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Imagining a Free Cuba: Carlos Manuel de Céspedes and José Martí

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Thomas E. Skidmore, and Wayne S. Smith

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CUBA SERA LIBRE
OCTUBRE 31 DE
4 DE NOVIEMBRE

Preface

José Martí died on May 19, 1895 in an engagement with Spanish troops in Eastern Cuba. The centenary of his death was the occasion for commemorations in Cuba and elsewhere. In China, for instance, it was observed with the publication of an anthology in translation of his prose and poems. At an International Congress of Hispanists, in India, four scholarly papers dealt with Martí's works; followed, among other observances, by an act in his memory at the University of South Africa, two symposia in Spain, and a session dedicated to Martí at the XII Congress of the International Association of Hispanists in Birmingham (England). Fondo de Cultura Económica of Mexico, probably the largest publishing enterprise in the Hispanic world, in conjunction with UNESCO, distributed a multinational edition of four million copies of two of Martí's books of poetry, *Ismaelillo* and *Versos sencillos*, through twenty-one newspapers in Latin America, Puerto Rico, Spain, and Portugal; three in the United States; one weekly in Canada and one in Israel; and forty-two morning dailies in Mexico. Moreover, Mexico and Spain issued postage stamps featuring Martí's image, the Spanish one from a portrait done just two months before his death.

Surprising as it may seem, one can find in Rhode Island, a minuscule state, some connections to the epic pursuit of political freedom in Spanish America. The earliest one was the presence of the Venezuelan patriot Francisco de Miranda, who in 1784 came to the United States to seek the support of Washington and Jefferson for his cause. During his trip he stopped by the college that eventually became Brown University, and visited its first president, the Reverend James Manning, leaving in his diary a detailed and uninhibited account of his sojourn. But there is more.

The Cuban Pedro J. Guiteras found shelter from the repression of the colonial authorities in his country in the quiet town of Bristol, Rhode Island. There he wrote his *History of the Island of Cuba*, to be published first in New York in 1866, followed by a second edition in Baltimore in 1882-1883, and also started his biographic work of Cuban poets. A direct descendant of the Guiteras family, Antonio, revered in Cuba

for his integrity and staunch nationalism, was gunned down near Havana in a stand against Batista forces in 1935. Even Martí's well-known, delicate poem "Los zapaticos de rosa" ["The little rose-colored shoes"], published in *La Edad de Oro* (New York, 1889), seems to have been written on one of his visits to Newport, R.I.,[1] during his long exile in the United States. There is also John Hay, a graduate of Brown University in 1858, who became secretary of state in 1898, at the start of the war between Spain and the United States that brought about the independence of Cuba. In addition, Brown University is proud of an endowed chair in modern and contemporary Latin American history, presently occupied by Professor Thomas E. Skidmore, and bearing the name of Carlos Manuel de Céspedes, the first president of a rebellious Cuba (1868-1873).

Brown University could not ignore the opportunity to honor the memory of one of Latin America's most outstanding political and literary figures. To this effect, our Center for Latin American Studies organized a two-day conference that took place on October 19 and 20, 1995. Its title, "Imagining a Free Cuba: Carlos Manuel de Céspedes and José Martí," brings together two names united by the one ideal, the same that today is an inspiration for so many. If the first verses by Martí were probably those of a poem entitled "To my mother," one of his sonnets, published in a student newspaper early in 1869, was dedicated to the "¡10 de octubre!" ["October 10!], known as "El grito de Yara" for the revolutionary proclamation issued by Céspedes on that date in 1868. The enthusiasm of young Martí for the insurrectional attitude of Céspedes, which was to inspire his future political action, shows clearly in these lines by the still adolescent poet:

> Gracias a Dios que ¡al fin con entereza
> Rompe Cuba el dogal que la oprimía
> Y activa y libre yergue su cabeza!
>
> [Thanks be to God that, at last with integrity
> Cuba breaks the noose that oppressed her
> And active and free lifts its head!]

The event at Brown University was structured in two parts. The first one was an opening session dedicated to Céspedes and Martí. The second part, which took place the following day, consisted of two sessions: "Martí: the political activist" and "Martí: the writer," chaired respectively by the renowned British historian Hugh Thomas, and the outstanding Hispanist Professor Geoffrey W. Ribbans of our Department of Hispanic Studies. A total of seven papers were read, resulting in an integrated whole characterized by a multidisciplinary approach, and an overall complementariness. In organizing this publication, we thought it best to arrange them in order of presentation.

Professor Thomas E. Skidmore's opening lecture, "Cubans by Choice: Carlos Manuel de Céspedes and José Martí," set the stage by highlighting the ideological connection between the two nineteenth-century protagonists of the Cuban struggle for freedom.

