

BINARY WORD SURVIVALS MOVE WITH MORE PRIDE THAN FEAR

By Franco Fuica

Legislation and public policies coordinator of Organización Trans Diversidades (OTD)

PHOTOGRAPHY BY ALEJANDRA FUENZALIDA

The advance of the fascist governments in Latin America has taken surprised us as LGBTI movement because we have been framing laws in the last two decades to recognize and guarantee equal rights, and we thought that that was the obvious resource of the advance of human rights in a ravaged region by civic-military dictatorships. However, the pendulum was destined to return to the other pole, and we felt more intensity the change of direction to the right with the election of Bolsonaro in Brazil, with which already add six countries with conservative governments and unclear schedule regarding to LGBTI people, Paraguay Argentina, Chile, United States, Colombia, and Brazil. In addition, there are the two governments that although they are not completely conservative and not right-wing, do not have the best political management in the face of diversities, such as Bolivia and Venezuela, plus Central America countries that have not yet developed the capacity to manage diversities due to the deep poverties and contexts of gang violence that move drugs through their territories, spreading terror among their neighbors.

Not only we have not taken the weight that the said election has on our internal policy about the recognition of our rights in laws, regulations, circulars, and judgments, among others, but we have overlooked that the situation affects us regionally since in the campaigns similar actors emerge in each of the region countries, such as religious fundamentalists who work systematically to limit rights and share common strategies and contexts, such as poverty, disinformation, low quality of education, shortage of stable and decent jobs, insecurity fear, lack of services guaranteed by the States, high levels of crime, delinquency, and impunity. This is in addition to that the conservative groups are close to the corridors of power and the media, where they can prevent certain ideas from spreading and others have a platform, even if they lack total and absolutely common sense, as is the case with the movement "Con Nuestros Hijos no se metan", which constantly claims for less State and more family. These movements offer citizens a social space, an emotional bond, a sense of duty, a sacred book, and establish relations of vassalage and domination very typical of fascism, which quickly allows everyone to rest without having to decide, just obey, in order to fulfill a divine plan outside the rational understanding. After that, everything that is against the rules of the fundamentalists will be the target of their virulent attacks, full of anger and discrimination.

As stated before, it has established the hate speech naturalization intermingled with freedom of speech, what does not seem to matter to public opinion nor communication media, which keep searching news to generate polemics and to confuse a citizenship that does not have arguments to

evaluate the merit that they said, a practice that only straightens distrust and specify polarization, so it offers a TV reality full of insecurities and which enhance individualism and LGBTI phobia, leaving the "minorities" without consideration while people without human rights, prejudice victims and the violation that has claimed so many lives in the most horrendous and unjust ways.

At the same time, it is undeniable that in recent years we have progressed as never before in history: today the gender prison is increasingly questioned and denounced. There arises the paradox: the same region of the world where there are more murders of trans people is at the same time one of the most advanced in this century in the recognition of rights that create a minimum floor of guarantees. According to the figures published by Transgender Europe, the number of murders of transgender people increases every year and, of course, greater visibility, greater rejection. Last year's report recorded 369 people killed in the world, 44 more than in the previous year. According to the comparison of figures by continent and a

"There arises the paradox: the same region of the world where there are more murders of trans people is at the same time one of the most advanced in this century in the recognition of rights that create a minimum floor of guarantees."

"According to the comparison of figures by continent and a 10-year longitudinal study, 2,982 murdered trans people have been registered, of which 79% correspond to South and Central America. The figure is devastating. "

longitudinal study of 10 years, it has registered 2,982 trans people murdered, of which 79% correspond to South America and Central America, The figure is devastating because, without have the detail and just by the knowledge of the trans reality that I have of the region, I should say that it has been studied much less than 10% and very few cases have had an outcome that sanctions the murder. Meanwhile, the media still mention their pronouns and legal names without the slightest respect for their identities, and in most cases, they are remembered with ridicule in the yellow pages of local newspapers, where their legal name stands out and mockery of his social name. It is still possible to read headlines in Central America that call for the contempt of trans people and that justify their death.

