

“Gane usted y ayude a la Teletón”: Neoliberal mechanisms in the Management of Social Wellbeing

“Gane usted y ayude a la Teletón”: mecanismos neoliberales en la gestión del bienestar

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Abstract: This article argues that neoliberalism must also be understood from its impact on the cultural sphere, and thus it shows how governmentality functions in Chile by analyzing the case of a television program. Specifically, using a “thematic narrative analysis” and various archival sources from 1978 to the present, I examine transformations in the Chilean Teletón over time. The results are clustered into three ‘moments’ that I label sensitization, identification and action, which link a social problem with a specific way of feeling and acting. In this way, it demonstrates how the management of both individual and collective well-being is promoted through the neoliberal organization of society. Finally, the conclusions state that to this day the mediation and pedagogical role of television cannot be dismissed.

Key words: governmentality, well-being, neoliberalism, television, Teletón.

Resumen: Este artículo se funda en la idea de que el neoliberalismo debe ser comprendido también en la esfera cultural, por este motivo busca mostrar cómo funcionan los mecanismos de gubernamentalidad a través del análisis del caso de un programa de televisión. Mediante un Análisis Narrativo Temático y considerando archivos históricos desde 1978 hasta el presente, se estudió el caso de la Teletón chilena y sus transformaciones en el tiempo. Los resultados se presentan agrupados en tres “momentos”: sensibilización, identificación y acción, los cuales vinculan un problema con una forma de sentir y actuar específica. De esta manera, se muestra cómo en el caso analizado se promueve una gestión del bienestar, individual y colectivo, por medio de una organización neoliberal de la sociedad. En las conclusiones se señala que, aun en la actualidad, el papel mediador y pedagógico de la televisión no debe ser desestimado.

Palabras clave: gubernamentalidad, bienestar, neoliberalismo, televisión, Teletón.

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Introduction

The phenomenon of Teletón¹ has been noticeably poorly explored in social sciences. Despite this show is increasingly contested by society due to its market “solidarity” and the image projected of disabled people and their rejection (Ferrante, 2017; Humeres, 2017), it is still a legitimate form of entertainment. Therefore, there is need for methodical analyses that help comprehend the mechanisms by means of which Teletón (ritual, campaign, governability device) produces links with population. In this way, the present article² comes from the interest in learning this show’s functioning and what the relations with the audience are for the purpose of analyzing the historic mechanisms by means of which it has rooted into Chilean society.

Teletón is relevant at Latin American level, as the model has been exported to Brazil, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Paraguay, Panama, Peru, Uruguay, and Venezuela, and even the *Organización Internacional de Teletones*, ORITEL [International Organization of Teletons] was created. Although this cultural product will take specific forms in each society, Chilean Teletón is a regional referent: the popularity it has historically accomplished, its broad media coverage and the amounts of money it raises are considerably superior in Chile. In this way, the Chilean version, in addition to being the pioneer, has a specialized communication team that advises the rest of Latin American versions (Fundación Teletón, 2013). In any case, by analyzing Teletón Chile it is sought to promote an analytical framework that may serve as a reference or comparison for other versions in the region.

Teletón is a phenomenon with various faces, therefore, by examining one dimension, the forms in which disability, childhood, “solidarity”, entertainment, fund-raising neoliberal philanthropic nature, marketing and publicity strategies merge and also because of this, its role as political platform. As long disability and childhood, and neoliberal solidarity have been studied in Chile (Ferrante, 2017 and 2018; Gutiérrez, 2014; Humeres, 2017; Energici, 2014; Román *et al.*, 2014), in this article I have privileged deepening, not completely excluding other dimensions, in the political aspects of Teletón, that is to say, as a device to manage the population’s social welfare.

1 This article refers to Teletón as an entertainment show, owing to this, the analysis does not consider rehabilitation centers or their tasks, as they were built later under the same name.

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The main argumentation of the present article is that Teletón had a particular function in disseminating neoliberalism in Chilean Society, as it allowed structural reforms to have a cultural correlate that accompanied the change of social model. In this way, by means of publicity and a wide variety of strategic marketing and communication techniques, which positioned the brands, entrepreneurs and the new private institutions, and their functioning, which would lead the neoliberal transformation.

The second argument of this work underscores the conjunctural characteristics in which Teletón is inserted; that is to say, this was not invented to perform this function of neoliberalism, the entertainment entrepreneurs knew how to exploit a unique concurrence to successfully effect their idea, at once, it provided an excellent mediation to introduce the new social model. Chilean Teletón transcended its influence as a television program, rooting into the national culture so deeply that after forty years (it began in 1978), it is still successful.

The first argument (Teletón and its dissemination of a new social model) will be substantiated by means of the empirical analysis of audiovisual material; later on, I will develop the social and historic characteristics that forged the aforementioned stage. Firstly, the country was being hit by a violent military dictatorship, society was divided between irreconcilable political and ethical stances, in the face of which Teletón was put forward by its creators as a moment for a "truce" (Bontempi, 2012).

