

NATIONAL UNITY AND COHESION: LIMITATIONS OF CITIZENSHIP FOR TRANS* PERSONS IN CUBA ¹

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ABSTRACT. The rhetoric of national unity as the basis for building a new society is one of the inspirations in the implementation of policies in the current Cuban context. As an example, the National Strategy for the Care of Transgender People in Cuba aims at the social integration of trans* people, using narratives of national and unity cohesion. This work reflects critically on the limits of public policies and on how certain rhetoric calls into question their universality. To this end, we take into consideration some contributions from cultural and feminist studies and debates about radical and plural democracy. In the conclusions, we point out alternatives to the discourse on the integration of trans* people in Cuba through national unity and cohesion. Among the alternatives we take a distance from conceptions that think of differences only in terms of subordination and antagonism relations as well as based on the provisional nature of policies, their possibility of creating alliances, to be mobilized by the passions, seem more feasible to contribute significantly to improve the citizenship of trans* people in the Cuban context.

Keywords: National unity; cohesion; trans* citizenship.

UNIDADE E COESÃO NACIONAIS: LIMITES DA CIDADANIA PARA AS PESSOAS TRANS* EM CUBA

RESUMO. A retórica da unidade nacional como base para a construção de uma nova sociedade é uma das inspirações na implementação de políticas no contexto cubano atual. A exemplo disso, a Estratégia Nacional de Atenção a pessoas transexuais, em Cuba, almeja a integração social das pessoas trans*, recorrendo a narrativas de unidade e coesão nacionais. Este trabalho reflexiona criticamente sobre os limites das políticas públicas e o modo como determinadas retóricas colocam em causa a sua universalidade. Para tal baseamo-nos em contribuições dos estudos culturais, estudos feministas e debates acerca da democracia radical e plural. Nas conclusões apontamos alternativas ao discurso da integração das pessoas trans*, em Cuba, pela via da unidade e coesão nacionais. Dentre as alternativas consideramos que um distanciamento face a concepções que pensam as diferenças apenas em termos de relações de subordinação e antagonismo, assim como uma aposta no caráter provisório das políticas, a sua possibilidade de criar alianças, de ser mobilizadas pelas

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paixões, poderiam contribuir significativamente para incrementar a cidadania de pessoas trans* no contexto cubano.

Palavras-chave: Unidade nacional; coesão; cidadania trans*.

UNIDAD Y COHESIÓN NACIONALES: LOS LÍMITES DE LA CIUDADANÍA PARA PERSONAS TRANS* EN CUBA

RESUMEN. La retórica de la unidad nacional como base para la construcción de una nueva sociedad es una de las inspiraciones para la implementación de políticas en el contexto cubano actual. Como ejemplo de eso, la Estrategia Nacional de Atención a personas transexuales en Cuba aspira a la integración social de las personas trans*, recurriendo a narrativas de unidad y cohesión nacionales. Este estudio reflexiona críticamente sobre los límites de las políticas públicas y el modo en que determinadas retóricas cuestionan su universalidad. Para ello nos basamos en contribuciones de los estudios culturales, estudios feministas y debates acerca de la democracia radical y plural. En las conclusiones apuntamos alternativas al discurso de la integración de las personas trans* en Cuba por la vía de la unidad y cohesión nacionales. Entre las alternativas consideramos que un distanciamiento frente a concepciones que piensan las diferencias solo en términos de relaciones de subordinación y antagonismo, así como una apuesta en el carácter provisional de las políticas, su posibilidad de crear alianzas, de ser movilizadas por las pasiones, podrían contribuir significativamente para incrementar la ciudadanía de personas trans* en el contexto cubano.

Palabras clave: Unidad nacional; cohesión, ciudadanía trans*.

Introduction

This text deals with the problematization of the guidelines that assume the need for 'unity and cohesion' as a condition for an effective National Policy for the social integration of trans*⁵ people in Cuba (Castro, 2014), showing some limits and risks that such an argument can contain. One of the aspects that seem to us to be central to the policy of comprehensive care for transgender people in Cuban society refers to their social integration, expressed, according to certain perspectives of analysis, in their cohesion with other segments of society.

It is highlighted in the consulted works (Castro 2008; Castro 2014) the idea of trans* citizenship that is seen as negative for the so-called cohesion of values and norms system from the rest of Cuban society. It is also believed that the situations of exclusion that this population suffers in different spheres of social life are caused by the distance between his cultural references and those from the rest of society (Castro, 2014).

