Collapsed Temporalities on Social Media: Cuban Expats in Brazil and *Facebook*[1]

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ABSTRACT

Social network platforms raise complex questions regarding the perception of time. They can also produce a feeling of "co-presence" (Miller, 2011), mixing temporalities of "past, present and future". Within their affordances, social network platforms generate "collapsed contexts" (Marwick and boyd, 2010). When it comes to migrants who leave their home countries, such tools are frequently used in order to maintain a connection with family, friends and land that were left behind. This paper proposes the concept of "collapsed temporalities" to reflect upon Cubans who (voluntarily and legally) moved to Brazil. Apart from the theoretical discussion, we analyze self-narratives on *Facebook* of two Cuban expats, who had agreed to participate in the research through online interviews. We argue that, once displaced, they have to deal with multiple layers of temporalities that affect their own self-narratives in terms of language and content.

KEYWORDS

Migration, Collapsed Temporalities, Facebook, Brazil, Cuba.

Introduction

The condition of being a migrant – either voluntarily or not, permanently or not – produces reflections about one's identity and ways of experiencing connections with their homelands. For many, social network platforms – such as *Facebook* – are the most used means of communication nowadays to keep in touch with family and friends. Not only do they allow a relatively fast, cheap and easy exchange of messages, but they also enable a feeling of "co-presence" (Miller 2011) among individuals, via the publication of pictures, videos and texts from everyday life.

Social network platforms brought, in the late 1990s, two major changes in comparison to previous online forms of communication: 1) the structuring and organization of public or semi-public networks around individuals' profiles, and 2) the possibility of combining different forms of communication (inbox or private messages, post on profiles' timelines, comments to posts, among others) – both synchronous and asynchronous, more or less ephemeral – also using different "languages" (written texts, pictures, videos, emoticons, gifs etc.) within the same platform. This generates complexities in the ways social actors will manage their self-narratives and interactions with their network, related to who is part of their connections, and how to communicate with them (two aspects which are intertwined). As Alice Marwick and danah boyd (2010) – and afterwards other authors have argued – social network sites create "collapsed contexts", in which "physical arrangements, social relationships, situational definitions, temporal moments, and distinct locales" are present simultaneously (Davis and Jugerson 2014, 477).

When it comes to migrants, who build a cross-cultural network of friends / followers, this context gets even more complex. In this paper we focus on a specific group of social actors and their use of *Facebook*: people who voluntarily migrated from Cuba to Brazil, due to professional and educational reasons, thus establishing a relation between two countries from the Global South.

By interviewing J. and R.[2], both 'qualified migrants'[3] settled in Brazil since 2014, and having observed their profiles on *Facebook* since 2017, we argue for adding the more specific idea of "collapsed temporalities" to the notion of "collapsed contexts" . These migrants have regular access to social media in Brazil, and their networks are mainly composed of Cuban people (family, friends, colleagues) from their "past" lives, and Brazilians from their "present" lives, all "living" together in the same space of their profiles. This creates challenges at least in terms of two aspects for such individuals: the attempt to a) process different layers of time as a "receptor" of their contacts' postings; and b) discursively recover and organize these layers in self-narratives that could be understood by a heterogeneous and temporally dispersed network.

This paper aims, therefore, at proposing the notion of "collapsed temporalities" by investigating how Cuban expats[4] living in Brazil use *Facebook* in order to create their self-narratives and communicate with their networks. In order to do so, first we will proceed to a literature review of the relationship between migration and social media; second, we will briefly present data concerning the use of social media in both countries; third, we will present and discuss the notion of "collapsed temporalities", bringing the results from our empirical research.

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2 In order to keep their anonymity, the research's participants are going to be here referred to by their initials. This paper is part of one of the author's PhD thesis, which is being developed in Brazil, and the participants of the research mentioned here have agreed to share their discourses and posts.

3 The term "qualified migrants" was proposed by Brazilian researchers Denise Cogo and Maria Badet (2013) to refer to people whose access to the reception country are attached to their educational and professional specialization in a certain area.

