

# Critical Psychology in Mexico: Realities and Potentialities<sup>1</sup>

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## Abstract

Mexican critical psychology is explored in terms of its *potentialities*, or what it could become, as well as in terms of its *realities*, or what it currently is or has been to date. In the exploration of past and present realities we will attempt to identify some of the more important critical, alternative and radical positions in the history of Mexican psychology. As for future potentialities, they are assessed from two perspectives: our own, as professors of psychology at a public university in Western Mexico, and that of our students registered for the degree in psychology at the same university.

*Key-words:* Psychology, critical psychology, Mexican psychology, psychoanalysis, ideology.

## Introduction

We are firmly convinced that what could be termed *Mexican critical psychology* is more than just a potentiality and is in fact a reality. Under this term we draw together all the theoretically reflexive work performed in Mexico in which certain psychological ideas are debated and questioned, either completely or partially, leading to the adoption of critical, alternative and eventually radical positions; which in turn have been used to resist certain dominant, regulated or disciplinary positions. All of the above, as will be seen in the present article, has not only occurred within the current confines of academic psychology, but also beyond them, in marginalized extra-academic areas and during periods when psychology had yet to establish itself academically as an independent discipline distinct from religion and philosophy. Moving beyond the limits of this independent discipline, as well as the university departments where it has developed, psychology is understood here in its broadest sense as used in previous centuries; that is, as discourse, study, conviction, research or reflection concerning psychism and its properties, faculties and operations. Understood in this way, psychology includes religious beliefs and philosophical considerations concerning the soul,

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<sup>1</sup> The authors would like to mention that their research on critical psychology in Mexico would not have been possible without the help of Leonardo Moncada Sánchez, Rigoberto Hernández Delgado, Karla Ileana Caballero Vallejo, Leonor Pastor and Liliana Ruiz Guzmán.

cultural and popular representations of human psychism, ideological systems that use implicit or explicit psychological concepts and also, of course, anything referred to today as “psychology”, whether in academia or beyond it. In all these areas of Mexican psychology, as we will see below, it is possible to detect critical, alternative and radical positions which are the object of the current article.

In this article we will try to demonstrate that a Mexican critical psychology does in fact exist and this will be explored in terms of its *potentialities*, or what it could become, as well as in terms of its *realities*, or what it currently is or has been to date. To begin with, in the exploration of past and present realities we will attempt to identify some of the more important critical, alternative and radical positions in the history of Mexican psychology. This will allow us to present certain examples of recent work that has declared itself critical psychology, but also numerous Marxist, Freudian and Freudian-Marxist incursions into the field of psychology. These will be complemented by belligerent anti-imperialist Indigenous positions, certain egalitarian, anti-discriminatory, enlightened anti-scholastic and anarchist positions, as well as anti-positivist and particularist anti-universalist narratives, and finally openly declared militant and committed positions.

Based on the past and present realities of Mexican critical psychology, we assess its future potentialities from two perspectives: our own, as professors of psychology at a public university in Western Mexico, and that of our students registered for the degree in psychology at the same university. To present the point of view of students we will analyze the responses to a questionnaire completed by roughly 200 students in order to identify possible critical, alternative and radical positions in the future generation of Mexican psychologists. Finally, in order to complete this prospective analysis we will make reference to three potentialities for critical-psychological work resulting from our own research and personal reflections. Firstly, we will offer a critique of patriarchal Mexican ideology in relation to the majority presence of women in the field of psychology in Mexico. Secondly, using a psychoanalytic perspective, we will offer a critical assessment of legal psychology and question its ideological assumptions and complicity with power. Thirdly, using certain passages from the discourse of the Zapatista Army of National Liberation (EZLN – acronym in Spanish), we will reconstruct a critical Zapatista psychology that targets the racist, macho and normalizing psychological culture dominant in Mexico.

### **Realities**

There is no point in the history of Mexican psychology when it is not possible to identify an alternative, critical or radical stance serving to resist a dominant, regulated and disciplinary position. However, this opposition has not always been of the same nature and has varied over time. The positions have also changed, not only in relation to the system current at the time and the ideologies of distinct periods, but also in relation to the possibilities for subversion offered by each historical situation.

No two moments are the same in the history of Mexican psychology, but all moments demonstrate an opposition between dominant and alternative positions and it is this opposition that creates the tension and movement of history. The history of Mexican psychology is the story of a struggle between positions and this history is presented retrospectively as simultaneity or as a succession of oppositions between different expressions of two psychological positions, the dominant and alternative, which are locked in an ongoing struggle:

- *Opposition between a European imperialist psychology and an indigenous psychology of resistance.* With the Spanish conquest of Mexico, the indigenous psychology of the specific individual and their desire, of the “*in ixtli in yóllotl*” (León-Portilla, 1956, pp. 190-191), was prohibited and replaced by the European psychology of the normalization of the individual and the inhibition of desire. The methodology of this European psychology, “based on gender and specific difference,” was imposed at the expense of the Pre-Hispanic psychological method of “the living look” (p. 192). However, despite the colonization and modernization of Mexico, this investigative method managed to survive through a *nahualismo* which resisted European psychology (Ruiz de Alarcón, 1629, I, 6, 94-96), was used in numerous indigenous insurrections (Sigüenza y Góngora, 1692, p. 117; Reed, 1971, pp. 136-184; EZLN, 1994-2005, 28/05/94 y 24/08/94) and was revived by psychoshamanism and other alternative psychologies which are more or less esoteric and critical of European psychology (Castaneda, 1968, 1971, 1972, 1974; Roquet y Favreau, 1981; Grinberg-Zylberbaum, 1987a, 1987b, 1989, 1991; Jodorowsky 2001).
- *Opposition between a discriminatory psychology and an egalitarian psychology.* In the 16<sup>th</sup> century, immediately after the Spanish conquest of Mexico, there was a clash between the egalitarian psychology of Fray Bartolomé de Las Casas and the discriminatory, racist and ethnocentric psychology of Ginés de Sepúlveda. While the latter presented indigenous people as “men of little ability” with “bad habits” and who “do not live according to natural reason” (Las Casas, 1552, p. 68), the psychology of Las Casas defended the “good understanding” of indigenous people, their “ability” and “sharp wit” (p. 113). At the same time, in an analysis anticipating Marxist criticism, Las Casas criticized the economic basis of Sepúlveda’s psychology, which attempted to “justify mundane and tyrannical men” and “justify the theft, robberies and deaths they are responsible for and their usurpation of States” (p. 114).
- *Opposition between a scholastic psychology and Enlightenment psychology.* In the 18<sup>th</sup> century, Juan Benito Díaz de Gamarra criticized scholastic psychology, its dogmatism, intolerance and prejudices, and particularly the Aristotelic idea introduced to Mexico by Fray Alonso de la Veracruz (1557) according to which psychism is to be found “in the whole and any part of the body” (pp. 20-21). Díaz de Gamarra (1774) opposed this corporal psychism and insisted that psychism resides “solely in the brain” (§155, p. 155). To emphasize this he based his argument not on other philosophers, but on experiments recently conducted in France. During the same era and in the same spirit of the Enlightenment, José Ignacio Bartolache (1772) not only performed psychophysiological experiments on animals, but also conducted a clinical study of hysteria which included a thoroughly modern discourse fully compatible with incipient bourgeois capitalist ideology and slightly tinged with social criticism, for example when illnesses observed in “persons of high and middle categories born and educated in luxury” were attributed to “inaction” and the “perverse custom” of “getting up late” (pp. 68-61).
- *Opposition between a positivist psychology and an anti-positivist, rationalist, anarchist or narrative psychology.* In the face of the growing dominance of positivist psychology in Mexico, during the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, three important alternative psychological proposals appeared. Firstly, the rationalist project of anarchist Plotino Rhodakanaty (1881a, 1881b), who criticized positivism for its “sensualist ideology” and the reduction of psychology to “empirical data” of a “tangible order” confused with the “intellectual order” (1881a, p. 151). Secondly, the incursions of anarchists in psychology, from Rhodakanaty and his followers Rico (1878) and Riquelme (1878), to the recent *Anarchist Psychology Manifesto* of the Oaxacan Psychology Association (Vargas-Mendoza and Aguilar-Morales, 2008), and including the penetrating psychology implicit in the political articles of Ricardo Flores Magón (1910). Thirdly,

