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Adolescents, Teachers, and Psychoanalysts: a clinical political intervention

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ABSTRACT – Adolescents, Teachers, and Psychoanalysts: a clinical political intervention. What do psychoanalysts do in schools? This article discusses a clinical-political psychoanalytic intervention at school that interpellates teenagers and the teaching staff into constituting and sharing their knowledge. During the intervention, three moments are distinguished at which we could assert the suffering of adolescents when the school's functions are cross-cut by race and class, a crossing mimicked in the correlation among *development, poverty, race,* and *social danger.* When knowledge could be shared through dialogue, the school's conflicts and discomfort vis-à-vis adolescence and the complexities of the Brazilian historical-social situation could be located, thereby highlighting the establishment of conflicts as engines of work rather than as failure of the teaching staff.
Keywords: **Psychoanalysis. Clinical-Political Interventions. Adolescence. School. Conflict.**

RESUMO – Adolescentes, Professores e Psicanalistas: uma intervenção clínicopolítica. O que fazem psicanalistas nas escolas? Esse artigo, debate uma intervenção psicanalítica *clínicopolítica* na escola, que interpela adolescentes e equipe de ensino a constituir e partilhar seus saberes. Distinguimos três tempos na intervenção em que pudemos constatar o sofrimento dos adolescentes quando as funções da escola estão atravessadas pelo recorte da raça e da classe, atravessamento que se concretiza na correlação entre *desenvolvimento, pobreza, raça* e *perigo social.* Quando os saberes puderam circular em diálogo pode-se localizar os conflitos e o mal-estar da escola diante da adolescência e das complexidades da situação histórico-social brasileira, de modo a tornar a construção dos conflitos como motor de trabalho e não como fracasso das equipes.
Palavras-chave: **Psicanálise. Intervenção Clínico-Política. Adolescência. Escola. Conflito.**

Introduction

The relation between education and the psi-field is almost as old as the establishment of the modern school as a model of education for national states. However, the modalities of this type of interaction remain under the spotlight for various controversies regarding their ethics and implications; a debate that goes beyond the limits of this article. We emphasize that a constant practice in which these fields of knowledge used to act together was to classify individuals who escaped expected behavioral or learning patterns, which produced diagnoses and discourses to determine who would stay out of school or turned school dropout into a natural phenomenon. Psy-knowledge could be included in schools by presenting it as knowledge about deviations, thereby responding to the school staff's desires. Nevertheless, we believe that this mode of operation potentializes the master's knowledge – imposed to the other as described by Lacan (1992), hence rejecting the ethical principles of psychoanalysis that are guided by listening to both the subjects and the institutional plot.

The recent problematization brought by inclusive education and institutional psychology, which starts to focus on the dynamics of the school as an institution, leads to another type of relationship between *these* types of knowledge, with psi knowledge being able to act differently within schools. In this context, this article discusses what psychoanalysts do in schools, problematizing the ethical conditions and possibilities of sustaining a listening to the subject in educational institutions.

This particular article is the result of questions asked by the researcher, Joana Sampaio Primo, who coordinates the monitoring of schooling of immigrant children or children of immigrant parents in certain schools of a neighborhood in the city of São Paulo; a study linked to the Laboratory of Psychoanalysis, Society and Politics (PSOPOL).[1] From this intervention emerged the proposal to create a group with teenagers in one of the teaching units that we accompany. Our proposition of holding *conversation groups* with teenagers was established through dialogues with the school coordination, which is a key action for the development of our study and the ideas contained herein.[2]

The focus of our study – called clinical-political psychoanalytic interventions – is based on the principle that listening, in contexts of social vulnerability, implies that the psychoanalyst must necessarily use unconventional clinical strategies which promote an implicated psychoanalysis, insofar as it is attentive to the historical and social complexity of its formulation (Rosa, 2016). It is a type of listening that, when taking into account the institutional context, complexizes its strategies by proposing not only the listening of the subjects but also the return of their knowledge saying about all of them. We underline that we see ourselves participating in an *institutional we*: we share the same history, we are part of the same city, and we are in the same field of work.

In general, we intended to "[...] create the possibility for adolescents to find an Other receptive and willing to provide them with another type of knowledge, not closed knowledge" (Catroli; Rosa, 2013, p. 310), which could create a space for the circulation of words with those young people, where knowledge could be established from their incongruities rather than from imaginary certainties. In other words, we arrived with a bet on listening as a place for recognizing the subject. A divided subject, knowledge loaded with inconsistencies and fissures, but precisely for that reason, capable of sustaining conflicts which can, in the listening, through their twists and turns, enable the subjects to come to "[...] position themselves in another way vis-à-vis what determines them" (Sousa, 2000, p. 18).

In addressing listening in an institution, we realize the importance that this knowledge would be able to gain at an institutional level in an ethical gesture of producing enigmas that concern not only the individuals directly involved in the listening but also a collectivity. We understand that conflicts are always internal and external, that is, they permeate the subjects and the collective since the dichotomous notions of individual and society are questioned by psychoanalysis. Thus, we identified, in addition to *conversation groups*, the need for this circulation of knowledge produced by adolescents to be returned to school, a return arranged with the group of students. In our view, that collaborated to the *constructive dimension of conflicts* (Vicentin; Gramkow, 2018) in a way as to relieve places predestined for adolescence, deviation, and conflict.

