

ACADEMIC ARTICLES

CUBAN INTERNATIONALISM AND CONTEMPORARY HUMANITARIANISM: HISTORY, COMPARISON AND PERSPECTIVES

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Abstract

The end of the Cold War has introduced important transformations including the practice of humanitarian aid that adjusted to the new world order. The general tendencies of the 'contemporary humanitarianism' are well discussed in the scientific literature. Since 1959, Cuba has developed its internationalism policy and has created a post-disaster brigade relief in the late 1990s. However, the subject has been little studied. The objective of this article is to analyze the Cuban humanitarian practices, values and framework in comparison with the contemporary tendency that appears since the end of the Cold War. Based on interviews led with Cuban *cooperantes* and a review of scientific literature, the study proposes that the Cuban post-relief internationalism is profoundly linked with the particular context in which it was created, but it is also functioning in a specific way in practice.

Keywords: humanitarian aid, Cuba, internationalism, governmentality

The Cold War period was marked by a constant competition between two superpowers, Soviet Union and United States, to elevate their global influence. This rivalry manifested at different levels: ideological, military, development, etc. The turn of the 1990s marked significant changes at the international level introduced by the collapse of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) and

the establishment of a new world order under the aegis of the United States. Russia and the majority of Eastern European countries adopted capitalist economy and multiparty system, but some other, as Cuba, remained socialist. However, the Caribbean island experienced difficult times as the disintegration of the Eastern market and the tightening of the American embargo have led Cuba to lose two-thirds of its gross national product (GNP). To overcome the crises, the Cuban government introduced a phase of reorganization known as the ‘Special Period in time of peace’ (*El periodo especial en tiempo de paz*) that has necessitated important sacrifices from the population. Nevertheless, the social pillars established after the 1959 Revolution, the health cares and the education system were preserved. Also, in the end of the decade, Cuba initiates a new era of its internationalist policy that aims to share those social achievements with other countries. Indeed, the Henry Reeve Brigade was created to provide medical cooperation in post-disaster context. Few social scientists have studied this internationalist practice, but the general tendencies that emerged in the humanitarianism field since the end of the Cold War are well documented. The objective of this article is to analyse the Cuban humanitarian practices, values and framework in comparison with the tendency that appears in the 1990s. Since, for obvious reasons, it was not possible to directly integrate an emergency brigade in a disaster situation, the characterisation of the Cuban action is based on testimonies of internationalist volunteers and a review of scientific literature. In order to characterise the Cuban practice, I carried out 20 interviews in Havana (Cuba), Montreal (Canada) and Escuintla (Guatemala) between July 2011 and August 2013 with Cuban doctors that took part in missions dating back to 1998. The physicians I interviewed have served in the Henry Reeve Brigade but some of them also participated in other medical missions. The selection of participants was opportunistic which means that I constituted my network with the people I met and that accepted to share their experiences. This research strategy, like any other, has advantages and disadvantages, but it has allowed me to outline the general tendency of Cuban humanitarianism to be deepening with further research.

The Historical Construction of Cuban Internationalism

During my interviews with Cuban doctors, most of them explained the actual internationalist policy of their country by the fact that Cuba ‘was born’ because of the internationalist engagement of soldiers from different countries. In fact, to win their independence from Spain (1492–1899), Cuban people have fought over 30 years and received support from many foreigners including Dominicans (Modesto Díaz, Luis Marcano, Máximo Gómez), Americans (Henry Reeve),

Canadians (William Ryan) and Poles (Carlos Roloff). The termination of the Spanish colonisation of the island was followed by an episode of United States military occupation (1899–1902) known as the beginning of the ‘neocolonisation’ of Cuba. Until the 1959 Revolution, the United States maintained a political influence and economic interests in Havana with the complaisance of the Cuban presidents. Indeed, most of the resources and the economic sector – plantation, banks, railways – were controlled by North American firms and the Platt Amendment permitted the United States intervention in the domestic affairs.

As Fagen (1969) states, the available socioeconomic statistics on the Cuban situation in the first half of the twentieth century place the island in an advantageous position in comparison with other countries of Latin America and the Caribbean. In fact, the alphabetisation rate was 76 per cent (1956), the level of life was higher than the regional average and there was medical attention through private, religious and public services. However, there were important inequalities between rural and urban areas and social discrimination, specifically against the Black population, in the access to products, services and opportunities (Kirk and Erisman 2009: 27).