In anyplace legal changes has been free, they had cost blood, sweat, and tears. Nowadays, trans children from yesterday who now we are adult people and activists of the cause, are struggling to get our new generations will have what we did not have. It is about legal recognition of non-binary gender and non-discrimination, what have been achievements of organizations and activists that have conquered the right to be named, to be recognized through a collective but exhausting work of constant education of our representatives, our governments and our institutions.

More than we like, we have contributed hours of our life to training in such simple matters as establishing that the use of the social name is the first action of respect towards trans people. It is necessary to highlight that nor Chile nor Argentina, Uruguay, Mexico, Ecuador, or Bolivia have discussed nor voted with absolute conviction the norms relatives to the gender identities; the votes have come out reluctantly with abusive requirements, ridiculous and pathologizing,

establishing limits to constitutional guarantees, as is the case in Bolivia, derived from the pressures of religious fanatical groups that at all levels take effect and have managed to pause but not stop the progress.

In Chile, this year will be remembered as the year of the transfeminist revolution, with thousand people screaming in the street “que todo el territorio se vuelva feminista”, taking to the university strikes the gender issues that once, more than ten years ago, were proposed by me in a CONFECH (Confederation of Chilean Students) of the year 2006, but it was not its time. Today is the time.

This year, after more than five legislative discussions, the Gender Identity Law was promulgated on November 28; this year, with the help of the trans actress Daniela Vega, we celebrated the first Oscar for a trans person in the history of Hollywood Academy, and this year exploited the use of inclusive language that I met in 2008 and that we brought to Chile from Brazil with Michel and Ana Lucia, and that today is present even in newscasts and is an incipient part of the colloquial language. Nobody is oblivious to everyone. Everyone have a good or bad opinion about it. This year we listened to and read the word trans more times than in the history of humanity thanks to so many brave people who made our way resisting in the corners, in the anonymity, in the towns, in the fertile plain, so that today we can be visible with more pride than fear and vindicating trans voices and discourses so often usurped by cisgender voices that have little conscience and try again and again to star in the demand for trans recognition, invisibilizing the immense progress of trans voceries that have emerged in recent years.

This year also marked a before and after in the comparative law of trans identities due to the discussion of the Comprehensive Trans Law in Uruguay, which includes historical reparation in work, education, health, and social security, which starts recognizing the historical disadvantage that we

“Our lives shine and become visible every day more, facing the difficult path of cultural resistance that has awakened creatures that we thought were extinct, possessing incredible hateful speeches, few common sense and complex to disarm, because they take advantage of the ignorance and fear of the population.”

have lived due to Uruguay State negligence and ignorance. This year, the advisory opinion of the Inter-American Court of Human Rights, which urges the 34 States of the system to legislate in favor of trans identities and equal marriage, was made public. This year, Chile and Canada have chaired the first coalition to ensure equal LGBTI rights in the world.

The year 2018 has marked a period of changes and strong contrasts. Important advances in human rights and hard political setbacks in the different latitudes of our America. However, the time progresses ceaselessly and our lives shine and become more visible each day, facing the difficult path of cultural resistance that has awakened creatures that we thought were extinct, possessing incredible hateful speeches, few common sense and complex to disarm, because they take advantage of the ignorance and fear of the population. Slogans shouted without context as "No to gender ideology" have managed to settle in public opinion and we and our allies are trying to

disarm them. The right and the conservative groups have always resorted to unsustainable speeches that generate confusion, but which are very effective in their objective: to divert attention to brief and empty slogans while delaying urgent social advances in order to stop them and even make us retreat. What's behind this? Freedom of worship, freedom of expression, conservatism, fear, ignorance, bad living, fascism, incitement to hatred, links with powers that be? The speculations are varied, but what they receive back is, paraphrasing Daniela Vega, rebellious day, resistance and love, with all the courage of the survivors of a binary world.