

AGAINST NORMALITY: THREE STORIES ABOUT CHILDREN, MONSTERS AND NEOLIBERALISM

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The experience of psychologists can be very delicate when psychology is part of the solution that neoliberal policies propose. A system which aims to privatize and individualize puts Psychology and psychologists under the beliefs that there are not alternatives or choices. This article aims to understand the role of psychologists and researchers who work with children and how normality takes different faces under the threats of neoliberalism in the voucher Chilean educational system, through the adult view in my experience as researcher in schools and under totalitarian regime from the side of my childhood understanding. Through a reflection on the place of silence and what is not said, appears the figure of the monster, commonly used to understand the impossible. I finish trying to situate the role of the psychologist as a guide to give space to the monstrosity that inhabits in us under the totalitarian regime of neoliberalism.

Introduction

This article tries to give (me) some understanding about my work as a critical psychologist, who has been working in research for some years, specifically through Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). My field has been Education and children; in particular what children say about their education and their learning at school. Still deeply amazes me how we, people who went voluntarily to schools or other educational institutions (myself representing the worst case, making University and academia a big part of my life), understand (or not) how the institutions make us part of a system that we tend to embrace but at the same time fiercely reject. A system where we can find many ways of abuse, in forms, among thousands, of excessive pressure, abuse against women, or explicit violence, specially against children or LGTB people. Try to understand what is *normal* and how normality is -sometimes- just normalized abusive regulations between people has been part of my work, researching what children think about learning and how much they are aware about the influence of their social backgrounds in their school achievement and how neoliberal policies have influenced on this matter.

I would like to tackle this issue through three main points: first, a reflection upon some public policies on children's issues in this case *Attentional Deficit Hyperactive Disorder* (ADHD), due Chile is next to USA the country with the higher prevalence of the disorder. This system has been seen as an experiment, which right wing governments of developed countries usually menace to install. Second, I am going to analyze some of my experiences working with children as a researcher, because I firmly believe working with children as a researcher and not as a psychologist or a teacher or other traditional grown up positions, give an odd point of view of children but also about being an adult. I finalize with a short autobiographical recount of being a girl raised during a dictatorship,

where normality was mandatory. I have been thinking about my own experience in a systematic way due I participated, as a subject, in a big research which collected data from people, who, like me, lived under Pinochet Dictatorship when we were children¹.

Neoliberal State, Psychology and Children: normal is cheap.

Amid my worries about children and institutions, ADHD has been in a central part of my research. To understand this, I first worked through teachers and patients' discourses, then through an analysis of the diagnosis discourses and practices. I also worked doing CDA with some educational public policies around the subject; and currently, I am trying to understand the big part the disorder had, building the private practice of children psychology in Chile during the 80's. That historical approach has been useful to understand the role of children's disorders, an also as a way to control women as mothers, due most of the disorders always open a window about the responsibilities of the breeding -always a feminine task- as a possible cause of the problem. In the other hand, we can see in that analysis how the families became the main place for children and childhood, taking the place of the state. In this particular analysis I would like to show how ADHD is just a part of a bigger system, where psychologists has some part to play in the bigger picture of neoliberalism policies. Neoliberalism is a real political expression of the accumulation of capital. It uses policies, discourses and practices that validate it as ideology.

In 1980 the Chilean military government introduced choice in education as part of a neoliberal reform. The cornerstone of the reform was the implementation of a flat voucher system, which can be used both in public and private schools. Currently, 92% of the Chilean students use vouchers (Elacqua et al., 2011). The Chilean experience has been studied as a *natural* laboratory of choice at a national scale an conclusions are not encouraging. The voucher system has not improved students' performance on standardized tests, repetition rates or years of schooling. Furthermore, it has generated "cream-skimming" due to an increase in sorting. The final result is segregation (Hsieh and Urquiola, 2003). So, in Chile you can live a life in which, if you are a wealthy person, never ever see a working class fellow Chilean. The segregation is so powerful that a person can be born in a private hospital, go to a private nursery, then to a private school and then to a private university, to finally work in the private sector and get married with some of their neighbours. It is possible too to do that without moving a couple of kilometres around: segregation is geographically too. Same if they are poor, except because everything, specially educational system is *worse*, with teachers with low incomes, bad hours, being in charge of other necessities of their students than education, like food, clothing, or problems arising from drug consumption in broken communities.