We consider that it is necessary to have some reservations in the face of arguments that both explain the causes of the social exclusion of trans* citizenship, as well as those that propose that his social integration would be resolved through his existence in harmony

⁵ We rely on the idea of trans* explained by Raquel (Lucas) Platero (2014) that this is an umbrella concept that includes a diversity of gender expressions such as transgender, transgender, transvestite and it distances itself from any pathological perspective of trans* people. However, in the analyzed policy, the term transgender is used, understanding that "transgender is that person whose gender does not correspond to the sex designated at birth"(Ministerial Resolution (Known as Resolución Ministerial nº 126, 2008).

with the rest of society. To develop our arguments, we will base the analysis on some theoretical keys developed within cultural and feminist studies and on the theory of radical and plural democracy (Laclau & Mouffe, 2015). These studies warn that cultural representations that build an idea of national unity as a monolithic block can be harmful and counterproductive. Arising from the idea of a nation, there would be the idea of citizenship to embody that imagined nation. However, along with the citizenship demarcation that embodies the imagined nation, the frontiers are drawn and the bodies that do not enter in the category of people with the same legitimacy as other segments of the population are banished (Butler, 2017).

In turn, the way we think about citizenship is linked to the type of society we desire, and to the relationships we conceive as possible – agonistic or antagonistic – to be established within the political community. Within this logic, public policies would come to be one of the many ways that the State appeals to manage this type of conciliation.

After explaining the theoretical coordinates that guide our reading of the subject, we briefly contextualize the Cuban scenario in terms of sexual policies, focusing on the National Strategy for the social integration of transgender people (Castro, 2014). In the conclusions, we pointed out some theoretical premises that would contribute to the establishment of a more democratic framework for a trans* policy in the Cuban context.

From policies and their political meanings: theoretical keys for analysis

One of the main risks in the design of public health policies is to privilege their view of mere technical tools to be developed by the Ministry of Public Health. It is customary to think that developing protocols that guide the technical performance of professionals is the central issue of public policies and that this aspect would exhaust their conformation. However, policies become devices that deal with the politician; this understood as “[...] the dimension of antagonism [...] constitutive of human societies” (Mouffe, 2015, p. 8).

Bearing in mind that policies seek to establish order in this conflicting scenario that the politician presupposes (Mouffe, 2015), one of their challenges is to take into account the disputes associated with the search for rights. As different power regimes tend to create social hierarchies for some groups over others, policies – as instruments to guarantee democracy –, need to take these clashes into account.

For Chantal Mouffe (2015), political identities are structured relationally, being the affirmation of a difference – often understood in a hierarchical sense – the precondition for their existence. The ‘other’ establishes the boundaries of the existence of the ‘I’. This premise is fundamental for analyzing policies in the field of sexual and gender diversity, a fertile ground in which we/they relationship can become particularly antagonistic, as it is assumed that ‘the they’ – constitutive exterior (Laclau & Mouffe, 2015) – threatens the existence of a ‘we’.

Precisely from the concept of constitutive exterior developed by Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe (2015), it is possible to understand that social identity is based on the legitimation of values that expel a set of ‘others’ – considered as opposites – from the sphere of cultural and politics intelligibility. Having recognized this issue, it would not be a question of aspiring to eliminate antagonism. On the contrary, what democracy presupposes is the formulation of the distinctions we/they in a manner consistent with the acceptance of pluralism and democratic values (Mouffe, 2003; Mouffe, 2015), that means, the democratic agonism.

In Judith Butler's (2002) reading on this idea of the constitutive exterior, the author points out that the configuration of a political sphere is linked to the acceptance of certain gender performances and the rejection of others. The delimitation of the policies subjects produces a gradual scale that identifies those who constitute the feared spectrum of those who are positioned in a privileged place in the sex-gender, racial, regional, age, and socio-class hierarchies, among others. Thus, the policies that may exist forward which subjects and under which conditions are established.

By this argument, it is understood the need to tension these regimes, which, by establishing a terrain of symbolic legitimacy and cultural intelligibility, deny a set of possibilities for other existences. This is especially relevant in the claims field for LGBTQI groups related to their rights. Stuart Hall (1992) alerts us to the unifying trends with which national cultures operate and to the strategies they address to ensure their expectation of homogeneity. One of these strategies has to do with circulating the idea of having “[...] a single people” (Hall, 1992, p. 62). According to this reasoning, class, racial and other differences do not matter because a national culture is going to build homogenizing representations that allow it to narrate itself as a large family (Hall, 1992).