Secondly, a few years after the dictatorship started neoliberal reforms were introduced, which also privatized health care. This scenario conditioned access to any sort of medical service to the individuals' payment capacity, or their families'. In this way, Teletón was installed in Chile as a fundraising campaign in favor of "crippled" children and was disseminated as necessary social work. In the third place, these transformations concurred with relevant technologic changes such as the expansion of television to the entire country (Tagle, 2009). Such transformation entailed an unseen power for the Governing Military Board, which became enabled to broadcast its unilateral messages to a large part of the population simultaneously, by means of frequent national live television broadcasts (Correa *et al.*, 2001). Finally, Teletón would appropriate the format of national live television broadcasts as no other television show had done it thus far, while it is still relevant for mass culture.

Among the possible analysis lines, this work pays special attention to the management of wellbeing by Teletón; in this way, the subtitle of this

article “Neoliberal mechanisms in the Management of Social Wellbeing” refers to a series of actions patterns that linked individual and social rewards. These mechanisms are broken down in the analysis of Teletón as a case, in which, in this article, *wellbeing* is used as a resource to account for something that may be thought as contradictory: neoliberalism and wellbeing. Traditionally, Welfare States have made a state management of areas which, in classic liberalism, were thought of always outside the market (Mirowski and Plehwe, 2009; Foucault, 2007).

Health care, education and prevision such as in Chile, before dictatorship, were organized by the State using public funds. Owing to this, when Teletón invited to individually “gain” by means of consumption as suggested by the motto “*Gane usted y ayude*” [Win and help], a new culture and a new way to solve social issues (which, in the pre-dictatorship socialist model was wellbeing) were introduced. Obtaining pleasure by making purchases and helping disabled children at once as a part of the national goal proposed the dual goal of individualizing social inequality, on one side, and on the other, collectivize help in a conspicuous manner. This form of governmentality, as explained later in the text, has had considerable success in a large part of society.

Consequently, the analysis of Teletón is also an analysis of the operating ways of neoliberalism, or else governmentality mechanisms (Foucault, 2007; Rose, 1993; Lemke, 2012). In the case of Chile, despite the authoritarian violence, with which neoliberalism was imposed, as well as the constitutional inclusion of this model implemented by the group of the so-called unionists (Fischer and Serra, 2004), it is also necessary to understand what took place in the cultural sphere. In this way, I will argue that communication media, especially television, had a privileged role to modify the culture of the 1970’s. In like manner, against the acclaimed current decline of traditional television, I state that television still has a preponderant role to model mass culture.

The present article was carried out considering three theoretical stances. On one side, I point at a contribution with a specific example and restricted to the sociologic debates of the justifications capitalism produces (Weber, 2001; Boltanski and Chiapello, 2002). On the other side, on the basis of the particularities of neoliberalism, the article discusses certain governmentality mechanisms (Rose and Miller, 1992; Brady, 2016; Lemke, 2012; Fougère, 2010) and finally, it tries to contribute to the analyses on the place of television and in particular, of Teletón in Latin American societies.

The argument is developed in four sections. Firstly, the case of Chilean Teletón together with the specific political and social conjunctures in which it developed are presented, at once, the place it had or still holds in national culture. Secondly, a theoretical discussion is exposed, in which the analysis is inscribed, mainly sociologist studies on neoliberalism, governmentality and some analytical perspectives of communication. Thirdly, some characteristics of the Thematic Narrative Analysis (Riessman, 2008) are presented. Finally, results appear in groups of three "moments": sensitization, identification and action, which are linked to a problem with a specific way of feeling and acting.

Chilean Teletón

In Chile, Teletón is a long-play television show (27 uninterrupted hours) and with national coverage by the end of the year, which has taken place as of 1978. This "television marathon" works as a fundraising campaign for disabled children, in which contributions are made by purchasing products of the brands showcased. The communicational scope of Teletón is enormous; as it is broadcasted nationwide (all the channels of *Asociación Nacional de Televisión de Chile* [National Association of Television of Chile] participate), it holds a privileged place in the communication media and society, producing an environment that is only comparable to presidential messages transmitted in this manner.

Moreover, the communicational accompaniment operates in the most varied formats: various national radio stations broadcast the show live adding to the national transmission; several communes lend publicity slots on public areas; newspapers and magazines cover the event; and political authorities are attendees. Owing to this, many communication professionals, entertainers, actors and actresses as journalists or public figures such as popular sportspeople or politicians fight to be part of the audience.

However, Teletón is much more than a fundraising campaign and a television phenomenon, as it has a correlate that produces multiple practices by the population. For example, thousands of Chileans change their consumption behavior to "help"; others paint the word "Teletón" on their cars together with a heart and the date of the show; a hundred thousand people attend Estadio Nacional to close the campaign; many join and even some take their televisions out onto the street to spend the night in groups watching the show; moreover, there are corporate money boxes placed in several public and private spaces, among other practices.

Therefore, it is not bold to state that Teletón is an important part of the Chilean culture and identity, which virtually 100% of the population knows about, while a large part of it, places at the level of national symbols such as the flag, Cueca (national dance), or the national football team (Cuevas, 2008).

