

The analyst and his bet

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Within what we could consider an epochal climate, freedom is cut out as a privileged signifier of what is understood as a clear extension of its domains. The freedom of movement, the freedom to access knowledge, now configured as a floating mass of books, classes, music, which we can access without going through a teacher, a guide, a bookseller, or paying a copyright. That of renting a womb to have children, freezing eggs to have offspring at will, beyond the restrictions that biology imposed in other times. That of being able to choose one's gender, trying to free oneself from the anatomical determinations of sex and, at the same time, to demand that anatomy - indeed, medical power - adapt the body to that choice, defying and at the same time fulfilling the Freudian maxim that "anatomy is destiny", since the freedom to change destiny curiously brings with it the right to modify anatomy.

"Yo nena, yo princesa: Luana, la niña que eligió su propio nombre" is a book written by Gabriela Mansilla, mother of a trans girl. It is a diary that begins in 2011, when Luana is 4 years old, and ends in 2013, when she gets her ID as a girl. She is known for being the youngest person in the world to have achieved this change. I am not going to dwell, on this occasion, on the details of the book, about which I have already published a work in which I detail the points that, from the mother's point of view, aim to account for the change of gender identity of her son Manuel. I would like to highlight, on this occasion, those that have a bearing on the question of freedom:

The emergence of a desire to be a girl, which the mother recognises and situates at the age of two. Although we are not sure if it is a desire in the psychoanalytical sense of the term - we lack the elements to define whether it is a command, a push or a desire - we can consider it as such, at least for the moment.

2.- A second moment, where the mother goes to a neurologist, a psychologist and a psychoanalyst, who fail successively in the face of the child's worsening condition and certain ailments from which he has suffered since he was very young: insomnia, eating problems, hair loss. Faced with the attempts of some of these therapists to get him to accept his male condition, the child becomes upset and hides his female clothes or wears them secretly. At the age of three and a half, he pulls his hair, bangs his head against the wall, bites himself.

When watching a National Geographic documentary on transgender people, the mother immediately recognises her son: "That's what he has. That's it. From that moment on, the mother is

reassured because she finally finds a signifier of what her child has. This signifier names all of the child's ailments, giving certain signs a meaning different from that of an illness, a picture of anguish or a mere neurosis. The mother withdraws him from treatment and, this is her choice, consults a specialised service.

4.- On 31 July 2011, Gabriela notes with curious precision in her book, her son Manuel, aged 4, shows up with a long t-shirt of hers that looks like a dress. And he makes a declaration: "I am a girl and my name is Luana. And if you don't call me that, I won't listen to you. From this, the mother infers that "That's it, there's no turning back. She chose a name, a woman's name, she tells the father". The mother's account highlights the attribution of a definitive choice that "there would be no turning back" and which, it is emphasised, was made by Manuel alone and on his own.

After this episode, Luana's mother decides to go to the service specialised in trans identities, which belongs to the Durand Hospital, where she is referred to the psychologist Valeria Paván. Ms. Paván is an activist and coordinator of the health area of the Argentinean homosexual community (CHA) and confirms the nomination: she is a trans girl. Based on this case, she directed the documentary "Yo nena, yo princesa", wrote the prologue of Gabriela Mansilla's book and also edited a compilation, recently published, in which all the professionals, school directors, teachers and LGTTTBIQ activists who accompanied Luana's change of identity talk about her. We can consider this publication as the non plus ultra of gender ideology.

6.- What is historicised both in Gabriela Mansilla's book and in those of the professionals and activists who led the accompaniment, what is centrally attested to, is the appearance of a trans desire, its emergence, the moment when a child says that he or she perceives his or her body as identified with a gender different from the biological gender, as a fact of self-determination. This self-determination effectively requires giving the child the status of a fully-fledged subject, i.e. an adult. If, on the one hand, the child cannot agree to carnal intercourse with his or her consent alone, because it is understood that his or her consent would be worthless as a minor, insofar as gender identity is legally separated from any sexual connotation and is enshrined as a right, the child's consent does count as a full subject. But what is important is not the legal aspect as such, but what it reveals about the ideology and the epochal horizon in which we practice. There is a part of society that believes in an innate knowledge and in a subject that could self-determine, without going through the Other. A subject who would have in himself the elements of his identifications, his choices, his orientations, which presupposes in each of us an innate knowledge.

The mother's story is built precisely on this hypothesis: that she herself, as a mother, had nothing to do with the emergence of her daughter's transgender decision. Today you are more of a girl than any girl I know, you chose your name, your colours, your dresses and dolls. You chose 'to be' and mum only supports you and accompanies you in your decisions, which I learned to respect seeing that you felt happier that way".

At the age of 4, Luana enters kindergarten dressed as a girl. Shortly afterwards, the new gender identity law was passed and the process of obtaining a DNI began. In order to achieve the change of identity through a judicial resolution, something that we could not develop here, the activists and lawyers decide to transform Luana into a witness case and, based on that, it is decided that Luana's trans identity would need to go through a process of joint visibilisation: "Luana's coming out would be developed as an appeal. The CHA hoped that Luana's claim would also be a claim of collective interest, of social interest: "...what many might consider a risky path - the potential trauma of the intimate exhibition of a minor - must be valued at its rightful point. Luana can be who she is, she can be named with the name of a girl with which she perceives and identifies herself, because she faced the dignifying process of visibilisation. Because over fear and stigma, she took the risk of questioning the laws of the State in search of recognition".

