
My Grandfather's other War

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The newscast is over and the nightly TV programming is broadcast. My grandfather starts looking for activities he could not find. He ends up in front of Cubavision and it seems he wants to get in there.

For moments his eyes cloud over, the blue in his pupils turns blurred. He began to remember that episode of his life, when he also participated in the struggle against bandits. It's been so many years since my father is already a man but his memories remain intact.

My grandmother was pregnant and he had to leave. Living in the hills that was imminent. It was necessary to overthrow those who were seeking to sow terror in the peasantry and in the newly-born Revolution. He did not think much, there wasn't much to meditate about. He knew that area like the back of his hand, and his rough hands began to guide the militiamen.

He was near Limones de Cantero when young Manuel Ascunce was murdered. He experienced every terrible crime. I did not understand and asked him why he thought those bandits reached those extremes of evil.

There was a lot of hatred in those people, daughter. That's the only explanation.

My grandfather hardly reached fourth grade. In his octogenarian head there is still no need for consolation, watching LCB series: "The Other War", directed by Luberta and broadcast on

Cuban television, he is moved and tells me that reality was much harder, very hard.

I knew some of those who joined Julio Emilio Carretero. They were farmers of the zone; we were like a family until they took another path.

He heard that the hanging of the young teacher took place when he was almost dead, but never knew in detail about the fourteen sharp wounds and bruises on his genitals. Neither my grandfather nor the ringleader noticed the eternal pain of his mother, Evelia Domenech and many years later he had the opportunity to meet her personally. There he fully understood her suffering.

When she speaks about that crime, her words sound laboured and I can only figure out her pain, because many comrades also fell in the attempt to overthrow those new enemies.

Those were worse than the other enemies. It is very difficult to understand how a person is firstly a loved one and something else later.

Because life is about choices, grandpa, some do not choose the right path. Then the years manage to show them how well or badly they did things. History does not exalt the losers; it is responsible for exalting those who fought on the side of right.

As researcher Eduardo Vázquez said: There is no argument from the vanquished that can erase even one of the stabbings given to 16-year-old literacy teacher Manuel Ascunce Domenech. But they also hung Pedrito Blanco, another literacy teacher aged 13. Reality is very hard. Very difficult task for those who do not want to see.

Translated by Jorge Mesa Benjamin / Cubasi Translation Staff
