentes en México. 2) la idea del continuo desigualdad(es) violencia(s) y su visibilización. **Metodología**: en nuestra argumentación se utiliza una sociología analítica y cualitativa como perspectiva metodológica, en donde conceptos clásicos de la sociología funcionan como herramientas reflexivas para impulsar la elaboración de un pensamiento cualitativo, crítico y normativo en torno las formas de precariedad y su anverso el bienestar. **Resultados**: se presentan en dos apartados: 1) La emergencia de la violencia como estructura de precarización de la vida, apartado que reflexiona sobre el aumento de las formas de violencia(s) y su importancia al momento de abordar el asunto del bienestar; 2) Analítica de las formas de precariedad social, en donde se propone una matriz de las principales formas de precariedad realmente existentes en México, allí se identifican los elementos del continuo desigualdad(es) violencia(s). **Conclusiones:** se plantea que un conocimiento sociológico cualitativo de la precariedad social y la violencia, de sus formas y dinámicas de acción social es necesario para comprender el significado sustantivo del bienestar; conocimiento útil para orientar las acciones públicas a favor del bienestar en sociedades democráticas, sobre todo para ensayar innovación en el diseño de políticas sociales.

Palabras-clave: precariedad social; desigualdades sociales; desigualdades económicas; exclusión; violencia; paz; desafiliación; cohesión social; pobreza; marginación; políticas sociales; bienestar; sociología cualitativa; acción social.

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Resumo

Objetivo: o objetivo deste trabalho é testar uma sociologia do bem-estar; ou seja, são discutidas duas ferramentas analíticas para compreender o conteúdo sociológico do bem-estar: 1) a identificação das formas de precariedade social existentes no México. 2) a idéia do continuum de desigualdade(s) e violência(s) e sua visibilização. **Metodologia**: nossa argumentação utiliza uma sociologia analítica e qualitativa como perspectiva metodológica, onde os conceitos clássicos da sociologia funcionam como ferramentas reflexivas para promover a elaboração de um pensamento qualitativo, crítico e normativo em torno das formas de precariedade e seu obverso, o bem-estar. **Resultados:** apresentados em duas seções: 1) O surgimento da violência como estrutura para a precariedade da vida, uma seção que reflete sobre o aumento das formas de violência(s) e sua importância ao abordar a questão do bem-estar; 2) Análise das formas de precariedade social, que propõe uma matriz das principais formas de precariedade que realmente existem no México, onde são identificados os elementos da(s) desigualdade(s) contínua(s) da(s) violência(s). **Conclusões:** argumenta-se que um conhecimento sociológico qualitativo da precariedade social e da violência, de suas formas e dinâmicas de ação social é necessário para compreender o significado substantivo de bem-estar; conhecimento útil para orientar as ações públicas em favor do bem-estar nas sociedades democráticas, especialmente para testar a inovação no desenho de políticas sociais.

Palavras-chave: precariedade social; desigualdades sociais; desigualdades econômicas; exclusão; violência; paz; desafiliação; coesão social; pobreza; marginalização; políticas sociais; bem-estar; sociologia qualitativa; ação social.

Introduction

A sociology of welfare needs to develop ways of thinking around the problematic duality: precarization *vs.* welfare; for this reason, this paper argues for two analytical tools to understand the sociological content of welfare: 1) identification of the forms of social precariousness existing in Mexico, using this country as a typical ideal case of countries with medium development; 2) the idea of continuous inequality(ies) and violence(s) and its visibility.

As a working hypothesis, the authors propose the idea of a qualitative sociological knowledge of social precariousness and of its forms and dynamics of social action. This is necessary to understand the meaning of welfare and the orientation that public actions should have to build and guarantee it in democratic societies. Subsequently, a theoretical foundation of two sections is presented: a) sociological concepts and b) the sociological understanding of welfare – the black box of poverty data. The results are divided into two sections: 1) The emergence of violence as a structure for the precariousness of life, a section that reflects the increase in the forms of violence(s) and their importance when addressing the issue of well-being; and 2) Analysis of the forms of social precariousness, which proposes a matrix of the main forms of precariousness that actually exist in Mexico, where the elements of the continuum of inequality(ies) of violence(s) are identified. The matrix is composed of the following problem sets: a) forms of poverty, b) forms of historical and spatial exclusion based on racial, ethnic, and class origin, c) forms of labor disaffiliation, d) forms of violence.