During the 1950s, some contestation movements against the corrupt and repressive Batista’s government (1940–1944/1952–1959) started to take form. It is in this context that the Cuban Revolution will arise. Indeed, the rebel army led by Fidel Castro will fight against Batista’s troop during more than two years in Sierra Maestra until their victory on 1 January 1959 celebrated by a triumphal entrance in Havana. For Eckstein (1994), the Cuban Revolution was profoundly nationalist, and the majority of the population supported it against Batista’s government.

Soon after the victory, Fidel Castro’s government started a vast process of social reforms, which included nationalisation of foreign companies, agrarian reform, organisation of a national alphabetisation campaign, universalisation of health services – building hospitals, training doctors, widespread vaccination – and the adoption of an internationalism foreign policy. Those measures, that some were directly confronting American’s interests in Cuba, led to a deterioration of the relations between the two countries. The definitive rupture occurred after the unsuccessful invasion of Cuban’s exiles at the Bay of Pigs endorsed by the American government. Soon after, Fidel Castro declared the socialist nature of the Revolution and tightened his relations with the USSR.

Symbolic and Pragmatic Perspectives on Internationalism

The Cuban Revolution can be viewed as a radical initiative to attain the State sovereignty and to split with the previous social order. In this perspective, the social transformation implies also the profound change of the human being to

create the ‘new man’, a formulation that includes woman. This ideal subjectivity refers to a person who rejects material incentives and self-interest, who is motivated by moral imperative and values the common good (Kozol 1978; Andaya 2009). It is a fluid and flexible identity that encompasses principles of solidarity, fraternity, egalitarianism, cooperation, sacrifice, service, work and honesty (Fagen 1969). Ernesto ‘Che’ Guevara has contributed by his thought and his practice to develop this notion. As a physician and a combatant, Guevara put in front the key role of the doctor in the new society who will renounce profit to dedicate his specialised knowledge to people and the Revolution (Andaya 2009: 363). The ‘new man’ embedded a larger responsibility with regard to humanity materialised in the internationalist policy. Again, Che Guevara’s example influenced this notion as an Argentinian who fought for Cuba’s liberation, but also against imperialism in the Congo (1965) and Bolivia (1967) where he was killed. To be internationalist supposed a responsibility in front of his compatriot and the world for the people’s emancipation and national liberation. Consequently, the Cuban ‘new man’ is a frugal, responsible and politically engaged revolutionary with a sense of duty and sacrifice (Gronbeck-Tedesco 2008: 665).

Internationalism is also a principle that guides the international relations since 1959. It implies a medical, technical, educational and military help to people who need it. Because Cuba received international help during its liberation war against Spain and after the Revolution’s triumph, Cuban people have a ‘debt against humanity’ that they can pay with internationalist duty. As Feinsilver (1993) argues, it is an anti-imperialist motivation, but also a Latin American perspective of liberation that follows Bolivar, San Martin and Marti’s thought. Since 1959, Cuban internationalism has been characterised by its engagement in favour of emancipation’s movement and by the sharing of its social success, especially in health and education, to ameliorate the well-being of the population in the world (Artaraz 2012; Kirk and Erisman 2009).

Following Kirk (2009: 498), the internationalist practice has evolved in the time and he identifies three distinct periods. The first begins in the wake of the 1959 Revolution and is characterised by a spontaneous medical support during emergency situations abroad. Even if two-thirds of the estimated 6,000 Cuban doctors have left the island in the early years of the Revolution, Cuba has sent a medical brigade after an earthquake to Chile in 1960 and to Algeria in 1962.

A second period refers to the years between 1970 and 1990. At that time, Cuba was part of the Socialist bloc, but it also plays a political role in international forums of Third-World interests and in providing concrete cooperation to those countries. This era is characterised by multiple components: military engagement in the war in Angola and Ethiopia, technical and medical

cooperation, alphabetisation campaigns and the training of professional resources (DePalo 1993; Saney 2006; Kirk 2009; Kirk and Erisman 2009).

The Cuban cooperation holds up at the turn of the 1990s, when the dissolution of the Soviet Union and the Eastern bloc and the tightening of the US embargo created an economic crisis in the country. The important sacrifices from the Cuban population, and the reform adopted by the State have permitted to overcome the *Special Period* and to inaugurate a new internationalist era.

