

COMMUNITY EXPERIENCES, SHARED UPBRINGING AND CARE POLICIES

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ABSTRACT. In this article, written in the context of the 2020-2021 pandemic and in compliance with the Preventive and Compulsory Social Isolation (ASPO), we analyze two community experiences related to the care of children and adolescents that take place in the provinces of Neuquén and Río Negro (Argentinian Patagonia). This analysis is the result of a qualitative study carried out from the perspective of Critical Social Psychology and Public Policy, in which we seek to recover the social knowledge that these community initiatives can contribute to the design and reformulation of public care policies. Specifically, the experiences we present here are the GAIA-Nueva Crianza Civil Association, made up of families of trans children and adolescents; and the Lazos Azules civil association, made up of families of children and adolescents with ASD (autism spectrum disorder). Although the two associations are very different from each other, they both coincide in being led by families who, after having listened and paid attention to the needs of their children, they organized collectively to make visible the reality of their children and adolescents by generating different actions. These actions tend not only to make effective the rights of children and adolescents, especially those linked to identity, education and health, but are also aimed at influencing public care policies at the local level, from what Boaventura de Sousa Santos calls the sociology of emergencies and from what Rita Segato designates amphibious feminine key politics.

Keywords: Public politics; childhood; adolescence.

EXPERIÊNCIAS COMUNITÁRIAS, POLÍTICAS COMPARTILHADAS DE PAIS E CUIDADOS

RESUMO. Neste artigo, escrito no contexto da pandemia 2020-2021 e no quadro do cumprimento do Isolamento Social Preventivo e Obrigatório (ASPO), analisamos duas experiências comunitárias relacionadas com o cuidado de crianças e adolescentes que ocorrem nas províncias de Neuquén e Río Negro (Patagônia Argentina). Esta análise é resultado de uma pesquisa qualitativa realizada na perspectiva da Psicologia Social Crítica e das Políticas Públicas, na qual buscamos resgatar o conhecimento social de que essas iniciativas comunitárias podem contribuir para o desenho e reformulação das políticas públicas de atenção. Especificamente, as experiências que aqui apresentamos são: a Associação Civil GAIA-Nueva Crianza, formada por famílias de crianças e adolescentes trans; e a Associação Civil Lazos Azules, formada por famílias de crianças e adolescentes com TEA (Transtorno do Espectro do Autismo). Embora as duas associações sejam muito diferentes entre si, ambas coincidem no fato de serem lideradas por famílias que, depois de ouvir e atentar para as necessidades dos filhos, se organizam coletivamente para tornar

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visível a realidade dos filhos. a / es e adolescentes gerando diferentes ações. Essas ações tendem não só a efetivar os direitos da criança e do adolescente, especialmente aqueles vinculados à identidade, educação e saúde, mas visam influenciar as políticas públicas de atenção em nível local a partir do que Boaventura de Sousa Santos denomina a sociologia das emergências e do que Rita Segato designa como feminilidade anfíbia chave de politicidade.

Palavras chaves: Políticas públicas; infância; adolescência.

EXPERIENCIAS COMUNITARIAS, CRIANZAS COMPARTIDAS Y POLÍTICAS DE CUIDADO

RESUMEN. En el presente artículo, escrito en el contexto de la pandemia 2020-2021 y en el marco del cumplimiento del Aislamiento Social Preventivo y Obligatorio (ASPO), analizamos dos experiencias comunitarias vinculadas al cuidado de las infancias y adolescencias que se desarrollan en las provincias de Neuquén y Río Negro (Patagonia Argentina). Dicho análisis es resultado de una investigación cualitativa realizada desde la perspectiva de la Psicología Social Crítica y las Políticas Públicas en la que buscamos recuperar los saberes sociales que estas iniciativas comunitarias pueden aportar al diseño y reformulación de las políticas públicas de cuidado. Específicamente, las experiencias que aquí presentamos son: la Asociación Civil GAIA-Nueva Crianza, conformada por familias de *niñes* y adolescentes trans; y la Asociación Civil Lazos Azules, integrada por familias de niños y adolescentes con TEA (Trastorno del Espectro Autista). Si bien las dos asociaciones son muy diferentes entre sí, ambas coinciden en estar protagonizadas por familias que, a partir de haber escuchado y prestado atención a las necesidades de sus hijo/a/es, se organizaron colectivamente para visibilizar la realidad de sus niño/a/es y adolescentes generando distintas acciones. Dichas acciones tienden no sólo a hacer efectivos los derechos de las infancias y adolescencias, especialmente aquellos vinculados a la identidad, la educación y la salud, sino que están orientadas a incidir en las políticas públicas de cuidado a nivel local desde lo que Boaventura de Sousa Santos denomina la sociología de las emergencias y desde lo que Rita Segato designa como una politicidad en clave femenina anfibia.