The structure of the voucher plan has suffered just three important changes in thirty years. During the nineties, the democratic government allowed private voucher schools to charge parents a fee. The system was called "shared financing" and it was popular among private

¹ I have to thank my colleague at Universidad Diego Portales, Patricia Castillo who created and directed the project "Childhood under Dictatorship".

voucher schools: currently half of them charge a monthly fee. This policy caused only more segregation, because schools selected their students based on their parents' ability to pay (Elacqua, 2011). This system was terminated 2016 with a new bill. The schools had to choose to stay with the voucher or go completely private. Most of the schools chose to eliminate the fee and keep the voucher system, because obviously, the market can be tricky, and a market where the state has a good share of the cake, is always safer. We still do not know the outcome of this change, because only started 2017.

A second amend was implemented in 2008, when the Congress passed an adjusted voucher bill (*Ley de Subvención Escolar Preferencial*, SEP). It increased the amount of the voucher for students who are considered "vulnerable" due to their socioeconomic background. In other words, the SEP voucher takes into account that it is more difficult and more expensive to educate students from low socioeconomic status. The financial support goes for "projects" that schools made looking at their necessities. Many times the projects are having a psychologist working at the school, with the hope that she or he could transform the old and rusty school relationships, from a functionalist perspective. The SEP bill does not change the essence of the voucher system, as we can see. Also, other question in another level is if the adjusted voucher changed or potentially can change the system performance in terms of efficiency, equity and social cohesion. Until now, the answer seems to be no.

In 2010, during first Michelle Bachelet term, a new finance law was implemented, called *Decreto 170* or "differentiated grant", which follows the same principles of the SEP bill: Increasing the subsidy for those children who have *a problem* that prevents them from continuing their education in a "normal" way and, therefore, require special financial support, which will result in the hiring of special education teachers and psychologists who take charge to support the education of these problematic cases. To benefit the schools, children must be diagnosed and the diagnosis should be performed by a physician, tripling the grant over that of an *undiagnosed* child. A student who has special educational needs under the law is one that requires additional help and resources, whether human, material or pedagogical, to drive their development and learning, and contribute to achieving the goals of education. The extra money the schools get because this grant, should go to projects which improve the learning conditions for the problematic children. Every school design their own project, sometimes hiring the help from private agencies called ATE, and in my opinion, I have not seen a really innovative way to tackle the learning difficulties of the children. It cannot be easy to do that: for example standardized tests do not stop running for the children who belong to the program, therefore many times the interventions are oriented to improve their performance in specific areas related to those tests.

At the current moment, there is not an official evaluation of the outcomes of the *Decreto 170*, nor from the Ministry of Education or Ministry of Health (two of the stakeholders of the original project in 2010). Nonetheless, there is a small research in Valparaiso through the enrollment data in the called "integration schools" (those which work with children with special educational needs). In this specific city, the third diagnosis from *Decreto 170* is ADHD, just bellow "Specific Language Impairment" and "Specific Learning Disorders". Also, the researchers say

after the *Decreto 170* was established, the enrollment of children with special educational needs is managed by municipality² increased for the first time in the last 20 years, while the schools managed by privates remained the same (Torres, 2013).