The following day, at the start of the morning session, Professor Louis A. Pérez, Jr., explored Martí's works and actions searching for the meaning of his notions of *patria* and *Cuba Libre*, as well as their present-day relevance. Next, Professor George Monteiro contributed an analysis of the journalistic accounts of three American writers who witnessed the intervention of the United States in the Cuban war in 1898; a compelling subject, since Martí himself was a journalist and recorded vividly in his diary of 1895, *De Cabo Haitiano a Dos Ríos* (1940), his own experiences in the early stages of the conflict. Dr. Wayne S. Smith closed the session with a summary of the opposing interpretations of Martí's ideology, while demonstrating the present validity of the latter's thought.

The afternoon session opened with Professor Cathy L. Jrade carrying forward the debate about Martí and Modernism, and establishing how in his writings poetics and politics "come together more assertively than in those of other modernists, bearing on the shaping of national identity." Professor Ivan A. Schulman, for his part, theoretically re-examined Martí's notions of Modernism, which go beyond the strictly aesthetical to reflect "the challenges presented by a new set of social and historical circumstances." In closing, Professor Nelson R. Orringer established a significant intertextual

relationship between Martí's writings and Unamuno's famous novel, *San Manuel Bueno, mârtir* (1931).

We welcomed the presence at the conference of a direct descendant of Carlos Manuel de Céspedes representing the family, Marcantonio M. Antamoro, Brown '90.

Preceding the conference, and to contextualize it, the Center for Modern Culture and Media offered a film show, organized by Mr. E. Robert Arellano, on aspects of the struggle for Cuban independence. There was also an exhibit of books and graphic materials at the Annmary Brown Memorial Library, "José Martí: From New York to Dos Ríos," researched and mounted by Ms. Rosemary Cullen, Curator of the Harris Collection, John Hay Library. One of the items, from the Anne S. K. Brown Military Collection, was a striking chromolithograph of about 1873, featuring prominently a waving Cuban flag and the motto "Cuba será libre." (See illustration on page iv.)

This event was co-sponsored by the President's Office, The Herbert H. Goldberger Lectureship in Social Science, The Thomas J. Watson Jr. Institute for International Studies, and The Francis Wayland Collegium for Liberal Learning, Brown University. Our thanks to all for their crucial support.

We also wish to register our gratitude to the speakers and to the chairpersons, together with a special acknowledgment of the collaboration of Dr. Regina Cortina, Associate Director of the Center for Latin American Studies, and Ms. Antoinette Bulson, its associate director and administrative coordinator. And we are indebted to the following for their important contributions: Mr. William Slack, director of special events, and his staff; Mr. Peter Harrington, curator of the Anne S. K. Brown Military Collection; Ms. Catherine Denning, curator of the Annmary Brown Memorial Library; and Ms. Leslie Baxter and Ms. Jean Lawlor, on the staff of the Watson Institute.

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Acting Director (Fall 1995), Center for Latin American Studies
Providence, R.I., August 1996

Notes

[1]"["Los zapaticos de rosa"] 'Escrito en Newport, donde estábamos él y yo visitando una familia amiga.' (De una carta de María Mantilla viuda de Romero al compilador de esta antología, de 5 de junio, 1961. Martí estuvo varias veces en ese lugar.)" "["The little rose-colored shoes"] 'Written in Newport, where he and I were visiting a family who were friends of ours.' (From a letter of María Mantilla widow of Romero to the compiler of the present anthology, dated June 5, 1961. Martí was several times in that place.)" José Martí, *Versos*. Estudio preliminar, selección y notas de Eugenio Florit (New York: Las Américas Publishing Company, 1962): note 47.

Cubans by Choice: Carlos Manuel de Céspedes and José Martí[1]

Thomas E. Skidmore

Thirty-five years ago, Cuba was at the center of a Cold War confrontation that brought us closer to the brink of a nuclear holocaust than we had ever been before. The 1962 missile crisis, eventually solved by diplomacy, was the highest point of danger in the troubled history of mankind since World War II. That terrifying experience alone should justify our efforts to understand how Cuba has reached its present moment in history.[2]

This Caribbean island also should interest us because its revolution of 1959 changed all thinking about Latin America and U.S. relations with the region. That revolution, whatever we may think of it, must be acknowledged to have produced the most thorough-going social transformation of any political upheaval in modern Latin America.[3]

Cuba also merits our attention because it is an important continuing influence in our own country's artistic and academic life. Cuban talent has enriched U.S. society not only in Miami but also in many other communities across the U.S., including Providence, R.I.

