

Narrating Continuity...

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Three years ago today, I knew about Fidel Castro's death. It was early in the morning and I was alone in Rio de Janeiro. Obviously, I read the news on the Internet. Social networks are somehow the geography of our nation, but I cannot weigh them up quite well.

Recently, a friend of mine shared with me a viewpoint that certainly makes sense. Certain groups of the Cuban socio-class are governing the social networks. And even though I have increasingly seen more ordinary Cuban citizens playing a very important role on the Internet against postmodern, liberal, social democratic narrative and all its variations — the goal is to attack the political system in Cuba, aiming at turning it into another thing, quite different indeed —, the truth is that in some groups, made up essentially of intellectuals and artists who claim to wish the best to our country and made noble causes their flagship, join forces with those who work for the international far right in the U.S. But they do not say a word about it while their visibility and influence grow bigger.

In the early hours of that November 25th, away from home, I knew about Fidel's passing on the Internet. Then I found the typical, aesthetically correct speech but weak in terms of principles of the Cuban "progressive" forces. They barely admitted Fidel's positive features and legacy — they granted at least that concession to him — but they later crucified him by alluding Republican formulas in liberal democracies with which they weigh up the world in their own image and likeness. I promptly run across bursts of hate from Cubans residing in Miami, euphoric and fired up, as nature had finally conceded them a shred of questionable fortune that an infinite amount of money and their government strategies had failed to achieve, as they would have wanted. I

also saw with great satisfaction other colleagues who had never been involved in political debates before, honoring Fidel. I also saw excessive idol worshippers who hurt no less. I saw ferocious fights full of insults as if there was no tomorrow. Then, I understood the real extent of what was being brewed in Internet — the perfect scene for a political struggle on Cuba. I distanced myself from all of these. I chose to imagine with growing nostalgia I was one of the seven million Cuban citizens who mourned in every square. My friends from the University chatted with me and described me in awe how students were gathering, surprised about their reaction. My family wrote me and it was another source of information.

When my Brazilian colleagues asked me about how I felt, with a very special curiosity, I confirmed that it was not another President's death for many people outside Cuba. Fidel had been, in fact, one of the most influential human beings of his time. A man who was annoying for the colonial, capitalist, global hegemonic order due to his imperative order of rationality, which meant transgression and subversion.

In days when the concept of continuity — while thinking of Fidel — is in the spotlight of Cuban official media, we would be fortunate if we can maintain the anti-hegemonic logic of Fidel's ideas in order to defend the conditions for the continuity of a social, anti-colonialist project in a world where colonial dominance is pretty sophisticated and frightening. It would be the continuity of change, the alternative, and the struggle for transforming the world; the continuity of hope. And this continuity must be championed, built, and narrated. As for Cuba, there are some who disguise themselves with a sort of aesthetic that introduces itself as avant-garde, when in fact, is quite the opposite. With the support of the most important economic powers of the world, although they labeled themselves as independent, all of them take profit of social networks to continue repeating again and again hackneyed formulas of liberal democracies as the only possible alternative, betting on another kind of continuity: the continuity of disaster.

Taken from Karima Oliva Bello's Facebook profile

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