Methodology

In the argumentation the authors use an analytical sociology as a methodological perspective, where classic concepts of sociology function as reflexive tools to promote the elaboration of a qualitative, critical, and normative thinking around the forms of precariousness and its obverse, welfare.

The concept of social action acquires a methodological importance in the argumentation, since thanks to this, thinking in terms of social processes is possible. In this sense, this work is inserted within a qualitative methodological perspective, that is, one concerned with knowledge from the interpretation of the experience of the social subjects of inequality(ies) and forms of violence(s).

Theoretical Basis

Sociological Concepts

The concept of social exclusion in this work is understood as any process of discrimination regarding opportunities (Fernández-Enguita, 1998). Economic exploitation "consists of unbalancing the terms of exchange or the appropriation of the product of cooperation to one's own advantage" (Fernández-Enguita, 1998, p. 89). All forms of economic exploitation consist of an unfair asymmetry in the endowment of the economic product within the processes of exchange. The forms of exploitation appear in: the social division of labor, in the exchanges that take place in the market and in the domestic spheres of labor.

Disaffiliation is that area of society where individuals find themselves in a position of social exclusion, especially in relation to the formal labor market (Castel, 1997). Social cohesion is understood as those processes of individual and collective social action, as well as their organizational forms that allow for the unity of institutions. The sociological principle that makes social cohesion possible is organic solidarity; that is, social action based on a conscience or reflexivity in favor of the common good (Vázquez, 2008).

The sociological knowledge necessary to understand the meaning of well-being in our modern societies of medium development presupposes the identification of two sets of problems: a) social and economic inequalities, b) forms of violence. Both sets of problems are situations of a *social-historical* nature that function as powerful structures that shape individuals and their institutions, and that as structuring forces operate at different sociological levels: macro, meso and micro.

Qualitative sociological approaches to forms of social precarization require opening the black box of the processes and diverse articulations of inequality(ies) and violence(s); that is, it is necessary to unveil the system of social relations that explain the production and reproduction of inequalities.

Social precariousness implies a fissure, deterioration or disruption of social cohesion processes. The various situations of social precariousness impact the realization of each individual in terms of his or her full human condition, as well as his or her autonomy or individuation. In this sense, the social precariousness of life implies the impossibility of the historical and social unity and continuity of a society. Welfare as a situation assumes the security of broad integration of individuals into institutions. Well-being and its forms imply the possibility of a secure existence, not only in the continuity of life and society itself, but also in the possibility of democratic coexistence free of violence(s).

The precariousness of life implies two intertwined dimensions: the existence of fragile and unsustainable economies in relation to the environment, as well as societies with weak systems of social relations that fail to produce powerful systems of social cohesion, or, in other words, where the institutions of society are inefficient in preventing processes of violence(s) and zones of social anomie (due to ignorance or omission of norms). The precariousness of life implies a double spiral of economic disaffiliation and social disaffiliation in social contexts where forms of violence appear systematically, for example, in the ideal type of Mexico.

To understand such processes, it is necessary to try a qualitative sociological look; that is, to ask oneself about social action in its various directionalities: rational and normative as posed by Max Weber and creative (this directionality of social action shapes the other two, thus, for example, every morality of cooperation assumes a creative social action) (Joas, 2013). The working hypothesis is that without knowledge of the constellations of social action, knowing and understanding the structuring processes that trigger the various systems of inequality(ies) of violence(s) in the daily life of social subjects, collectives and institutions is impossible: how is adversity faced?

Social action, as constellations of action, has several readings: macro, meso and micro. On each reading floor what is produced are narratives of a social historical nature of processes; each is important in understanding precarity. Thus, in order to understand the forms of precarization of ethnic/racial groups, one must turn to long-range historical narratives. This is the case of the processes of exclusion of indigenous groups in Mexico, which have been left out of development for centuries (Stavenhagen, 1998). It is a social-historical narrative of injustice, which bases classism and racism as imaginary cultural structures.