Being something typical of today`s adolescents, that is, a certain overvaluation concomitant with a devaluation, adolescents quickly move from an ideal of *pure happiness* to one of *pure violence* (Rosa, 2011), which emerges as a period of conflict. Though commonly distinguished as a stage of human development, this phase must be historically contextualized as an intrinsic period to modernity since the idea of development arose with the knowledge and practices that were established around the figure of the abnormal (Foucault, 2014).

In the present article, we position ourselves in the opposite direction despite being understood mainly as a stage of development. Supported by the psychoanalytical conception of adolescence, we conceive it as a moment "[...] of destitution and constitution of the phantasmatic fiction that will guide the subject in the world" (Catroli; Rosa, 2013, p. 298; Rosa; Huerta, 2020). Hence, insofar as the adolescents' processes in the face of human dilemmas related to sexuality, death, belonging, and social transformation narrating their own history, they also tell about the way each society conceives the modalities of the subject's inscription in the social bond, as well as their availability to social changes (Rosa, 2011; Rosa; Huerta, 2020).

Since adolescence is configured as in a time of passing that can be located between *ceasing to be a child* and *becoming an adult*, adolescents summon the social fabric for a movement between opening and closing:

opening, since conflicts extrapolate them; closing, because conflicts are quickly read as *teenager's issues*. It is precisely because they occupy a position of questioning the social order, including that of the school, that we point out our guiding ethical principle of adolescents carrying knowledge that must challenge everyone, especially in institutional contexts. In other words, making room for *adolescent issues* means betting on the production not of all-knowing knowledge but of jointly-built knowledge, a type of knowledge that opens space for conflicts.

Therefore, guided by the knowledge that questions the *master's knowledge*, we distinguish three moments in our clinical-political intervention at schools in reference to Lacan's Logical Time (Lacan, 1998). In the first moment, the *instant of the glance*, the psychoanalysts[3] inroduce their work to the school and teenagers. In the second one, *time for comprehending*, conflicts ask for passage, that is, they start to be built in the listening of *conversation groups* side by side with the problems of the social bond that go through them: the particularities of the school as an institution of the modern State, the Brazilian case specifically, linked to the unfolding of the concepts of development, adolescence, and deviation. It is also part of the *time for comprehending* a debate about our conception of adolescence, which tries to confront developmentalist and segregationist discourses about it. Finally, the third one is the *moment for concluding* when the adolescents' discourses return as knowledge of the institution and, together with those of the teachers, can build the coordinates of the conflicts that put the forces back into play and distribute responsibilities.

To convey what was produced in the encounter with these young people and the thought arising from the *adolescent issues* that challenged us and that were able to challenge the institution, we chose to organize our text in *fragments* because we conceive reality as fragmentary and able to find "[...] its unity in and through the breaks, and not by glossing them over" (Adorno, 2012, p. 35). Therefore, work of an essayistic nature that is, using the *essayistic* form as a proper way of producing thoughts, a way that does not reduce its object but rather amalgamates with it, lives up to its complexities, incompleteness, and nonsense (Adorno, 2012). Besides affirming the incomplete nature of reality, the choice of *fragments* tries to tension the subject-object division inherent in any investigation. Inspired by the authors that we have already mentioned and by the importance of knowledge circulation in institutions and, above all, the importance of researchers' involvement in what they produce, we chose *fragments*. Their breaks and cut-offs presuppose both hesitation and thinking (Sousa, 2000), that is, clippings that compose and recompose the path of the production of fragmentary knowledge.

Times of Clinical-Political Listening: Intervention in the School Context - 1st Moment - Introduction Time: What do Psychoanalysts do in Schools?

Fragment 1: Psychologists, for me, are superfluous!
It was our first contact with these young people. We were on break time, ready to listen to them after having introduced ourselves as psychologists who would have a weekly conversation group with whoever wished to participate. They introduced themselves: they told family stories, stories of breaks, depression, and dating. We stopped at a place where pupils were talking together during the break and heard: "[...] no, you won't want to listen to this song, there's a lot of bad words," from a boy in a group of young people listening to music with headphones. They kept chatting with each other, trying to find out who we were, asked questions, and provoked: "[...] psychologists are superfluous for me"; another teenager added "[...] my mother is also a psychologist, she hits us with a wooden ruler." We moved away a little, entering another conversation circle including girls only. Also curious about our presence, they ask us more directly: "How old are you?," "Are you married?," "Do you have any children?," "Wow, you are just like Xuxa!" "Xuxa" is a reference that evokes our fair skin, light-colored eyes, and brown hair. At first, we were struck by the strangeness of that comment, but it gained the status of strange-familiar: being white with light eyes in a group of young Black women is a brand that needs to be highlighted.

The introduction asks for passage: motivated by our presence and first meeting, the strength of the questions and provocations marked the presence of the adolescent: a blend of provocation and curiosity, amalgamated with the place we were in and the social differences cutting across us. If we were not at a school, would they care about the bad words in the song? If we did not live in a society that treated money as valuable, a value that spreads across classes and concepts of race, would we look like *Xuxa*?

Thus, the first moment is the time of questions that require thoughts, reflection, and history: who were we and who were they in this scene, marked by history? Therefore, it is necessary to situate the fields of education and adolescence.