Finally, Cuba deserves study because it is fascinating in itself—its culture, society, and history. Cuba has long been one of the most vibrant expressions of New World civilization, largely because of the profound mixture of African and European, along with important components from Asia and elsewhere in the Caribbean. In the words of Fernando Ortiz, that distinguished student of Cuban culture, "[I]n Cuba the cultures that have influenced the formation of its folk have been so many and so diverse in their spatial position and their structural composition that the vast blend of races and cultures overshadows in importance every other historical phenomenon."[4]

This paper looks at Cuba in the nineteenth century, although the twentieth century furnishes an inevitable backdrop. Incidentally, I offer no predictions about the future of present-day

Cuba. Instead, I shall engage in what has been called the historian's true profession: being a prophet of the past.

Brazilian Parallels with Cuba

If Cuba is worth our attention, then why should a Brazilian history specialist, such as myself, be talking about it? Chief among the possible answers is the fact that I hold a chair generously endowed by Count Franco Antamoro, the great-great-grandson of Carlos Manuel de Céspedes. It was also our good fortune to have Count Antamoro's son, Marco Antonio, as an undergraduate at Brown. There are also good reasons for a Brazilianist to study Cuban history. Both Brazil and Cuba are tropical societies, which have depended largely on agricultural exports, especially sugar, for their economic development. And both turned to massive imports of African slaves to furnish the labor force. As a result, both societies were deeply influenced by slave-based plantation societies. Equally important, both were significantly molded by African culture, more than any other major Latin American countries outside of the Caribbean. The parallels can be seen in music, dance, cuisine, language, and religion. Any Brazilian ethnomusicologist would feel at home, for example, reading the multiple works of Fernando Ortiz on Afro-Cuban music and dance.[5]

Brazil also resembles Cuba in that they were the last two slaveholding countries of the western hemisphere to embrace total abolition—Cuba in 1886 and Brazil in 1888. Unlike the U.S., both had opted for a gradualist solution to the great moral problem of the nineteenth century.[6]

Of course, there are also many differences in the historical experiences of Brazil and Cuba. Brazil has enjoyed a broader resource base and a much larger territory. Most important, it has had the advantage of being much farther away from the United States. Those of you who fear that Brazilian imperialism may have already taken over this paper can rest at ease because I shall now turn to the main topic.

Brown chose this date for a conference on Cuba because it was the centennial of the death of José Martí, the great prophet of modern Cuban nationalism. We also honored Carlos Manuel de Céspedes, Martí's most prominent precursor and the man

known as "*el Padre de la Patria*." The story that follows is part of the history of the Cuban struggle for self-government in the nineteenth century. It takes the form of an anti-Spanish revolt, but it also should be seen in a wider context, namely "the Pursuit of Freedom," as Lord Thomas so eloquently subtitled his monumental history of Cuba.[7]

The Scenario: Two and a Half Countries

Our interest today in the lives of these two extraordinary Cubans, each of whom in his own way *chose* Cuba, cannot be understood without understanding the two and a half countries that composed the scenario for their actions. The first country was Spain, once the envy of European monarchies as it prospered on the exports from its American colonies. But Spain was now in decline, left behind by the industrial revolution that was producing a new source of wealth in northern Europe. Spain's loss of most of its vast American empire in the 1820s had made it all the more determined to hold onto the Caribbean remnants of Puerto Rico and Cuba, along with the far distant Philippines. Spain's failure to enter the modern economic era had not prevented it from maintaining enough military power to control these remaining colonies.

By 1868, however, Spain was a society in deep crisis, suffering its own uncertainties about national identity. Furthermore, it was wracked with political conflict. In September 1868, a military coup forced Queen Isabella into exile and led to the short-lived Republic of 1873. It was this sign of weakness and division that provided the opening for the Céspedes-led revolt of 1868 to be discussed below.

The second country was the United States, whose economic rise paralleled the Spanish decline. By the 1860s, the U.S. had become a self-confident expansionist society and was approaching the status of a major industrial power. A largely Protestant Anglo-Saxon ideology had produced a rationale for the conquest of "inferior" peoples on the Spanish-speaking borderlands. Mexico's huge territorial loss to the United States in the 1840s had alerted all Latin Americans to U.S. intentions. Furthermore, the United States had become the prime trading partner of Cuba and was on its way to becoming the principal

foreign investor. The scenario was thus set for the collision of a declining but proud Spain and a powerful and supremely self-confident United States.

In between was the "half country" of Cuba. This term is meant to describe the in-between stage where Cuba existed politically. Its native-born elite had despaired of an independent status in the 1840s and had even flirted with annexation to the United States. One motive was to preserve slavery since it was thought that Spain's guardian power over slavery might need to be replaced by that of a sympathetic U.S. south.

For most of its existence, Cuba had been little more than an *entrepot* for the commerce between the Spanish colonies and Europe. Its native population had been largely annihilated in the first century of Spanish occupation, which began with the arrival of Columbus.