The meso and micro-sociological narratives refer to the phenomenological experience of the workspaces; that is to say, the *socio-cultural* zones of recreation of life. At this time, clarifying that the labor zones are not the same as the economic zones is important, since their time is different; it is continuous. Following León (2017), the time of life has its best understanding in the act of breathing. The creative social action that takes place in the work areas intrinsically supposes a nebula of feelings, for which reason subjectivities are a matter of sociological knowledge that is difficult to bring to statistical order; that is, subjectivities move in the imperative need of life, which is that continuous time that has its best understanding in breathing. Within this time of life, there is a powerful need to remain; to survive: "thirst for existence … In need of life, to nurture, protect and expand ourselves; not to succumb, get sick; not to suffer and remove what hurts us" (Leon, 2017, p. 29).

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At a micro-sociological level, perhaps, the most complex life experience to understand as a process of social structuring is violence, due to its arbitrariness and its effect as damage(s). In this case, the statistical order is not enough as an act of knowledge, so its qualitative expressiveness is necessary, not only as a restoration process, but as a process of moral awareness of society.

Considering the above, a qualitative sociology of welfare – from the point of view of the experience of the subjects, as substantive knowledge of the effect of the various forces of inequality(ies) violence(s) – focuses its epistemology on the concepts and notions of: unity of the social, substantive time of work, social cohesion, organic solidarity, creative social action for the sustainability of life, agency, and autonomy in the political sphere, sustainable economy and symmetrical distribution of resources and wealth, resolution of conflicts as a mechanism against violence(s), citizen praxis, and production of peace zones.

The forms of well-being are a series of social, economic, legal, and cultural products; which are not possible or understandable without their system of relationships (social action and organization) that have made them possible. In this way, well-being is concretized in substantive facts for people; sometimes they appear as little everyday things like going to school, having dinner every day with the family, being able to read a book, covering an eight-hour workday for a fair salary, not being harassed in public spaces (in the case of women), and being able to access the internet for one hour a day (for young secondary school students). Well-being is presented in everyday history as a constellation of significant social events for individuals and basic social groups (families and communities).

Well-being, as a phenomenological experience, has its main receptacle in the person's body; that's why its main experiential flow, in modern societies, appears in the health-food-education continuum (or biography of well-being). This syntax of well-being appears as a writing of the social that is inscribed in the body and mind of social subjects; its recurrence appears as individual and collective memory that functions as the basis of satisfaction around life itself; as a successful and sustainable sequence, it becomes the cement of the foundational institutions of society: the safety of life constitutes the pillar of the continuity of the institutions and their enabling rules.

The satisfaction of this flow of substantive and continuous acts as a time of and for life constitutes an achievement for every society; for every family and community; for every nation and democratic State. Therefore, well-being and its concrete products must be: systematic throughout life, economically and ecologically sustainable, culturally situated, sufficient, morally acceptable and

expressible as the content of sociality (as part of a horizontal and subjective democratic communication). The radical opposite to the time of life is the time of war.

The Sociological Understanding of Well-being: the black Box of Poverty Data

The condition of poverty is related to a precarious human condition, the man and the family in a condition of poverty is precarious *per se*. It is true that poverty as an imaginary cultural meaning has a negative moral content around the poor; something that Simmel had already noted in his essay on *"The Poor"* (Simmel, 2014) but that modern States have tried to turn around through a systemic refunctionalization treatment of the poor, to avoid social anomie. However, poverty in the contemporary world has a demeaning moral significance around the "poor." In this way, poverty functions as a stigma and even democratic governments give their public policies, aimed at alleviating poverty, a tutelary logic (Castel, 1997) where the poor are treated as *not subject* (Corrêa, 2015).

In this sense, in Mexico and Latin America the poor person is the peasant, who is even seen in some economic thought as a pre-modern economic agent, as an obstacle to the liberalization of the productive forces and the means of production. In urban areas, the poor man is the young violent gang member. Poverty as a social imaginary of stigma, is reduced to dirt and garbage as aesthetics; as a moral, it is reduced to the condition of non-subject, which immediately supposes the denial of citizenship to the extent that the non-subject is the one that has no conscience and, therefore, cannot exercise actions of economic or political autonomy. The non-subject is also the underdog (Corrêa, 2015), the one who has to receive charity from the State or society; he/she acquires the category of social deviance.