The presented fragments allow us to indicate the paradoxical function that education fulfills by enabling access to discourses and knowledge. In other words, the whole education system is "[...] a political way of maintaining or modifying the appropriation of discourses, with the knowledge and powers that they carry with them" (Foucault, 2001, p. 44). Although the school fulfills the social function of maintaining the discourses that compose the national States, it, paradoxically, can function as an institution that also promotes the modification of the discourses and the most common practices of our society.

Without naively betting on education as the *salvation* of our society, precisely because we understand all the historical complexities of its formation and all the discourses and daily practices that support it, we believe that giving visibility to *school conflicts* can enable a criti-

cal gesture, thereby rendering the too easy gestures difficult (Foucault, 2010).

Conflict is also a pivotal notion in psychoanalysis, in which the play of forces can be located between the instinctual demands and those imposed by external reality. Freud (2018) situated it as the irremediable struggle to which everyone is condemned, a fight through which the ego appears as a precipitated instance of this conflict, which, however, will never cease to exist: "Success was achieved at the cost of a rift in the Ego that never heals, but which increases as time goes on. The synthetic function of the Self, though it is of such extraordinary importance, is subject to particular conditions and is liable to a whole series of disturbances" (p. 347).

Thus, that which synthesizes the way we recognize ourselves and is socially recognized has fissures, irremediable ones, formed by conflicts that can be understood as engines of creation.

Despite the evident differences between the Foucaultian and Freudian conceptions of conflict, we consider both to the extent that they allow us to think about the institutional relations in which we place ourselves and the subjects with whom we work at the schools. Institutional relations evidence the invisibility of conflicts generated in and by the social bond. Only their effects are visible, which, when attributed exclusively to the subject, individualize his/her impasses and pathologize or criminalize his/her possible outputs (Rosa et al., 2019). As we have seen, when it comes to teenagers, the tendency to be silent increases, particularly because they are involved in marking the social scene in an unprecedented way, sin their move from the family scene to the social scene, a passage that can have an effect of denouncing the most elementary forces of our gestures.

We now end the *time of seeing* by underlining what we chose to introduce ourselves based on the students' questioning – Who were we? What do we like? Do we say swearing words? – which made us introduce the ethical and political principles that guide us, emphasizing the dimension of the *conflict construction* as basic to any work in school.

2nd Time - Moment of Comprehending: The Conflict Calls for Passage and Construction

School, Deviation, and the Abnormal: Brief Notes on the History of School in Brazil and its Articulation with the Concept of Development

Just as the *moment of seeing* ended with the question "Who were we in that scene?," we start the time for comprehending with the following question: *What from our social fabric pulsated in that introduction: psychology, race, class, adolescence and/or school?*. Questions that throb in our daily lives but that we do not always want to face. They pulsate because they mark frontiers of traffic, knowledge, and practices. And

precisely because we are precisely oriented toward being able to situate ourselves in this scene and passing through its many crossings that we understand the need to turn to the basic concepts that make it up: the knowledge that constitutes the *psi fields* and the concept of development; the formation of schools in the Brazilian State, and the imbrication of adolescent production in a State where deviation will indiscriminately mark the majority of the population.

Then, we depart from the *fragment* of introduction to the lines of force that constitute it because we understand that "just as something that is merely factual cannot be conceived without a concept, because to think it is already to conceive it, so too the purest concept cannot be thought except in relation to facticity" (Adorno, 2012, p. 26), that is, we intend to produce a tense game between the *fragments* and the history of the concepts that compose them.

We intend, as suggested by Foucault (2000), to conduct a type of study that lies on the border *between* a historical analysis of the conditions for strengthening certain discourses and their materialization in daily practices (Primo; Rosa, 2019). The concept of history with which we work conceives it by its discontinuities and ruptures, opposing the idea of an origin and a linear continuity (Foucault, 1979). Resorting to history means "[…] to mark the singularity of events, far from any monotonous purpose; to stalk them there where they least expect and in what is held to have no history" (Foulcault, 1979, p. 15). Consequently, we understand that discourses and practices emerge from problems of a given time, configuring gestures that become habitual and difficult to not be reproduced as normal.

Thus, it is important to cover, albeit briefly, the major points of our modern history that made a decisive contribution to the constitution of the concepts of *development* and, later, of *adolescence*. To start, we point out that even if we can follow a modern history that bases its foundations on the idea of *development*, the latter will not equally affect the different territories either in relation to the metropolis-colony separation or that of the peripheral areas of urban centers.

Thus, we identified that throughout the 17th, 18th, and 19th centuries, the construction of wage labor, warfare and nation-state-formation, and nascent capitalism are non-linear processes that established new discourses and social practices. It is within this context that Foucault (2014) identified the formation of the *abnormal* individual, a figure that is relevant to us since it guided the conception of the *normal* by articulating different medico-legal meanings throughout the 19th century. When passing through the figures of the *monster*, the *onanist* and, finally, the *incorrigible individual*, the *abnormal* constitutes itself in opposition to the idea of *appropriate development*, leading psychiatry to consolidate itself as a kind of knowledge that deals with childhood and its care institutions: family and school. We reinforce the idea of *development* as central to our discussion since it unfolds into conceptions about childhood and later about adolescence.