In the late 1990s, a third period in the history of the Cuban internationalism has started, which is marked by the abandonment of the military aspect and the emphasis on the medical cooperation. Two main tendencies characterised this new era. On the one hand, the election of Hugo Chavez in Venezuela sets the bases of agreements between the two countries where Cuba offers medical cooperation in exchange for petroleum sold at a preferential price. This type of collaboration has expanded to other fields (educational, agriculture, finance, etc.) and to other countries within the ALBA.¹ Cuba has also established agreements with other Third-World countries where they send doctors in exchange for other economic benefits. This kind of international collaboration has been well documented as a ‘medical diplomacy’ (Feinsilver 2008) and a ‘transactional humanitarianism’ (Brotherton 2013). Those authors also discuss the benefits the professional who participated in those missions received such as small bonus salary, moral prestige and the opportunity to buy some goods that are not available in Cuba (Andaya 2009).

On the other hand, after the passage of Hurricane Mitch that struck Central America in 1998, which greatly affected the countries of the region, Cuba created the Henry Reeve² Brigade support consisting of trained physicians that could be rapidly deployed to places where natural disasters and grave epidemics occur. The doctors who are part of this contingent must be in good health and shape, fluent in two languages other than Spanish and have to be disposed and prepared for rapid deployment where they are needed (Martínez Suárez 2006). Also, the Henry Reeve’s *cooperantes* have a general medical preparation and solid knowledge regarding epidemiology and diseases related to catastrophes. Since 2005, the Henry Reeve Brigade has been deployed to Guatemala, Pakistan, Indonesia, Bolivia, China, Haiti and more recently in West Africa to fight the Ebola epidemic. Also, in the end of the 1990s, the Cuban State inaugurated the Latin American School of Medicine (ELAM), which offers medical training, free of charge to students from developing countries. The objective is to contribute to the establishment of sustainable health systems that are supported locally as well as to retain physicians in countries of the South where ‘brain drain’ is problematic (Kirk and Erisman 2009: 52; Castro *et al.* 2014: 596).

The Cuban doctors I interviewed were making a distinction between the ‘medical diplomacy’, where the services are paid, and the humanitarianism

response to natural disasters offered for free to any country. Feinsilver (1993: 24) affirms that, even if Cuba does not receive financial retribution for the deployment of the Henry Reeve Brigade, this practice provides moral prestige, soft power and symbolic capital to the State that can be later transformed in material capital. Consequently, it cannot be considered as a completely selfless action. However, the objective of this analysis is not to examine the intentions of the actors, but to deepen the practices, values and framework of the Cuban internationalism and the contemporary humanitarianism. In order to compare those practices, the analysis will focus specifically on the Henry Reeve Brigade's action that operates in the same context as the humanitarians.

Contemporary Humanitarianism

It is difficult to precisely define the concept of contemporary humanitarian aid since it has expanded and has been reconfigured in the turn of the 1990s (Atlani-Duault and Dozon 2011: 393). In this context and in order to compare it with the Cuban practice, humanitarian aid will be considered as an emergency practice in response to natural, social or political disasters, which takes the form, among other things, of food aid, provisions for medical care and temporary shelter to the affected population.

Until the 1990s, there was a clear distinction between the concepts and the practices of development and humanitarianism, a difference that tends to blur since the end of the Cold War and with emergence of new security imperatives (Duffield 2005; Atlani-Duault and Dozon 2011). Indeed, the shift to a unipolar world contributed to the resurgence of various tensions that were once attenuated by the dynamics of the Cold War and which gave rise to violent conflicts such as the war in Somalia, the Rwanda genocide or the conflict in the Balkans. Faced with these complex emergencies, the Western States reinvest in crisis management, particularly through military actors (Pandolfi 2006; Saillant 2007). As for non-governmental organisations (NGOs), they specialised and professionalised by making more use of experts such as administrators or technicians. In other words, humanitarian actors specialise in problems of the 'victims' who themselves become objects of expertise (Collovald 2002 in Verna 2007: 37).