The problem is that these representations of the united people presuppose adherence to normative regimes in terms of gender, sexuality, among others. The articulation of regimes that intertwine sexuality, gender, race and nationality contribute to creating citizenship patterns. Let us think of one of the speeches that have had a significant weight in the case of Cuba in the shaping of a national imaginary, pronounced as a tribute to the victims of the Crime of Barbados⁶. The final words of this speech affirm: “When an energetic and ‘virile’ people cry, injustice trembles” (Castro, 1976, authors translation⁷, authors emphasis). Even though Fidel Castro had spoken these words in 1976, they have been repeated every year in October, when the media and the national conscience remember this terrible fact in the history of Cuba. It is stated that this type of rhetoric has contributed to the emergence of the national myth that establishes that political invincibility is linked to heterosexual power (Hamilton, 2012). In this sense, it is noted that references to heteronormativity (Oliveira, 2013) and cisnormativity (Vergueiro, 2015) are regimes to those who are appealed to build national narratives of unity.

Questioning the nation's idea as a unified cultural identity allows us to understand the power games that subordinate differences and create inequalities, that movement that tries to “[...] stitch differences into a single identity” (Hall, 1992, p. 65). Likewise, thinking about the politician as a dissent, conflict, antagonisms space is extremely productive to understand “[...] who these political subjects are and how they are constituted in action” (Prado & Toneli, 2013, p. 353).

The configuration of citizenship (heteronormative and cisnormative) in the Cuban context: brief notes

Recently, a public debate took place in Cuba on the legalization of same-sex marriage, a proposal contained in article 68 of the Draft Preliminary Amendment to the Constitution of the Republic. The resolution for such a right can be considered a legal kludge

⁶ The Crime of Barbados is the name used to name the destruction, due to a terrorist attack, in a flight (CU-455) from the Cuban aviation, which was on its way from the island of Barbados to Jamaica and then, to the Cuban capital (Havana). This unfortunate incident occurred on October 6, 1976. The 73 people on the aircraft board, a DC-8 Douglas, were killed in the hit her to worst attack of its kind in the Western Hemisphere.

⁷ Cuando un pueblo enérgico y viril llora, la injusticia tiembla.

(Bento, 2017), because of being treated as a legal arrangement that does not introduce substantial changes in the lives of the historically marginalized populations. It is worth noting that, since 2006, the National Center for Sexual Education (Known as Centro Nacional de Educación Sexual - CENESEX) presented to the National Assembly the proposal to modify the Family Code in order to include same-sex marriage (Robert, 2016). There was then a long wait for the legal recognition of a right yet limited by the paralysis of the legal system. Article 68 of the draft amendment to the Constitution proposed to define marriage as “[...] the voluntarily consensual union between two people” (Llopis, 2018, authors translation)⁸. This proposal was modified and introduced in article 82 of the constitutional project, defining marriage as the union between two spouses. The reticence to explicitly recognize the legal union between people of the same sex was based on the argument “[...] of ‘opposition’ to this issue detected during popular debates over the reform of the Constitution that took place in the last three months” (Agencia EFE, 2018, authors translation⁹, authors emphasis). This current fact is only one link in the chain of discourses that, in its historical constitution, has been establishing a regime of truth (Foucault, 1979). In this case, heterosexuality as an incarnation of the Cuban citizen. It would then be appropriate to exercise a critical analysis of some facts that reflect how sexual revolutions (Hamilton, 2012) have occurred in Cuba. This perspective allows us to understand, in general terms, the argument used in the National Assembly in 2018, its crystallization in the Cuban context, building a determined sexual and gender order expressed in public policies.

Let us take the example of some discursive statements to show some continuities that describe how sexual citizenship is constituted (Evans, 1993) in Cuba, based on a strong heterosexual imperative. We do agree with Pablo Pérez Navarro (2018, p. 28) that “[...] the discourse, in addition to its expressive or descriptive functions, must be analyzed concerning its power to produce effective transformations in the social contexts in which it intervenes”.

Different discourses circulating in Cuba are spaces for building a collective memory about the founding of a Socialist State and the impact it has had on all spheres of the nation, including sexuality (Hamilton, 2012). These speeches express several meanings about the construction of the national identity, and how it tries to overthrow certain colonial structures that until before 1959 guided the population lives. Categories such as class, race, gender, religiosity, sexuality are dimensions to be renegotiated in the history of the Cuban Revolution.