In the other hand, the *medicalization* issue is also a preoccupation. The International Narcotic Control Board (INCB) placed Chile into the top ten countries in the world for consumption of methylphenidate, with a state demand of 400.000 grams in 2013 (Rojas et al, 2017). This places methylphenidate as the second highest procured psychotropic substance by the Chilean government³. The use of methylphenidate is part of the treatment recommended by the Health Ministry for children between 5 and 15 years old (Ministerio de Salud Gobierno de Chile, 2005, 2008). Even though there are many organizations against children medicalization, some of them seriously intends to put medicalization as a problem of power imbalance between institution, disciplines and subjects; this is still a delicate issue to work in an organized way because anti - medicalization movements are, sometimes, radicalized forms of an essentialist point of view about what children should be (for example children as a natural being who should not be polluted by chemicals or children as an easy target of external influence, a subject without any agency or capability of response) and not necessarily points of view that can tackle the abuse of power, so the entanglement sometimes only grows.

Those are just some of the numbers and facts related with ADHD in Chile. ADHD is a popular diagnosis in spite of its very evident failures, for example, the gender gap towards boys⁴, or the DSM IV and DSM V hyperkinesia as a mental sign, and the adult-centred and *long-distance* diagnosis, due doctors can diagnose the condition without the presence of the patient (Peña et al. 2015). ADHD it is, as well, a very alive discourse about what children should be, the expectations about being a grown up and what learning is. ADHD is the reverse of the story of infantile normality, strongly based on the discourse that considers children always as a part of a dyad with the adult, where both parts are not equivalent. Everything related to the disorder has to do with expectations about the child's behaviour and adult authority. That is why the symptoms are an inventory of bad behaviours at school that are not explained by the lack of learning ability but by something else. But ADHD is not only the cause but also the *justification* for misbehaviour⁵, there is a discursive continuum in the analysis of the "problem child" from the bad boy or the little monster to a child with behavioural difficulties and other more sophisticated ways of maintaining the feeling of normality and control setting boundaries, new and more objectives

² The Municipio is the unity in charge of education since 1980 and represents the state in the educational system. They had to act exactly the same as a private entrepreneur, without the possibility of charge any fee to parents.

³ Phenobarbital is the drug most bought by the state. It is used as a hypnotic and for the treatment of epilepsy. The state declared a necessary demand for domestic consumption of 1,500,000 grams for 2013 (The International Narcotic Control Board, 2013 en Rojas et al, 2017).

⁴ The diagnostic ratio is 3 boys for 1 girl, except in Chile and Israel where is 50/50 (Rojas et al. 2017).

⁵ This can be seen in Chilean women's magazines of the 1980s, we have been researching through CDA during 2016, a work in process of publication.

and specialized, new disciplinary boundaries, for example, with the neurologically diverted child.

In this schematic way to see children, learning is a goal, and end, almost a thing of physical borders. Learning, since this point of view, happens in the head, and it opens its way through the eyes. Thus, when learning fails, the cause is the student head. This surprises me every time, because even though this view of learning is shared for the educational institutions as a whole, and is completely lineal and static, and there are some moments we can recognize outside the children's heads, in the process, from the teacher to the "neural" final moment. Always is about children incapability. I have been trying to change this point of view, especially in children, since I did my first own research on the subject with 10 years old boys and girls from different social class schools. All the children thought learning was a very individual issue, capacities were inherited mostly, so the school and the teachers were practically useless.

Why children thought in this way? Several reasons, but we cannot ignore that Chilean system is financed *through* children, financing a school is through the 1 + 1 and not about the educational community, it is about counting the bodies, one by one. Normal children are cheap, and normality keeps in the budget the educational system. Chilean *Concertación* (an Anthony Giddens "Third way" of socialism) decided not to change even a point of the neoliberal system in education, only make it *more perfect*, how they put their political decision rhetorically. How? not normal children are, all of the sudden, the ones with bigger *vouchers*. Is this an affirmative action policy? Logically, no, because there is not a narrative about a community or about their necessities: this grant is made not for schools, but for the owners of the schools who need to keep their schools in the competition, through the scores of standardized tests. So, this enhanced grant for children with "special needs" goes to school, and this is the part I think it is one of the most perverted: much of this money goes to psychologists who work with these children, making them "better learners" but also they work producing more diagnosis to maintain the grants for the schools.