Collaboration between military and humanitarian actors has developed progressively on intervention sites, in order to respond effectively to crisis situations. For example, the military can provide security for the movement of humanitarian organisations so they can deliver their assistance in a context of civil war (Duffield 2001, 2010). However, this has led to increasing confusion among locals who can hardly distinguish the specific roles of these actors. The result is a rise of violent acts or the resistance to these interventions. The financing of humanitarian

activities contributes to this mix of roles, particularly since 11 September 2001 and the increase of preoccupations regarding terrorism. On one hand, humanitarian organisations are more and more dependent upon public funds (Audet 2011: 452) but, on the other hand, financing is now concentrated in the hands of private funding agencies³ and a few international donors – the United States, the European Union, the United Kingdom, Canada, Australia, Japan, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank (Mouton 2012: 15). In this context, humanitarian organisations are increasingly called on to take clear positions to obtain financing and insure that money doesn't indirectly serve interests contrary to those of the donors. This trend has contributed to the erosion of neutrality and the principles of impartiality, which NGOs are bound to. As Ticktin (2014: 280) argues, greater militarisation and *neoliberalisation* tended to create competition rather than collaboration between NGOs.

The tendencies of the humanitarianism that emerged after the end of the Cold War are interesting to analyse in relation to the Cuban internationalism to illustrate what kind of practices those different frameworks are producing.

Compare Analysis of Cuban Internationalism and Contemporary Humanitarianism in Disaster Situation

To proceed to this comparison, I will privilege ideal type, which is a theoretical construction exposing 'how a social activity would take place if it was evolving with a complete rational purpose, without any disturbance from error or affect, and how it would evolve in a complete unambiguous manner, with a sole purpose' (Weber 1995: 35). This analysis demonstrates how contemporary humanitarianism and Cuban internationalism operate on the ground by raising the general trends that we can outline from scientific publications and interviews, while admitting that the reality is more complex. In fact, the ideal type illustrates the way the practices unfold on intervention sites through analysing parameters of sovereignty, temporality, territorial and social relation with local people.

Sovereignty

Max Weber defines sovereignty as a modern territorial State attribute, which refers to the highest social authority responsible for maintaining internal order and protection against the competition of an external order by the monopoly on legitimate violence in a specific territory (McFalls 2009b: 7). Within territorial boundaries, 'sovereignty implies that political authority is singular, exclusive and that it ultimately belongs to the head of State', including that 'the State has absolute political and legal independence in relation to others' (Mérand 2009: 28).

When a humanitarian emergency occurs, military and humanitarian actors are rapidly deployed to contain the crisis and support vulnerable populations. In this kind of situation, sovereignty tends to move from a local level, towards a mobile international community of civilian and military experts, characterised by its ability to be exported and implemented on the grounds where an international crisis occurs (Pandolfi 2006: 44). A 'mobile' sovereignty is imposed on traditional sovereignty, which then becomes weakened or directly implicated in the disaster. In other words, this alternative form of sovereignty is taking place when and where the territorial sovereignty fails, or is in a crisis situation (McFalls 2009a: 217). The use of modern technologies⁴ allows the military-humanitarian dispositive to move quickly on the ground, but also to strengthen their authority over local capacity. According to Pupavac (2005: 178), the military-humanitarian system erodes developing countries' capacity to maintain their political sovereignty. Indeed, although they are theoretically sovereign, they are not treated as equals by developed countries, to the extent that military-humanitarian coalitions intervene on their behalf, to control crisis situations and manage the population 'at risk'.

In regards to Cuban internationalism, when a country is hit by a humanitarian crisis, the Cuban State offers its cooperation to the local government, which is free to accept or refuse it. For example, during the passage of Hurricane Katrina in New Orleans in 2005, Cuba had proposed sending a medical brigade to the Bush administration, which declined the offer (Kirk 2009: 497). During deployment of a Cuban mission, the local State authority remains in control of sovereignty. Cuban mission leaders regularly communicate with local governments to coordinate parameters for the mission installation, monitoring and field organisation.

(...) When we arrived to help, we asked the Ministry of Public Health of Haiti where people were. We assumed that they were in certain places, but we coordinated with them and chose a location close by the countryside hospitals (...) We started giving our help and provided, with the Haitian authorities, a country diagnosis to determinate the necessities and provide the required assistance. (Testimony of a doctor in Haiti, July 2011)

When discussing modern technology during interviews with the Cuban internationalists, they often drew parallel between field constraints and those from their everyday lives in Cuba. Indeed, since the country is subjected to an economic embargo imposed by the United States, material insufficiency is common. Cubans rely on resourcefulness and cooperate with each other to overcome negative effects of this policy. These dispositions prove to be advantageous in a humanitarian context, where there are many constraints on the field and while

they do not possess high technology as the humanitarian actors from richer countries. A doctor explained me that it is easier for someone to learn, for example, how a special computer program works, than to learn how to do the same with mental operation for someone who is not used to it.