We also emphasize that the logic of *normality-development* will not be restricted to the bodies of individuals; the concept of *development* will encompass the intricacy of conceptions about the development of history/humanity and about socioeconomic-developmental issues. Therefore, it is a concept that centralizes structural pillars of modern thought.

Also, the concept of race will be established around *development* as a notion that qualitatively distinguishes between different phenotypes. Racial marks found in our presentation to the school, marks about which the adolescent issues took soundings: "Wow, you are just like Xuxa!" The stereotype of white, rich woman and Queen of the shorties, Xuxa, and everything she represents tell a unique history with the unwrapping of the notion of race in Brazil, and it is in its search that we will follow.

> *Fragment 2 – Waking up to be able to Sleep: The nightmares of the social*
> *The theme was nightmares. An unfolding of the fears that occupied some meetings. She started to speak about a nightmare that she considered horrible: she lost her 2-year-old niece on the street and was very sad because she thought "[...] when will I have another blonde niece like her?"*

As an effect of historical contingencies that gain the strength of absolute truths, race, despite its questionable concept, imposes itself with all its power on the many racisms that permeate Brazilian society. They take the form of discourses that sometimes go through us in nightmarish dreams but that were present in the *conversation groups* – psychoanalysts could be seen as Xuxa because of their marks, class, and race.

Hence, a collation of thoughts is required. *Development*, when related to the idea of maturation of the individual, articulates conceptions about the biological destiny of humans, about *race* and *degeneration*. We situate, for example, that it was in the 19th century, at the time of a nascent biology, that the notion of race emerged, the same we operate, in one way or another, until today. It was Georges Cuvier (1769-1832) who "[...] introduced the notion of race associated with the inheritance of permanent and very distinct physical features in common among human groups" (Lobo, 2008, p. 193). In the midst of such a conception, discourses about *origin, heredity,* and *distinguishable characteristics* gained importance.

When going through the history of child psychiatry, we are faced with the fact, pointed out by Foucault (2006), that the classification of abnormal individuals predates the idea of *normal development,* an important historical development since it circumscribed the abnormal as a paradigm of the normal. Esquirol was one of the first physicians to organize, in the early 19th century, a classification of *idiocy* as a mental illness that distinguishes people in relation to their potential for *development* and, therefore, for educability (Bercherie, 2001). Even though this is not a proper classification in child psychiatry, as this specialty did not exist then, it is knowledge produced about childhood and its deviations based on the possibility/impossibility of becoming educated:

> [It is not] a malady, [but] a state in which the faculties are never manifested, or have never developed sufficiently for the idiot to acquire the knowledge which other individuals of his age receive when placed in the same environment (Esquirol, 1838, p. 76)[4].

In this passage, we underline the notions of *state*, *development*, and *knowledge* which are central to our discussion since they unfold as a set of norms that start to mark the ways of *being* and of *conceiving* adolescence, which are directly linked to the central institutions that affirm the national state: work, family, school, hospital, and prison. Furthermore, in the 1830-40's, closely tied with the repercussions of Esquirol's text, the *idiots* and the *feeble-minded* began to be discriminated and were sent to special hospital pavillions, freeing their parents to work (Lobo, 2008). Thus, although compulsory education in France was instituted in 1881, it only accentuated the classification between normal and abnormal individuals since this distinction already operated as a basic discourse.

We acknowledge the centrality of childhood as a problem that, throughout the 19th century, concatenated a significant production of knowledge and practices that began to affirm the medical-legal field as normative of social life, distinctly ruling over the fate of rich and poor children. Whereas the former were the responsibility of schools, the latter required the interventions of the bodies of so-called social control: "[...] In one case there is a necessary appeal to medicine and in the other a necessary appeal to the court, judge, and police, et cetera" (Foucault, 2014, p. 238) – diferent destines for poor and wealthy children present in European states but which will have unique effects on the nascent states of former colonies such as in the Brazilian case.

Despite the importance of differentiating the way in which each nation-state is constituted, we remember that the formation of this structure is tied-up to birth, territoriality, the mode of life's reproduction, and the legal-administrative framework, instances that will institute a form of sociability in which people gradually become subjects-of-law, a process that is underway in the Western world as a whole. Thus, that which caracterizes this transition is the coexistence of disparate modes of socialization.

Then, we enter the unfolding of the problem of the abnormal and its particularities in the newly-created Brazilian State, developments that constitute our history, and, as we will see, have been unfolding until the present day into what we identified in our *fragments* as an interpellation of race and class, entailing different ways of life in the same city; ways of life that engulf nightmarish dreams. We start by emphasizing that, at the time of Independence from its former Portuguese metropolis in 1822, a large part of the population of what came to be called Brazil was slave; a situation that already presents us with different problems from those of the metropolis, albeit linked to them. We emphasize, once again, that the concepts of *race*, *abnormality*, and *degeneration* appear at the same time and in direct connection.

Besides, 16 years after the country's political independence, the Brazilian Historical and Geographic Institute (IHGB in Portuguese) was founded, "[...] one of the first attempts by Brazilian intellectuals to group together elements that could be taken by a national identity or culture" (Kowalewski, 2017, p. 164). IHGB headed the organization and dissemination of the bases of what comprised the history of Brazil, being marked from the outset by narratives that tried to add a founding father with a concern for the mix of races. The essay by German scientist, Karl von Martius, winner of the competition "How to write the History of Brazil" in 1845, envisioned the idea of the miscegenation of the three races as the founding element of the Brazilian national territory despite the different levels of importance among them (Kowalewski, 2017).