As a result, what we have is many young psychologists who are happy and enthusiastic to work in schools with children, but they have to play this other role as "diagnostics devices" to keep the money flowing. Many of them lasts just a year or two due the low income and the stress of playing such difficult role. We call those "psychologist PIE", the name of this program. In some of the schools are educational psychologist working along with them, but they seldom work together. Actually, I do a lot of supervision with educational psychologist whom describe PIE psychologists as "box psychologists" (same word and same implications in English and Spanish). Boxing all day must be completely exhausting, so many of the PIE psychologists do educational psychology in secret, but in this kind of system you must report numbers, so in order not to be caught, they do very interesting things like making the diagnosis explaining that is just a fiction, or they change diagnosis with a high negative social impact like cognitive impairment, which means less support and future possibilities, for something less destructive in children's lives like ADHD. Some professionals are critical of medical treatment and allow some resistances in children and their families, like reject it and/or taking alternative medicines. The traditional unethical

behaviour is the ethical thing to do, opting sometimes for the less evil thing to do, moving boundaries under the covers and making children worthwhile in different senses than financially. Sadly, still many of the *box psychologist* are too disciplined disciplining.

Children in the classroom: prodigies and monsters.

A few years ago, I was in a school in the Chilean countryside, in an idyllic vineyard town 400 km south of Santiago. I had an appointment to interview some of the teachers. The headmaster decided I should interview the older teachers of the school (and I heeded as usually do in this cases). Then, I had an interview with a woman in her 50's, a "Religion" teacher⁶. I called her "Mrs. *Beige*" in my field notes, because obviously, she was wearing a completely beige outfit, but also because she has some kind of a beige attitude: soft but utterly strict. At the end of the interview, she had discovered that I am a psychologist, issue that I tend to keep for myself when I do fieldwork. She asked me to accompany her to her classroom, because she needed me to see the children: "They are monsters", she said. "Monsters?" I said, with a smile. "Yes, monsters", she said, exactly the same way in which a horror film starts. I walked behind her, and outside the teacher's room there were 5 or 6 girls waiting for her, worried because Mrs. Beige was a little late in starting her class. "Look at them", she said. "But, they don't look like monsters" I said. "But they are, they are starting to have boyfriends".

That chit chatting after the "real" interview opened my eyes to something I had normalized despite my efforts to think the ways adults see children: the discourses about children around the monstrosity but also about the prodigious⁷. The monster has been a figure present in different cultures. Even in the western worlds it had its part to explain what is not legible. For example, Foucault analyze this figure twice: first at "The words and the things" and the in "The abnormal". Foucault understood the monster in two ways, depending on the knowledge/power economies: a natural monster that appears in the taxonomic kingdom, and a moral monster part of a legal world (Nuzzo, 2013). For Nuzzo both Foucauldian monsters "are linguistic and cultural constructions that produce crisis, mixing up the scheme of identity and difference, as well as the unity of signified and signifying" (p.61). Children as monsters is a different perspective, more than the classic "angel versus demon" discourses that give an account of the traditional taxonomic view of things, where they are one thing or another, where the ambivalence prevails over the ambiguity. The monster is more a hybrid figure, half human, half animal, like these children, a half girl half

⁶ All Chilean school must have a "religion course" but is not mandatory to assist. We Chileans as mostly in all Latin Americans countries have an ambivalent relationship with religions. Catholicism was the hegemonic force for centuries, and still is among the elites. But protestants is rising very fast among working class people. They are a big force in rural communities also. Nonetheless, they are very similar to Catholics: stand against women's rights and have built a financial empire with deep connections with political power.

⁷ In English "monster" and "prodigies" mean the same. In Spanish they have different meaning, one is negative, the other completely positive, but in both cases is a rare phenomenon, hard to witness.

woman, a half civilized half barbarian, a living thing which terrorizes but at the same time, fascinates us⁸.