In *Cuarta Encuesta Nacional de Opinión Pública* [Fourth Public Opinion National Survey] (ICSO-UDP, 2008), 70% declared they knew about and liked Teletón; 28% acknowledged being aware, though they did not like it; only 0,4 % declared not knowing about it (ICSO-UDP, 2008). This way, Teletón is also one of the most prestigious brands at national level. In 2013, this was chosen as one of the best three brands of the years by experts in the subject (Grandes Marcas, 2019). *Fundación Teletón* proudly recognizes that by means of its work it continually improves the image of their strategic partners' brands, for "not only rehabilitation is physical, but also emotional" (Teletón, 2019). The social response stirred by this phenomenon is considerable and cannot be reduced to a single skillful method to sell at the expense of the image of disabled children.

Sociology, neoliberalism and communication

The question about the operating of capitalism and the corresponding social changes it produces have been an issue of interest for social sciences from the start and has expressions in the most significant intellectual traditions of the XIX and XX centuries. From Weber (2001) onwards, sociologists have tried to decipher and grasp the way changes in economic and political thinking permeate in various societies. Some inheritors of Weber such as Boltanski and Chiapello (2002) state that capitalism needs a justification for individuals to adhere it, for many wills are needed for it to function. Boltanski and Chiapello (2002) argue that money or economic rewards do not justify everything, this is why sense of action is required. As expressed by Weber (2001), an ideology or *esprit de corps* to justify the adherence to capitalism are necessary.

Nevertheless, Boltanski and Chiapello (2002) hue weber's thesis. As they explain, it is not possible that the only relevant for people to join capitalism is to provide personal-level justifications. Hirschman (1977) argues that justifications pointing at common good are more effective; while Boltanski and Chiapello (2002) put forward that the support for capitalism is based on a combination of individual and common-good justifications to guide

action. The analysis of justifications in capitalism is a relevant topic for sociology, which searches for the creative role of capitalism.

This harmonizes with an analysis of power, as the proposal by Foucault (2003), in which it is understood that merely negative power is unable to produce something; it would be a sort of anti-energy. It is not enough to repress and force, for the most effective power is exercised from creative energy. In this way, if it is necessary to seduce, to persuade (a basic maxim of communication studies); the persuasive characteristics of capitalism have to be understood as well, or specifically its neoliberal version, its justifications, or what others have called ideology or spirit.

Chile has been pointed out by many as an exemplar case of installation of neoliberalism, for as it is widely known, this country "was an early stage of intensive experimentation with neoliberalism applied over extended periods" (Plehwe, 2009: 32). There are few (or no) doubts on the connections of neoliberal policies set up in Chile. According to Dean (2014), Chile is the per excellence case by means of which the influence of neoliberalism on individuals and organizations may be empirically restituted.

Chilean neoliberalism has been object of international (Klein, 2007; Harvey, 2005) and national analysis (Valdés, 1995; Silva, 1995; Fischer and Serra 2004; Ffrench-Davies, 2003; Cavallo, 1989; Garate, 2012; Undurraga, 2014; Guzmán *et al.*, 2017). Likewise, links between Pinochet's regime and the Chicago School of Economy are well known and studied.

Governmentality studies and their limitations

Furthermore, as of the nineties, studies on governmentality appeared in social sciences as an analytical framework to problematize contemporary forms of government, which involve strategies and power relations, exercised inside and outside the State (Rose and Miller 1992; Brady 2016). Adding to this, as pointed out by Lemke (2012) integrating forms of knowledge, power strategies and technologies of the self; this standpoint has made it possible to offer a fuller explanation for the social and political transformations as they unfold.

However, this Eurocentric analytic line (Lemke, 2012) has to be complemented with a perspective that allows better pondering the specificities of Latin American countries. After all, a Latin American neoliberal society is not the same as a European post-welfare state neoliberal society, as neither are their governmentality mechanisms.

In the task of accounting for the complexity in contemporary forms of government, academicians largely refer the art of government or behavior of the behavior —as pointed out by Foucault (2007) in his courses in *Collège de France*— of “advanced liberal” societies. This last denomination refers to the capability of governing “by means of regulated elections of individual citizens” (Rose, 1993: 285). In this way, “liberalism noticeably differs from other government rationalities because it considers the need of people not to feel ruled: it means governing free people” (Fougère, 2010: 427). This meaning is useful to mention some of the current problems of governmentality studies.

Furthermore, for some time now, the concept of neoliberalism has been under revision by a number of scholars, who noticed it was turning into a metanarrative (Peck *et al.*, 2010), which was used by and large, without the need to define it (Thorsen, 2010). In like manner, it was often said that neoliberalism encompassed an excessively wide variety of phenomena (Boas and Gans-Morse, 2009) frequently exaggerated (Dean, 2014). Plehwe (2009) argued that the ambiguity and excessive use, and also the complexity of defining neoliberalism have frequently contributed to deem neoliberalism an exaggerated invention of the left. In this same line, Flew (2014) demonstrated that whilst the term neoliberalism was scarcely used before the nineties, this witnessed an exponential increase over time. In recent decades, this tendency has continued and even intensified, to a good extent due to the effect of the 2008 “Global” Financial Crisis and the ensuing search for social scientists to produce explanations (Lee, 2008).

