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Capitalist patriotism



Sources: Rebellion - Image: Diana Dowek, "Landscape with rearview mirror II" (1975).

Love and hate of a country are two impossible fictions, but very useful.

"On that national holiday, all the kids were piled up in a courtyard and made to swear allegiance to the flag. 'Do Xurais defend this symbol immacvated with your blood, no matter what reasons you had not to face it?' To which the kids replied shouting loudly 'Yes, with this blood, xuro!' From there until death, the inhabitants of Calataid would proudly carry the scar of the Oath to the Flag, which was not only essential to do any public procedure, such as entering the honorable body of Alamines de Cerdos y Gallinas

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to collect the traditional bribes, but also served to practice an old custom that consisted of measuring it every time two old friends met (...) *'When they pushed me with the other kids in the schoolyard to xuraba for that piece of rag, I shouted well forte No xuro! But mine was not lost among the obedient xuro of my companions.'*"

This moment from the cubist novel *The City De la luna* (2009) is a fiction-testimony of my experience as a first-year high school student during the military dictatorship in Uruguay. While the director recited the patriotic phrases that made the people cry parents, I remembered my grandfather, tortured by Captain Nino Gavazzo, then a prisoner. Accused of feeding fugitive tupamaros who are not even Knew. I remembered my uncle, also tortured, and I remembered his young wife. shooting himself in the chest. I was five years old, but I never forgot. Remembered conversations on a farm in Cologne, where two men face the bluff of the kitchen mentioned that the bodies found in the Río de la Plata did not They were fishermen but had been dropped from Argentine planes, more Ten years before one of the pilots confessed in 1992.

When I asked the teacher of "Moral and Civic Education" what the laurel branch on the national coat of arms meant, he hit me on the hand for pointing to the sacred symbol with a finger. The history teacher, proud descendant of an English captain and tired of my questions, told me in front of the whole class that a relative of mine would never have a street named after him. I didn't understand why that was important and I don't understand it now. Shortly after I asked the literature teacher, a very kind woman, why Juan Carlos Onetti was not even mentioned and her answer was: "because the country gave him everything, education, work, family and he went to another country to criticize his own."

Years later, when the incipient democracy freed the political prisoners of Libertad, one of them went to visit my grandfather's farm and told him that, with a relative, he had set up a restaurant and they had invited one of the companions who was a singer. But one day he asked her to include some non-protest song. The musician was offended and there the friendship ended. "He needs to understand that you can't maintain your business only with like-minded customers," my grandfather said.

The attitude of the revolutionary singer to the context has something in common with the dialectical resource of the *influencers* of capitalism. A popular *Iranian YouTuber* who immigrated to the United States defines himself as "someone who loves this Great Country" once interviewed an American professor who defines himself as a Marxist. After making a display of historical ignorance, he barely could throw him with the classic: "Why don't you go live in Russia." Russia is not even socialist, so even more classic is the

invitation to live in Cuba. The inquisitors do not bother to consider that Cuba is the consequence of US imperialism and, even less, that it is in countries like Cuba where capitalism exercises its miraculous powers with greater force.

The remedy of questioning the private life of a Persona as an argument against his ideas is mediocre and cowardly. How questioning a socialist for sending his daughter to a private school because You want and can afford a bilingual education. How to question a capitalist poor (or rather, someone who believes in capitalism) for sending his child to a public school. Or question someone because they live in a neighborhood and not in the other. Each individual lives in concrete circumstances in a particular world; in any case, dominated by capitalism.

More if you are a salaried employee. When the neoliberal crisis hit Latin America at the beginning of the century (as a logical consequence of the forced indebtedness in the 70s, which later led to the recipes of the IMF and the Washington Consensus in the 90s), many of us who had the white refrigerator outside and inside emigrated to Europe or the United States as a way to survive and then, in some cases, for professional reasons. Some imposed ideological changes so as not to feel the discomfort of the false contradiction: if you live in a capitalist country you must be a capitalist. If you live in a socialist country you must be... Well, there are different opinions.

Currently, the logical consequence of the Growing social inequalities of neoliberalism and the loss of power extractive of imperial powers (euphemistically called *developed*) about their colonies first, about their friendly dictatorships later, and finally, On the indebted *developing* democracies, it has given way to a more visceral fascism. This nationalist wave (do not confuse nationalism imperialist with anti-colonialist nationalism) was born in "the countries developed" and then, like everything, was copied in their ex-colonies with complex of inferiority.

The advantage of fascism is not only its intellectual simplicity, illustrated with its tribal symbology of flags, shields, shouts and clichés, but also his visceral and militaristic patriotism. Hatred of all kinds of *others* in the name of love for the country in which they were born or the sudden love, at first sight, of the country they adopted.

Patriotism is not the love of a country but the love of a country. reflection of self-love in foreign symbols. Love and hate of a country are two impossible fictions, but very useful. Sometimes it works to vindicate rights of oppressed peoples. Sometimes, for the opposite. It is usually a of the collective passions easier to manipulate by those above that they don't give a damn about the homeland, the flag and the lives of those who swear Die for it.

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