Temporality

Temporality is a concept intrinsically linked to sovereignty as a parameter of human life. The modern State operates in a linear and progressive temporality based on the idea that it will endure over time. The context of emergency, in which the humanitarian crisis is unravelling, requires a rapid action, which then causes an acceleration and suspension of temporality, introducing a continuous present in which the action is taking place (McFalls 2009a: 217). In order to act quickly, the humanitarians use proven and standardised protocols which ‘decontextualise’ and ‘dehistoricise’ situations in which humanitarian aid unfold. The crisis is mobilising all efforts, while the present and the future are no longer important, which perpetuates the state of emergency. This causes a prolonging in the context of emergency and an increase in political, economic, military and social dependence of the local society.

Cuban internationalism is part of a linear and long temporality, which is associated to the definition of the modern State. Indeed, the Cuban approach advocates a long-term vision in which emergency assistance is linked to various initiatives with the aim of developing local capacity. Cuban *cooperantes* are deployed in the field for a long period, enough to implement the program, make it work and finish it. They are not subjected to international funding of their programs that privileged ‘emergency’ action.

[To Haiti] we know that we can help with medical aid. An important difference [with NGOs] is that everyone will help for a short period of time. Teams get up to fifteen days and when they are in a condition to take on the mission, the staff changes. So, new groups arrive; they take three days to adapt to the conditions, start working and then leave. This does not facilitate the task and many people or organizations were gone after a month. We stayed (...) we, we were there before the earthquake, during the earthquake, and we were there after. We knew that there would be significant problems that would show up after and that’s what happened; First a group of diseases and then a serious cholera epidemic. (Testimony of a doctor in Haiti, July 2011)

In fact, Cuban cooperation in Haiti took form in emergency medical assistance, but also by granting ELAM scholarships to Haitian students so that they

eventually replace the Cuban medical personnel after their training. At the same time, the Cuban State, Brazil, and countries members of the ALBA were working with the Government of Haiti for the reconstruction of a national health system.⁵

Space and Its Organisation

Directly linked to the definition of sovereignty, territorial space is also shaken by the deployment of the military-humanitarian system. Mobile sovereignty creates dissolution and division of space, which then marks a ‘deterritorialization’ of political control, destroying the special features of places (McFalls 2009a: 217). The territory is reorganised into different areas (refugee camps,⁶ control areas, special zones, etc.) while the urban and historic sites are often used for operational requirements. The historical, cultural and identity relations of the local society are deeply transformed by this depersonalisation and ‘dehistoricisation’ of places.

Within Cuban internationalist missions, territories remain under the control of competent political authority, guarantor of the sovereign. By insuring the parameters of intervention, Cuban *cooperantes* aim to maintain the specificity of places, and mark the space similarly to the way it was prior to the crisis. During the 2010 earthquake in Haiti, internationalists installed field hospitals with the collaboration of the local government, in order to ensure that different communities from each province could have access to it.

Relations with Local Society

The humanitarian intervention implies a relation between those being helped and the humanitarian. In regards to relations with local society, it is acceptable to state that humanitarian actions take place while creating a gap between those who come to help and the beneficiary population (Ngirumpatse and Rousseau 2007: 196). According to the works of the anthropologist Mariella Pandolfi (2006), humanitarians tend to use pre-established and standardised operating procedures, because of the urgency of the intervention. These strategies are based on universalistic democratic values, collective participation and assisting victims. Not to mention that humanitarian intervention contexts are often an opportunity to implement political models or good governance practices that have no local anchorage. To implement their programs, humanitarians will tend to favour local interlocutors who are part of a modern, cosmopolitan, polyglot elite and adhering to the values of human rights. This creates tensions with traditional leaders who are more rooted in the social structure, which risks weakening the society already harmed by the disaster. Pandolfi also notes two types of

standardizations interlocked in the humanitarian intervention presence: firstly, public discourse makes the place similar to all humanitarian operation territories, while the speeches convey stereotypes about the local society interpreting the other as being rooted and immutable. Recovered and repeated, these *clichés* help asserting the intervention system's dominance and hiding phenomena and complex events.