Palabras claves: Políticas públicas; infancia; adolescencia.

Introduction

In this article, written in the context of the 2020-2021 pandemic and in compliance with the Preventive and Compulsory Social Isolation (ASPO), we analyze two community experiences related to the care of children and adolescents developed in the provinces of Neuquén and Río Negro (Argentinean Patagonia). This analysis is the result of a qualitative study carried out from the perspective of Critical Social Psychology and Public Policy in which we seek to recover the social knowledge that these community initiatives can contribute to the design and reformulation of public care policies.²

² Although the writing of this text is individual, it should be clarified that, within the framework of the Research Collective that we are part of, the experiences presented have been worked on together with other members of the collective.

Specifically, the experiences presented here are the GAIA-Nueva Crianza (NC) civil association, formed by families of trans *niños* [children] and adolescents³, whose main objective is to make visible the existence of these children and adolescents; and the Lazos Azules (LA) civil association, formed by families of children and adolescents with ASD (autism spectrum disorder), whose main objective is to work for the social inclusion of people with ASD. Although the two associations are very different from each other, both coincide in being led by families who, after having listened and paid attention to the needs of their children, collectively organized to make visible the reality of their children and adolescents and to guarantee their care by generating different actions.

These actions tend not only to enforce the rights of children and adolescents, especially those related to identity, education, and health, but are also aimed at influencing public care policies at the local level from what Boaventura de Sousa Santos calls the sociology of emergencies and from what Rita Segato designates as an amphibious feminine politics. We understand community experiences as those actions carried out by the members of a community to seek the transformation of problematic situations (Montenegro, Montenegro, & Iñiguez, 2006). We also define public policies as the set of initiatives and responses—manifest or implicit - that constitute the predominant position of the State in the face of an issue that concerns significant sectors of society (Oszlak & O'Donnell, 1995).

In this framework, we consider that community experiences have an impact, from below, with a contextual, critical, and emancipatory perspective, on the broader social sphere with the purpose of reversing the dominant value systems (Torres de Torres, 2016) and that “[...] public policies must be increasingly present to accompany these social movements” (C, LA President). In this sense, we conceive that community experiences not only have an enormous potential and richness, but that they arise, at least in part, because there are needs and interests related to children and adolescents that are neither covered by the State nor by other institutions or social organizations. At the same time, from the Epistemologies of the South, we understand that to transform the world, knowledge is needed not only from academia, but also the knowledge generated within the framework of the variety of social struggles.

Critical perspectives of social psychology

We consider that Social Psychology deals with the subjective dimension present in collective processes and that one of its main concerns is how to generate processes of social change in situations considered problematic or worthy of social transformation through the generation of social intervention processes or the accompaniment of collective actions.

Considering the four major perspectives that Marisela Montenegro (2001) distinguishes within the field of social psychology and psychosocial intervention, we place two of these developments as the most traditional ones. The first, linked to the functionalist perspective, defines society as a whole, characterized by equilibrium and order within which social problems (such as delinquency, addictions, etc.) are seen as the product of the dysfunctions of certain groups or individuals. This perspective is based on positivist epistemology that postulates that scientific knowledge is a universal and absolute truth that

³ In the Spanish original, the experience presented uses the letter ‘e’ to write words such as *niñes*, *amigues*, *hijes*, *todes*, etc. because it is a ‘native category’ used by the protagonists of the experience and because, from an ethical and political positioning of the research, we advocate the need to use non-binary inclusive language. Likewise, we clarify that the term *trans* alludes to the word transgender and refers to people who have a self-perceived gender identity different from the one assigned at birth.

enables objective diagnoses and design targeted interventions that will be outlined by expert professionals, to correct or adapt to problematic individuals or groups and that will be evaluated through traditional methods.

The second development, linked to the conflictivist perspective or critical theory, understands society rooted in a capitalist structure that is unequal and unjust, which is based on exploitative processes. This structure is held responsible for generating certain social problems (such as unemployment, violence, etc.). Likewise, this perspective understands that society is crosscut by ideologization processes that provide an apparent order in which scientific knowledge has functions of de-ideologization and conscientization. This scientific knowledge must dialogue with popular knowledge, both to identify and provide solutions to problems. This perspective proposes a participatory methodology that involves the formation of an intervention team made up of both professionals and people from the community, in charge of both diagnosing and designing projects that provide solutions to specific problems. At the same time, these projects seek to generate deep transformations in the social structure and will be evaluated from a participatory evaluation design that will consider not only results but also processes. Within this perspective, we place the theoretical and methodological developments of the Latin American Community Social Psychology (LCSP) and its Participatory Action Research (PAR) proposal.