[4] We use the term "expats" in this paper to refer to such "qualified migrants", but it is relevant to mention that many people in this situation choose to keep both countries as official /legal homes, in what they call a "circular immigration".

Relationship between migration and social media: A literature review

According to the *World Migration Report* published by the IOM[5] in 2018, the number of migrants worldwide has reached 244 million. This represents approximately 3.3% of the global population, a percentage that shows the increase of migration waves compared to the early 2000s. Milton J. Easman highlights the proportional relationship between increasing migrant flows around the world and globalization: "Fast, cheap, safe, and reliable airline transportation has facilitated international travel, while instantaneous, inexpensive communications technologies, telephone and e-mail, enable migrants to keep closely in touch with families and friends in their former homeland" (2009, 4).

This way, in the context of contemporary global flows, one must look at the diversity of channels that have risen and may potentially facilitate transnational mobility. More efficient transportation has stimulated displacements, as media spheres have also gained more reputation and relevance. Nowadays, social network platforms are an explicit example. A research conducted by Rianne Dekker and Gofried Engbersen (2014) allowed them to argue that these digital environments actively transform the nature of migrants' social networks, becoming mechanisms that stimulate mobility. According to the authors:

> First, they enhance the possibilities of maintaining strong ties with family and friends. Second, they address weak ties that are relevant to organizing the process of migration and integration. Third, they establish a new infrastructure consisting of latent ties. Fourth, they offer a rich source of insider knowledge on migration that is discrete and unofficial (Dekker and Engbersen 2014, 1).

Considering such statements, could we point out a connection between the intensification of digital networks and the growth of migratory flows? Denise Cogo's study with Brazilian migrants in Spain showed that the acceleration of use and consumption of digital spaces contribute to the "reorganization of the migratory flows and networks and, consequently, to the configuration of transnationalism in the migratory sphere" (Cogo 2012, 4). According to the author, social media not only facilitate new sources of information to create conditions for a displacement, but they also contribute to maintaining a certain sense of community of the displaced subject, by allowing contact with other homeland *selves*. There is actually empirical data proving how the frantic social dynamism produced by technological capitalism worldwide has a concrete impact on the quantity, and even the quality, of migratory flows nowadays. In an article that traces Philippines settled in the United Kingdom (UK), Mirca Madianou and Daniel Miller argued that "there are clear links between the intensification of emigration and developments in the telecommunications industry" (Madianou and Miller 2012, 30).

By embracing the relationship between social media and migrant's everyday life, we assume there is no boundary, other than the access and the literacy ones, that prevents migrants from boosting their social capital, once displaced, and that a division between an on and an off-line world does not stand, as Daniel Miller and Don Slater (2000) have already pointed out. The authors explain how these platforms can be perceived by users as *concrete* spaces: "In much

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5 Source: https://www.iom.int/. Accessed 28 April 2019.

of our research, email communications or websites were experienced as comparatively concrete and mundane enactments of belonging, rather than as virtual" (Miller and Slater 2000, 5).

Another perspective on the topic is that from Mohammed El Hajii and Camila Escudero, who, by discussing the concept of *webdiaspora*, argue that it "allows to construct and reinforce communities social, economic, political and transnational cultural networks without dismissing the edification of a symbolic space" (El Hajji and Escudero 2015, 14). Both authors seem to concur with Easman's argument, who, in a previous study, remarks the existence of digital diasporas; understood by him as "organized and sustained through the internet, fostering cyber-communities among individuals of the same ethnic provenance who happen to be scattered geographically" (Easman 2009, 20). As Brignol argues, the internet can provide:

> support regarding the construction of migratory projects, and the maintenance of links between families and transnational relationships; in the informative links with the country of origin; in the consumption and cultural production; in the learning of local languages; in the obtaining of information related to juridical citizenship; in the uses of migration media, as companionship and leisure, in the technologically mediated political participation (Brignol 2015, 107).