In this article, I am interested in understanding neoliberalism from a limited definition such as that by Mirowski and Plehwe (2009), specifically Mirowski (2009) and Foucault (2007). For the purpose of this analysis, I will not develop this definition thoroughly, as it may be found in the references above, but I will point out that as opposed to liberalism, neoliberalism as “collective thinking” (Mirowski, 2009) needs an active state to promote and articulate the expansion of the market toward every aspect of life. Gane (2014) points that neoliberalism comes from the search for an alternative social science, capable of establishing rational monetary calculation as a valid principle for the action of all the spheres of life. As underscored by Mirowski (2009: 427), “it would be an error to consider that neoliberalism is close to the sphere of history of economy as such”. Owing to this, it is transcendental to grasp neoliberalism not as an economic theory, but as social theory / project.

Moreover, neoliberal solidarity forms have been analyzed by Energici (2014) in Chile as a widely extended form of contemporary governmentality. In this line, Román-Brugnoli *et al.* (2014) have demonstrated that solidarity has been forcefully linked to the sphere of emotions, while national identity to the side of neoliberalism, leaving the previous relationship between solidarity and social rights behind. For her part, Ferrante (2018b) has shown the way certain mendicity practices toward people with disabilities are strongly associated to an idea of solidarity in Chile, undermining the effective installation of a rights-based approach.

As well, Ferrante (2017 and 2018a) has analyzed this charitable construction of solidarity around disability out of Teletón and its rooting in Chile. Finally, it has been pointed out that the triple vulnerability of children (childhood, disability, and poverty) is used by Teletón to sensitize people appealing to solidarity (Humeres, 2017). To sum up, disability, "neoliberal solidarity" or charity and identity are closely linked in Chile. Further in the text, this relationship will be discussed.

Television and social mediation

In the case of the means here analyzed, television (especially in the 1970's and 1980's in Chile), as all the technology in use have situated characteristics. Martín-Serrano (2008: 115) analyzes the television as a means from a historic standpoint and defines it as a "technical machine that produces cultural objects". Not only does television produce culture, but also reproduces it. The researcher demonstrates that control is exercised implicitly through codes: "the existence of a broadcaster that controls information" can be hidden on television (Martín-Serrano, 2008: 133), which is observable in the intention of the information media to transmit an "objective truth". Part of the television potentiality to exercise a subtler control than other media would be give by its characteristic of index medium (Martín-Serrano, 2008). By means of codes, the reproduction of the regulatory system of society is tried, at once, images or situations are indexed to certain discourses and interpretations.

In this way, the qualities of television as an index medium and its place in culture account for a governmentality mechanism, which implicitly produces significations. Though, the power of television has limitations. The model of hypodermic needle (Lasswell, 1927), in which it was thought that the audience blindly followed the effects expected by communicational

producers has been obsolete for long time. Cultural studies have been particularly productive to create frameworks that allow understanding the complexity and multi-directionality of communication and its audience. It has been insisted that the decoding of the messages by receptors was as important as its design in the final signification. Hall (1973), one of the greatest exponents of this vision, referred the design/reception cycle as encoding and decoding; that is to say, if designers encrypt messages or scripts, the receptors or users reinterpret these directions as they use them.

Chilean television during the military dictatorship

As stated by Leighton (2012), the coup d'état started with the seizure of communication media and strict control was maintained along Augusto Pinochet's dictatorship. Correa *et al.* (2001) claimed television was the most controlled communication medium by the military dictatorship, as it was utilized to disseminate the new values of the society in creation: "in any case, television became a driving force of the market dynamics, helping to establish the cultural patterns that foster the development of capitalism supported on consumption propension" (Correa *et al.*, 2001: 306-307). Likewise, the Military Junta used the compulsory national broadcasts: a simultaneous broadcast live over all the communication media, television and radio stations, reaching a coverage without paragon thus far (Tagle, 2009).

In parallel, over this period, the technologic change to satellite television (1976), with which nationwide coverage was attained, concurred with the increase in the number of television sets (Sierra, 2006). That is to say, the authoritarian power of the military dictatorship adding to the expansion of television coverage generated a great dissemination power, which in 1978 was deftly harnessed by the producers of Teletón.

Methodology

The theoretical conceptual arguments above are directly linked to a Narrative Thematic Analysis (Riessman, 2008), of about one hundred communicational items of Teletón. Here lies its quality of accounting for what was said, where researchers consider certain theories and, in this way, direct the analysis toward their goals. Narrations are interpreted on the basis of the unicity they create and not in small fragments or categories. Narrative Analysis serves to study the way various histories socially

function to mobilize certain individuals or collectives, or else, to create the possibilities for certain groups to generate belonging and participate in action. A significant quality of Narrative Thematic Analysis consists in preserving the consequences (instead of codifying thematic segments), with a view to keeping the course of history.