there is the extravagant narrative proposal of Salvador Quevedo y Zubieta (1906-1909, 1912), with its “historical” and “social psychology”, which is methodically displayed through literary fiction.

- *Opposition between a universal human psychology and a particularist Mexican psychology.* At the beginning of the 20th century a particularist psychology with a focus on what is specific to Mexicans appeared in Mexico as a reaction against the Universalist psychology of Europe and the United States. This *psychology of the Mexican* is begun by the positivist Ezequiel Chávez (1901), who offers biting criticism of a Universalist psychology that “fails to take into account the cardinal observation that character, or what amounts to the same, the result of all psychic conditions of individuals, varies according to the nation” (p. 81). Given that there are cultural differences between psychisms, then there must be differences between the psychologies dealing with these psychisms. This is how, firstly, a psychology of the Mexican, which reaches its height in the middle of the 20th century, is conceived (Ramírez, 1953, 1955; González Pineda, 1959a, 1959b; Gómez Robleda, 1962), and secondly, how in the second half of the 20th century a Mexican ethnopsychology appears, developed mainly by transcultural psychologist Rogelio Díaz-Guerrero (1972, 1989, 1993; Díaz-Loving et al., 2008). This is subsequently and paradoxically imposed as a dominant, regulatory and disciplinary institutional position in Mexican academic psychology.
- *Opposition between an ideological psychology of consciousness and a political psychology of the unconscious.* With the arrival of psychoanalysis in Mexico, a form of political psychology of the unconscious inspired by Marx and Freud was developed to offer a criticism of the ideologies and ideological aspects of psychology. This critique appeared in many guises: first, the Freudian-Culturalist and Marxist-Humanist theory that Erich Fromm (1955, 1964, 1970, 1973) completed in Mexico; then, under the influence of Igor Caruso, a synthesis of “Marxist tinged sociology” and the “critical-social aspects of psychoanalysis” (Páramo, 2006a, p. 329) were used to question a certain form of Marxist psychology (Suárez, 1966), religion and ideology in general (Suárez, 1971; Páramo, 1981, 2001); soon after, in a book that has become a reference text in Mexico, direct criticism of the ideological character of psychology from the perspectives of psychoanalysis and historical materialism (Braunstein et al., 1975); and finally, at the Universidad Autónoma Metropolitana (Autonomous Metropolitan University), Xochimilco campus, the critical work of a group of Freudian researchers, among them Guillermo Delahanty with his “critical social psychology” (1980) and “critical psychohistory” (1984), and Enrique Guinsberg, with a critic of social control (1985, 1996) and concepts of normality (1996) and mental health in a neoliberal context (2001).
- *Opposition between a neutral empirical-objective psychology and an open, militant and committed theoretical-reflexive psychology.* In Mexico, beyond psychoanalysis there is also a systematic critique of concepts of normality and mental health dating back to the introduction of anti-psychiatry, mainly inspired by Basaglia, which not only challenged psychiatry but also questioned dominant psychology for its collusion with psychiatry and its claims to neutrality, since these served to cloak its political position, ideological content, obedient subordination to power, and its repressive, exclusive and normalizing functions (Marcos, 1980, 1982, 1983). At the same time, with the penetration of Mexican psychology by Marxism, we see another systematic questioning of the supposed neutrality of psychology, in particular empirical-objective psychology. This questioning, which would become the axis of Mexican critical psychology as we know it today, was first developed in the name of a Marxist, critical and dialectic method (Delahanty, 1976; Molina, 1980, 1983), and then simply on the basis of a theoretical-reflexive, critical and self-critical psychology, openly situated and implicated in society (Fernández-Christlieb,

2003, 2006; Montero y Fernández-Christlieb, 2003), and also at times clearly militant and committed to social change (Jiménez Domínguez, 2000; Gómez Pérez, 2004; Vázquez, 2007; Flores Osorio, 2008). This psychology has coalesced, for example, into a social psychology of liberation inspired by Martín-Baró and comprehensively developed in Mexico (e.g. Vázquez, 2000a, 2000b, 2007; Flores Osorio, 2002, 2008, 2009), as well as in a constellation of feminist, affirmative, lesbian, gay, transexual and queer psychologies that are only now beginning to figure in the field of Mexican psychology (e.g. Careaga Pérez, 2001a, 2001b, 2003). As would be expected, these latter psychologies tend to focus their criticism on the masculine, heterosexual, macho and androcentric ideological aspects of dominant psychology.

When reviewing the current state of psychology in Mexico we can see that none of the above mentioned dominant or alternative positions have completely disappeared. The only positions that have not survived are those that have changed with the passage of time. As a result, the only available options for psychological positions have been changes over time or constancy.