The issue of the stigma of the condition of poverty and the conception of the poor as a non-subject, in addition to its political implications, ends up generating social imaginaries that make invisible the powerful historical-social processes that construct them as precarious; just as it makes invisible the relationship systems that bring it closer, mesh and engage with forms of violence. This is so to the extent that poverty as a statistical data is nothing more than a result of a series of arrival variables (income, access to health, access to social security, access to education, access to decent housing, among others). For a qualitative sociological perspective, what is relevant is to recognize the

situations of access to each of these satisfiers, which means thinking about their real impact on the daily life of the subjects, as well as understanding the way in which these satisfiers are inserted in relational systems that make life possible in the world of work in precarious conditions.

The magnitudes of access and their stratification and spatial distribution of certain goods say little about their pragmatic and creative use to maintain life, or what is the same, they do not express their place and role within a substantive rationality in favor of the continuity of life under defined cultural principles and historically socially constructed territorial spaces. How do we build life and its significance in the time of life in situations of deprivation(s) in a given time and place? What is the logic of spending in situations of extreme scarcity?

The heuristic capacity of disaggregated poverty data in relation to exclusion processes is, however, limited; due to its statistical nature, it does not refer to other forms of exclusion, in particular to forms of exclusion due to discrimination, which is based on the relationship of stigma between subjects. Another dimension of exclusion due to discrimination that it cannot account for is the issue of racism, which is exercised at the level of social relations between classes. As is possible to see, the forms of exclusion do not end with the processes of access to certain properties and services, but rather expand according to the forms of discrimination and stigma existing in a given society, and have a second expansion of meaning when they conform to ideologies that sustain forms of violence.

The deeper understanding of the processes of exclusion, especially in countries and regions with a colonial past, has to do with the broad historical processes of construction of social structures that went through the forging of the colony and its complex processes of social distinction according to the race and social classes. Sometimes one must not ignore the existence of colonial agricultural structures that are the structural foundation of broad processes of economic exploitation in the countryside.

This set of aspects that concern the processes of exclusion of racial ethnic groups and specific social groups (the LGTBIQ+ community, for example) show that the forms of social exclusion are only understandable to the extent that they are understood as process and historic social stories.

In the case of income measurement in poverty methodologies, which are resolved around the construction of food baskets whose value depends on a line of moderate and extreme poverty, they are very far from expressing the forms of exploitation by exchange unequal in the market or by unequal allocations by the State (Fernádez-Enguita, 1998). Exploitation as economic inequality supposes a political economy as conflict between classes, which gives meaning

to asymmetries in the endowment of resources and wealth. In Latin America, the distribution of income and wealth has to be studied as a result of long-term historical and social processes, where certain privileged groups not only control the bulk of the wealth of the countries, but also control the political dynamics of the States. An ideal typical case in this sense is the contemporary history in Chile.

Income measurements, their instrumentalization as poverty lines and their expression as positions in the social structure can say nothing about the real processes of disaffiliation (Castel, 1997), about their implications in terms of processes of social inclusion and exclusion, of affiliation and disaffiliation in relation to the labor market and the social institutions of the State. In this regard, Castel's wage society model (1977) for developing countries is somewhat distant, especially when, following the Mexican example, a majority of the population of working age is in the informal economy and those who are in the formal sector – the low-skilled working and service class – are in low-paying jobs.

In Mexico a complex and deeply precarious labor market exists. To generalize, in 2017 the percentage of those who earned less than a minimum wage was 24%; almost six out of 10 people worked in the informal economy (so they are excluded from any social security system); and the working population in the street represented just over 17% in the country and in Mexico City almost 22% (Alba and Rodríguez, 2021). "In the last three decades, work in Mexico has become precarious, and fewer and fewer jobs meet the minimum characteristics of decent work under the ILO definition" (Alba and Rodríguez, 2021, p. 169). Disaffiliation from the labor market implies a fragility of social relations, bringing individuals closer to areas of social anomie, producing processes of erosion of the individual's institutional supports.