Within the most current developments of critical social psychology, and following the order proposed by Marisela Montenegro (2001), we find two more approaches that make the PSCL proposal and its PRA more complex. The first, linked to the socio-constructionist perspective, which understands society based on the daily interactions of individuals without major structural elements that constrain them, in which language is central. This perspective is based on a constructionist and relativist epistemology, which criticizes that science can objectively represent reality and understand social problems (such as gender violence, discrimination, etc.) as the product of collective constructions. In this framework, it proposes the need to deconstruct the phenomena. To do so, it offers discursive methodologies and genealogies, understanding that the struggle for meanings is a way to intervene and transform reality.

The second development, linked to the situated perspective, proposes a critical analysis of social intervention taking the contributions of socio-constructionism, feminist epistemologies, and post-Marxism. This approach is based on the feminist notions of situated knowledge and embodied and dynamic objectivity. It proposes to think of the actors in the processes of intervention and social change (professionals and members of the community) from the post-Marxist concept of subject positions and calls articulations or partial connections to the relationships established between different actors, postulating that all of them—and not only the “recipients”—are transformed in the intervention processes in which they participate.

Even more recent developments are those which, as part of this critical social psychology, we propose to incorporate from: 1) the theories of social movements and collective action, which provide us with some categories of analysis (needs that give rise to organizational processes, objectives they propose, meanings that permeate them, actions they carry out, incidences they achieve, etc.), which allow us to describe and characterize the community experiences investigated; 2) the Epistemologies of the South (Sousa Santos, 2010), from which we state that the current society is not only capitalist, but also colonial and patriarchal and that, in order to transform them, we need to appeal to knowledge from both the academia and that which emerges in social struggles, making use of the sociology of emergencies (Sousa, 2010); and, 3) Feminisms (Segato, 2018), which propose

politicization in a feminine key that follows an amphibious path as it develops its struggles both from the State and from outside it.

Thus, this updated, complex and renewed critical social psychology, added to the conceptualizations about care that we will develop below, constitute the central conceptual context of our research. From this context, we understand that, for the community experiences investigated, the care of children and adolescents, due to their characteristics and particularities, have constituted a problematic situation worthy of transformation from which families have organized collectively, creating shared child-rearing spaces. From this context, we also consider that childhood and adolescence constitute fundamental moments in the existence of human beings, where the need for care is central. It is in this context that the study of the experiences that are organized collectively to create collective spaces of care is a priority.

Realities and conceptualizations about care and care-giving

Caregiving is an indispensable and constitutive activity of society that enables sustenance and reproduction of life, activities that permeate and cross all people, and that involves material and emotional elements. From the beginning of life and until its end, we need care, and this is resolved through a network of relationships that make up the social organization of care (Rodríguez Enríquez, 2019).

According to Laura Pautassi (2020), care is a human right that includes the right to care, to be cared for, and self-care. This care is associated with the indispensable activities to meet the basic needs of people's existence and reproduction, providing them with the physical and symbolic elements that allow them to live in society. It includes self-care, direct care of other people (the interpersonal activity of care), the provision of the preconditions in which care is performed (cleaning the house, buying, and preparing food), and care management (coordinating schedules, making transfers to educational centers and other care institutions, supervising the work of the paid caregiver, among others) (Rodríguez Enríquez, 2019).

Although there is no consensus regarding the notion of care, it can be understood as

[...] the action of helping a child or a dependent person in the development and well-being of his/her daily life. It encompasses, therefore, taking charge of material care, which implies 'work' and economic care, which implies an 'affective, emotional, sentimental bond' (Batthyány, 2020, p. 40, emphasis added).

Here we work with a broad notion of care, understanding that it includes not only those that need to be received from the domestic space, but also those received from other spheres (educational, health, cultural, sports, etc.) where children and adolescents live their daily lives.

At the same time, we understand that historically, culturally, and socially, care has always been associated with the female figure and that "[...] much of the burden of care continues to fall on women and girls [...]" (Bertolotto, 2014, p. 155) thus reinforcing "[...] the social assumption that the person naturally, concretely, and exclusively responsible for the care of children is definitely the woman" (Bertolotto, 2014, p. 151). Thus,

[...] the practice of care will tend to be understood exclusively as a female attribute, associated with a naturalized idea of being a woman and constituent of a model of social and family relations that needs to be unraveled and rethought (Bertolotto, 2014, p. 15)

and that has its continuity in the ways in which public care policies are thought, designed, and implemented.

Under these circumstances, it is necessary to incorporate and put a gender perspective on the agenda, which begins considering in matters of care, “[...] that which is called love [...]” is unpaid work, the invisible work of millions of women, which, moreover, is absent “[...] in the representations of the economy that feed the formulation of policies” (Bertolotto, 2014, p. 154).