So far, we might have pointed out only the positive effects Internet has had for migrants, encouraging support, mobility and solidarity. However, a deeper revision of the literature has shown evidence that technology also provides realistic awareness of the risk of migrating, as Heather Horst's (2006) study with Jamaican people suggests. Apart from that, bringing different social groups on the same platform may cause complications for the process of self-presentation. Hence, we must assume that, despite their positive effects, social media platforms may contribute to feelings of displacements as well.

From our perspective, the link that connects with more intensity social media with migratory experiences worldwide is the fact that both deal with the lack of co-presence in corporeal terms. The feeling of an absent homeland, and consequently absent familiar bodies, may lead migrant subjects to enact strategies that approach them to, on one side, those who have been left behind and, on the other, to those who potentially become new social connections. Somehow, migrant subjects experience the dimension of the virtual relationship construction, as they constantly need to recreate those absent bodies in their everyday lives.

In such situation, multi-related thinking (Baumann 2001) makes itself present all the time through migrants' narratives in social media, represented by multi-layered languages, constant claiming of an absent nation while including in their social agendas topics related to the host country political and economic logics, among others. This understanding of social media as a community-formation booster is especially relevant to sustain our arguments, because it is the possibility of creating and maintaining clusters that allows an isolated migrant subject to take part of a *diaspora*, as a collective objectification of displacement.

Academic production regarding the tensions between migratory experiences and the use of social media is somewhat new. The literature review allows us to state that the majority of the researchers dealing with this topic belong to what we know, geopolitically speaking, as the Global North (Madianou and Miller 2012; Brinkerhoff 2006; Horst and Miller 2005). However, we also noticed that these productions aim to look at the global flows formed, precisely, in the

so-called underdeveloped countries, which sets an important precedent to our research. The fact that the main target of this research is no other than the Global South[6] migratory flows is not a coincidence. It responds to a social fact which reinforces that most of migratory flows originate from the developing or underdeveloped countries towards the developed ones (Easman, 2009), turning those communities into "more accessible" and obvious research objects. In addition, academic institutions from the so-called 'developed countries' tend to stimulate this kind of research by financing academics to develop their work. Despite this scenery, we also found some attempts of studying the matter from the academic Global South that shows a persistent and continuous movement, particularly coming from Brazilian researchers (Cogo 2012; El Hajji and Escudero 2015; Brignol 2015) and Cuban academics living abroad (Gutiérrez 2015; López 2015).

Use of social media in Cuba and Brazil

Brazil is considered a country with "continental dimensions" (Rigotti 2011). It is the fifth largest country in the world in terms of geographical area, and has a population of almost 210 million people, according to Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (IBGE)[7]. The country is considered of "high human development", occupying the 79th position in the rank of Human Development Index (HDI), similar to Cuba, which is listed in the 73rd position[8]. In spite of that, Brazil is marked by strong social inequality and disparities. These are related not only to cultural and social regional differences across the country, but also to a conflicting disproportion in terms of "progress", being the Southeast of the country considered the most "advanced" part of it, where migration levels are historically higher, both from within the country and outside.

In terms of internet access, the latest "Global Digital 2019 reports" informs us that

> Despite controversy around privacy, hacking, fake news and all the other negative aspects of online life, the world continues to embrace the internet and social media. Global digital growth shows no sign of slowing, with a million new people around the world coming online every day. This growth is clearly fueling social media use. 45% of the world's population are now social media users (We are social 2019, online).

In Brazil, however, according to the same report, 70% of the population is an internet user and 66% are active social media users, numbers considerably higher than the global average,

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6 The notion of "Global South" is usually associated with post-colonial studies and is sometimes taken as a synonym for "Third World" or "Developing countries, from a geographical perspective. Nevertheless, we here follow the perspective that: "the term Global South should be understood here as constitutive of entangled temporalities, and therefore considered less as a category that can be clearly delineated, and instead as an "ex-centric" location (Comaroff, 2012) that calls into question the "world dis/order" (Levander and Mignolo, 2011) […] it is the sense of Global South as an extended location that is here recognized and taken as fundamental for us to understand that time itself is much more a problem of entanglements rather than specific established and fixed models" (Resende and Thies 2017, 2).