Returning to the issue of social cohesion and the condition of poverty, remembering the vision of Castel (1997) is necessary. He reconsiders the concept of social exclusion as a situation of disaffiliation, where the subjects in a situation of exclusion are those who have weakened the ties that unite them with institutions such as the family, the community or companies, and in general with society. Social exclusion for Castel is not only a process of social closure, but a process of disaffiliation from society, of breaking social ties. For this author, formal work, guaranteed by the State or salaried society, is the main condition for the integration of a social subject into society. Therefore, access to a legally supported job, through a contract, is essential to avoid falling into disaffiliation. From this perspective, the condition of poverty is situated as a process of vulnerability and disaffiliation, to the extent that there is economic income below the needs for social reproduction, as well as the

existence of a weak link with the labor market (possibly one is in a situation of job discouragement, job insecurity, underemployment or open unemployment). At the same time, there is a weakening of family and community ties, which places people in a situation of risk and, perhaps, with the possibility of suffering various forms of violence. Extreme poverty approaches the condition of social anomie.

Results

The Emergence of Violence as a Structure of the Precariousness of Life

The forms of violence and their importance addressing the issue of well-being is something that should be considered by the qualitative sociology of welfare. Mexico is a clear example in which in recent decades violence appears systematically. It is a violence of at least three types: citizen insecurity, that exerted toward the female gender, and the violence exerted by organized crime. The effects of these types of violence have left enormous consequences in vast areas and regions of the country: poverty, forced displacement, regions outside the rule of law, and femicides.

To get an idea of the magnitude of the problem in the case of Mexico, according to the National Urban Public Security Survey (ENSU) carried out by the Instituto Nacional de Estadística Geografía e Informática (2022), by March 2022, 66.2% of the population aged 18 and over considered that it was unsafe to live in their city, and 71.7% of women had a perception of insecurity. In some of the most populated municipalities in the country, the perception of insecurity of its citizens exceeds 80% (Toluca, Ecatepec, Naucalpan, Tlalnepantla, among others). Organized crime, for its part, generated 30,000 victims by 2021 – the equivalent of three wars (Marcial, 2022).

Following the example of Mexico, the existential condition of poverty, both in the countryside and in the city, matches with an expansion of violence; that is, poverty as daily life is crossed by complex processes of violence. In this regard, the authors propose the notion of violence inequality as a continuous problem (Arzate, 2018); that is to say, today understanding the result of social and economic inequalities at the level of social action without knowledge of the structures of violence that are concomitant to them is not possible. With this the authors propose the hypothesis that the structures of inequality work in a

structured way with the structures of violence, making the daily life of women, children, families, urban and rural communities, problematic groups to deeply understand.

The sociological issue is that the ways in which social and economic inequalities are structured with the forms of violence can become a social regime; that is, in a system of social rules where the forms of social action assume a destructive social morality. This raises the total or partial absence of a rule of law; as well as an impossibility of a full citizen condition. Normalized violence at the level of forms of social action harms the citizen condition and its best expression, which is citizen praxis or action of subjects in the public space.

Analytical Way of Social Precarity

From a qualitative sociological perspective, precariousness is investigated from the point of view of the subjects; that is, as experiential and phenomenological experience of the forms of inequality violence that surround their lives, without leaving the long-term social-historical analysis that explains the construction of forms of exclusion in the territory of certain social groups. The authors think that these two dimensions of the analysis of precariousness, as knowledge of a critical nature, are fundamental to building actions that elaborate on welfare from the perspectives of civil society, public scientific systems of social sciences and the democratic State through their public policies.

This knowledge of precariousness focused on the individual as an actor located in the institutions, territory, and history implies recognizing the voice of social groups in the face of inequality(ies) and violence(s), so the proposal of knowledge of the duality of precariousness/welfare seeks to make visible the voice of the most unprotected and vulnerable people; it represents an act of knowledge as well as social justice, of recognition of otherness, non-centrality, recognition of the creative capacity and political agency of these social subjects.