Foucault, in “*Les mots et les choses*” (1966) quotes at the very beginning of the book, the Argentinean writer Jorge Luis Borges, and his book «The Chinese emperor». Borges was obsessed with odd taxonomic logics and he played a great role as an artist putting them in the fantastic interstices of his worlds. Maybe helped that Latin Americans live among monsters; we live through different kind of hybridizations: language, religion, skin colour, nationality, history. A monster could be a remain o many rests of reality, rests of the reality kingdom which has a knowledge function: to explain the inexplicable or better, what it does not *want* to be explained. Not everything should be explained, but the western world has been built on explanations. The taxonomical logics of understanding the world are the expression of power, we know, the account made by the man almighty is the expression of the empire of a knowledge that leaves a violent wake and a legacy of ignorance in all the places that invade. A monster summarized many times and many names, many things that cannot always can be identified or named. Is the unknown and is the impossible to know, and the latter lives within us and we are slaves of that rest of unmentionable. Since western world knowledge is an issue of freedom, even freedom and knowledge can be named as the axes of the modern world, but, for other worlds freedom and knowledge are not necessarily related: all the contrary, they are opposites. The children's knowledge, for example, is a forbidden knowledge, a wisdom which is doomed to be repressed or understood as a rare phenomenon.

The next text is from a research conducted by other Chilean colleagues who were studying ADHD in schools. It is the fragment of a transcription of an interview with a teacher⁹. She said:

The kids, if you watch them, look at what they are (pause) attentive, do you notice? They take out the toys, they always take the toys, and if they don't have them, they take out... they play with a finger, they play or they start to play with a finger, I don't know, they play with the foot or the shoelace. The thing is incredible, is incredible (laughs) (teacher, sixth grade, school 1) (Ceardi et al., 2016)

That image of children mesmerized playing with their own body, with what the teacher was moved, more close to the fascination produced by a work of art, this sudden appreciation of the children conduct, similar, in a way, to a scientific recount of a primate experiment, the ecstatic look, not very common in a teacher, not very common in the school territory where the normality has domesticated the sight and the only exception is the scandalized alarm when things are different. The *primate* child that the teacher observes with fascination, and invites others to share the ecstatic sight, it is *demonstrating* which is one of the most important and naturalized functions of children: to be there for the others (monster, *monstrare*, to show). When this monster appears everything else

⁸ There is a deep and insightful analysis about the human foucauldian monster, specially from the sexualities point of view in Sharpe, Andrew (2007). Foucault 's Monsters, the abnormal individual and the challenge of English law. *Journal of Historical Sociology* (20)3, 384 - 403.

⁹ The text fragment was cut by the researchers.

disappears, everything else becomes a scenography which remarks this figure with no context. A child is that, with no history or other people around, condensing time and space¹⁰.

Normality, in (other) words, is to stick to the letter. The monstrous, however, is to get out of the letter and to see a different world, without categories, because the categories are impossible in a world that is not known. What children/monsters do is to show that categories not only do not work, as we already know, but what adults do to put them into Manichean categories that accommodate us, transforming adults and adulthood in the owner of the word. It is not possible to ignore the role of the powerful sage in which we transform when we put the other either in the category of monster, but fundamentally in the category of prodigy. To be the one who recognizes the prodigy is to be a prodigy in himself. Normality is the categories but also the demonstration of power and wisdom. Monstrosity is the resign to that false power and is the recognition of ignorance and openness, so is more an opportunity than a condemnation. What to do with these girls who are starting to be women? It is still a legitimate question because it is about life itself: sex, love and getting inexorably old.

Even though is pretty obvious that the election of certain categories talks more about who uses and applies them, I would like to reflect on the dangers of not being normal, in the dangers of being part of a category or none at all. For that I will use my own experience as a child in a totalitarian regime.

"Just look normal": living under the fear of state violence.