Bearing in mind that turning point (not necessarily assumed as the origin) that is the Cuban Revolution, we will focus on brief references that describe changes in the scope of sexual and gender policies. We highlight that public policies after the Revolution are guided by the Cuban State and are characterized by a top-down approach. (Auxiliadora, 2005; Hamilton, 2012; Castro, 2014; Robert, 2016).

It is noteworthy, for example, that the eradication of sex work in the form of prostitution was one of the first policies of the revolutionary government that explicitly addressed the issue of sexuality. Other sexual and gender dissents, such as homosexuality, were seen as threats to revolutionary morality (Hamilton, 2012).

The sexual policies developed by the revolutionary government have been marked by the paradox. If, on the one hand, these policies have been a reflection of traditional values and gender hierarchies, on the other hand, they have created some guarantees for the full exercise of sexual and reproductive rights. This would be the case for accessibility to

⁸ [...] la unión voluntariamente concertada entre dos personas.

⁹ [...] tras la oposición a este asunto detectada en los debates populares.

institutional abortion without legal restrictions at the very beginning of the 1960s decade (Hamilton, 2012).

Later, in 1979, care for transgender people was institutionalized in the National Health System, although at the time, it was considered a mental illness. Due to the institutionalization of this service, as well as the creation of different instances of scientific debate around sexual and gender diversity, the first sexual reassignment surgery in Cuba was made possible in 1988. However, such surgeries were interrupted that same year and have only resumed after almost twenty years, in 2007 (Castro, 2014).

In the 1990s, a gender approach was explicitly assumed in Cuba to face policies related to sexuality (Castro, 2014; Robert, 2016). Despite adhering to this critical perspective, it is possible to state that the new approach has not necessarily changed the way of understanding sexuality. An example of this is the fact that in 1992 the Centers for the Study of Sexology and Sexuality Education were created in the country's medical faculties and at the National School of Public Health (Castro, 2014), but not in the Social or Human Sciences faculties. It is symbolic to note that medical sciences and the Ministry of Public Health context were the privileged space for thinking and debating issues related to sexuality, although not the only one. Thus, sexuality becomes a subject within the domain of hegemonic knowledge of Medicine and, consequently, it will have effects in the way this category will be used to meet the reality of different human groups.

In the context of public policies that were developed during this period and entering into the specific theme of policies for the trans* population, the justification for interrupting surgeries for sexual reassignment was “[...] due to the inadequate approach given by the media” (Castro, 2014, p. 74, authors translation)¹⁰. It should be noted that, according to this logic, what grants political legitimacy to the right is that it exists as a social consensus; otherwise, it is called into question. Thus, how an idea of public order is mobilized in the state exercise of biopower is verified (Pérez Navarro, 2017).

We see how these discourses are repeated in various ways, both in the case of the egalitarian marriage previously exemplified, and in the case of health care policy for trans* people. In the research developed by Mariela Castro (2014) in which she concludes with a public policy proposal for the social integration of transgender people in Cuba, the author explains:

The process of building a new society in Cuba presupposes cohesion among groups, which in turn is conditioned by the relationship of these groups with ‘the system of norms and values established’. The considerable distance in this research among transsexual people and ‘the norms and values that govern the functioning of certain structures of society’, speaks of the existence of a certain degree of segregation of this social group about the basic functioning of society, which could have an impact negative in the viability of collective projects (Castro, 2014, p. 96-97, authors translation¹¹, authors emphasis).

However, further on, the author exposes some empirical data obtained, according to which “[...] social cohesion is weak in this group since ‘most subjects perceive themselves as distant from the norms and values associated with gender identity in today's Cuban

¹⁰ [...] a partir del enfoque inadecuado dado por los medios.

¹¹ El proceso de construcción de la nueva sociedad en Cuba presupone la cohesión inter e intragrupal, lo que a su vez está condicionado por la relación de esos grupos con el sistema de normas y valores instituidos. El distanciamiento apreciable en esta investigación entre las personas transexuales y las normas y valores que rigen el funcionamiento de determinadas estructuras de la sociedad, habla de la existencia de cierto grado de segregación de este grupo social respecto del funcionamiento integral”.

society” (Castro, 2014, p. 95, authors translation¹², authors emphasis). Following these data, she develops the basis for a social integration policy for transsexual people in Cuba, which would aim to “[...] transform the limited social integration of transgender into Cuban society, in order to contribute to the well-being of these people and, at the same time, for the ‘people unity’ as a viable element of the social project” (Castro, 2014, p. 124, authors translation¹³, authors emphasis).