The media appearance of Gabriela Mansilla had an enormous repercussion. Letter to the governor and the president of the nation, the love of a mother in favour of the rights of a child was unappealable. There is, however, a tension between the visibility of a case that is self-proclaimed to be groundbreaking, such as the Luana case, and the care of intimacy, the founder of the psychic, even more so in the case of a 4-5 year old child. In the three books I am mentioning, Luana - and her mother - are supposed to have triumphed in a struggle, a feat that is considered heroic. Confronting the laws of the state", "winning a great cultural battle", "opening the gap in thought that Jacques Rancière speaks of", as the Academic Secretary Gabriela Diker of the National University of General Sarmiento affirms. No attribution, however excessive it may seem in the face of the real desires of a five-year-old child, is excessive for the enthusiasm that the case arouses among these specialists: "Luana is a little messiah, although such a comparison may be shocking for atheists and reactionaries. " And continues Dr. Alfredo Grande, Coordinator of the therapeutic team that assists Gabriela Mansilla and her children, "But Luana is the prophet of the times of desire..." "Let us be free, the rest matters nothing", said the father of the fatherland. And the

only possible freedom is the freedom of desire. We are only free when we are what we want to be... I admire without envy - which I assure you is not easy - Luana's freedom. And I associate it with the affirmation of another fighter for all freedoms, Rosa Luxemburg: The freedom of others prolongs mine to infinity"..."That is Luana. Your freedom has prolonged ours to new infinities. You deserve our infinite gratitude.

9. -While the possibility of an exchange between these militant psychologists and psychoanalysts may be important, it must be stressed that the differences between psychoanalysis and this kind of accompaniment are so profound that they require us to practice the kind of dialogue suggested by Freud in Lay Psychoanalysis, where one can never convince the other but can argue their differences and sustain their specificity, which is no mean feat in an age in which psychoanalysis is required to adopt signifiers that do not refer to its own terms and to leave aside others that, although essential to it, are not accepted by some other social discourse. For psychoanalysis, the subject is not free with respect to the signifiers that determine him, he has the freedom of forced alienation, without which he loses his purse and his life. He also has the freedom to do something else with those signifiers that determine him other than his mere subjugation. So there is a margin of freedom, even if its ostentation is always suspicious for us. Why emphasise Luana's freedom of choice at the age of four, raising it practically to an absolute ideal, if it is not to take no responsibility for the effects of my own intervention, insofar as someone is personally involved as therapist, mother, lawyer, militant in the advancement of this trans desire in the social sphere?

Wouldn't Luana's supposed freedom, which is exhibited throughout the book, end up being in part her slavery, since her story is re-appropriated by her environment, the projection of each person's ghosts, assimilated to total freedom which, neither for Luana nor for anyone else, exists? Is it the construction of a witness case, constructed as an "example to follow" on the path of a trans desire that aspires to a great social reform, a new utopian project?

It seems so. In a conference at the Untref in Buenos Aires, Judith Butler stated that she is excited about the possibility that many trans children will flourish. "The trans child does not have to be isolated, he or she has to be in communities with peers, so that they are not exposed to the family as the only social structure. We need a huge transformation in schools, in gymnasiums, in parks, so that trans children can flourish. Trans children need to be with other trans children, so they can identify themselves and enjoy life."

Jean Allouch recently pointed out an interesting take on the term 'freedom'. Lacan declares to a Belgian journalist: "I never talk about freedom". When freedom is on display, Lacan puts it aside. On 3 February 1972, considering it "indecent", he proposed that the inscription "Liberty, Equality, Fraternity" be erased from the walls of the French Republic; shortly before, (10 March 1970), it had been the object of a similar charge: "This attachment to fraternity without counting the rest, liberty and equality, is a curious thing, of which it would be convenient to perceive what it covers". What does it cover? In 1958 he judged all talk of liberty as being "by definition not only ineffective, but profoundly alienated from its end and its aim".

10.-If this utopian project exists, it must be recognised that psychoanalysis could never contribute to its formulation. The clinic always comes after the fall of ideals and not their enthronement, it pays its costs rather than collect its credits. Declared of cultural interest by the Senate and edited by the University of Gral. Sarmiento, we cannot know whether adult Luana will be happy and proud or horrified by the tenor of the confessions of her mother, her accompanying therapists, her teachers, her fellow militants. What we can know is that as long as there is a psychoanalyst, there will be a place where all this can be put to the test, these affirmations can fall, freedom can be read in its determinations and in the operations of alienation that preside over the structuring of the subject who is not without the Other, and separation can give rise to that little bit of freedom which, while not absolute, is not so little either. A place where the ideals of the analyst have been deposed to make room for those of the analysand, where the analyst's own desires give way to the desire of the analyst whose abstinence is not cowardice, nor lack of action, but, on the contrary, the possibility of the act. Ensuring the survival of this space, different from all others, is our bet.