This work has also been intensified in the current context of pandemic and ASPO, as social distancing measures, school closures, overburdened health systems, among others, have placed a greater burden on women and girls to cover the basic survival needs of families, especially those related to the care of children, people with disabilities, or the elderly. At the same time, the current context has deepened social inequalities, including those related to care.

To all of the above, we must add the consideration that “[...] families, in their various forms, continue to be the key institution for meeting care needs [...]” (Bertolotto, 2014, p. 154), while “[...] both family models and social policy practices are anchored in an idea of family organization that preserves patriarchal features, which is generally implicit and often quite distant from the daily and concrete reality of the recipients of these policies” (Bertolotto, 2014, p. 153).

Method

This is a qualitative study in which we draw on the contributions of ethnography (Mosquera Villegas, 2008), ethnography with children and adolescents (Tammarazio, 2016; Milstein, Guerrero, Clemente, & Dantas-Whintey, 2017), and virtual ethnography (Ruiz Mendez & Aguirre Aguilar, 2015). The latter, because the context of pandemic and ASPO has imposed not only intense modifications to social life, but also to the research processes currently developed.

Likewise, we were inspired by the constructive barter proposal (León Cedeño, 2007) defined as a way to overcome the limitations of other ways of producing scientific knowledge, proposing a way of coexisting with the collectives in the specific places where they act in order to learn from their counter-hegemonic actions and mutual aid, and supporting, at the same time, their self-organization.

The data production devices used were multiple, so we speak of a ‘methodological mosaic’ (Bonvillani, 2018) in which we sought to achieve a variety of ‘products’ of different materiality (graphic, audiovisual, oral, written) considering that each and every one of them constitute small constructions of the lived experience.

The data analysis was carried out together with the production/collection of empirical material, understanding that the logic of qualitative analysis is guided by the recurrence of meanings that insist and upon which we configured a polyphonic narrative.

Community experiences

The GAIA-Nueva Crianza civil association is made up of families and friends of trans children and adolescents from Río Negro and Neuquén. It arises, based in the capital of Neuquén, in December 2018, from the difficulties that these families encountered in different environments (family, school, and health, among others) while listening to and wanting to accompany their children. Its main objective is to make visible the existence of trans children

and adolescents, while guaranteeing the rights of all children and adolescents. This association generates actions not only at a micro level, but also at a macro-social level, seeking to influence public policies.

The Lazos Azules civil association is made up of families of children, adolescents, and adults with ASD (autism spectrum disorder) from Río Negro and Neuquén. It was formally born in the capital of Neuquén in 2015, after a previous history of almost twenty years of struggle from the numerous difficulties that these families encountered for their children to receive a diagnosis, access to treatment, and achieve their inclusion in the educational system and in different social environments. Its main objective is to work for the social inclusion of people with ASD in all the social spaces in which these people develop their lives, also having as one of its main axes of work the search for incidence in public policies.

Both associations, although they define themselves as integrated by families, are marked by a strong presence and protagonism of women, of 'girls' (M, mom LA), almost all of them are mothers of the children and adolescents of these experiences.

In what follows, we present a characterization of the community experiences investigated, giving an account of some of their different dimensions: the meanings of childhood they generate, in which the diversity of ways of being and existing constitute a central symbolic articulator; the innumerable actions they produce in order to create a more loving and friendly world; the collective upbringing and shared care spaces they propose; the transformations of collective action generated in these particular times of pandemic and ASPO; the impact on public care policies that these community experiences exert; and the complexities that care has imposed in this current context.

Meaning of childhood: diversity of being and existing

Nueva Crianza strives 'for full, free and happy childhood' and for childhood and adolescence with 'the right to be', while insisting that it is not only a matter of enabling other ways of living gender, but also of valuing all diversity in its broadest sense. From this association, children have always been seen as being under the care of adults, but "[...] taking their own actions, making their own decisions, with an impressive margin of freedom" (V, NC President). In this sense, the families of this association say, "[...] we listen [...], we allow children to question us, to challenge us, to surprise us, to propose other worlds" (NC Facebook).

In line with these meanings, as a symbol and logo the association has chosen a light blue and pink kite with a colorful tail that represents that:

Our children were always ahead, showing the way, leading us... that when we thought we had something confirmed, assumed, understood... new challenges, paths and questions were proposed to us. We all agreed. And a friend brought in the image of seeing each child as a kite, looking for higher flights, while we, on the ground, were holding that thread, trying to find the optimal tension, looking for the most favorable winds, avoiding storms and obstacles... And it also occurred to us to think that one day that kite would grow wings, cut the thread, give us a kiss... and take off on its own flight (Facebook NC).

For its part, Lazos Azules conceives, in relation to their childhood and adolescence, that although

[...] we refer to a disorder, that is why it is known by the acronym ASD, [what they are learning as families is that it is] a condition that they have, that it is a way of seeing and perceiving the world differently [and that] it is not bad to be different (M, LA mother).