In the reading of Castro (2014) about the cohesion among groups of trans* people with the rest of society, some assumptions that are open to question are presented. One of them would be the homogenization of what is thought of as ‘the rest of society’. Then, the expectation that the unity among the trans* population and other groups in society would be based on the idea that this population would submit to a system of established norms and values. Such a system of norms and values is coercive and restrictive to trans* people's lives.

The argument that trans* people perceive themselves as distant from the gender identities that prevails in Cuban society today denies that the fact that it is due to the existence of an excluding matrix (heterosexual imperative), that this subject condition is part of the constitutive exterior of the norm and that the production of this abjection zone is a condition for the existence of gender norms and the identities it produces. What is at stake is not just a matter of self-perception. Contrary to any possibility of including trans* people under this logic, such argument works in favor of structural transphobia. An expectation of assimilation of trans* existences would be operating here under the guise of enduring the nation's legacy, when in fact, it is a matter of preserving the legacy of heteronormativity (Oliveira, 2013).

Such reading continues to support a relationship of subordination of trans* existences to heteronormativity and cisnorm (Vergueiro, 2015). This relationship of subordination seems to be placed as a condition for the advancement of Cuban society and the existence of collective projects as a society. Contrary to what the author affirms, the society heterosexualization is far from favoring the progress of society towards the establishment of democratic relations. We agree with Mouffe (2003) when she states that a logic of differences while structuring of subordination relations needs to be tensioned by radical democratic policies.

Even though in Castro's research (2014), it is recognized how many public policies try to “[...] subject others to positions of hegemonic power” (Castro, 2014, p. 122, authors translation)¹⁴, her proposal reproduces this axiom and the current political conjunctures in matters of sexual citizenship confirm this rationality according to which gender dissidents have to see their existences strongly regulated.

It seems contradictory to us to think about the social integration of trans* people to normative systems that govern people's lives based on gender binarism. It would be relevant to break the idea of national cultures as unified entities because such representations limit the full access to citizenship of those people who do not embody the ‘good citizen’ standard. Attempts to eradicate differences through the rhetoric of unity seem to be an exercise in violence, rather than a possibility of harmonious coexistence or based in cohesion.

¹² [...] la cohesión social es débil en este grupo, puesto que la mayor parte de los sujetos se percibe distante de las normas y valores asociados a la identidad de género en la sociedad cubana actual”.

¹³ [...] ¿qué se desea transformar? En este caso, se trata de la limitada integración social de las personas transexuales en la sociedad cubana, con el fin de contribuir al bienestar de esas personas y, al mismo tiempo, a la unidad del pueblo como elemento de viabilidad del proyecto social.

¹⁴ [...] incorporarlos a la pauta homogeneizadora del poder.

Continuously, unity and national consensus are rhetorical that define the possibility of the existence of political agendas of gender and sexuality. Based on this rhetoric, dissent acquires the status of being a problem for public life. Consequently, subtle strategies are developed to standardize those existences that call into question the purity of the dreamed nation (Bento, 2018).

In this logic, unity operates as one of the regimes of power that establishes boundaries and exclusions, since, in political terms, it becomes difficult to evade these polarizations (Prado & Toneli, 2013). Consequently, politics itself, in its eagerness to be a reflection of the unified nation, places limits on trans* existences. The condition of the possibility of these policies is that they do not disturb the established regimes; otherwise, they start to be contained or eliminated as the examples analyzed illustrate.

It also seems imperative to start thinking that dissent, conflict and dispute are part of the political and that the attempt to eliminate these constitutive aspects of the political order is an exercise of symbolic violence by erasing differences (Mouffe, 2015). We endorse Prado and Toneli (2013) that the politician always runs away from the practices of conformity with the consensus. It is precisely the plurality of identification processes that allow us to give up perennial, fixed, dichotomous positions. These theoretical keys make it possible to conceive policies in another way more consistent with democracy.

Final considerations

As Adrienne Rich (1984, p. 16) expresses, "I bring notes, but not absolute conclusions [...]", we believe that policies must always bet on being provisional, bearing the mark of a constant struggle. The authors reflections seem inspiring, so they help us to keep in mind the idea that policies are localized and provisional and need to create multiple forms of resistance. Thus, certain experiences historically expelled from the margins of different normative regimes, need to demand full recognition of their existence. These arguments coincide with Mouffe's (2003) idea that policies also involve passions. It is not possible to remove these passions from the political scene, nor is it advisable to think about the political sphere in this way.