The main advantage of this methodological perspective is that qualitative knowledge of the environments in which the inequality(ies) and violence(s) take plsce allows knowing the state of social cohesion at the family, community and regional level; as well as detecting the processes of disintegration of society around the lives or biographical courses of women, children, young people, and older adults, the most vulnerable people in societies such as Mexico.

About the previous discussion, and to approach the knowledge of social precariousness from a historical/relational point of view with a perspective of social justice, a matrix of the main forms of precariousness is proposed, it explains the processes of weakening of the social fabric or social cohesion in countries similar to Mexico as a whole (see Table 1).

The matrix is composed by four problematic systems, all of them have been treated by the social sciences in some way: 1) Forms of poverty; 2) Forms of spatial-historical exclusion by racial, ethnic and class origin; 3) Forms of labor disaffiliation, and; 4) Forms of violence.

Table 1. *Matrix of the main forms of precariousness that explain the fragility of social relations or social cohesion in Mexico*

1.Forms of poverty.	2. Forms of spatial-historical exclusion by racial, ethnic and class origin.	3. Forms of labor disaffiliation.	4. Forms of violence.
1.1 Income below a poverty line	2.1 Urban segregation	3.1. Forms of exploitation in the social division of labor	4.1. Violence(s) against women and LGBT groups
1.1.1. Moderate poverty	2.2 Rural marginalization	3.2. Precariousness of work	4.2. Domestic violence.
1.1.2. Extreme poverty		3.3. Job discouragement	4.3. Racism as cultural violence
1.2. Poverty of time		3.4. Open work	4.4. Social security
1.3. No access to essential services			4.4.1. Citizen insecurity due to common crime
1.3.1. Exclusion and educational backwardness			4.4.2. Citizen insecurity due to organized crime
1.3.2. Lack of access to health services			4.5. State violence by state of emergency
1.3.3. Lack of access to social security			4.6. Violence for low-intensity war

1.Forms of poverty.	2. Forms of spatial-historical exclusion by racial, ethnic and class origin.	3. Forms of labor disaffiliation.	4. Forms of violence.
1.3.4. Lack of quality and space in the house			
1.3.5. Lack of access to basic services in the house			
1.3.6. Lack of access to nutritious and quality food			

Poverty, as a system of deprivation, has been measured in Mexico by the National Council for the Evaluation of Social Policy (CONEVAL),[1] it has taken as a basis for its development the dimensions set out in the Ley General de Desarrollo Social (2004): exclusion and educational backwardness (1.3.1), lack of access to health services (1.3.2.), lack of access to social security (1.3.3.), lack of quality and spaces in the house (1.3.4.), lack of access to basic services in the house (1.3.5), lack of access to nutritious and quality food (1.3.6.). The poverty line has been calculated through the development of a food basket for the countryside and the city; from there the moderate and extreme poverty lines are derived. The poverty of time is added to the indicators of this dimension or system of relations (1.2.). It is relevant as it is considered as a complement to the notion of exploitation to measure time as a variable of production of forms of welfare.

The various measures of poverty are important as they provide a stratificational and territorial view of deprivation; due to that it is possible to know processes of asymmetric endowment of resources. It can generate conjectures around processes of social conflict derived from lack, and has also worked as an indicator of access to social rights. Today, multifunctional poverty methodologies have proven effective in producing stratified systems of deprivation that show different poverty lines (1.1.1 and 1.1.2).

Forms of spatial-historical exclusion by racial, ethnic and class origin consist of long-term historical discourses that explain at least two phenomena: urban segmentation (2.1.) and rural marginalization. Talking about

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1. CONEVAL's poverty measurement can be found at: https://www.coneval.org.mx/Medicion/MP/Paginas/Pobreza_2020.aspx

segmentation in urban spaces is better as the reality of large Mexican cities (Mexico City, Monterrey, Guadalajara, Ciudad Juárez, and Tijuana) is characterized by isolated spaces, ghettified within the urban continuum; spaces that show less development in urban planning and public services, as well as severe conditions of economic poverty that coexist with multiple forms of violence and destruction of the social fabric. These are spaces where social anomie is the norm, and even where organized crime and common crime groups have taken control of life within themselves. Within families there are severe problems of addictions and gender violence; such is the level of conflict and violence in these segregated spaces of the city that, many times, are configured in true states of exception with the consent or silence of the State.