During their deployment in the field, Cubans live in the communities where they work, generally located in rural or sparsely settled areas. Their integration into local everyday life allows internationalists to build relationships with the people and contextualise their action. This promotes the development of a trusting relationship between Cuban internationalists and members of the community, thereby reducing potential resistance to the intervention. Each internationalist mission is adapted to a specific context and is then developed as much as possible, with the collaboration of local human resources. Castro *et al.* (2014: 599) states that the cultural and ethical preparation of Cuban *cooperantes* promotes mutual comprehension and collaborative work instead of interventionism.

Reflection and Conclusion

The use of the ideal type was found appropriate to address the general trends in how humanitarianism and internationalism operate in the field within a context of crisis. Like any method, however, this has its limits. This tool should be seen more as a way to build hypotheses rather than as an exhaustive mode of analysis. In order to deepen the analyses as to the distinctiveness of internationalism, a reflection on the positions of Cuba at national and international levels as well as how the governmentality is exerted will be presented.

As shown, Cuban internationalist missions are deeply linked to measures established in the wake of the 1959 Revolution; the focus on building better health and education capacities, and the ideological commitment to support other countries has led to a cooperation policy marked by humanist values. Although Cuba was declared a socialist State in the early 1960s, it still would have retained some independence from the Eastern bloc (Kirk 2009: 500). Evidence of this includes a particular commitment in international Third-World movements and an internationalist cooperation performed with many of these States. According to Fanelli (2008: 7), the Cuban State has, over decades, developed a particular socio-political model he calls 'cubanalismo' which, according to him, appears to be profoundly different to neoliberalism.

With the collapse of the USSR in the early 1990s and the strengthening of the US embargo, Cuba has experienced significant economic slowdown and certain

isolation on the international stage. This forced the Cuban government to introduce measures to make up for the disappearance of the Eastern market during the 'special period'. The rise of leftist governments in Latin America, in particular in Venezuela, inaugurated a new era of internationalism in 1998, which allowed the Cuban State to establish new relations to lessen its isolation. Despite the recent warming of relations with the United States, the economic embargo is still in place and Cuba has limited political ties with Washington and all Western States.

Thus, the brief analysis of the Cuban national model and the position of the State at an international level tend to show that the development of this cooperation policy is intrinsically linked to the particular trajectory of Havana since 1959, which appears distinct from the contemporary humanitarianism. Although those practices share common aspects, such as the objective of aiding victims in a crisis situation, the motivations and means of action are quite different. Since Cuba maintains limited relationships with States and institutions leading humanitarian aid, the convergence of these practices seems incongruous. Even if Cuba has gained an important role in the international sphere and has acquired more influence than can be expected from a little Caribbean Island, it does not have much influence on a sphere dominated by International Agencies, 'First-World countries' and private funding groups.

The Governmentality

The trend in humanitarianism since the end of the Cold War is part of a broader change in the type of governmentality that was introduced by the Western States. According to Foucault (1976: 178), the type of power that characterises Western modernity dates from the seventeenth century, when there was a transition of power in which the sovereign had the right to choose between the life and death of others, to a disciplinary, administrative State, endowed with the prerogative to ensure life. Governmentality can be defined as 'the set of practices by which one can build, define, organize and instrumentalize the strategies that individuals, in their freedom, can have towards each other' (McFalls 2008: 158). In this perspective, McFalls (2008) postulates that since the seventeenth century, the liberal governmentality, serviced the individual through interventions at the population level, has changed since the mid-twentieth century. From now on, neoliberal governmentality takes action based on a power focused on people where the State withdraws and abandons its duties of taking control of its well-being and assumes a management function of risk groups.

In this perspective, contemporary humanitarianism provides emergency response personnel, where they are military or technical experts (doctors, engineers, administrators) to introduce, in terms of social relations, market

competition mechanisms so that the recipients of this assistance come to support themselves with empowerment. The individual, as a social entrepreneur, operates as a *homo economicus*, a man of production providing capital for himself and his family, being his own producer and the source of his income (Foucault 2004b: 232). From the moment it led individuals to take responsibility, it was wrong to speak of a way to create ‘development’ since they sought survival, prevention of frustration and resilience, from a security perspective (Pupavac 2005: 176). Consequently, there is an abandonment of the desire to create a global vision for a fragmented action: chaos regulation (McFalls and Pandolfi 2012). Under the rationality of controlled chaos, the relationship between knowledge and power is divided and every aspect of life becomes an autonomous area of government expertise. This includes strengthening action at the individual level. As shown by contemporary humanitarianism analysis, since the 1990s, NGOs are professionalising both in specific areas of action and by becoming ‘victim experts’ (Verna 2007: 37); the operations of the military-humanitarian system also aim to establish mechanisms for developing empowerment and resilience of groups shaken by the disaster. In other words, the prospect of solving the crisis and creating bases for a development is abandoned in favour of managing ‘at risk’ groups.