Thus, they are starting to refer to it as ASC (autism spectrum condition) to emphasize the need to recognize and respect diversities. "Autism is not a disease [they say, while maintaining that] not all children with autism are the same. They are all different, all unique and diverse" (M, LA mother).

Thus, these associations show us a conception of childhood and adolescence not only appearing in all its diversity but also questioning our adult-centered, homogenizing, heteronormative and binary society.

Caring actions: the struggle to build more loving and friendly worlds

Nueva Crianza's care actions are multiple and diverse and include direct work in the varied contexts in which their children live their daily lives. Internally, this association has organized several meeting spaces for families and friends to exchange information, to support each other affectively and emotionally, to share joys and difficulties, and also to celebrate life. At the same time, it has created a creative-expressive space called the *Cresiendo* [Growing/being] Workshop where children and adolescents participate together with their siblings, friends, neighbors, and schoolmates, where they can express themselves freely through art and words.

Externally, this organization is very active in participating in different public spaces, where it seeks to make known the existence and reality of trans children and adolescents from the understanding that their personal and family experience is very important for others. Likewise, it has participated in many trainings, lectures, talks and forums in different localities of the Provinces of Río Negro and Neuquén, for teachers, health personnel, judiciary personnel, and the community in general, seeking to guarantee the right to education and health, as well as trying to make the right to identity effective.

Through all these initiatives, Nueva Crianza invites to jointly build spaces that shelter everyone; and to listen and respect children and adolescents in all their diversities. They define their actions as "[...] an activation [...]" (V, president NC) that is carried out from a loving place, from which they seek to make visible, raise awareness, and invite to create worlds that care for and embrace children and adolescents.

Lazos Azules also develops a significant number of care initiatives that are organized into different programs. Some of these programs are especially for people with autism, such as *Yo también participo* [I participate, too], a cultural and recreational space with the purpose of promoting access to culture and recreation for people with autism. Others programs are for families, such as *Padres Escucha* [Parents Listen]; *Primeros pasos* [First Steps]; *Lazos te acompaña* [Lazos is with you] and the *Escuela TEA* [ASD School] for parents, all of which aim at generating a space where families can share information, support each other affectively, and internalize the rights of their children.

There are also programs aimed at raising awareness and training society in general, such as *Let's talk about Autism*, *ASD Citizen Safety*, *ASD at School* and *My City, My Place*, which seek to raise awareness, inform, and train on how, from different actors and sectors of society (health, education, safety, etc.), we can contribute to create a friendlier world for people with ASD and their families. Lazos Azules has also developed virtual tools such as the *Zero Pyrotechnics App* and *Bibliographic Tools* that make information and the possibility of implementing different initiatives more accessible. Finally, other programs, such as *Strengthening our Blue Ties*, are aimed at networking with other organizations and influencing public policies.

In short, the care actions developed by both associations are multiple and diverse and include direct work in the different contexts in which their children live their daily lives, especially those related to the family, school, and health environments, as well as activities aimed at the community in general.

Collective upbringing and shared care spaces: 'personal is political'

Nuevas Crianzas, New Upbringing, is a Portuguese word that designates childhood without appealing to gender, and also alludes to the relationships of children with mothers/fathers/adults, from a place of respect towards the needs of each one. This is why the association adopted the name Nuevas Crianzas. The idea, they say, is to practice new upbringing based on listening. "Infancy and childhood count, and there have always been trans children, but new upbringing is about being able to listen" (V, NC President). "What is new is listening, that there are families and adults who listen to these children" (D, NC mother).

Likewise, this organization understands that "[...] society as a whole is responsible for children and adolescents [...]" and, in this sense, they not only speak of loving, respectful upbringings, that embrace and accompany from love, but they also invite to carry out "[...] collective upbringing [...]" (V, NC president), upbringing shared with others that are counter-hegemonic, and have a politicizing effect.

Of all the initiatives Lazos Azules deploys, it emphasizes that it is society that must change its outlook and its way of organization in order to include children and adolescents with autism and not the other way around.

If a teacher carries out an activity in which a child with autism in her class cannot participate, the problem is not the child's, but that of the teacher who was unable to design an activity that included all the children in her class (S, LA mother).

It is not a matter of adapting the child and adolescent with autism to society, but of rethinking and redesigning our social spaces from the notion of diversity so that they are loving and friendly for all: "[...] diversity is a value and not something that stigmatizes; being diverse enriches us all" (C, LA President).

Based on these ideas, blue families - as they call themselves - share and support each other based on the particularities of raising their children, while at the same time, they work to generate spaces for shared care among themselves and with society. Social spaces where, given the difficulties these children and adolescents have in waiting or their high sensitivity to sounds, health care centers can provide them with care without making them wait too long; supermarkets can use quiet and soft music; New Year's Eve parties can be celebrated with 'lots of lights and little noise'; movie theaters can have shows with lower volume, make use of pictograms, allow some lights to be left on, and enable the possibility of moving around.