Normality, as a lived experience, can be understood as a simulacrum. I was born in April 1973. Pinochet's coup against Salvador Allende's "Unidad Popular" government was that same year, in September. Pinochet left the government in 1990, when I was beginning my last year in secondary school. Consequently, my life so far, still is a constant recount of that life. My family was not a *political* family, even though my dad always reminded us how "normal" was to talk about politics during lunch with his dad when he was my age. A "political family" during the Pinochet's regime, it would be any family who was outspoken about their opposition to the regime, which, as we know, was a very risky position: kidnapping, prison, torture or assassinations affected thousands and thousands of Chilean men, women and children. So, "not to talk openly" was a decision made by many Chileans, like my family, as a survival choice. We had to maintain the appearances which were, basically, not talk against the regime in public. I remember very clearly my mum telling me when I was 5 or 6 years old "don't talk about that with other people", when I said to her, laughing, that my friend from across the street told me her family called Pinochet "Pinocchio".

¹⁰ The monster also appears in Jacques Derrida work. The monster here is more a devise to work with the unnamed and the unimaginable. The monster is the radical way the future shows to us. As the author says: "The future can only be anticipated in the form of absolute danger. It is that which breaks absolutely with constituted normality and can only be presented as a sort of monstrosity" (Derrida, 1997:5).

Being against the dictatorship for me was not talk about that and never ever make put any good word on Pinochet or the regime. Never clap too loud when the military went to school with their band, or when the Headmistress talk positively about the regime at the school acts. The silence took the shape of resistance for some. Not to talk against but never talk in favour.

In that environment, to seem normal was completely mandatory. Body and soul, clothes and language, hair and behaviour. There was a system and the system was under constant vigilance, so people was always preoccupied with what they said or had done. Obviously, is very difficult and exhausting to live in a constant state of worry. So, we also had a system to live normally, the normal you can be, in a violent and also a very poor country.

My family was a middle-class family, so we did not struggle with money issues like the vast majority. We, the children, went to school and learnt about Chilean history until 1973 (I remember one of my school books which finished Chilean history at that point with a draw of a young Pinochet and the word "LIBERTAD" below him.) But I also remember we used to play a lot in the streets, and watch *telly* when we were back home. We had one channel, controlled by the state. The telly showed to us a very normal, calm country, with many people who loved the president and some bad guys, "the extremist", who wanted to destroy all the good and the beautiful, like in the western films. Watching civilian police in operations in broad daylight, wearing their weapons, fighting the bad guys, was a common thing in the news. Of course we did not believe those demonstrations, but also we accepted that violence in our houses' living rooms with the docility that people show when they watch films where hundreds of people die in a blink. That was my normality. Being normal, in a way, was also opposite to being subnormal and specially for being different. I believe this was the most difficult part for me, for example try to be discrete about my taste for British music and androgynous aesthetics, being a silent fan of those problematic foreign lads and soon after, of our own problematic lads. I am not talking about being a fan of the obvious choice against the regime, the openly political music, the protest songs, which are a very old Latino tradition. I was more onto Annie Lenox boyish look and Boy George pretty girly face. But I know that if I talked openly about that I would gain trouble with *everybody*. So, being normal in a mandatory normal world makes you overreact and embrace normality attacking what it is different, or in my case, keep quiet and go on. Under totalitarian regimes, other possibilities are not only unaccepted, they are supposedly inexistent. So, all we have was silence, and in the other hand the existence of other possibilities, both to overcome alienation.

Therefore, I always have been very suspicious about normality, because I lived in a country where we were obligated to be normal children, in normal families, otherwise we could be the suspect under a violent regime. The energy we spent keeping that charade up I believe affected me very deeply. I fought then, in my young years, trying to come to terms with my obliterated rebellion and the new freedom I (we) had. In my case, for the first time as a young person, but also as a citizen. To the children of the dictatorship our destiny was twisted and we found ourselves with some of the childhood rituals short-circuited by violence and death. We were not *invited by the adults to the culture*, as the place of

the childhood Hannah Arendt describes in her work from 1954 "The crisis of education", but we went, together with our parents, forced, naked and scared, to stand in front of the barbarism. There was no one there to greet us. The adults were also children who faced this world that did not bring any explanations. Then, it was clear that normality never was ours, all the contrary, always was imposed.