Publicity posters from 1978 to 2014, the totality of songs, called Teletón "anthems",³ from 1979 to 2014, and some publicity campaigns were included in the analysis. Also, the stories of life of "symbol children", with which the show opens each year, were considered. The stories of the main producers of Teletón and institutional discourses complemented the research. As this show does not break links, but produces them owing to the surroundings such as the social and political context, the historic references are incorporated in the analysis as necessary.

Analysis

Teletón arrived in Chile in 1978 as a long-play program popularized under the hosting by Jerry Lewis in 1966 in the United States, with the premise of being a charitable program for children with muscle dystrophy. It was Mario Kreutzberger, known in Chile and in Spanish-speaking countries as Don Francisco,⁴ who after watching this format in the United States imported it to Chile in 1978, turning Lewis' *Telethon* into Teletón. Such as Lewis, Kreutzberger set up a show where disabled children are utilized to move and publicize certain commercial firms, orienting familial consumption as a way to "help".

However, the personal boost by Kreutzberger would not have yielded results without a favorable concurrence of events. As the official story tells, Teletón was an idea by Kreutzberger to unite a polarized and divided country by the end of the seventies, where "the possibility of not only making a campaign for the disabled, but also to unite the country" (Casarejos, in Bontempi, 2012). As demonstrated by other analyses on entertainment and television during the dictatorship (Durán, 2012), a proposal such as Kreutzberger's could not be more ideal in that moment. Beyond the story that praises the figure of a visionary innovator (Kreutzberger), the inception of Teletón is better understood considering the addition of conjunctural factors.

3 Music compositions accompanied by videoclips produced each year.

4 In this article, the name of the presenter (Kreutzberger) and his stage name (Don Francisco) are used depending on the reference made, that is, the individual or the television character.

The call to unity “without political distinctions” (Fundación Teletón, 2013) was reinforced over the nineties and is presently kept as one of its promises of apparent neutrality, as though it did not foster a social model over another. Likewise, such survival is supported upon a disquieting, no doubt skillful, mixture of continuity and change. On one side, the general structure of the television show has always been similar: first, the histories of children with disabilities are presented by means of an audiovisual that invites commotion, later on, various firms, personified in the stage by directors or sales representatives, compete for the largest check. Certainly, along the 27 hours the show lasts, many a thing occur —sports sections, humor, female models, and of course advertisements—; however, the core argument of the show bases on the tragic situation of children and the overcoming of this helplessness by means of the economic contribution of firms. On the other side, and as explained later in the text, audiovisual language has been adapted to the fashion of the times.

As a way to expose the argumentation, on occasions I will adopt an explanation model, taken from the studies on Science, Technology and Society, more precisely from studies on science (Callon, 1986), infrastructures (Ureta, 2015) and public policies (Hamilton, 2011). By means of the exposition so far, what is sought is not a finished model of something that starts and ends, but a concretion of an actual process (Hamilton, 2011). Likewise, the moments are not pure, but overlap or complement one another. All in all, the expression of the moment allows observing a particular mechanism or strategy able to activate itself or not at various times. By means of the sensitization, identification and action phases the operating modes, which are as discursive as material, will be described.

Sensitization

“Let us be together in this crusade of love, called Teletón”, thus started the first edition in 1978, accompanied by an angelic choir in the background. The first part of the show is markedly oriented to sensitize with the univocal description of the life of children with disabilities. A key piece in the constitution of the emotional climate Teletón produces from its overture are the life stories of “symbol children”, with which each edition starts. In that 1978 version, the story divides into three times, firstly, a tragic introduction in which the children lived without the Teletón (slow music and somber voices); then, it is narrated they way the meet Teletón, the screen becomes colorful and happy music is played. In this discourse, children with disabilities

in Chile have to be fighters, their problem is approached as an individual tragedy which they have to overcome with their sole willingness, they have to walk, and make everything a “normal” kid does. Finally, when Teletón comes into play, the history presents improvement in the lives of the minors and their families.

For example, in 1978, after the audiovisual presentation, the camera closes up on the a deeply moved audience, mainly women profusely crying, covering their faces with their hands; hundreds of people who cannot hold their trepidations. This emotional climate is constantly reinforced over the 27 hours, while the camera operators neatly use the foremost close-ups: a pair of eyes on the entire screen to exacerbate the effect. In the closure of the first Teletón, which marked the pattern of language that still goes on at present, there was a chair at the center of a black stage; the light broadened to reveal an applauding audience. The spectacle concluded with a shocked Don Francisco, kneeling, resting his cheek and nose on the face of the “symbol child”.