7 Source: https://www.ibge.gov.br/apps/populacao/projecao/index.html. Accessed 22 April 2019.

8 According to the latest report released in September, 2018. Source: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_countries_by_Human_Development_Index. Accessed 22 April 2019.

despite a low speed in internet connection[9]. As in the rest of the world, the most used social network platform in the country is *Facebook*, and Brazil is usually ranked as the third country with higher numbers of this site's users worldwide[10]. Social media play an important part in many Brazilians' everyday lives, and the access is provided by several private companies. When it comes to Cuba, the scenario is somewhat divergent.

According to the island's National Statistics Office (ONE), in 2017 the number of users of Internet services in that country was 5 975 300. A year before, only 4 529 200 Cubans living on the island were surfing the *World Wide Web* using several means for it; which showcases a growth of 1 446 100 of new users in 2017. For an island inhabited by 11 221 060 people, 2017 stats represent a 53% of Cubans online, without considering those living abroad. Despite these growing numbers, there are some particularities concerning Cuba's way to manage and distribute Internet access that may be worthy to highlight, if we consider a world subsumed under capitalist dynamics of "free enterprise" economies. Cuba's communication and technology are related to a social policy of access that puts the State as not only a main manager, but also the only one allowed to distribute and to guarantee social access to information and social media platforms, legally speaking. This statement sustains the prerogative of an Internet experience conducted by governmental interests, as the "Integral Policy to improve society's computerization in Cuba"[11], published by the Telecommunication Ministry in 2017, shows. The document constitutes the guideline to improve computerization of Cuban society, in the absence of a Telecommunication Law. In Cuba, the institution responsible for distributing internet access is the Ministry of Telecommunications, on whom *Cuban Telecommunications Enterprise S.A* (ETECSA) is dependent. In a State-centered economy, such enterprise is the one responsible for creating the infrastructural conditions to be online, distribute access and establish the prices for doing so – along with Cuba´s Ministry of Finances and Prices. Correspondingly, a remarkable topic in this discussion is the question of who are, financially speaking, those having daily access to the Internet in Cuba, a country with a minimum salary of approximately 30 USD[12]. If we consider an hour of wireless connection to full Internet access costs one USD, it is still a high price to pay.

Despite these economic barriers, there are Cubans surfing the Internet on a daily basis, and the tendency is for Internet use to grow annually, as data taken from the Global Stats Website[13] shows. According to the stats pointed out by the site, from July 2018 until July 2019, 98.87% of Cubans residing in the island prefer Facebook to all other social media platforms, followed by Instagram, Pinterest, YouTube and Twitter. A year before, the percentage of use of the

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9 One may even refer to the expression "Brazilian Internet phenomenon". See, for example: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Internet_in_Brazil. Accessed 22 April 2019.

10 As of January 2019, Brazil and Indonesia had 130 million Facebook users each, while the USA had 210, and India 300. Source: https://www.statista.com/statistics/268136/top-15-countries-based-on-number-of-facebook-users/. Accessed 22 April 2019.

11Source: http://www.mincom.gob.cu/sites/default/files/Politica%20Integral%20para%20el%20perfeccionamiento%20de%20la%20Informatizacion%20de%20la%20sociedad%20en%20Cuba_0_0.pdf. Accessed 28 April 2019.

12 Source: http://www.one.cu/aec2016/07%20Empleo%20y%20Salarios.pdf. Accessed 28 April 2019.

13 Source: https://gs.statcounter.com/social-media-stats/all/cuba. Accessed 22 August 2019.

platform was 46.5%. We believe this growing number directly responds to the habilitation of the 3G service on the island since December of 2019 by ETECSA[14].