I think that is why memory is important not only today, in the current times, to remember and do not let to happen again another genocide, but, at that very same time, because the memories brought back then by our parents gave us a counterpart of a nostalgic difference, that allowed them consoling their selves and us, the children, helping us to understand that the life we had was *not normal* no matter how it seemed. Not only the dead were stalking us, but we lived with the constant violence, the stupid morals, the celebration of ignorance, the permanent censorship that operated in the media an also in everyday lives. Everything in our lives was a consequence of fear, our fear but especially theirs. It had to do with fear. And if you were not afraid you had to learn to be so, because fear was also the source of our survival.

Ending

Totalitarian regimes are not only open dictatorships. Neoliberal regimes are totalitarian in name of the market and profit. Any other possibility is unthinkable. Even though people act together, neoliberal systems quickly transform resistances in their own discourses. For example, in Chile thousands of people have been protesting for the last 7 years for free University education. Chilean education is paid bay students, through their families or private bank loans. 2 years ago, as a solution to people's demands, socialist government proposed "gratuity", which is another form of subsidy for Universities. The condition to be part of this new system is being a low class student with good educational outcomes. Some of the students where against this system because its structure is the same of a loan: They do not go directly to universities, they go to the students who can decide which university they go, like the voucher. Also, is difficult to decide how poor students should be to be part of the gratuity, then, there is a technical decision which can be very unfair for many students. Even though this institutions should accomplish some conditions as some quality standards, research, and any kind of participative government, the system is far away to be a higher educational system, as a whole, with educational principles, thought as a view of what we Chileans as a country, nation and state want for the future of our young people, our culture or even our economy. Thus, we can see how neoliberal state can see opportunities to grow and develop their aims in every problem, in every system crack, even in every people's demands.

A critical position is being aware of how some solutions are just settlements without a firm view about subjects and institutions, strategies or smaller policies without ethical positions. In the other hand, being critical is also being aware but this time of the system small interstices where we can work. This is also an ethical position, to look for possibilities, not the one or the other: a new different one.

But, as we have seen, we should not surrender to the lack of alternatives. To believe that it is one of the aims of neoliberalism and any totalitarian

regime. But the alternatives not always are the obvious ones, we should look further than binarism. We should work with the matter we have. *Hybridization*, for García Canclini (2000) has been a concept useful for post colonial studies, but I use this concept fundamentally to talk about resistances, specifically resistances at school. How, sometimes, resistance is also a hybrid product of what we think, what we want and what we can do, with the very matter of what we criticized. Hybridization it is a better concept than heterogeneity because it is more about coexistence than mixtures. Politically speaking, hybridization is more closer to dissent than consensus, it is the coexistence of difference - sometimes uncomfortable- but generally more honest and more fertile than the superficial consensus of perspectives.

Why I do not declare (I do not say the contrary, although) that I am a Psychologist while I am doing fieldwork? Maybe because psychology, the discipline, it is sometimes invasive and some people tend to be afraid of psychologists. Also because I learnt very early to keep quiet in order to not disrupt in order to do what I want to do. Also because I do not want to draw boundaries even though my profession is about that. How to overcome the menace of being the lieutenant of the Other, the vigilant front woman of the rules, is a question we should be able to make to ourselves. How to work within the rules but not for them is a question we sometimes need to answer under totalitarian regimes. This is also the very matter of the collaborative work with colleagues, patients, students or any other member of our communities. Breaking the rules should be a communitarian effort in order to protect ourselves from futile heroism. Neoliberalism loves heroes, likes the lonely efforts and the self improvements narratives exactly the same way that hates communities and collective efforts. Nevertheless, when I said that I was a psychologist the monsters appeared. Psychology can be a way to see the reality in its difference and subtleties. Can we psychologist work against normality and become guides in the search for the monsters to come, the monsters we are, the monsters that live in the classroom or the box? Can we work against normality and try to think always the impossibility more than the possibilities? Can we overcome the menaces and turn what threats onto us into new languages?

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