On the other hand, some discussions pointed out by Judith Butler (2017) allow us to conclude that perhaps unity and cohesion are not the most productive strategies as a way of making policies, and that, in any case, we should bet on alliances. It would not be just a matter of breaking the fictions that imagine the nation as a totality, free from conflicts and antagonisms. The issue also points to other ways to face struggles for the rights of sexual and gender minorities.

Butler (2017) points out that the struggle for the social justice of the LGBTQI population can become a radical democratic project when we manage to admit that this 'they' is more than a group that has been deprived of rights and subject to precariousness. It is imperative to understand that the rights we are fighting for (and that would be the guarantee of social integration sought in Cuban politics described above) are of a plural character. Such rights are not limited to specific political identities but allow us to broaden the idea of what we mean by 'we'. It is not that these 'others', built as abject, have to adhere to a cisheteronormative system in order to be able to access to citizenship.

Provisionality, passions, alliances and a detachment from the tendency to essentialize identities, even with political ends, would seem to be more in line with public policies that

aspire to the inclusion and recognition of the rights of transgender people in today's Cuban society.

Then, how do these premises contribute to public policy, such as the one discussed here, build possibilities for inclusion and inscribing itself in a more democratic framework? The practical consequences of the theses mentioned above would imply rethinking the very way in which this type of policy is implemented. It would be fitting that before they were instituted by the Cuban Ministry of Public Health, spaces were created where it was possible to “[...] mobilize those passions towards the promotion of democratic design” (Mouffe, 2003, p. 16).

This means that, as part of the implementation and evaluation of public policies of this type, spaces of the dispute between trans* users, political managers, researchers, activists would have to be expanded and institutionalized. Enhancing the knowledge intersection more than to aspire to a definitive consensus, as politics is far from being given once and forever. It needs to be reviewed and rethought in light of its impacts on people's lives and the knowledge that is continually being produced.

It seems important to us to destabilize the binary logic that establishes: State – a place of speech, citizenship – a place of listening and services reception that are thought for it. Even if the State is an instance involving social actors different from those of civil society, and even more so in the case of Cuba where the State has a central role in shaping political agendas, it is important to consider the instability of these borders, and how much they produce material political effects. Do we still believe that the question about *who can speak?* ends up invoking ‘who can exist?’ (Ribeiro, 2017). That is, certain social positions reflect or not their recognition in the intelligibility matrix of citizenship and its possibility of being considered as subjects of rights in a democratic context (Malfrán & Lago, 2019).

Here, the definitions of this ‘other’ that is the subject of public health policies also come into question, especially when they are in favor of equality and inclusion. Definitely, the lenses to produce a reading of this other cannot be the genre normative and constrictive regimes. Thinking about those subjects that historically are defined by the speech of the other alerts us to be aware of the colonizing impact that can reach certain definitions. There is an urgent need to rethink the interlocutions between public policies and the epistemologies used to design such policies, as we insist, public policies are not merely technical issues to be developed by technicians and health professionals. As stated by Thiago Coacci (2018), producing knowledge implies legitimizing ways of existing in the world, therefore the need for reflecting on the produced knowledge and the power dynamics that are involved in these productions.

Finally, and once again, calling on Mouffe (2003), the agonistic character that constitutes citizenship would also have to be considered. As the author points out, a pluralist democracy needs to create opportunities and institutions so that dissent can manifest itself. We also believe that it would be necessary to make the dissent existence available in all existing institutions and not just in some of them.

Resulting from this argument, we consider that the fact that CENESEX is the national institution that par excellence cares for trans people*, it perhaps contributes to weave a national imaginary according to which these people could only exist there. It is not the case that such an institution disappears, and even less, all the important work, which is being carried out in this context. We point above all to the need to tense the possibilities for the existence of trans* people in all institutions where Cuban (man and woman) social life takes place, to create other forms of (re)existence.

In short, neither unanimity nor national unity and cohesion at any cost. Rather, an agonistic democracy (Mouffe, 2003), without denying possible antagonisms, but the possibility of cohabiting with others, the proliferation of expressions and experiences of gender and sexuality, widening the constrictive/constitutive limits of Cuban sexual citizenship.

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