By observing the set of communicational items referring to disabled children (especially stories of life, anthems and official posters), it is evinced that the construction of disability as an individual tragedy is used as one of the main sensitizing elements, which allegedly represents infantilized disabled individuals.⁵ For example, the 1980 anthem sang: [in a child’s voice] “*Déjame creer que puedo ser feliz, dame una razón para vivir. Solo un pedacito y nada más, de todo tu corazón*” [Let me believe I can be happy, give me a reason to live. Only a little piece, and nothing more, of all your heart] (Anthem “*De pie en la esperanza*” [Standing for hope]). Sensitization is one of the declared strategies of the production team (Fundación Teletón, 2013) to stir participation. Apart from this, sensitization has many possible forms, and from such repertoire producers decide to dramatize the life of a young children.⁶

If, as stated by Illouz (2007), emotions are cultural meanings and social relationships, after 40 years (in 2018) of repeating this same discourse, there is a society that has learnt to feel and respond to such repertoire.

5 In 2004, *Primer Estudio Nacional de la Discapacidad en Chile* [First National Study of Disability in Chile] was carried out (Zondek *et al.*, 2004), it points out that most of disabled people are adults; only 5,7%, children between 0 and 14 years of age. However, in Teletón, disability is synonym to childhood.

6 As I have pointed out, this tragic vision may be revised in other works (Humeres, 2017), as well as the rejection of those who were protagonists.

Identification

In this show, national identity has been approached according to each epoch; for example, after 1998, in the context of Chile's participation in the World Cup, flags, songs, colors and national symbols are increasingly abundant. The national football team classified and everything indicated that Teletón organizers exploited the "national union" sentiment experienced in that moment. In such year, in point of fact, a song created for the supporters of the national football selection was adopted and sung in Estadio Nacional: "*Chileno, chileno, chileno de corazón identificate con Teletón, chileno de corazón*" [Chilean, Chilean, Chilean at heart, identify with Teletón, Chilean at heart] (1998 anthem: "*Chile se identifica con la Teletón*" [Chile identifies with Teletón]). The annual "challenge" of Chileans was thus re-affirmed, a pseudo-sport event, but one in which everyone wins.

As noticed, national identity is at the core of the motivational strategy, supported on a discourse on the unity of Chile, committed, solidary, generous; for example: "*Chile tiene corazón*" [Chile has a heart] or "*demostrando nuestra fuerza nuestra unión*" [displaying our strength our union] (1996 Anthem: "*Otro paso adelante*" [Another step forward]). Such national sentiment stirred by Teletón underscores the use of national symbols such as the national flag, cueca (national dance), football supporters' songs and clamors such as: "*Vamos chilenos*" [Let's go, Chileans].

In the search for *the national*, the 2003 anthem starts with an imitation of a Mapuche⁷ ritual, and by means of typical instruments such as *pifilca* and *kultrún*⁸ TN the following rogation was simulated: "*Dame tu mano, ponte de pie ¡acuérdate!*" [Give me your hand, stand up, remember!] (2003 anthem: "*Teletón es tuya*" [Teletón is yours]). Furthermore, the idea that helping does you good was promoted. The idea of the song is thus illustrated: "*Si sientes que te duele la tristeza, y estás cansado de esperar, abre las puertas de tu corazón y sentirás la alegría que entrega el amor*" [If you feel sadness is hurting and are tired of waiting, open your heart and feel the happiness love delivers] (all the songs are performed by the most popular singers at the moment). "*Todo un país recibe dando*" [An entire country receives giving] is a phrase that accounts for the possible emotional gratification or reward in the identities of those who participate.

7 Indigenous people of Chile.

8 TN *Pifilca*, a flute similar to a whistle; *Kultrún*, a percussion instrument.

In recent times, and resorting to the performers in vogue, the communicational tone has become more "joyful": "*Sale cada día un nuevo sol, siempre todo puede estar mejor, solo hay que pensar que todo va a estar bien y siempre sonreír chilenos y ser positivo desde el alma, siento felicidad cuando veo que estamos Unidos*" [The sun comes up every day, everything can always be better, you only have to think everything will be alright and always smile, Chileans, and being positive from the soul, I feel happy when I see we are United] (Con la fuerza del corazón [With the strength of heart], 2011).

The proposed national union represents the puerility Teletón fakes, in its language for children and children-adults, which intends to nullify political debate and the possibility of coexisting in the difference. At present, unity as an important part of the national identity and the "challenge" of the whole of society are already indissociable after using this resource in all the communication campaigns. For instance, in 2012, the official anthem was: "*y vamos Chile, falta muy poco, si ellos no se rinden nosotros tampoco [...] puro corazón, es la Teletón [...] demuestra tu amor, es por los niños de mi lindo país*" (and let's go, Chile, we're very close, if they don't give up, neither do we [...] a pure heart is Teletón [...] show your love, it's for the children of my beautiful country) (Anthem "Puro corazón" [All heart]). In the *videoclip*, a singer in vogue travels on popular emblematic sectors of the Chilean capital (for example, La Vega, *micros*⁹, shopping centers, historic center streets in Santiago, etcetera); there are also traditional characters such as *chinchineros* and couples dancing cueca.