There is no doubt, however, that Cuba remains an isolated experience towards diversification and massive access to the Internet. Prices continue to be high. Yet, connectivity rates are low-priced compared to previous years, and new means of connection have been facilitating access for users, as the debut of mobile data experience has been showing since 2018. Cubans living on the island have been paving their way to guaranteeing their presence online, particularly on social media. Being online and able to connect with others beyond the screen is a priority for many, especially for the youngest who are financially capable of paying the taxes (Bacallao 2015).

Collapsed temporalities: use of *Facebook* by Cuban expats in Brazil

Cubans migrating to Brazil in the XXI century: a brief contextualization

Cuba has historically been a central source of migration in the Caribbean region since the beginning of the 20th century. Cuban researcher Antonio Aja Díaz (2011) identifies the United States of America as the main host country for migrants from the island; mainly due to the geographical proximity as well as to the legal advantages they have in that country, when compared to other Latin Americans intending to reach US borders. According to the website *Cubadebate*, "about one million and four hundred thousands of Cubans are settled in more than 120 countries, the majority of them in the United States"[15]. If at the beginning of 2017 the total of inhabitants residing in Cuba was 11 239 224[16], then we could state that the country's diaspora represented in 2018 about 12% of its total population, which leads us to an understanding of Cuba as a significant source of migration nowadays.

Despite Cuban migrants' historical concentration in the US territory, Ernesto Rodríguez Chávez notices that "Cubans' flow to countries that were not traditionally recipient ones of these migrants is gradually establishing Cubans relatively important groups or settlements abroad" (1999, 138). Although there is no reference to Brazil in the mentioned text, Cuban numbers arriving in the country are, at least, keeping stable, if not increasing. According to information presented by the United Nations High Commissioner of Refugees (UNHCR), 2.373 Cubans requested to be recognized by Brazilian government as refugees in 2017, becoming the second country with the most significant number of requests, after Venezuela[17]. In fact, at the beginning of 2019, Brazilian newspaper *Folha de São Paulo* published a note[18] referring to the increase of requests for shelter coming from Cuban doctors after the medical

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14 Source: http://www.etecsa.cu/inicio/se_amplia_servicio_internet_en_cuba/. Accessed 22 August 2019.

15 Source: http://www.cubadebate.cu/noticias/2018/08/03/los-cubanos-residentes-en-el-exterior-participaran-en-el-debate-del-proyecto-de-constitucion-infografia/#.XU8UCONKjIW. Accessed 22 August 2019.

16 Source: http://www.one.cu/aec2016/03%20Poblacion.pdf. Accessed 22 August 2019.

17 Source: https://www.acnur.org/portugues/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/refugio-em-numeros_1104.pdf. Accessed 22 August 2019.

18 Source: https://ww1.folha.uol.com.br/cotidiano/2019/01/dobram-pedidos-de-refugio-de-cubanos-no-brasil-apos-saida-do-mais-medicos.shtml. Accessed 22 August 2019.

program "Mais Médicos" ended[19]. Despite statistics remarking a significant number of Brazilian leaving their country to seek more "stable" destinations (Cogo, 2012), it seems the number of Cubans coming to the country has continued to grow over the last decades. The data by the Brazilian Observatory of International Migrations (OBMIGRA) in 2018 identified an increasing number of Cubans moving to Brazil, and specifically to the Southeast region. According to this report, the main causes of this growth are the *Mais Médicos* Program and family reunion provisions.

An interesting observation regarding Cubans coming to Brazil is it constitutes a particular phenomenon within migratory flows worldwide: a flux from a Global South country to another one. Despite being statistically inferior, South-South displacements (Blanco, 2006 apud Brignol, 2015) constitute a plausible option for migrants intending to leave their homeland who do not have the proper means of doing so to reach developed countries. Moreover, certain policies of cooperation between Cuba and Brazil since President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva's administration have gradually put the continental nation in a spotlight position for Cuban professional class until now. Not having to put themselves into a risky position by migrating illegally, nor having to give up on their civil rights in their homeland for "abandoning" the country, made this academic / professional mobility an interesting choice for those potential Cuban migrants, despite language barriers and equal rates of development in both countries. Easman (2009) notices that the movement to middle-income countries or even the low-income countries instead of the developed ones might happen because migrants can benefit from job opportunities that were not available in their countries. In the case of Brazil, scholarship programs and employment contracts were some of the options those scientific working forces chose in order to obtain visas and other legal guarantees, scenarios which are uncertain under the current Brazilian government[20].