Among the alternative positions that have survived until today, and which have not substantially changed or lost their initial vitality, are indigenous psychology, the political psychology of the unconscious, theoretical-reflexive psychology, openly situated, militant and committed, and also, perhaps, anarchist psychology. With regard to alternative positions that have undergone change, the following are worthy of mention: indigenous psychology, adopted by psychoshamanism and other more or less esoteric psychologies; the egalitarian psychology of Las Casas, whose project has been sustained and enriched through liberation psychology and other militant and committed psychologies; anti-positivist psychology, whether rationalist or narrative, which today mainly appears under the guise of Lacanian versions of the political psychology of the unconscious; and finally the particularist psychology of the Mexican, the perspective of which has been broadened in current theoretical-reflexive and openly situated social psychology. With regard to Enlightenment psychology and its enlightened spirit, it would seem to have become, via positivism, an antiquated ideology that permeates the current, and allegedly neutral, empirical-objective psychology of many cognitivists, experimentalists, neuropsychologists, etc. It is also true that many dominant positions of the past meet in this empirical-objective psychology: the ideological psychology of the conscience, the Universalist psychology of human beings, positivist psychology and even European Universalist psychology that ensures its continuity through the imperialism of Anglo-Saxon psychology, in particular from the United States.

It is also of particular significance that all dominant, regulated and disciplinary positions meet to form a single position, while alternative, critical and radical positions maintain their plurality, differences and mutual tensions. As usually happens, it is not easy for progressive projects to achieve the unity and cohesion more reactionary projects tend to achieve spontaneously. Perhaps the explanation for this is to be found in the critical, and therefore polemical and combative, vocation of all truly progressive endeavors. In the case of psychology in Mexico, it is clear that all alternative positions have also always been critical of other positions. This continues to be true today since we cannot identify a truly alternative psychology that is not also an essentially critical psychology.

## Potentialities

### Critique of decontextualization

Having reviewed the past and present realities of critical psychology in Mexico, it is now time to consider its potentialities and explore these among the psychology students and professors of the most important public university in the Mexican state of Michoacan, the Universidad Michoacana de San Nicolás de Hidalgo.

In order to survey students we prepared a questionnaire with five open-ended and closed-ended questions and distributed this among 187 third-year psychology degree students. In the questionnaire they were asked to indicate their political position (right, left, communist, anarchist, Zapatista, conservative, feminist, etc.), their theoretical position (psychoanalysis, humanism, neuropsychology, social psychology, cognitive, behavioral, communitarian, educational, etc.), their opinions concerning topical questions in Mexico (such as marriage between homosexuals), the function they personally assigned to psychology (whether adaptive or liberating, normalizing or exploratory, etc.), and their criticisms of psychological approaches studied to date at university (such as ineffectiveness, complicity with the system, irrelevance to Mexican reality, and many more).

Focusing on the functions assigned to psychology and criticisms of it as a discipline, we can highlight the following in student responses (the percentage for responses given by students who completed the survey are indicated in brackets):

- In relation to dominant psychology, the majority of students believe that psychology should help people achieve a better balance (48%), perform their role in society more effectively (44%) or better adapt to society (37%). This view is only rivaled by the idea that psychology should help people defend their convictions (40%) and fight for what they want (37%).
- When we analyzed correlations between answers on the survey, we identified three groups of students that shared certain ideas and between which the boundaries were fairly imprecise, but which seemed to correspond to three clearly defined ideologies. Firstly, in line with a dominant and essentially conservative ideology, there are those who think psychology should serve people to better adapt to society (37%), achieve a better balance (48%), behave normally (8%), better perform their role in society (44%), accept their place in society (28%), accept their destiny (1%), obey the rules (3%), respect authority (4%), control themselves (29%) and control their emotions (5%). Secondly, as part of an emerging ideology more akin to liberal individualism, there are those who maintain that psychology should help people become less dependent on others (22%), think of themselves more (18%), overcome prejudices (35%), achieve greater self-esteem (47%), be more competitive (22%), be more productive (24%), fight for what they want (37%), be less inhibited (9%), have more common sense (17%) and be less contradictory (9%). Thirdly, in an alternative position, there are those for whom psychology should serve not only to defend their convictions (40%) and resist manipulation (16%), but also transform their surroundings (25%), resist power (5%) and question their own certainties (4%). It's clear that this final group of students is more promising in terms of the potentialities of critical psychology. This is confirmed when we closely analyze the other responses of these same students which can consequently be considered the *critical group* of students surveyed.
- In the recently identified critical groups, students do not share a clear political position or opinion on current topics. What they do generally share is an attraction to psychoanalysis,

social psychology or communitarian psychology. In this way we can verify the deep affinity between these currents and the adoption of a critical position. This is also perhaps a positive indication concerning the potentialities of critical work in psychoanalysis, social psychology and communitarian psychology. Finally, when choosing subjects and specializations, these will be the currents students from the critical group tend to choose.

- Unlike the other two groups identified, the critical group does not criticize the psychology studied at university for its complexity, uselessness or failure to keep up to date; what it is criticized for is its ideological tendencies, complicity with the system, subordination to economic interests, ignorance or concealment of cultural and gender variables, its frequent submission to US psychology and lack of contact with the real problems of Mexican people. Here we see the opening of a broad and varied panorama of potentialities for Mexican critical psychology which mainly corresponds to the following two positions: *the particularist psychology of the Mexican*, and *theoretical-reflexive, openly situated, militant and committed psychology*.
- Even if we consider all students surveyed and not just those from the critical group, we can see that what is most criticized in the psychology studied at university is the lack of relevance to the real problems of people in Mexico (61%), its frequent submission to US psychology (42%), and its failure to adapt to Mexican culture (41%). It is therefore clear that the predominant and major criticism of students, which could be described as a *criticism of decontextualization*, coincides with the particularist and culturalist criticism offered by academics throughout the 20th century in the successive currents of Mexican ethnopsychology and the psychology of the Mexican.
- If we analyze the correlations between responses relative to criticisms of psychology studied at university, we can again distinguish three diffuse groups of students connected by certain points of view. Firstly, from a more or less culturalist and particularist critical perspective, there are those students who tend to criticize psychology for its lack of relevance to the real problems of Mexicans (61%), its frequent submission to US psychology (42%), its failure to adapt to Mexican culture (41%), its ignorance or concealment of cultural variables (13%), and its ignorance or concealment of gender variables (7%). Secondly, from a Universalist, empirical, modernizing and more or less pragmatic perspective, there are those who prefer to criticize psychology for its uselessness (1%), lack of cohesion (12%) and contemporaneity (27%), and its inadequate empirical and experimental support (16%). Thirdly, from an economic-ideological and apparently Universalist critical position, there are those who criticize psychology's complicity with the system (20%) and its subordination to economic interests (20%).
- If we correlate the groups differentiated on the basis of their criticisms of psychology with those groups differentiated on the basis of the functions attributed to psychology, we find that with certain significant correspondences we are also able to associate these with the major critical traditions of Mexican psychology. Firstly, in the tradition of the psychology of the Mexican and openly situated theoretical-reflexive psychology, particularist and culturalist criticism is not exclusively offered by those who assume a critical position of resistance and transformation, but also by those who accept the dominant and conservative ideology of adaptation and normalization. Secondly, in the enlightened and positivist tradition, empirical and essentially pragmatic universalist criticism which appeals to the present and relevance tends to come from those who adopt the liberal individualist ideology of independence, lack of inhibitions, competitiveness and productivity. Finally, in the spirit of Marxist psychology, economic-ideological criticism, in terms of complicity with the system and subordination to economic interests, generally comes from those who conceive psychology from the critical position of resistance and transformation.