Though Brazil was founded upon the discourse of miscegenation, Kowalewski (2017) alerts us about the contradictions that this narrative portrayed:

> In the narrative presented in its journals, the Institute relegated a specific space for indigenous, blacks and mestizos, who were not considered by its members as a constitutive part of national history, except when the focus issue was about miscegenations and hybridizations, whether biological or cultural. *These two ethnic-racial groups had disproportionate spaces in the articles published in its RIHGB: while the concern with indigenous people is part of the entire period covered with a large number of articles and debates, texts about blacks and mestizos are a rarity* (p. 165-166, emphasis added).

Silenced, Africans were considered foreigners in the national territory. Paradoxical silencing, insofar as a target of great concern, as registered at the "First International Races Congress" in 1911, in which João Batista Lacerda, then head of the National Museum, defended the theory of whitening the nation as the destiny of miscegenation in Brazil.

Sometimes defended as a policy, sometimes silenced as a foreign race, miscegenation marks national history in all its contradictions. The mestizo, the hybrid, has been, at times, the greatest uniqueness of the Brazilian territory, *the strength of its people*, and simultaneously, a mark of its impurity, a contradiction that determines the fate of the *abnormal* and the *degenerate*.

Then, returning to the repercussions of the discourses on the *abnormals* in Brazil, we emphasize a temporal issue, that is, we have identified that the medical-legal practices and discourses are not long in coming here but are established in their own way, incorporating and reproducing the historical logics of the constitution of the Brazilian territory.

As seen above, Foucault (2014) identified in France a difference between the institutions designed to care for children from poor or wealthy families. In Brazil, it was not otherwise, but with the singularity that, here, a huge portion of the population was disregarded as such,

namely the African slaves, former-slaves, indigenous, and mestizo; an amalgam with unique repercussions.

Within the formation of the Brazilian State and, more specifically, in the establishment of its educational field, instrumental in shaping this form of society, we concur with Villela (2000) that the unusual transfer of the Portuguese Crown to the colony, in the early 19th century, was indeed an important milestone for accelerating what was being centralized as an education system. Nevertheless, this stimulation took place mainly at the level of higher education due to the concern of forming the staff that would compose the state bureaucracy.

Despite being a concern that very early created laws and constitutional measures in Brazilian territory such as the General Law of Teaching of 1827 which, according to Villela (2000), was the first in Latin America, such measures and laws operated more as written texts than as effective educational practices. In addition, throughout the imperial history, national education effectiveness measures focused on the formation of basic education teacher using the first so-called *Normal Schools* as a model, which were the responsibility of the municipalities (Villela, 2000).

Without resources directly earmarked for education and without a national plan, basic education in Brazil was formed around a few Normal Schools and their leaders, composing a scenario restricted to only a few teaching methods and educators such as Benjamin Constant and Caetano de Campos, both from the late 19th century. Since the reach of education was limited to a few schools, it was tilted toward the wealthier classes. Also, basic education became a right only in the 1934 Constitution. Therefore, education relied on laws that were far from routine practices: there were few Normal Schools where few teachers applied to undertake their training program in a dynamic in which other teaching models coexisted, and the population about which the State proposed to act was much smaller than that who lived in that territory.

We identified the cry, as a break in the silencing of the coordinates of the conflicts at schools, which brings in the question of racial difference in the face of a simple presentation: "Wow, you are just like Xuxa!" A cry that reveals a country hence founded on *explicit contradictions* with regard to the gaps between laws and their daily implementation and on *implicit contradictions* when we take into account the question of *miscegenation* as that which was the taint of the territory and its singular strength, a question relegated to *silencing*.

Fragment 3: The community destroys
Talking a little about the Youth Cultural Center, the teenagers who made up the conversation group expressed their wish that the school had more possibilities because they got tired of always being in an old building in which everything was damaged. They said that there was always something bad in the school. It was the last day of the group before their vacation. They commented that when they returned from the holidays they would find all the toys damaged. We had a hard time sharing with them that the environment was damaged not because it was impeccable but because it was alive:

the school is open to the community, the community - of which they are also part - that feels "guilty" for spoiling the toys. We saw signs of deterioration, but they seemed too small for us to agree that the community destroys.

As we have seen, development issues carry the history of the country marked by a racial delimitation relative to whom occupies the place of citizenship or is relegated to another condition, that of abnormality. With this new fragment, we intend to approach the subjective consequences of the creation of *border areas*, that is, demarcations sometimes geographical, sometimes economic, sometimes phenotypic, sometimes gender-related, *zones* that delimit who is inside and who is outside, with different consequences. If the community spoils, and to some extent, we are the community, why did we not feel that the school was damaged and that we could spoil it? With regard to *Blondies* like the niece of the dream, could we consider ourselves part of that community?