Cuban diaspora in Brazil: the use of Facebook and the problematics of time

Considering the fact of a displaced subject facing narrative challenges, we believe that temporarily dispersion also emerges because of context collapse, as it was defined by boyd and Marwick (2010). The notion that social network platforms generate "collapsed contexts" can be explained by Alice Marwick and danah boyd: "Social media technologies collapse multiple audiences into single contexts, making it difficult for people to use the same techniques online that they do to handle multiplicity in face-to-face conversation" (Marwick and boyd 2010, 114). As Polivanov has argued:

> One may say that the "context collapse" also refers to the fact that, in the same online environment, such as Facebook or Twitter, social actors have to deal with people that come from multiple social contexts which, before the social network sites, did not use to be a part,

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19 Cuba decided to "leave" "Mais Médicos" Program after several conditions imposed by Jair Bolsonaro's government at the end of 2018.

[20] After his election in 2018 and even during his presidential campaign, current Brazilian president Jair Bolsonaro has sustained hostile narratives regarding the Cuban government and people, using a very particular group of temporary Cuban workers in Brazil, the "Mais médicos" professionals, as a way to confront the Labor Party's foreign policy towards Cuba, which was of proximity between both countries. This rhetoric provoked belligerency between both States, and the anti-Cuba narrative has gained territory in the Brazilian institutional scenario. Due to that, it is expected that the flux of regular Cuban migrants to Brazil will decrease during Bolsonaro´s administration.

simultaneously, of their audiences, such as people from family, work, college friends, and so on. Extending the authors' argument, it is possible to state that this context is collapsed both from a synchronic, as well as diachronic perspective, i. e., it involves both the fact of having to deal with people from different social circles in the present, as well as the accumulation of people that were part of our lives in the past […] such dynamic offers complexities to the processes of self-performance (Polivanov 2019, 116, our translation).

In the case of Cuban expats in Brazil, this process brings forth a sense of a collapsed temporality between two contexts: that of the homeland, which represents a mist of past (where they came from), present (where their beloved ones live) and the future (to where they may return or not one day); and that of the current land, where they compile a mix of past projections concerning what life would be like there, their present-day reality and doubts concerning their future in the country. By rising a discussion about *timescapes* in the Global South, Resende and Thies (2018) seem to indirectly dialogue with boyd and Marwick's notion of context collapse, when they connect the capacity of producing and sharing different regimes of temporality with the situational contexts in which subjects are embedded: "We all partake of different regimes of temporality at the same time and are highly competent in swapping our roles according to the situational context" (Resende and Thies 2018, 3). Our proposition, however, is that for migrant subjects in social media this perception of different regimes of temporality gets clearer, and the swapping of roles more complex.

Once displaced, subjects move themselves not only from locals where they learned to experience and express time with a specific tempo (Levine, 2006), but also start to establish a new relationship with the territory left behind, based on narratives that recreate the time once lived and co-created by them. Following this idea, we understand social media's agency not only as context collapse facilitators, but also as provokers, on one hand, of access to fragmented temporalities through which homeland is constructed for expats by their people; and on the other, a mixed convergence between temporal registers, where past and present conditions are not always clear.

The case of Cubans in Brazil shows us that, since expats' homeland-based social connections are the main source for them to consume narratives about Cuba, the discursive absence or low presence of these peers in social media platforms directly affect the amount and synchronicity through which Cuban expats reach their distant territory. Despite the fact that the repertoire of social media available for Cubans seated in the island has grown, taxes continue to be high, which makes the daily presence of these actors in social media often limited. According to J., one of our research participants[21]:

> When I got out from Cuba and had the opportunity of an everyday connection to the Internet, the feeling was something like: I am finally going to meet everyone. We – Cubans – go out from the country willing to socialize with everyone in social networks, because it is something we don't have so easily there.