The results produced by our survey demonstrate a heterogeneous student body with different, and even diametrically opposed, personal positions. Despite the clear dominance of adaptive and normalizing psychology, students maintain their critical capacities and in the majority of cases use these to criticize the decontextualization of a psychology that continues to be dominated by US models and that does not appear to suit either Mexican culture or the real problems of Mexicans. Now, in addition to being criticized principally for its submission to US psychology, its inadequacy for Mexican culture and its lack of relevance to the real problems of Mexicans, Mexican university psychology is also strongly criticized for its complicity with the system and its subordination to economic interests. Here we see the opportunity for a liberating critical psychology that conducts a deep examination of conscience and has the courage to accept it has not only submitted but sold itself, that in the final analysis it is a psychology that has not only been conquered but bought, that has not only been seduced but prostituted by the new conquerors of Mexico.

### **Women psychologists: the professional profit of Mexican patriarchy**

In addition to the potentialities identified on the basis of the questionnaires given to our students, as professors we have considered other possibilities for critical-psychological work in the context of our own research and reflections. The first potentiality is related to the fact that the majority of psychologists in Mexico are women since the practice of psychology in Mexico is dominated by women with a ratio of three women to each man (Millán, 1981). The questions that arise regard how this majority presence of women in the professionalization of psychology should be interpreted: as a tradition, a symptom or a strategy? In the context of a culture as sexist and macho as Mexican culture, what kind of vocational desire is at work when people wish to “be a psychologist”?

When psychology is conceived as cultural form implying organized and institutionalized knowledge that creates its own language within a specific culture (Foucault, 1965), we employ a fundamental premise: *psychology, like any other cultural form in our country, is impregnated with patriarchal ideology*. Here our idea is to problematize, from the position of psychoanalytical-feminist thought (which appeared during the third poststructuralist wave of feminism, and in particular with the project of Luce Irigaray), the vocational dimension implicit in the professional choice made by Mexican women when choosing psychology in order to argue that women psychologists are the professional tools of Mexican patriarchy.

We emphasize and focus on the vocational aspect not only because it is one of the dimensions of the desire that forms the central theme of psychoanalysis but also because we believe that it is through the complexity of the symbolic and imaginary orders of vocation, and by which a subject commits their subjectivity to the most authentic expression of the inscription of their desire to be, to be what they want to be and forge significant and satisfactory professional (social) links, that the processes of patriarchal subjection of feminine subjectivity converge to form tight knots.

In order to examine why there are more women than men involved in the practice of psychology it is necessary to consider psychology a feminized profession. Like other feminized professions, psychology is permeated by a series of values considered feminine in cultural terms (a feminine cultural character) and which are attributed to social relations and by extension to psychology professionals (Lorente Molina, 2004). Use of the term ‘feminized’ here alludes to the need to highlight the fact that this not only refers to an increase in the number of women involved in psychological practice or practices, but a cultural model that

affects professional identities and the subjectivities they give rise to. This leads to the following question: What are the cultural models professionalized in psychological practices in a highly patriarchal and macho society such as that of Mexico?

In line with gender hierarchization, some of the cultural values considered feminine and which are deeply and widely rooted in our collective imagination include: pacifism, affectiveness, docility, patience, devotion, and care for others (Lorente Molina, 2004). In addition, as we will see, these are precisely the values that characterize the career of psychology since they are associated with the ideals of the profession and are therefore located at the very heart of the vocational push that beats with the desire “to be a psychologist”.

All of these values emerge from the dichotomous order used to mark sexual difference in Western thought, with the idea of active/passive being the essential and basic value, but also the most powerful, and through which masculinity is associated with being active and femininity with being passive. This relation can be considered the most basic in the sense that it permeates the entire history of philosophical discourse, which orders and reproduces all thought, and which “is marked by an absolute constant that orders values, and which is the opposition active/passive” (Cixous y Clement, 1986, p. 64). The active/passive idea is fundamental since it is based on the most basic difference (defined as a pair of opposites) of human reality, which is the difference “man/woman”. This can be considered the most powerful difference due to its pervasiveness and the number of fields where it is dominant (art, culture, science, religion, politics), as well as its ability to impose and maintain oppositional logic as a law that organizes all that can be thought to the point of becoming natural and universal.

Given this dichotomy, the cultural values considered feminine, and which were mentioned above, are associated with passivity. Due to this association, in the masculine imaginary they not only promote an idea of the morphological disposition of women (womb, depository, container), or the functional character and role played in procreation by their reproductive cells (the ovum as a rounded cell incapable of moving by itself and constantly awaiting fertilization), but also the correlation established between femininity and maternity. In patriarchal ideology, maternity is represented as the paradigm of femininity. If women are not mothers they are not feminine.

A final aspect to be considered in the genesis of those cultural values considered feminine is the non-aggressive component attributed to the feminine constitution and which serves to explain a number of cultural productions with respect to modifications to the aggressive impulse “as a counterweight or search for equivalents to women’s function in maternity” (Irigaray, 1974, p. 16). The fact that women are not permitted any outwardly expressed form of aggression is due to the fact that femininity is absorbed by maternity, and that maternity is in turn deprived of the representation of any form of aggression. A mother who does not exclusively love her children is a virile or destructive woman. Inherent to the psychical constitution of women would be the tendency towards pacification and all other subjective positions serving as loving arms, as oases of pleasure, as refractions of maternity; “breast feeding of the creature, restoration of man” (Irigaray 1974, p. 18), one of the social expressions of which is precisely professional production.