The composition of these *zones* bears a direct relation with the formation of the colonies, as a peculiar territoriality in history. In his argument about necropolitics, Mbembe (2019) located the particularities of the formation of the colonies in relation to the formation of European national states, more specifically, the formation of the *Jus Publicum Europaeum* (European juridical order) that established both the juridical equality of all states and the determination of their borders. In this composition, colonies "[...] are similar to the frontiers. They are inhabited by *savages*. The colonies are not organized in a state form and have not created a human world" (Mbembe, 2019, p. 34). This territorialization creates a specific way of relating that clearly demarcates the threshold between legality and exception, men and savages, as well as those inside and those outside and is a rationality that concerns us until today. Not only does it concern us to date but it also operates as borders between territories that were colonies.

It is in this context that we return to the discussion on the incidences of practices and discourses on *abnormals* in the construction of Brazil to add that poverty was understood as a deviation from order and a concept that was superimposed on the concern with childhood. That is, poor children were condemned to welfare institutions, such as the establishments for destitute individuals and hospices, where they were mixed with adults; institutions that functioned as deposits for those who were unwanted in the cities (Lobo, 2008).

With regard to the incorporation of the different classifications of *idiocy*, the category of *intermediate states* was added here to encompass practically everything that was considered as deviations such as poverty, human race degeneration, the undisciplined, radical political ideas, as well as women who do not follow moral rules (Lobo, 2008). Thus, *disposable body*, *social danger*, and *social burden* are linked as a mode of discrimination, which is a combination that remains in operation until today (Lobo, 2008). This connection turns the identification with the *community that destroys* into a sign of impotence: the adolescents in the group, who belong to the community, identified with us, who are not from the community, in an attempt to avoid being treated as *expend-*

able bodies, *social danger,* and *burden*. These are elements playing out in the scene and, as discussed above, in the *adolescent* transition from the family scene to the social scene, they can massively identify some of the adolescents in the place of devaluation.

We hope to have made clear the correlation among *development*, *poverty*, *race*, and *social danger* that began with the founding of the Brazilian State. Evidently, the consequences of such engendering took different directions throughout the 20th century, but our focus is the fate to which certain adolescents continue to be condemned: most fill the vacancies in social assistance institutions, lead violent death rates, and find openings at newly-universalized schools which, in many places, lack the necessary conditions for quality education.

Adolescent Knowledge: Adolescence as a Stage of Development and Adolescence as a Position in the Social Bond

Adolescents are distinctly marked in our social fabric; some imply social danger and fortunately, resist being identified as the community that is seen as *disposable body* and *social burden*. Other adolescences can be identified with the ideal of *pure happiness* (Rosa, 2011) in a complex game in which both the developmental concept of adolescence and the crossings of *social danger* that were established here are entangled.

Within the developmentalist logic, adolescence is identified as a universal stage and a homogenous territory. It is a stage marked by hormones, bodily changes, an enviable energy of *discovering the world*, and mood swings. All these changes shape the adolescent's identity, responsible for the future identity of the individual (Coimbra; Bocco; Nascimento, 2005). Not marked by differences in territoriality and unlike the way in which social strata are signified, such conceptions individualize and blame subjectivities: "[...] the way each one faces and resolves this phase will be determined by the individual and his capacity , or lack of it, to deal with his development issues" (Coimbra; Bocco; Nascimento, 2005, p. 8).

We see then that the interest in the phenomenon of adolescence as a biological stage, which would inscribe a subjective time within a specific developmental context, serves precisely to make the social field not responsible for its effects on the construction of subjectivities. By naturalizing the time of adolescence in a stage of biological development, the thesis of a split between social and individual is accentuated; by privileging the structural aspects of individuation, the impacts of the social determinants on the construction of subjectivities are masked. In opposition to such forms of understanding adolescence, based on a process of progressive development in a straight line toward adulthood, psychoanalysis understands that the awakening of adolescence, as Rosa and Huerta posit, is a necessary psychic work for "[...] the subject's position on three aspects: the support of his uniqueness and his difference; the mode of bond that he will establish with otherness, particularly with the Other sex; and as to the place he will occupy in the social

bond" (2020, p. 6). Hence, it seeks to restore to the adolescent the entire dimension of the conflict inherent to the subject's emergence, showing the lines of force at play: loss of the imaginary ideal, mourning, and encounter with the Other sex.

This notion of conflict is central to Freud's theory of sexuality. He rarely used the term adolescence in his study but employed numerous references to the term puberty – the term adolescence was not yet part of the social imaginary of Freud's time. Perhaps, that is why he referred to the term only in a sparse and imprecise way in the course of his work, opting for the use of *puberty*. However, even the term puberty suffered some transformations of meaning in Freud's work when passing from the field of biological development to acquiring the dimension of a rite of passage to the social scene where the encounter with the Other sex is updated and inscribes the malaise of social ties in the heart of the adolescent subject.

Certainly, the Freudian theory of sexuality elaborated as of 1905 in *Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality* (Freud, 2016) pointed to an organization classified into three stages, namely auto-erotism, narcissistic, and object relations. If these stages reflect a certain progressive character of human sexuality, we should not ignore that what is central to Freud is less the developmental dimension than, especially, the pulsional conflictuality that underlies each stage and the ways of resolving the conflict, which is always unique from subject to subject.

In Freud, we can say that for the development of human sexuality, it is necessary to repress incestuous infantile sexual impulses and then a second later, to veil in adolescence of those same impulse motions that will be brought up again at this stage of development, in which the maturation of the body reactivates a significant discharge of sexual (pulsional) energy that can no longer be contained by repression.