Action

Just as creating commotion and union, heart, fraternity, fellowship, etc. are mentioned, commercial messages are broadcast: "*Piense cuánto puede ayudar con solo consumir Néctar papaya y frambuesa Andina*" [Think how much you can help only by consuming Andina papaya and strawberry Nectar] (Teletón-Cocacola, 1980). Or else, as noticed in the advertisement of *Almacenes París* in 1982:

[Kreutzberger]: "This is the last week of Teletón, and now more than ever, *Almacenes París* has incredible offers for you to win and help Teletón". [Voice over]: "Tartan dress with hems \$1.490. Bikini, various models \$ 850". [Kreutzberger]: "This way you help Teletón". [Voice over]: "24-piece cup set \$1.490". [Kreutzberger]: "Last week of Teletón, come to Almacenes París, there are two reasons: Teletón and prices" (Teletón-Almacenes París, 1982).

9 Public transport buses in Santiago.

In this way, we notice that after (or during) sensitization is time for action and to do so, this action is oriented toward purchasing, preferably the sponsoring brands. In the quotation above (Almacenes París advertisement) may be interpreted as what Boltanski and Chiapello (2002) call justifications, individual and common good, as noticeable in the phrase: “*Gane usted y ayude a la Teletón*” [Win and help Teletón] and “[por] la *Teletón* y [por] los precios” [[for] Teletón and [for] the prices]. In this discursive relationship, buying in *Almacenes París* literally means helping a disable child. The relevant in this discursive act is performative (Butler, 2010), for, indeed sponsoring brands increase their sales in the campaign months.

The discursive relation above, however, is not enclosed to the commercial spaces of the show; in point of fact, there are no purely commercial or purely moving-sensitizing spaces, these are merged. For instance, in the first Teletón, the “symbol child”, a six-year minor with noticeable physical disability, in the arms of Don Francisco reciting all the sponsoring brands in gratitude: “I thank Ace, Costa, Té Supremo, Cola Cao, dos en uno...” (Teletón, 1978). By means of this action, the boy incorporates or embodies all what Teletón represents and proposes: childhood, disability, tenderness, humor and the special consideration of the brands by the audience.

Rose and Miller (2008) state that certain practices which merge psychology and marketing constitute the political economy of subjectification, in which consumption technologies in concurrence with commercial narratives establish a public habitat of images. This would be, according to the authors, a sort of everyday pedagogy that produces specific dispositions. In the case of Chile in the 1970's-80's, no concept could describe as well the role Teletón had in teaching a new way of feeling and acting. Particularly in the 1980's decade, discursive relations that link charity and market were utterly novel in Chile.

An instance of the cultural pedagogy that accompanied the neoliberal reforms is the public presentation of *Administradoras de Fondos de Pensión*, AFPs [Pension Fund Administrators], a consequence of the 1981 prevision reform. AFPs were a totally new prevision model, thereby, they had to be presented and any shadow of doubt about this model cleared. As an example, the transcription of an audiovisual item of AFP *Provida* publicized in Teletón in 1981.

Each time the sun rises comes up at the dawn of a new day, the country resumes its good endeavors using its full strength. With this creative energy, the provision reform, which is the most important social transformation in 1981, becomes the most prodigal seed, in which tranquility is presently built with a view to complete fulfillment in the future. This is the vital full-of-hope philosophy that *Provida* practices, the new provision, and it is the first, due to the solidity of the investors who promoted its creation. The first because of the personal attention and excellent service offered in its seventy offices across the country. The first because of the half a million people who trusted in us joining *Provida*. Because of these facts that ensure your safety, *Provida* opens its arms and invited all the affiliates of other AFPs to participate in the contests and events organized by our good *Provida* Family. Which today delivers this air ambulance to the fourth Teletón, as a contribution for this beautiful Chilean endeavor reaches the farthest corners of the country to help those in need. And with this spirit, *Provida* fully identifies with Teletón because it is an effort of all Chileans and because mankind shall shake hands with itself. Because none can understand better than *Provida* the motto of Teletón: Together, everything is possible (Teletón-Provida, 1981).

In this instance, we notice that the reform to the provision system was publicized in direct connection with Teletón's prestige, and in like manner, over the show this AFP is associated with national union.

As noticed, the producers of the show used this privileged space due to its prestige, coverage and duration to transfer such confidence to the new pension system. The call for help by means of personal consumption continues up to present. For example, in 2011, in an advertisement of supermarket Unimarc, Don Francisco is in one of the stores announcing: "We are waiting for you today in all Unimarc in Chile so that you can help us overcome the challenge. Choose Unimarc because your purchase is a smile for the children of Teletón..." (Unimarc-Teletón, 2011). In the meantime, dozens of buyers move in the background with shopping carts full of red heart-shaped balloons or carrying them in their hands. This is a particular case of the capability of television as an index medium (Martín-Serrano, 2008), in which a practice (help buying) is called for, is indexed to an image (consumers carrying hearts) and, at the same time, a brand (Teletón) with powerful social messages is associated.