Likewise, Lazos Azules endorses the motto 'Nothing about us without us' present in the International Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, which positions this group of people as subjects of rights and active actors in society, and no longer as subjects of care.

Transformations of collective action in these times of pandemic and ASPO: hybridizations between off-line activism and on-line activism

In these times of pandemic and ASPO, far from having ceased its activity, the format of collective actions implemented by these associations has been multiplied and deeply

transformed. Thus, through different virtual media (WhatsApp, e-mail, virtual platforms, social networks, etc.), Nueva Crianza has launched a survey of trans children and adolescents in the provinces of Río Negro and Neuquén. The main objective is to make visible the existence and realities of these children and adolescents, generating information that can be used as an input for public care policies. It has also started a campaign called Towards a NON BINARY CSE (Comprehensive Sexual Education), as a base to promote an open view of the diversity of ways of being and existing in the educational environment and, mainly, regarding the contents of the Comprehensive Sexual Education. Likewise, it has made visible and strengthened, from a survey of people and health teams that wish and/or are working with trans children and adolescents, a network of health care providers, seeking to counteract the barriers of access to health care, which has been one of the main violated rights for trans people (Colectivo TransFormando Realidades, 2017).

Likewise, Nueva Crianza has reformulated the CreSiendo Workshop as a virtual format, in which it has carried out a toy hacking campaign in which gender stereotypes and binarism present in toys are questioned. It has also held virtual meetings among the families and friends of the association and has participated in several discussions through social networks.

For its part, Lazos Azules has recreated through virtual formats, much of what it had been doing in person. Thus, it commemorated April 2, World Autism Awareness Day, through a blue tide on social networks and participated in various discussions, organized especially during the month of childhood, making known the existence and objectives of Lazos Azules, problematizing the issue of care and explaining the complexities of caring for the families of children and adolescents with autism in these times of pandemic.

It also carried out a campaign called 'Yes, I did it', where each one of the children and adolescents of the association told, through videos that were published in social networks, the different achievements obtained (at school, at home, etc.) despite the fact that, many times, the initial message received by their families at the time of diagnosis was that they would be able to learn and develop very few activities and skills. Similarly, a virtual 'mateada', based on the tradition of meeting to drink mate tea, was organized for the blue families that make up the association in order to give continuity and strengthen the already existing spaces of trust and mutual support.

Incidences in Public Care Policies: 'From the bottom up and from the top down'

In addition to the direct actions developed in the daily spaces where their children live, Nueva Crianza participates in different areas of public interest, articulating with different social and state sectors seeking to achieve influence at the level of public policies. Within the province of Neuquén, it has participated in the protocol of change of identity in minors and in the protocol of registration of trans children and adolescents in schools; it has supported the operation of the inclusive infant-juvenile clinic '*Identidades*' at the Castro Rendón Regional Hospital; and it has collaborated in the updating of the health booklet for the care and attention of children of the Ministry of Health.

In this context of pandemic and ASPO, Nueva Crianza has also participated in the project of ordinance for the trans labor quota in the City of Neuquén and the project of Comprehensive Law for Trans People; it has accompanied the situation of trans children who are in children's homes where "[...] there is no mother or father guaranteeing rights, but it is the State itself through its institutions [...]" that does it (V, NC President); it has participated in the Early Childhood Commission of the Co.Pro. Naf (Comisión Provincial del

Niño y la Familia de la Provincia del Neuquén) in order to make the issue of trans children visible and put it on the political agenda; it took part in the Third Provincial Forum on Trans Children held in Neuquén; has participated in the first Conference on the Construction of Lines of Accompaniment for Trans Children” invited by the SENAF (National Secretariat for Children, Adolescents, and Family) of Río Negro; and has started to work in coordination with the Pediatrics Society of the Alto Valle de Río Negro and Neuquén to generate spaces for awareness raising and continuous training for pediatricians.

One of the main lines of work of Lazos Azules is promoting public policies and, together with other social organizations and state sectors, seeking to participate, accompany, and promote care policies. Thus, in the Province of Neuquén, it has participated in the regulation of Law nº 2833 on Pyrotechnics (Argentina, 2012), which forbids the use, possession, storage, exhibition, manufacture, and sale of fireworks to the public, seeking to protect their children from intense noise; it has also accompanied the approval of the project of modification of Law nº 2980 (Argentina, 2015) that adheres to the National Law nº 27043 (Argentina, 2014) of integral and interdisciplinary approach to people with Autism Spectrum Disorder of 2015, as well as the regulation of that law. Likewise, during this time of pandemic and ASPO, it has elaborated a Guide of Visual Supports for Communication as an annex to the COVID protocols in an interinstitutional work with pediatric professionals from the city of Neuquén capital and Plottier.