In the words of Matheus (2008, p. 622):

> It is understood that puberty can sometimes act as a trigger for the second stage of sexuality, but not as a necessary condition. It is, above all, from the *gaze of the other*, or from the mirror image that he announces, that a foreign body appears to the subject, a new component in his psyche that does not find a record among the available symbolic resources. This gaze and image are not tied to the concreteness of reality, since the later is supported by the symbolic field that underlies and accompanies it. From *reality*, one seeks at least one *grain* that serves as a support for the real to be triggered by the strangeness of the other's gaze. It is for this reason that the adolescent moment is immediately independent of puberty, as it is linked to the senses which that body conquers in the bonds where it is inscribed.

During adolescence, the subject is summoned to reframe all those pulsating motions that had been dormant until the latency period. From this work of attributing a new meaning to the sexuality that was

asleep, something remains and resists meaning, "[...] a meaningless re-mainder – the traumatic one – from which the psyche is *organized*. This remainder concerns both the sexual directly considered, as well as the narcissistic issues that come into play due to the conflicts of author-ity and power" (Matheus, 2008, p. 622). It is this new veiling of the real of castration that will allow the adolescent to go against the Other sex when he/she can endure the trauma of castration through the construc-tion of a fiction that takes care of the sexual, of his desire as a subject: life project and love project. But to that end, to make the transition from the family scene to the social scene, the adolescent must be able to find possible places of existence within the *socius*; places of belonging.

It is to that extent that we can say that the awakening of adoles-cence occurs in the (dis) encounter of the newcomer to the social scene when he/she realizes that some masks fall off. Without such masks, sedimenteded between social discourse and fantasy, a stray movement takes place without imaginary certainties and anguish in the face of the eruption of the real. Therefore, the adolescence process will not only be the awakening but also the work of recomposing in a game with the veil and the masks, a fictional narrative.

> *Fragment 4: 'Is it true that animals eat us when we die?'*
> *In the conversation group made up of teenagers who volunteered to be there, a desire that had come as much from a curiosity to speak with psychologists as from the explicit recommendation from the school staff that some were to talk to psychologists. The topic they talked about most that day was fear; the time was almost over; fear of death; suicidal death. Questions about what happens after we die in a mixture of horror and enchantment: "Is it true that animals eat us when we die?," "Is it true that vultures can bite us even if we are not dead?" We agreed that this would be the topic of the next meeting.*

Space to talk about fears, fears of death, death that implies a mark of mourning. Knowledge that circulates in another way, knowledge and questions that produced knowledge. Questions that mark a time of rup-ture between the childhood body and the adult body. Could we think that the question about the vultures would unfold into questions about the vultures that eat the body that we had? We formed a space to be able to talk about fears, which, in the fourth *fragment,* focused on the fear of death but which was also the fear of depression, cuts, and sex. Fears that were composing a theme of interest for that group that was formed and that continued during the period of a year with some fluctuations.

When we resort to the psychoanalytical notion of adolescence, we are not surprised that the theme of fear of death is one of the first to ap-pear and remain throughout the meetings. For psychoanalysis, being a teenager is a time of passage that involves the elaboration of structural mourning of the childhood parental ideals, the first friendships, the imagined loves, and the infantile body. In this sense, the time of ado-lescence can be considered as a *time of conclusion* which, in part, could explain a certain prevalence of themes of life and death in the discourse and in the modes of transition to the adolescent act.

As Freud (2010) points out, in *Mourning* and *Melancholy*, two destinies announce themselves to the ego when confronted with the imperative of abandoning the first objects of love, victim of the interdiction of incest. One of the possible destinations for the adolescent subject is to follow the "normal" path of abandoning the object, accepting the painful suffering implied in mourning, and being content with other objects in the social world. Another possibility would be to refuse to replace the object, hence falling into a melancholy trap.

We can then relate the adolescent's entry into the social scene to a process between mourning and melancholy, which implies losing one's place in the parental ideal in order to launch the search for a place in the social field, from which become a subject in the identification game and in the object choice.

This process can take place as a *passage* or a *fixation*; as *mourning* or as *melancholy*. Being a *passage*, it seeks to constitute an ideal of the ego toward object choice. Being a melancholic *fixation*, the object investment is fixed to the identification, and the ego itself will be invested as an object of love or disaffection.

To conclude this part, we resort, once again, to our fourth *fragment*: how were the students of the *conversation groups* chosen? Despite the proposal to be a voluntary choice, we know – and we were able to talk to the coordination about this choice – that the fact that we are psychologists had led the adults – parents, coordinators, and teachers – invite some students to participate, *those* that they considered more subversive, more *deviant*, and, could we say, more inquiring?

We affirmed youth as an inquiring moment: "[...] it is unsettling, it does not easily resign to broken childhood promises of having a relevant place in the social structure" (Rosa, 2011, p. 8). Thus, in the transition from the family scene to the social scene, questions can be raised by adolescents; adults, who occupy the ideal of adulthood, are questioned for all their weaknesses and incompleteness. It is up to the adults to listen to teenagers in the difficult exercise of building conflicts and knowledge instead of taking their questions as ephemeral discourses and consequently silencing their process.