Naturalization

Each year, the incumbent President, regardless of the political wing, attends the television show at key moments (opening or closure), occasionally contributing with a check from the government. This

public fund donation, which also comes from regional governments and from health care funds, make the State another private enterprise making donations. This is, at least, problematic in a neoliberal society as Chile, in which a notion of State that acts outside market activities is promoted. As noticed, not only does the State support, but is also an active promoter of and funds market activities (visibly in this case in Teletón), at the same time, it saves on child rehabilitation management. Additionally, and consequently, the social model of disability (Barton, 2008; Ferreira, 2008) or one based on rights¹⁰ are *de facto* excluded. Over time, all these ways of coexistence and management of “the social” have been naturalized in Chilean society.

Teletón is part of the national culture and feeling. More so, in Chile, it is said that Chileans “are champions of solidarity, of the love for hope in rehabilitation” (Rodrigo Cáceres, twenty years after being a “symbol child”, in Bontempi, 2012). Chileans as “world champions of solidarity” has moved from a repeated motto not only in Teletón, but in other situations shared on television such as the tragedy after an earthquake, tsunami, a series of fires or a mining accident.¹¹ In this way, Teletón and its feeling-acting model permeates the Chilean culture and its identity in a significant manner.

Limitations

One of the limitations of this research is the unilaterality of the sample; even if it has been said that television and culture produce mutually, only the discourses produced about Teletón were analyzed, disregarding the way population receives these messages, plus it subverts, modifies or rejects those proposals. Studies on the field of communication have demonstrated, some decades ago, that the effects of communication are not unilateral and depend to a good extent on the repletion and approval of contents by the audience.

In this way, despite the *Cuarta Encuesta Nacional de Opinión Pública* (ICSO-UDP, 2008) and a research by Ferrante (2017) give an account of this show reception, other studies may be carried out to deepen into the audience’s interpretations and to analyze the unfolding of Teletón in the various nations of the region. Finally, it is worth pointing out that

10 As a contradiction, for as pointed out by Ferrante (2017), about a decade ago Chile adopted (formally) a rights-based approach.

11 As when in 2010, 33 miners were trapped at 720 meters deep and were rescued after 70 days.

the medicalized model of disability of which Teletón is accomplice and active promoter as well as the consequences for children and people with disabilities, has been analyzed somewhere else (Humeres, 2017), thereby, notwithstanding their relevance, in this article, they are aspects incorporated in a tangential manner.

Conclusions

By means of three moments: sensitization, identification and action, I have intended to show the persuasive mechanism by means of which Teletón functions and enters into national culture. In conjunction with Teletón and its enormous prestige in time and space, presently, a model of disability and to solve social and individual welfare has been naturalized, amidst lack of social security and minimum living standards for people with disabilities, plus a deficient rights-based approach.

In this way, the television show is effective and exists in harmony with a social structure that operates under the same conditions, for Teletón is an example of intermediation between institutions, regulations and 40 years of neoliberal policies. Therefore, despite present-day new communications technologies have reconfigured the place of television in society, its mediating power cannot be dismissed yet.

The case, in contextual and historic perspective, also allows studying the communicational model as a part of social pedagogy functional for the transformation of a socialist society into a neoliberal one. Technologic conjunctures (expansion of television on the territory) together with political conjunctures (dictatorship, violence, and reforms to the health care system, privatization of public television) made Teletón possible as a model. In the studied case, one notices the links between individual justifications with some that may be called collective good, in the context of a society of individuals with no collective social security.

However, in a certain way, the explanation of justifications, as a rational argumentation, opposes to the vision of governmental mechanisms. As noticed, in Teletón there are various strategies, emotions, discourses and actions beyond rational justification. Therefore, the way in which Teletón works may be understood better from governmentality or the art of distance governing by means of desires than from the standpoint of Boltanski and Chiapello (2002). All in all, this does not necessarily imply to discard this last approach to the whole, it may be another variable.

Beyond the abstraction of the three moments I have proposed, neoliberal governmentality, no doubt, is more complex. Distance governing or establishing a behavior for the behavior (Foucault, 2007) goes hand in hand with mechanisms that are as discursive as structural, as symbolical as material. On one side, at discursive level, the action was stimulated: providing new discursive relations (“emotional rehabilitation”), disseminating new definitions (example, market solutions for social problems), structuring moral judgements (the individual effort is fundamental for self-improvement) and by means of promoting modes of action (“incredible offers for you to win and help Teletón”). All in all, as discursive or as symbolic as they are, emotional and identity components are parts of political actions. As explained by Larraín (2001), national identities produce feelings of loyalty, community, and fraternity that are able to move large masses. In this way, national identity is also a political process that produces specific consequences for the destiny of the nation.

Finally, an analysis of neoliberal governmentality in the light of research works by Mirowski and Plehwe (2009), and Foucault (2007), in relation with the analyzed case, allows underscoring at least two characteristics of neoliberalism: the active role of the State in the structuring of the social model of the market, and the modelling of all the areas of life according to market principles. Two issues that are different in liberal or “advanced liberal” societies (Rose, 1993) such as the European, reason why Latin American governmentality cases should critically consider European analysis paying attention to their own particularities. As noticed, far from subtracting itself, the State sponsors models such as Teletón under an apparent political neutrality, while at once, it promotes a social model, *i.e.*, the neoliberal.

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