Among the professional productions that socially express the subjective positions of women in our society is psychological practice, which has also been absorbed by certain cultural

values considered feminine. Based on the analysis of certain responses to our survey we can problematize women's vocational choice of psychology as a course of study by declaring that here, in a Mexican society governed by patriarchal ideology, this choice ultimately fails in its most legitimate purpose, which is to allow women access to a new symbolic incarnation of themselves (Orozco Guzmán, 1993).

When we asked female students in our faculty to tell us the functions they attributed to psychology, the four most common functions corresponded to helping people to "achieve greater balance," "have greater self-esteem," "better perform their role in society" and "know themselves better". There is a common factor in all these responses: they are based on a lack of ego. A lack of balance, self-esteem, social performance and self-awareness all lead us to a narcissism involving the loving ideals of the subject, which were shaped by identification with parents and the collective ideals of culture and society. At the root of these ideals we find refracted the image of omnipotence or omnipotence as a grand image of a psychic unity that is the ego. These responses could therefore allude to the fact that on the imaginary plane of the vocation for psychology a desire to repair or restore lost narcissism is forged, that is, the image one has of oneself as a stable entity leading to the formation of the ego. In the specific case of women this would be restoration of the image patriarchy has created for femininity by means of numerous discourses and in this sense these responses allude to the key points in the fabric of the collective ideals with which women identify and reveal their narcissistic structure. However, as mentioned previously, this attempt at restoration fails in its desire to provide access to a new feminine identity since, as we will see, these are responses that, as routes of signification from where psychology is thought, serve to recover the identity values they are unconsciously trying to subvert by means of professional practice. Psychology is therefore unable to rid itself of all the features "good" mothers adopt since instead of (or in addition to) having a child to look after, and for what she discovers about her vocational calling, she embraces a profession that ensures she also, in the professional field, reproduces rather than produces; she reproduces the narcissistic ideal that men have confected for her (the maternal ideal), leading her to believe it is her own and that she, as a psychologist, should feel compelled to succor.

Our argument is that the narcissistic image, the inflated image of oneself that is underpinned by narcissism and that women attempt to remedy through psychological practice, is in itself a negative image and is so from the outset since it does not reflect the specifics of her sex, of the feminine sex. The mirror that women look into (recovering Lacan's "mirror stage") is a phallic mirror that fails to reflect anything more than someone who is castrated since the mother –who generally offers her body as a support for the imaginary whole– has also been castrated, is in effect a castrated being.

In this sense, as clearly stated by Irigaray (1974), "even the most fully achieved femininity cannot aspire to the ideal, cannot in any way attribute to itself an ideal", since it "lacks its own mirror", while "narcissism, and its pact with the ideal, would be a tributary of the phallic eminence" (p. 92). Female narcissism is wounded and humiliated from the outset, from the very moment it is inscribed as an imaginary structure of the ego, and for this reason any female project of narcissism, such as that which appears to be sustained by choosing psychology, is a project that leaves "women amputated of a strong representation of her sex" (*ibid*), and thereby sustains the imaginary projects of an 'absolute' and unique model of narcissism of which men are the sole beneficiaries.

The idea that psychology helps to "provide greater balance", for example, could be referenced with its counterpart located, due to the pathological connotation of the term 'balanced', in the field of mental disease, that is, a lack of mental balance; a field where the figure of woman

has danced in innumerable ways and in the majority of cases, emblematically, to her own detriment. Today it is very common to discover mental health statistics that emphasize the greater propensity of women to suffer the sad crown of madness: depression, which is reiterated on thousands of websites: “women are twice as likely to experience depression as men...depression is the leading cause of disability in women..., almost 15 per cent of women suffering from severe depression will commit suicide” (Appignanesi, 2008, p. 6).

On a less depressing note, when attempts are made to provide “information” concerning aspects of mental health that does not serve as a severe blow to psychic balance, such as information related to character, personality, etc., in terms of disorders, conditions or types, media such as popular magazines insist on using a female figure as a spokesperson for their messages and the image on their covers. It’s as if practical psychology were a matter of exclusively female competence, whether because they find it more interesting or because they need greater access to this type of information, but above all because it would seem that it is women who ‘know’ more about these matters of tormented minds and pains and/or understand them better, thereby reproducing the belief that women are more prone to mental imbalances than men as well as the feminization of psychological practice or practical psychology.

As a result of this infuriating sexist fraud, and despite the fact that statistics such as those mentioned above may indeed be sufficiently ‘true’ or that women may really possess a ‘true’ understanding of the workings of the psyche, the cultural illusion and cultural ideal persist. The belief turned ideal that women are more emotional and sentimental, are more in touch with the intricate world of feelings, than men persists and for better or worse she understands more about ‘that’ since she is always more exposed to the extremes of feelings and their imbalance.

To close this section, it must be emphasized that if the female psychologist can be considered, in certain cases, as the professional profit of Mexican patriarchy, this is because her vocational desire has been stripped of its spirit of change and transformation, not only at the personal level through the institutional reincorporation of her vocational desire in the form of a paid servitude effectively exploited by the State, but of psychology as a science. The clear division between theory (rational knowledge) and practice (empirical knowledge), the carrier of clear gender distinctions, leads to disrespect for what the experience of psychology can offer in terms of a significant transformation of a psychological knowledge that can only be accessed by male psychologists, as the history of psychology in Mexico clearly shows.

### **Beyond Legal Psychology: crimes of duty and distortion of the law**

Another potentiality for critical psychology work suggested by our research and personal reflections is legal psychology. This is the result of a perceived conflict between, on the one hand, a disdain for the subjective, perhaps for the *cogito*, on the part of legal officials and, on the other, the critique offered by psychology of the insensitive, harsh, severe and impersonal position adopted by the legal system. However, the psychology implied in law enforcement and administration uses the behavior of the object, and control of the same, as the methodology of its study. This psychology is implicit to the extent that it converges with the discourse of the Law: “Law and psychology are similar to the extent that both deal with human activities. Both are involved in attempts to control conduct” (Kirby, 1978, quoted in Eugenio Garrido y Carmen Herrero, 2006, p. 7). The control enforced by the Law is achieved through the exercising of power, a power that monitors and sanctions, a power that disciplines

and punishes, while the control exercised by psychology is achieved through use of the power of knowledge concerning human behavior.