We move to the third moment of this article, that is, the period of *construction of the conflict*. We pointed out how what was elaborated in the *conversation group* about death, *deviation,* and adolescence asking for passage to question the teaching staff as knowledge that concerned everyone in that institution; A knowing that was produced in the group but was already going through classes, walks, and breaks; A knowing that told from a position: the importance of conflicts not being reduced to the body of some, thereby producing the fear of death and the identification with depotentialized and subordinate places.

3rd Moment – Effects of Adolescence: The Possibility of Building Institutional Conflict

Fragment 5: Bathroom
One year into the conversation group practically composed of the same teenagers, we established, together with the coordination, a meeting with all the school teachers to present the importance of conflicts. It was conduct-ed by Maria Cristina Vicentin, a researcher and university professor of our reference. In this meeting with the entire school staff assembled, the teachers socialized titles of scenes of conflicts experienced by them with the students. It was the turn of the title "Bathroom." The math teacher, who had given this title to his scene, started by pointing out that the scene had not played out in that institution and was an old scene. She described a very difficult and noisy class. A student, the prankster of the class, asked if he could go to the bathroom in the middle of the turmoil. With that question, the professor told us that she had lost her mind. She emphasized for us that she felt ter-rible that she had missed something and that she had failed.

Based on the discussion in this article, we hope to have made clear the guidelines of what we propose as *clinical-political* intervention in schools: the importance of sustaining the analyst's ethics in institu-tional listening, that is, in the construction of knowledge that comes from adolescents but that returns to the team. When open to listening, professionals can also operate with this knowledge, demonstrating that it is to be found in the shared discursive meshes. The conflict or scene, chosen by this teacher, surgically gathers the elements that we tried to work on in this article, namely the *school* represented by the classroom, the *deviation* represented by the funny student, and the address to the group of which we were a part, which represents the possibility of sus-taining the conflict as a collective rather than an individual issue.

Conflicting scenes that most of the time are treated as failures of individuals and which, as we intend to have demonstrated, retell a his-tory, that is, a history of the conflict and the history of how we become what we are. Why are conflicting scenes experienced *as individual fail-ures*?

The answer, if it can be provided, would need to take into account the cruelty of living in a system of capitalist where the destitution of our position is at stake all the time – evidently, for some more than for others. Thus, *conflict building* means locating it and addressing it to the collective. Hence, the importance of returning the knowledge that ado-lescents produce to the teaching staff:

> The impactful presence of adolescents making school a field of "occupation" and "extension" of their existential territories suggests that the bodies of adolescents are pro-tagonists of ways of being and forms of resistance in the face of school culture, when they transpose or displace limits, configuring new spaces of expression and impor-tant fields of dispute for the construction of collective meanings. It also shows that the school can be a space for welcoming and experiencing this displacement of fron-tiers (Vicentin; Gramkow, p. 381).

We affirm that it is in the shared field that the subject experiences inventing himself/herself and inventing the world (Rosa, 2016), expanding the meanings of investigations and essays, linking them to the assumption that every action is a political action.

Finally, let us summarize our journey. We started from an assertion that produced a familiar strangeness: "Wow, you are just like Xuxa!"; a hard and fundamental question since it triggers the social places that were put. Practices and discourses constituted in a history that surpassed us and was reactivated in this meeting: White psychologists and Black students. Had we stopped in the nuisance, we would have shut up what operates as a conflict within us: the easy gesture might have been not to name the difference but it screamed in the student's voice and in our head, in search of a possible place in the thought and above all, in the institution.

However, this was the time of introduction, and everyone else would have to come so that the conflict could ask for passage and gain a place. Guided by the ethics and politics of psychoanalysis, we were able to listen to what was said to us and to ascribe the status of knowledge to what was being formulated. Like in an essay, we tried not to stop at the classic division between the subject and the object that operates in any research work. Although we know that this is a limit for modern thinking, we tried collecting *fragments* that together demonstrate the fragmentation of our reflections, the contingency of our habits, and the urgency to be able to create other lines of force; to be able to start *being Xuxa* and to then be something else, and to also fulfil our (school, mental health, family) function to question and accompany adolescents in their singular construction to enable them to allow themselves, on the one hand, an exercise in their erotic and, on the other hand, to assert themselves in a discursive bond in which, when telling their own history, they can also narrate the history of their time in contrast to the official history, illuminating the darkness of the bonds at play.

Notes

1 PSOPOL (Laboratory of Psychoanalysis, Society and Politics / IP-USP) produces research on adolescence and education. Check, in particular, the works of Ana Paula Musatti-Braga, Cristina Rocha and Viviani Carmo-Huerta.

2 We emphasize that the openness and partnership of the team at this school were fundamental for us to elaborate our ideas. We also emphasize that collective construction, a hallmark of this institution, was what was able to create the space for our elaborations.

3 All the Fragments discussed here were cut from conversation groups coordinated by psychoanalysts and researchers: Arieli Maciel Palácio Alvarez and Joana Sampaio Primo.

4 N'est pas une maladie, c'est un état dans lequel les facultés intellectuelles ne se sont jamais manifestées, ou n'ont pu se développer assez pour que l'idiot ait

pu acquérirles connaissances relatives a léducation que reçoivanent les individus de son age.

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