Through all these initiatives, the community experiences analyzed here make it possible for children and adolescents (trans, with autism, etc.) to occupy a place in the political agenda, questioning and challenging the normalizing-binary-patriarchal-colonial nature of society and public care policies. In this way, these ‘other’ existences break the socially imposed abysmal lines and turn around the adult-centric, homogenizing and normalizing world in which we live. In this way, they also put in check “[...] the binarism of public policies [...]” inviting us to “[...] consider the irrelevance of marking gender [as a precondition for [...] providing services and guaranteeing rights [...]” (Maffía, 2020, p. 2) and calling us to argue that the rights of children and adolescents should not be subordinated to the confirmation of any condition of being or any type of diagnosis (Barcala et al., 2018).

Caregiving in a pandemic context: complexities and overloads

In these times of pandemic and isolation, Nueva Crianza has paid special attention to the fact that, although ‘staying at home’ has meant that many difficult situations that trans children and adolescents usually lived ‘outside’ did not occur (not being called by the name they have chosen when they go to the doctor; having to face the dilemma of whether to go to the boys’ or girls’ bathroom when they were at school, etc.), this ‘new normality’ has also imposed some limits to the emergence of trans identities. In this sense, although not having to ‘come out’ to a strongly binary and heteronormative world has brought some relief, it has also implied the blurring of some concerns and questions about the diversity of possibilities of ‘being’ and existing that these childhoods and adolescences, as well as their families, had begun to raise in pre-pandemic times. This poses a certain complexity in care when it is a question of guaranteeing the right to ‘be’.

Lazos Azules has addressed the issue of care and the fundamental role of the caregiver, emphasizing the need to “[...] take care of the caregiver, because if the caregiver falls, a family system collapses” (C, president LA). And this, especially, in these times of pandemic and ASPO in which the caregiving role has been heavily burdened. “During the pandemic everything is much more complicated: routines ceased to exist, we had to reinvent

new routines [...] it added a very important stress to the whole family group [which falls mainly] on the main caregiver [...],” who, in general, is the mother (C, LA President).

Social distancing caused the family support networks to collapse, “It suddenly locked us in; it left us without therapies, without schools, without routine; it brought us a very big disorder in our behaviors” (C, LA President). Likewise, prevention measures (not touching or sucking on everything, using alcohol, wearing a mask, etc.) are also another stressor. “Then the caregiver is put in check, in addition, because he/she lost the support of the network. [For this reason ...] all social actors must be aware and start trying out strategies to take care of the main caregiver” (C, LA President).

Complexities of care, blurring of previous processes, lack of guarantee of some rights, overload in the task, rupture of support networks, etc. are some of the difficult issues that this time has brought us. As Pautassi (2020) argues, not only have isolation measures interrupted family care networks - the presence of grandmothers, aunts, neighbors - but the lack of institutions such as schools and community centers, added to the lack of staff in private homes, has made visible the complexity of care and its concentration in limited physical spaces and in the hands of women. A quarantine without schedules or limits on the demand for those who work outside the home and without sufficient consideration of the difficulties for a family to set up a ‘home office’ together with the ‘school also at home’. This added to problems associated with the lack of physical space, adequate furniture, and appropriate internet connections.

Towards a public policy of citizenship

Many of the actions and meanings present in the community experiences analyzed can be thought of as a contribution to the visibility of the diversity of ways of being and existing of children and adolescents that we can conceptualize from the sociology of emergencies (Sousa Santos, 2010). According to Sousa Santos (2010), such sociology is aimed at making visible and validating other ways of being, knowing and feeling this world. It seeks to “[...] open analytical spaces for ‘surprising’ realities (because they are new or because until now, they were produced as non-existent), where liberating emergencies can emerge” (Sousa, 2010, p. 35, emphasis added).

In this sense, making these diversities of childhood and adolescence visible involves amplifying the clues they give us to generate a profound transformation in this adult-centered, homogenizing, patriarchal, binary and heteronormative world in which we live. A world that brings so much suffering especially to those who feel strongly discriminated for ‘being different’ but where, in addition, we are all impoverished ‘before the waste of the experience’ (Sousa, 2010) of these ‘other’ existences. Thus, it is a matter of thinking about public care policies that include the diversities of childhood and adolescence without pathologizing any form of existence and without establishing prerequisites (diagnosis, gender, condition, etc.) to make rights effective.

