

coincidence that two of the slogans proposed by feminist movements today find a renewed repercussion: “jobs must sustain life or they shouldn’t exist” and “our lives over their profit”.

The intrusion of new financial technology (fintech) into the most precarious homes is one of the most salient features of this pandemic, which allows us to hypothesize that it is pushing a new wave of household indebtedness. This occurs at the same time that domestic spatiality is being powerfully reconfigured, as I already discussed. In that sense, our hypothesis is that the intersection between financial inclusion and the household at this exceptional moment exhibits three processes simultaneously. First, a greater need for and exploitation of domestic work (now defined as essential work) both at home and in community territories. Second, the demonstration that the violence required to financialize decisive areas of social reproduction uses the pandemic as a privileged accelerator (linking gender-based violence to financial violence). And finally, the dispute over the intensification of financial extractivism as the management of increasingly extreme poverty.

When we say that the home has been transformed into a favored site of experimentation for capital, we are not arguing that it is a closed or finished process. Thus, the importance of our feminist methodology: we see in that vital space an open dispute and not definitive modifications. Even so, we cannot but start from the changes that have already occurred in many domestic routines, in the labor dynamics, in the very marks imposed by the pandemic’s reorganization of the sensible and of logistics. It is no coincidence then that the housing crisis is one of the most salient features of the pandemic. The home, that supposed space of private refuge, denounced

by feminism as the epicenter of violence, is transformed into a terminal of flows that are a central part of the global political and economic scene in the crisis.

In this way, we argue that the home – its spatiality, functioning, and dynamics – suffered from nodal reconfigurations during these two years that do not end with the end of the period of health restriction measures.

In our situated research (Gago and Cavallero, 2022), that spatiality of social reproduction is altered and reorganized based on what we have detected as four interlinked dynamics that take root in households during the pandemic:

- The increase in household debt for basic goods, as a consequence of cuts to incomes and also the emergence of new debts (for public services and emergencies);
- The increase in debt for rent (either rental debts or taking out debt to not have to rent) and a greater vulnerability to eviction due to the accumulation of debt. This is combined with the intensification of real estate speculation (on the informal and formal market) through the increase (dollarization) of rents and the restriction of supply in reaction to the new Law 27,551;
- The reorganization and intensification of reproductive (especially unpaid) and productive working days in the same space;
- The intrusion of financial technology (fintech) in households, through mobile payments, digital wallets, and digital banks

We are interested in highlighting, analyzing, and connecting these four dynamics because they allow us to understand the household not as a site of isolation, but as a

fundamental battle ground, both in the sense of the intrusion of new financial technologies and of the reorganization of working days. Political disputes that impact the redefinition of public policies are also accumulated in the household. The household, we argue, is a space that brings together novel forms of finance (making the pandemic a financial laboratory) and the intensification of (paid and unpaid) labor. Thus, decisive forms of contemporary valorization are knotted together there, in that space that capital historically sought to portray as a “non-productive” space.

In the problem of housing then – and particularly in the way in which household debt reconfigures it – we have identified a key area for feminist investigation and political practice. That is also where the dynamic of – paid and unpaid – labor is reorganized under new coordinates. It is in the household where a series of problems are concentrated that enable us to continue deepening our feminist reading of debt and ask: How has the household become a laboratory? How does this affect the demands and policies that can be articulated and called for?

Just to finish: Why could the category of financial extractivism be useful?

If we define neoliberalism as a form of intensified extractivism, we can see how feminist struggles are strategies against dispossession and against financial devices as a private solution to that dispossessions and as a new form of value extraction.

Therefore, there is an urgent need to expand initiatives that materially confront the capacity to extract rents, and that incorporate the conditions of social reproduction— from health care to housing, to pensions and electricity and internet and phone bills—

into the labor struggle. It is the conception of labor that is at stake here, of who produces value and what modes of life deserve to be assisted, cared, and paid for, and also where the resources will come from if we aim for a global reorganization of the world of work. But also to support the networks that produce a de-domestication of care. I think that there is a feminist pedagogy to do that consists in proposing analysis while also developing programmatic interventions.

Explaining why there is a change in the relations of production that takes the sphere of reproduction (violently attacked and made “unsafe”) a privileged site becomes a central hypothesis for understanding the ways in which care and telework, the restriction of incomes and emergence of new debts, greater difficulties in formal and informal employment and the housing emergency become mixed together, along with the strengthening of platforms as service providers and the increase in internet and telephone rates.

I use the concept “financial extractivism” because it enables us to connect debt with political-ecological struggles against neo-extractivist projects, thereby revealing the linkages between debt, dispossession, and exploitation. By adding this financial dimension to our struggles, we can better map flows of debt and modes of exploitation in the dynamic, versatile and apparently “invisible” forms in which neoliberal mutation is rooted.

In other words, I would like to add a feminist reading of financialization that characterizes it as a colonization of social reproduction. The expansion of the financial system is a (violent) response to a specific sequence of struggles, on the one hand, and

a dynamic of containment that organizes a certain experience of the current crisis, on the other hand. Massive indebtedness is thus accompanied by new forms of discipline and (eventually) criminalization.

We must also understand debt as a privileged device in the “laundering” – “blanqueamiento,” not coincidentally a racist term – of illicit flows and, therefore, in the connection between legal and illegal economies and that increases direct violence upon certain territories. Here again, neo-extractivist projects play a fundamental role—first in the dispossession and then in the financialization of subaltern economies. As I understand it, these features also show why the collective subjectivation deployed by feminist revolts and its connections with popular economies, both directly linked to the politization of social reproduction, are a key component in the battle against neoliberalism’s power of limitless mutation of capital as an infinite utopia of financialization.

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