According to Foucault (2004a: 93–94), there would be no autonomous socialist governmentality to manage, control, organise and therefore govern population. In fact, he accepts the historic and economic rationality of socialism (often manifesting itself through health or education interventions). However, socialism becomes real in using governmentality techniques from National interest or Liberalism. National interest answers to a vertical and hierarchical logic, which, in its extreme form, becomes totalitarianism. As for the governmentality techniques of liberalism, which can be imposed to National interest, they refer to a horizontal control system that produces and consumes a series of liberties so that liberalism can freely regulate their actions towards the direction suggested by the mechanisms of self-interest (McFalls and Pandolfi 2013: 18). To illustrate his point, Foucault states that one must never question whether liberalism is true or false, but one must permanently question socialism. Indeed, socialism has no intrinsic governmental rationality, and this absence is replaced by a compliance report, which would be the very measure of the gap formed by the absence of a socialist art of governing (Foucault 2004a: 94).

While taking into consideration Foucault’s reasoning, Cuban internationalists’ mode of action could be linked to socialist governmentality working with techniques of liberalism, which is part of a political rationality represented in a horizontal and spontaneous order insofar as it is this individual action that generates an overall coherence. Indeed, the Cuban socialist State is committed to sharing its

achievements in health and education to those in need. On intervention grounds, *cooperantes* have some autonomy to adapt this action in order to meet local needs and build sustainable systems. The analysis has demonstrated that the Cuban internationalism operates in a specific way that reflected the particular ideal framework in which it was created, and this practice is inscribed in a different governmental rationality than the contemporary humanitarianism.

In conclusion, the present article has analyzed the Cuban internationalist practice, values and framework in comparison with the humanitarianism tendency that appears since the end of the Cold War. It has been shown that the principles of internationalism are located in the pragmatic and symbolic Cuban history related to the independence wars. After the victory of the 1959 Revolution, internationalism was instituted as a State foreign policy, which consisted of sharing national achievements with other countries in a humanist perspective. Since 1998, Cuba started to provide post-disaster relief with the creation of the Henry Reeve Brigade, a contingent of health workers specially trained to intervene in those contexts. Contrary to the contemporary humanitarianism, there are few studies that analyse how the Cuban internationalism operates on the field. The interviews led with Cubans *cooperantes* and the examination of scientific literature permitted to identify the general trends of the Cuban practice and to compare them with the ideal-type of the post-Cold War humanitarianism. This analysis has revealed that the Cuban internationalism functions in a different way than the contemporary tendency. Indeed, the fact that Cuba occupies a particular international position, closer from Third-World countries than from Western aid providers and institutions, reinforces this position as well as the reflection proposing that the two post-relief practices are associated to distinctive political rationality. However, this analysis must be considered as a first step to be deepening by further studies including a field-work in a context where the Henry Reeve Brigade is operating. Considering that natural disasters are unpredictable events, but that their responses are perfectible, it seems essential to valorized dialogue between the different actors to improve the practices.

Notes

1. The Bolivarian Alliance for the Peoples of Our America is a political, social and economic organisation promoting the integration of the countries of the continent. The member countries are Cuba, Venezuela, Bolivia, Nicaragua, Dominica, Honduras, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Antigua and Barbuda and Ecuador.
2. The Medical Contingent was named in honour of the young American soldier who fought for the Cuban independence in 1873 (Martínez Suárez 2006). We can see it as a direct message in the symbolic opposition between Cuba and the United States.

3. For example, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.
4. Modern technologies include, for example, means of transportation (aeroplanes, helicopters, and cars), weapons, tested response procedures as well as emergency equipment and logistics (GPS, satellite phones, etc.) (Mouton 2012: 8).
5. Minn (2016) proposes an interesting analysis of the ‘moral economy’ of health in Haiti and the different perspective that the humanitarians and Haitians health professionals can have. However, the point I wanted to make in this section is that Cuban post-disaster internationalism is an insert in a larger strategy.
6. Many analyses have been done on refugee camps and spaces of exception; see especially Agier (2002, 2008).

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