Law and psychology converge in their goal of exercising power over the Other through a law that limits and restricts, and a law that explains and predicts. The background to this scheme of power through control and the obsessive control of power is the presence of the anomalous figure of the abnormal in the 19th century. Foucault (2000) has identified its archeology in images of the monster, the incorrigible and the masturbator. Crime is not outside the Law, it can be located within the Law, in its very reason, as the reason of the State, while the criminal is not necessarily outside the Law since they may attempt to impose through their acts their own Law, a despotic Law, a Law that is an anti-Law.

The premises used to separate the fields of the legal and the psychological, as fields of supposedly scientific competence and fields of epistemic incidence, are disturbing: “The Law is, a) a set of standards, b) what ought-to-be and c) standards that are an obligation even if they are not met. Psychology is a) a set of natural principles, b) an explanation of behavior, and c) derived from the objective observation of who we are. Briefly stated, the Law is the way humans should behave while psychology is the way humans behave” (Garrido y Herrero, 2006, p. 8). We therefore face a fork in the path or a delicate balance between culture and nature. Culture, the culture of duty, of obligatory principles, is encoded in the legal system. The nature of human behavior, of its forms of being, are based on a psychology that is considered objective due to its use of observation or that makes observation the measure of its objectivity. The cultural dimension of human behavior is the *field of duty*, the field of Law, which is not the *field of being* of psychology. For this reason the standards used to legislate are neither born of subjects or built from subjects but designed for uniform individuals, without contradictions, and based on an ideal of consistency and control. There is no suspicion that where there is being there is a reason to be since being is approached from the perspective of a pure being, biological, neither shaped nor limited by culture or by discourse. Neither does it consider where this sense of duty should be instilled; creating a being that knows it is being observed, watched over in different ways by the Other. The ought-to-be underpins an objectivized being, a being transformed into an object by the gaze of the Other: “the preexistence of a gaze –I only see from one point, but my existence is observed from all points” (Lacan, 1953-1954, p. 80). Could this therefore represent the ideal of control and objectivity of psychology and the Law: panoptically monitor a subject and in this way divide it up into many parts, dispersing its existence for the purpose of a well calibrated observation? In psychology, the above mentioned ideal of control and objectivity is expressed in the supposed unity of its object, which permits a clearer understanding of observable and quantifiable conduct and increases the power for prediction and control. It could not respond to the Hegelian proposition of an opposition born in consciousness “between the known and the un-known” (Hegel, 1807, p. 274). This opposition is not only born in consciousness, it basically destroys it. The un-known, in the very substratum of consciousness, finally determines what consciousness does not know about itself, what is omitted, excluded. For this reason psychology cannot subscribe to the truth criteria that guide the Law in its task of judging: “It has not been acknowledged that the law does not attempt to discover the truth, it simply tries to ensure that the procedure is adapted to the standard and how to convince” (Garrido y Herrero, 2006, p. 16). The word of the accused is not to be trusted in the judgment process. The analytical position that should imbue psychological practice in any area, including its insertion in the enforcement of justice, has been clearly proposed by Piera Aulagnier (2007) when indicating a point of departure for the presumption of truth as an equivalent to the presumption of innocence with respect to statements made by the subject in

an inter-subjective meeting. But not only in the sense of it not being accurate to request proof of what they have said, but also that much of what is said and will be said pertains to this unknown that consciousness excludes.

The declaration of sincerity is also, according to experts, completely bereft of the “ability to discriminate between true and false statements” (Masip, Alonso y Herrero 2006, p. 483). If the word makes the meaning ambiguous, including the real meaning, it would be expected that there would be indicators and signs beyond articulated discourse that could give the subject away. Power, in its technified infatuation, believes it has the ability to distinguish truth or lies in some behavioral detail, in some physiological reaction linked to the anxiety of the suspect. It is true that, as Freud demonstrated, the truth can slip out in a parapraxis, but as part of the formation of the unconscious, like something that escapes the dominion and control of the ego. The truth creeps out despite the will and intentionality, and lies appear in the supreme pretention to tell the truth. For this reason experts in this field of psychology have admitted that lies, and therefore the truth, lack indicators, revelatory signs, and conclusively suggest that: “it is preferable to base our judgments on the credibility of the verbal content of the statement rather than base them on the non-verbal behavior of the source” (Masip, Alonso y Herrero 2006, p. 499). But if a trial is based on belief or credibility, it is also exposed to the operations of denial, to the phantasmatic effects of the censure of knowledge. So at this point shouldn't we just ask ourselves what the subject believes they know, what they say they know and the reserve of magic, mystification, and illusion that permeate our belief systems and lead us to always bias what we hear, whether we are analysts or alleged experts in the psychology of law? From the point of view of psychoanalysis, if the subject does not know what they are saying or from where they are saying it, subject to the *Spaltung* that constitutes it, then there also exists a long road that legal psychology has already traveled without recognizing this divided subject as capable of subverting its evaluative presumptions, formal declarations and compulsion to lie.

As in all psychology, legal psychology denies the subject is divided, affirms its knowledge of the subject and confirms its illusory unity. This functioning of psychology in general, and specifically of legal psychology, does not seem to agree with the representation of psychology found among students taking the survey. A considerable minority (1%) believes that psychology should “help people” to “repress when repression is required,” to obey the rules” (3%) and to “respect authority” (4%). We could affirm that a considerable majority reject a psychology that serves as an instance of law, an instance of submission, a repressive instance to be precise. The majority do not agree with the control functions assigned to psychology. However, a high percentage (37%) establish the importance of psychology “to help people better adapt,” which could imply a position that submits to the criteria of adaptation determined by regulations and authority.

The results of the survey reveal a contradictory subjectivity indicating a subjectivity built by the *Spaltung* of the unconscious. The psychology for submission to authority is questionable, objectionable, but does not necessarily mean that psychology can serve “to offer resistance to power” (4%). The psychology studied is criticized (20%) as it may “be a party to the system and subordinate to economic interests”, but it is not recognized as something that permits the questioning of and resistance to power. Consequently, psychology is divided, Split, perhaps reflecting the subjectivity in play: *useful to power, not very useful in resisting it*. On the other hand, it is useful in preventing a Split in the balance of the individual (48%) and their self-esteem (47%), for their social performance, for their self-knowledge (42%) and to defend their convictions (40%). It therefore offers a perspective of egocentric value in psychology.