Likewise, considering the main spheres and meanings that cross the care actions reported above and, following Rita Segato (2018), we can say that the two experiences analyzed generate a type of politicization in a feminine key that contrasts with the masculine DNA that characterizes our patriarchal and bureaucratic States. Segato characterizes this politicization as feminine because of its spatial and community roots in the environments where children and adolescents develop their lives; because it is pragmatic and close to day-to-day situations; because it places its emphasis on processes and not on results; because it is a problem solver and preserves daily life by seeking to create loving and

friendly spaces. This political approach implies a counter-pedagogy that rescues sensitivity and bonding and that bets on a historical project of bonds that produces community.

From the point of view of decolonial and feminist critical social psychology that we propose, we can also state that the transformations at the social level that these experiences propose. Participatory transformations – ‘Nothing about us without us’ -where children, adolescents, and their families play a central role. Transformations that seek to influence both at the micro-social level by generating actions in everyday spaces (including modifying the school experience, health care modes, among others) and at the macro-social level by seeking to influence public care policies (through the promotion of laws, regulations, protocols, participation in different institutional spaces, among others). These transformations emphasize the centrality of language and propose other ways of naming and being named.

These are also transformations that imply the recognition of the situated character of knowledge (Haraway, 1991) and that bet on the articulation between the knowledge arising from the social struggles of families and academic-professional knowledge in the design, implementation and/or evaluation of public care policies. In this sense, “[...] the family is the main source of information on the child’s characteristics, [...]” (M, LA mother) it conceives its knowledge from its daily experiences and searches, and thus builds very specific knowledge regarding what happens to its child/children both in the family environment and in the school and health environments.

In some cases, this articulation between families and professionals is already taking place: “I sometimes consult them, [...]not only do we have to include, but also learn a lot of things from these groups of families in order to improve public policies [...] as they have authority on the subject” (J, LA collaborator). In this way, the links established generate a break with the traditional relationship between academic and popular knowledge - “[...] because you say that professionals are supposed to know... no, here they are the ones who tell you and now I ask them because they really know [...]” (J, LA collaborator) - embodying participatory models as proposed by critical social psychology and exercising the idea, proposed by the Epistemologies of the South that, in order to transform reality, we must nourish ourselves both from academic and social knowledge.

Thus, the community organizations analyzed not only possess very specific knowledge that they collectively create by listening and paying attention to their children, but also become fundamental actors in matters of public interest by influencing the content or altering the course of public policies (Leiras, 2007), which shows the importance of generating public care policies from the territory and from the voices of the families.

At the same time, we understand that the spaces for exchange and emotional support between families and between children and adolescents are irreplaceable for any type of professional help, which is why the articulation and collaboration between families - as the first and daily care environment - and the formal systems of health, education, etc. —which also provide care outside the family environment - are irreplaceable for any type of professional help - which also provide care outside the family environment, becomes indispensable in terms of the social organization of care. In this sense, we believe that what we need to do is to rethink public policies from a broad conception of care that considers all the spaces in which children and adolescents live to make these environments more loving and friendly.

As we said earlier, although the organizations studied define themselves as composed of families, in each of them there is a greater role for women, for ‘the girls’. This is probably linked to the role of “[...] main caregivers [...]” generally exercised by women-mothers who, “[...] despite

all the efforts of feminist consciousness to rectify this situation, continue to be the object and not the subject of public policies (Bertolotto, 2014, p. 27, emphasis added).

In this context then, in addition to recognizing family knowledge, it is necessary to make visible that the 'care work', although familiar, is usually embodied by these women-mothers producing an overload of tasks and responsibility in them that has deepened in these times of pandemic. For this reason, it will then be a question not only of designing public policies that take care of the caregiver - as proposed by Lazos Azules - but also of deconstructing, from these public policies, this historical, cultural and social association between 'the feminine' and the tasks of care, stressing that "[...] care is not an innate knowledge or an ability consubstantial with the feminine [...]" which is why it is necessary to deconstruct and re-conceptualize it" (Bertolotto, 2014, p. 90).

Finally, and as a provisional closing of these reflections, we would like to propose the substitution of the concept of 'citizenship' for that of 'caregiving-ship' so that we begin to speak of Public Policies of Care instead of Public Policies of Citizenship. Caregiving-ship is the collective capacity to care for life in all its forms. It is born of respect and self-esteem, implies love and empathy and creates other social relations. This word has been proposed by Isabel Aler as a recreation of language, since she says that today we are witnessing a crisis of care. It implies replacing the term 'citizenship', which proposes the individual as independent and isolated from his or her social context because an individual conceived in this way is false and obsolete. The individual freedoms with which the patriarchal-capitalist-mercantile system seduces us deny our human social fabric, the need we have for each other, our collective being, the 'we' instead of the 'I'. In this sense, citizenship is a proposal that is not only obsolete, but false. In contrast, caregiving-ship creates social bonds of care and is centered on care, on interdependence and interaction as constitutive of the human approaching what Rita Segato (2018) calls the historical project of bonds.

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