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21 Participants have been interviewed via Facebook Messenger, Whatsaspp and/or Skype since the beginning of 2017. J. is a 33-year-old software developer, from Havana.

In parallel, R.[22], another participant whose narratives we have been observing on *Facebook* since 2017, posted on her wall: "Here is another proof that time passes by, no matter how hard we work not to see it or pretend to be in the picture. Same with last year and the previous one". The text was accompanied by a picture of two of her friends where she appeared as a drawing made by herself using the software *Paint* in order to guarantee her "presence" in the picture. She was complaining about the consequences of being especially temporarily displaced, absent from her goddaughter's birthday. In similar approach, Madianou and Miller found "SNS [social network sites[23]] are heavily used for posting photographs that keep one in touch with diaspora family, through mutual awareness of activities such as holidays and family gatherings and meals (2012, 114). Moreover, SNSs allow users to "'freeze' interactions that can subsequently be revisited and relived (Madianou and Miller 2012, 122).

Both statements from the participants of our ongoing research reinforce social media platforms' role as gathering spaces where expats can reach dispersed temporalities and construct their own by bringing together those time gaps they are interested in showing through self-narratives. Analyzing exiled populations of Cubans living in the US allowed Cristina Venegas to state that "the Internet potentially transforms the exiles' longing and intensifies their temporal and spatial dislocation" (2010, 166).

One of the migrants' challenge is which language to use in their communication with a diverse audience. As J. stated: "there is always a gap between those posts [written in Portuguese] and what your Cuban contacts receive, because the use of a different language makes it difficult for them to understand you". This particular case displays an awareness of what being a displaced subject narrating themselves to lagged social environments means. Feeling of *clusterization* seems to intensify for migrant subjects online who are daily challenged by the need of satisfying several groups and, therefore, several temporal demands. The notion of *timescapes* in the Global South as tactics developed by social actors to deal with the challenges imposed by temporal regimes may serve as a broad comprehension of this phenomenon in digital environments as well. Timescapes can be understood as a result of being exposed to and also "act upon multiple and conflicting regimes of temporality" (Resende and Thies 2018, 3). It is interesting to point out that, sometimes, taking narrative actions within these collapsed temporalities can turn subjects' public discourses into a mosaic that will eventually fail in its purpose of targeting both homeland and host country connections, which forms a heterogeneous *imagined audience* (Marwick and boyd 2010).

Discourses (in posts) intending to continue debates originated in the homeland agenda, from which expats are displaced, usually do not directly reference the original narrative that constitutes the center of the discussion, when it comes to important news. This way, several misunderstandings between the migrant subject and their social connections online potentially emerge, once the posts appear to be isolated and lacking context. This is often a consequence of the insignificant presence of Cuban official sources of information on social media, which

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22 R. is a 30-year-old PhD candidate in the state of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

[23] In the current scenario we believe it is more appropriate to refer to "social network platforms" instead of "sites", since they also became smartphones and tablets' applications. Therefore, they can be either sites or apps nowadays.

makes Cubans end up consuming more content generated by Brazilian media – to which Cuba's issues are not a priority. Therefore, news related to Cuba lose immediacy to these subjects, who, most of the time, depend on friends' and families' posts to keep synchronically updated, or on a selective exposure to news about Cuba in those media platforms that remain updated.