It is necessary to challenge the above perspective with the slight possibility that psychology questions its own certainties. In effect, few students (4%) believe psychology serves to generate mistrust of one's own certainties. For many it serves to improve self-esteem, strengthen their convictions, better defend their ego, but has little use for stimulating doubt about certainties, for establishing a split within the ego. This validates and revalidates a psychology that is an agent of individualist narcissism. In their support of a psychology that serves their own convictions, that is in agreement with their own certainties and allows them to continue trusting them, students fail to realize they are perpetuating an ideological scheme of dominant power which is what occurs, in our opinion, when authority is moved to the center of the ego.

Among the students surveyed, psychology as a weapon of repressive authority can be rejected, but not the psychology that places the authority of certainties in the ego. This scientific ideal of psychology leaves the Other immune, in the Lacanian sense of the place of the symbolic code, in the interests of an indivisible Ego that does not suspect it exercises the power of repressive authority or that it acts as its deputy. Isn't this also one of the possible goals of legal psychology?

### **Zapatista critical psychology: against racist, macho and normalizing psychology**

The final potentiality for critical-psychological work to be offered here is the project of a Zapatista critical psychology. This project is derived from the general conviction that academics in different fields of the human sciences, including psychology and in particular critical psychology, can learn a lot from social and political movements as long as these are not reduced to simple objects of study and reflection but are accepted as collective subjects that are as studious and reflective as we are. This requires their inclusion in our discussions, the adopting of a position for or against them, establishing a relationship with them similar to the relationships we have established with other currents and schools of thought, taking an interest in the theories they develop and not only their practices, and treating them seriously as participants and generators of ideas we can adopt, follow, question or refute. It is precisely in this way that we intend to treat the Zapatista Army of National Liberation (EZLN) when we propose a Zapatista critical psychology.

The Zapatista critical psychology we propose is no more than our way of making explicit and systematizing critical interventions of a psychological nature detected in messages, communiqués and other discursive blocks issued by Subcomandante Marcos and other EZLN members between January 1994 and December 2003. It is therefore necessary to analyze this discourse to obtain what we accept, propose and understand as a Zapatista critical psychology. If we refer here to a *Zapatista critical psychology*, this is due to the way Zapatistas themselves discuss, question and criticize, always in psychological terms, everything that refers us to the dominant psychology that apparently underpins the system challenged by the EZLN. This dominant psychology is not a simple and unitary ideological product, but a complex and varied ideology with multiple and irreducible ramifications. Of these, we present here three profane and spontaneous psychologies that are closely linked and impregnate Mexican culture. These serve to guide the decisions and actions of *the powerful* and other enemies of the EZLN while the criticism of these by Zapatistas reminds us of other criticisms encountered in the history of critical psychology in Mexico as well as certain responses of psychology students who participated in our survey:

- Against racist psychology.* The EZLN complains of the racist representation of indigenous people in which they are portrayed as essentially being: not significant, but “small” (EZLN, 1994-2005, 09.03.01); not adult, but “eternal children” (17.05.94); not citizens, but “citizens in training” (22.09.94). As *citizens in training*, indigenous people lack the ability to understand the concept of *Nation*” (22.09.94). Unfortunately, for racist psychology indigenous people always lack this ability since they are “unable to look” to the “future” that would unite them to “the Nation” (22.09.94). Forced to “look to their past” that “separates” them from the “Nation” (22.09.94), indigenous people will always be *citizens in training*. Indigenous people will always be *in training*, will never cease to be *small*, and for this reason they are considered *eternal children*. For a racist psychology that here excludes the genetic factor, the infancy of indigenous people is eternal, they do not develop. As a result, “in the minds of the powerful, the more indigenous people that disappear, the more the country develops” (26.02.01). The country should develop without indigenous people, or despite them, or against them, since from this perspective indigenous people will always be underdeveloped, will always be backward, and will always be children. As a child, an indigenous person “is good if they obey and bad if they rebel” (10.04.95). As children and even worse than children, indigenous people lack “experience” and “skills”, are incapable of “getting organized” and “determining their own destiny”, and for these reasons they cannot rise up in revolt of their own accord and need to be “manipulated” into doing so, “manipulated” by non-indigenous people, “by bishop Samuel Ruiz” or by “Subcomandante Marcos” (21.04.95). In this racist psychology, non-indigenous people are those that can manipulate, while indigenous people can only be manipulated. In general it is non-indigenous people who act while indigenous people can only endure, not act. From this same perspective, it is indigenous people who were “discovered”, as if indigenous people “were static” and the others “were the ones who moved” (09.03.01). This ethnocentric perception is just one of the many that serve to denigrate indigenous people and are added to racist representations of them as people and of their culture. As part of this representation, the “stories” of indigenous people are “myths,” their “doctrines are legends,” their “beliefs are superstitions,” their “science is magic,” their “art is craft,” their “language is dialect,” their “movement is to drag themselves along” (09.03.01). This representation of indigenous people logically determines the relationship of non-indigenous people with indigenous people: to look at them is to “look into the past or look down”; acknowledgement by them is to “acknowledge superiors”; to see them is to “see them subdued” (09.03.01). This is the way indigenous people *are seen to be treated* in the racist psychology of non-indigenous people, of “whites” or “foreigners,” which may be either physical or psychic treatment, when they “have brown skin but white arrogance” (12.10.94), “deny the color of their skin, are ashamed of their past and use the word ‘Indian’ as an insult and disqualification” (02.10.94).
- Against macho psychology.* Just like indigenous people who may be scorned by indigenous people themselves and not just non-indigenous people, women are often “scorned” by themselves or by “the mother, sister, friend, the other” and not only by men, “the father, brother, boyfriend, friend, lover, husband, son, superior or subordinate” (EZLN, 1994-2005, 22.03.01). Whether feminine or masculine, all of these are “faces” that “assume” the “power” exercised over women through “scorn”, but also via “harassment” (22.03.01). Harassment and scorn, as means of exercising power, characterize the dominant macho philosophy criticized by the Zapatistas. This psychology, shared by men and women, “makes man the hunter and woman a rival,” without “understanding that the rival is not a rival but a person,” and that “the prey is not a prey but a person” (22.03.01). This same *depersonalizing psychology* “classifies”

women as “things,” reduces woman to an “object of pleasure, of mockery and of scorn” (22.03.01), or assigns her a “position of filigree, an ornament on the executive desk” (22.09.94). As an “ornament”, woman is “valued for how she looks, not for what she is” (22.03.01), and she can also be placed in the “corner” that “has been built for her”, that “they want to force her to inhabit” and which “offers everything necessary for her to wear the face that power desires and scorns” (22.03.01). But this face is not the same for all social classes. In “upper class Mexico”, for example, women can come to play the role of “administrator of family wellbeing,” while in “middle Mexico the ancient cycle of daughter-girlfriend-wife and/or lover-mother continues” (22.09.94). In any case, women are enclosed in “a microcosmos where men dominate and make the decisions” (22.09.94).