In rural areas, the authors prefer the classic term of marginalization. It refers to the theories of modernization in Latin America as spaces decoupled from the processes of modernization that exist. In general, the concept works as it is about spaces, regions and/or communities where there is a disconnection with the development processes of the country. In Mexico between the north and the south, many of these spaces also respond to what is known as new ruralities or spaces where agricultural activities are being displaced by service or industrial economies. Also it produces important processes of precariousness of work. In this case there is a marked bias of racial and ethnic origin that responds to a history of colonization. It also refers to struggles demanding natural resources, as it is the case of endowment of land, waters, and forests of the peoples of Mesoamerican origin. These territorial marginalization processes incubate cultural processes of strong roots such as the patriarchal culture that places women in disadvantage and violence. Along this line, exclusion and its forms are linked to the territory, so its characteristics, especially the situation of distribution of productive goods, are relevant to understanding the processes of precariousness of life in all its magnitude.

Work is a source of identity, affiliation and realization of the human kind. As the Marxist utopia of generic man thought, in the capitalist world it is a factor that explains poverty, since it is linked, to a large extent, to the wage product of labor. In Table 1 there are four forms of labor disaffiliation (3.1., 3.2., 3.3. and 3.4.). The exploitation, a concept developed by Marxism in its different versions ranging from the classic work of Karl Marx to analytical Marxism that discovers and recognizes the forms of exploitation in the market, as well as, in certain contexts, the exploitation exercised by the State against its citizens, without forgetting the exploitation on a domestic scale or in non-monetary economies. The cultural dimension of exploitation initiated by Marx and continued by the so-called Frankfurt School cannot be forgiven. Accordingly, man is alienated and turned into an object in the context of

capitalism as a civilization. Recognizing this category of analysis to understand precariousness is essential, since in countries similar to Mexico there are extremely low wages, as well as a working class, day laborer, and service workers who suffer an asymmetric endowment for their work in formal and informal markets, not to mention other barbaric forms of exploitation such as sexual (trafficking) and slave labor. The female unpaid care work falls into the concept of exploitation.

Precarious work is a worldwide reality, but especially in Latin America. After several decades of neoliberal policies, it is still a relevant issue as is job discouragement; a situation affecting young university students. Open unemployment is already an area of disaffiliation and of anomie. Studying these forms of precarious life is important to establishing a link between the data on poverty and violence with the labor world. It is also important to know more about the way in which work, and types of exploitation and precariousness explain the destruction of the social fabric. They cause the fragilization of institutions that should function as supports, as well as the existing forms of violence within the labor world, particularly harassment and sexual violence toward the female gender and diversities.

Forms of violence is a particularly sensitive issue because violence not only disrupts the human condition, but destroys and kills individuals; destroys communities and nations; produces mass exoduses, hunger, underdevelopment, and planetary predation; diverts economic resources that could be destined for development; and leads to the financing of war. This study comprises five recurrent forms of violence with tremendous consequences and complex articulations with poverty, forms of exclusion, and labor disaffiliation.

Violence against women is a matter of concern, because of the high number of femicides, as well as because this type of violence is a systemic phenomenon: women suffer from different forms of violence at home, at governmental institutions, at schools, at productive workplaces, as well as in childhood, adulthood, and seniority. Violence appears in dating and conjugal relationships. Violence against women is direct or physical, emotional or psychological, and economical. Women suffer different types of stigmata (Frías, 2014). In this sense, its visibility is paramount, especially giving voice to women who have been violated as an act of first justice. The discourse of patriarchal culture explains the complexity of gender violence. Researching the relationships between forms of inequality and gender violence; examining the ways in which inequalities are based on principles of authority, domination, and social control; and understanding the processes of social construction of trends in the struggle for women's autonomy, equity, and freedoms may also be important.

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Domestic violence (4.2.) mainly appears in areas of urban segregation and marginalization. The urban areas are related to addictions and organized crime. Additionally, gender-based violence is constant aggressions with consequences on girls and young women, because they are often perpetuated by family members. Racism (4.3) is a form of symbolic violence of colonial origin and to some extent invisible in our societies.