We observed several attempts from the research participants to update their social connections from Cuba about current Brazilian political and social scenario through posts. One of the main indicators of such purposes was the use of the Spanish language when talking about topics that involve exclusively Brazilian reality. Somehow, the displaced subject ends up imposing to him/herself the mission of transmitting information about Brazil to their Cuban friends and families, and about Cuba to the Brazilian fellows. One of R.'s posts during the process of Cuba recovering after an unexpected tornado shows that:
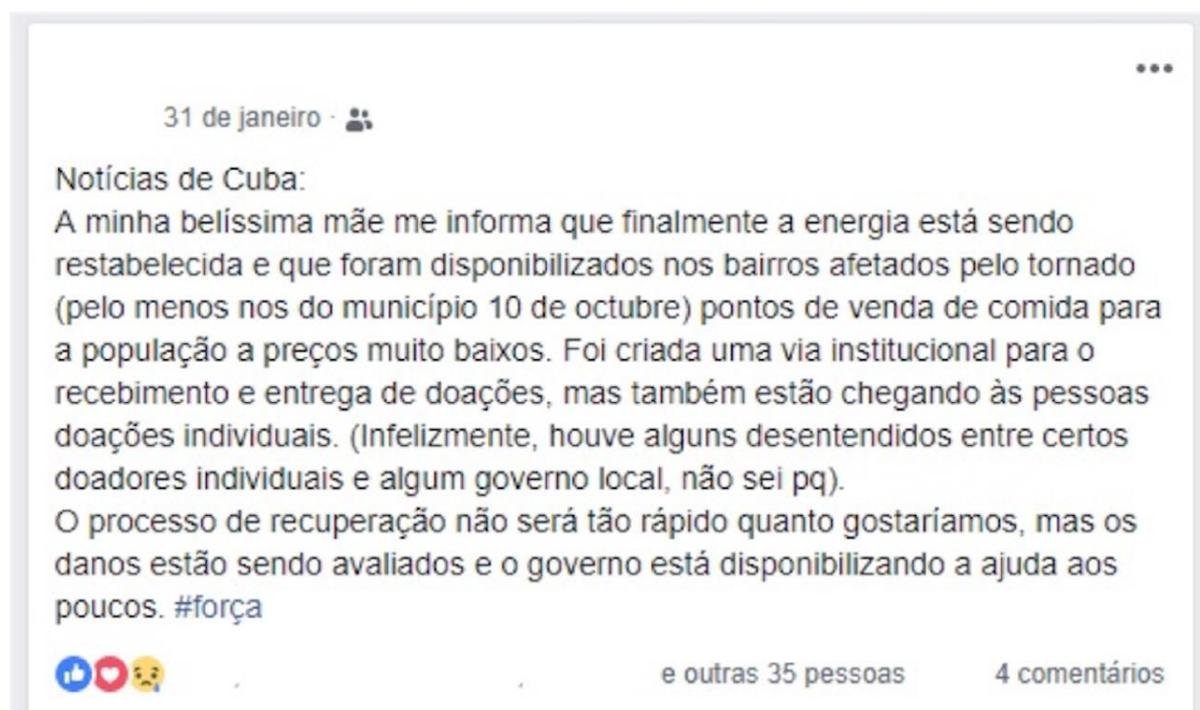

Figure 1. R.'s post published in her personal profile on Facebook on January 31st, 2019.

Using a heading entitled "News from Cuba" and written in Portuguese instead of Spanish, the post clarifies the message aimed at her Brazilian social connections instead of the Cuban ones, at least not the Cubans living in the island, who already knew what was happening there.

The example shows how this particular event in her homeland was being experienced, and spread by R. as an active and self-conscious practice of context collapse conciliation through the organization of socially-anchored temporalities. Thus, "time can be understood as a product of communicative practices which exact certain intercultural competences on behalf of social actors" (Resende and Thies 2018, 5).

Conclusion

Based on primary empirical data we argue that online environments such as Facebook could become a key scenario to assemble and also disassemble layers of time. While the platform

allows expats to keep in contact with people from their homelands, it also provokes a feeling of displacement and distance given by time gaps that narratives reinforce, especially when seen as a part of a wider, intersectional, and intercultural repository.

When Cubans leave their country for Brazil one of the first things they seek is to get connected through social media, as they feel they were somewhat isolated on the island before. Brazil is known for being an "internet phenomenon" and the country is widely immersed in a social media culture. This makes some migrants occupy the position of filling a communication gap between the two countries, almost as news producers (which is something that seems to be changing since the last presidential election in Brazil, with the fear of deportation). Further research is necessary to better understand such dynamics.

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