- *Against normalizing psychology.* Racist psychology and psychology that scorns women can be considered the ethnocentric and androcentric ramifications of a dominant psychology that attempts to *normalize* “indigenous people, women, homosexuals, lesbians, people of color, immigrants, workers, peasants” (EZLN, 1994-2005, 01.01.96), “Muslims, old people, the maladjusted” (03.2003), “the majorities that occupy the basements of the world” and that “appear to power as expendable minorities” (01.01.96). If these people are perceived as minorities and expendable, this is because they are “other” and “different” (26.10.99). Now, due to their alterity and difference, majorities are not only reduced to the condition of expendable minorities, but are “condemned” to “indifference, cynicism or hypocrisy” (03.2003), or even “persecuted, scorned, beaten, jailed, disappeared” by “the Power and its terms” (26.10.99). This is how, for example, Power and its terms, the terms *Masculinity* and *Heterosexuality*, force “homosexuals, lesbians, transgenders and bisexuals” to hide, even hide “from themselves,” “hide their difference” and “suffer in silence persecution, scorn, humiliation, extortion, blackmail, insults” (27.06.99). In all of this suffering, “the different must tolerate their humanity being reduced for the simple fact that they do not conform to a non-existent sexual normality, feigned and converted into a flag of intolerance and segregation” (27.06.99). When you force yourself to *be normal*, “normality becomes a daily prison,” but when you dare to challenge normalizing power, the “hypocritical normality that is power becomes a crime of sexual preference, and like criminals men who love men, women who love women, the other who builds love with the other are persecuted” (22.03.01). In this case, as in so many others, the “crime is being different and taking pride in this difference” (26.10.99). In effect, alterity and difference constitute crimes for a normalizing psychology that seeks precisely to ensure not “that we are all the same, but that we all try to be the same as a model” that is “constructed by whoever is in Power” (03.2003). Even if “the Power” is tortured by diverse “complexes and ghosts” that “have many names and many faces,” there is among them “a common denominator: *the other*,” the “different that not only depends on the ‘ego’ of Power, but also its own history and splendor” (05.2003). What appears before the ego as a “hated mirror” is “the face of the ‘other,’ its culture,” since “that is where difference is” (05.2005). This cultural difference is what cannot be tolerated in the normalizing psychology inherent to “neoliberalism at the beginning of the 21st century,” for which “the only culture is the dominant culture” (01.2003). And since the dominant culture today is money, “the mandate is that all colors are to use make-up to show the faded color of money, or that they dress their polychromy only in the darkness of shame” (03.2003). The dilemma is: “make-up or the closet” (03.2003). These are the only options available to the “maladjusted” and “all the names assumed by the others in any part of the world” (03.2003). All of them must submit to the “Project of globalization: make the planet a new Tower of Babel” that will be “homogenous in its way of thinking, its culture and its behavior” (03.2003).

The criticism of racist, macho and normalizing psychological cultures offered by the EZLN is closely linked to certain alternative, critical and radical positions identified in the history of Mexican psychology and among psychology students who participated in our survey. In the tradition inaugurated by the position of Bartolomé de Las Casas against the discriminatory and ethnocentric psychology of Ginés de Sepúlveda, we find the Zapatista criticism of a racist psychological culture which at times corresponds to the perspective of students who criticize psychology for its lack of relevance to the real problems of Mexicans (61%), its failure to adapt to Mexican culture (41%) and its ignorance or concealment of cultural variables (13%). With regard to the Zapatista criticism of macho psychological culture, it also demonstrates a previously encountered sensitivity: on the one hand, among those students surveyed who criticized psychology for its ignorance and or concealing of the gender variable (7%); and on the other, in the feminist psychology that is only just managing to establish itself in the field of Mexican psychology. This feminist psychology, and in general the constellation of feminist, affirmative, lesbian, gay, transexual and queer psychologies, is also closely linked to the Zapatista criticism of a normalizing psychological culture which simultaneously makes us think of those students surveyed for whom psychology should *not* be used to ensure normal behavior (92%), better functioning in society (56%), or acceptance of one's place in society (72%), but for the defense of convictions (40%), changing the environment (25%) and resisting power (5%).

### Conclusion

As we have seen, the criticism of racist, macho and normalizing psychological cultures by the EZLN has clear historical precedents in Mexican psychology. Neither is this criticism unrelated to the concerns expressed by psychology students. We could also say the same for the other two potentialities for critical-psychological work considered in our research and personal reflections. On the one hand, in criticisms of legal psychology we discovered the concern of students for psychology's complicity with the system (20%) while on the other hand, in the criticism of the patriarchal ideology that permeates psychology we again find the same concern for its complicity with the system, as well as the worry of students caused by the fact that psychology ignores or conceals the gender variable (7%).

In addition to expressing concerns similar to those of an important section of the student group, our proposals for critical-psychological work are related to certain alternative, critical and radical positions identified in the history of Mexican psychology. In the case of Zapatista critical psychology, we have already indicated its clear relation to egalitarian and theoretical-reflexive, openly situated, militant and committed psychologies. These same theoretical-reflexive psychologies would seem to precede our proposals for criticism of patriarchal psychological ideology and current legal psychology which also share a close relationship with the political psychology of the unconscious.

We can see that certain alternative, critical and radical positions in the history of Mexican psychology reappear in our proposals for critical-psychological work, as well as in the critical concerns expressed by psychology students. While we perceive a certain continuity between the realities and possibilities explored in this article, in the context of this same continuity we have also seen certain significant discontinuities. There is something new and innovative in the critical concerns of psychology students and in the potentialities for critical-psychological work resulting from our research and personal reflections. Until now, in the history of Mexican psychology there has been no serious criticism of, for example, either legal psychology or patriarchal psychological ideology, and neither has a critical psychology been

developed from the discourse of a subversive group such as the EZLN. These potentialities and many more, including some arising from student concerns, offer a promising horizon for the future of Mexican critical psychology.

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