Citizen insecurity in the form of common crime (4.4.1) and organized crime (4.4.2) have become a constant all over the country, of course, is linked to poverty, marginalization and spatial segregation. Blunt violence contributes to the weakening of the social fabric. Organized crime, particularly the case of drug cartels, is present in almost every city in the country, taking control of neighborhoods with extreme poverty and spatial segregation. Their activities (sale of narcotics, extortion, kidnapping, trafficking, control of local markets) have huge consequences on the social fabric and local economies; their activity exacerbates existing social and economic inequalities. In this case, young people who are disaffiliated from the labor market are the ones mainly affected. For Williams (2010), the presence of organized crime in cities such as Ciudad Juarez has meant a disintegration of society, therefore, its actions produce anomie (as a degeneration of rules and norms).

State violence due to a state of exception (4.5) is a real possibility and has been experienced as a result of State action against guerrilla groups and even against certain social movements. Low-intensity conflict (4.6) is different from the previous, because it occurs in territories where organized crime groups take control of large territories or regions, whereby the State ceases to have a presence (this happens in Mexico in regions of the states of Michoacán, Tamaulipas, Durango, State of Mexico, and Sinaloa, among others) with terrible effects on the population involving forced mobility, as well as a total defenselessness of the population against organized crime. This type of violence has led to the emergence of paramilitary groups and community self-defense groups that engage in low-intensity conflicts with the cartels.

The forms of precariousness in the matrix function work in the *social-historical reality* and are related to each other in a complex way: *coimplicating, reinventing* themselves, producing problematic spirals, generating specific dialectics that determine and structure each other. This deals with problematic continuums that produce processes of double social structuring, that is, where the great structures of inequality structure individuals and these in turn reproduce these structures of inequality, sometimes making them more powerful. This functions in such a way that in the social-historical reality inequality(ies) and the forms of violence(s) associated with them must be understood as processes of social action or problematic syntaxes (Arzate *et al.*, 2010).

To account for these problematic syntaxes, sociology must strategically draw on qualitative sociology, social-historical reconstruction strategies – focused on the notion of region and/or territories of identity and belonging – as well as advanced quantitative measurement techniques – as in the case of those used for the measurement of poverty and marginalization – among others. For the case of the voice of the subjects, the work of qualitative sociology of reflexive intervention at the level of families and communities is irreplaceable.

Conclusions

The authors have argued about two useful tools for the sociological qualitative understanding of welfare: an analytical form of social precariousness and a notion of visible inequality(ies) and violence(s). Based on this argument, a qualitative sociology of welfare is relevant when, in a country like Mexico, the different structures of social precariousness converge in the production of a social regime of violent inequality.

In this sense, approaches to the different forms of precarity from a qualitative sociology are necessary to: (a) rearticulate the macro or social historical explanatory discourses with the processes of social action within local, community and workplaces; (b) understand the complex and novel articulations between inequality(ies) and violence(s); (c) give voice to the most precarious social individuals of society as a first social justice act; d) understand the logic of social production of the different articulations of inequality(ies) and violence(s); e) understand the subjective and normative contents generated in vulnerable societies; f) make visible the continuum of inequality(ies) and violence(s) as a process of double social structuring; g) understand violence as a social-historical whole, in particular to understand its moral contextual content and meaning, and from this to act in favor of processes of social action for conflict resolution; h) understand the implicit rational, normative and creative contents in the systems of relationships that produce forms of solidarity and social cohesion; i) understand how recreating life in anthropo-cultural terms in the midst of intense zones of inequality(ies) and violence(s) is possible; j) understand poverty as a precarious expense and

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as a creative social struggle for the maintenance of life and the unity of the social as fundamental objectives, and; k) understand the reflexive content of citizen praxis, that is, the meaning of a morality of the common good in vulnerable contexts.

In conclusion, this possible qualitative knowledge of inequality(ies) and violence(s) is relevant to understanding the substantivity of precarious forms and their dynamics of social action; as well as well-being understanding and the guidance of public actions to building and guaranteeing it in democratic societies. First level knowledge for the design of robust social intervention strategies that can transcend the design of social policies based on mere economic transfers.

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