By the late eighteenth century, however, the Spanish had discovered that Cuban soil and climate were ideal for a vast expansion of cane sugar cultivation. In addition, Britain's brief occupation of Havana in 1762 opened the port and stimulated its commerce. The number of North American ships reaching Cuba showed the pace of change. The total went from 150 in 1796 to 606 in 1800, 783 in 1826, and 1,702 between 1846 and 1850. Cuba had thus emerged in the nineteenth century as one of the most dynamic export economies in the world. [8]

Accompanying this boom was a surge in population. From 1774 to 1841, the total population increased from 171,000 to slightly over one million. Included in this number were many thousands of Spanish immigrants, providing another anomaly in Cuban historical development. At a time, especially in the 1820s, when native-born Spaniards were fleeing the rebellious colonies elsewhere in the Americas, their counterparts in Spain were choosing Cuba as a new home. As a result, by mid-century, the colony of Cuba probably had a higher percentage of native-born Spaniards than any Spanish American republic. This could not help but complicate an attempt to revolt against Spain.

The huge population growth had another important characteristic. It tilted the racial balance against the whites. In 1774, they were 57 percent of the population, but by 1841 they had fallen to 42 percent. [9] This latter figure was roughly parallel to

Brazil, but much lower than in the United States. In short, Cuba was by mid-century predominantly a society of color, including a significant population of free color. This was to influence deeply all political decisions in Cuba.

Many foreign visitors to Cuba saw danger in the social structure of this burgeoning economy. One North American woman noted in the mid-1860s that "All the fine buildings here...are barricaded with iron bars...to guard against insurrections, as I was satisfied would eventually come upon the people of that island if they continued to enslave and oppress both colored and whites." [10]

A skeptic might ask whether the historian can rely upon the word of such travelers. Grounds for skepticism certainly existed, as any careful historian can attest. For example, one American visitor in the late 1860s reported a conversation that today could only be regarded as ideologically infelicitous. The Cuban gentleman, asking him about the U.S. said,

> 'Everyone is free there now, señor?'
> 'Oh, yes,' I replied; 'we have no negro slaves there now.'
> 'No, no! Señor; you don't understand me. I mean the women, too,—are they not free?'
> To which I was compelled to reply they were, and only we poor men were their slaves.[11]

Visitors were also powerfully impressed by the effect slave-based monoculture was having on Cuban society. Another American visitor noted at the end of the 1870s: "Every energy of every man and animal is concentrated upon the task of producing as many pounds as possible of sugar....The decay of many, and the enriching of the few, is ever the direct result of the production of one great staple by slave labor."[12]

The tensions inherent in slavery within a society predominantly of color were not the only source of instability in mid-nineteenth-century Cuba. Another was the style and content of Spanish administration of the colony. The arbitrary attitudes and actions of successive governors-general, who often made little secret of their contempt for the island, were a constant irritant. Perhaps more important were the high tariffs

the colonists were forced to pay. In sum, the native-born Cubans could easily summon the kind of grievances once common to the creole societies elsewhere in Spanish America.

Having set the scene, we can now turn to the story of Céspedes and Martí.

Carlos Manuel de Céspedes and the Ten Years' War

The Céspedes family had lived in Bayamo, in eastern Cuba, since the first half of the seventeenth century. Descended from Spanish *hidalgos*, they had been prominent members of the landowning elite. While previous generations were *criollos*, i.e. Cuban-born, the father of Carlos Manuel de Céspedes was among the first generation to consider themselves "*bien cubanos*."[13] As wealthy planters strongly affected by harsh Spanish taxation policy, the Céspedes family had an obvious economic interest in independence. It is not surprising that Carlos Manuel and all four of his siblings committed themselves to the struggle for a break with Spain. [14]

Céspedes was a lawyer who had studied in Barcelona, Spain. There he became involved in the struggles of Catalonia against the Spanish government. He thus witnessed first-hand one of the Spanish peninsula's deepest ethnic and regional divisions. After receiving his degree, he lived in England, learning English and enjoying the tastes and manners of the British aristocracy. Céspedes was said to be a handsome figure who especially enjoyed social life and was not immune to the charms of the opposite sex. Traveling throughout Europe, he admired the "civilized" governments and found the only country politically comparable to Cuba was Turkey, which had a dictatorship, perhaps an unfortunate omen for Cuba's future. This sustained exposure to other countries clearly helped to define his political views, activism, and goals. On his return from Europe, he assumed his family responsibilities in Cuba.

Carlos Manuel de Céspedes's subsequent career set him apart from most planters of his generation. A rich landowner and possessor of 30 slaves, he chose to take two bold steps in 1868. The steps were interrelated.

The two burning issues of his day were the future of slavery and the political future of Cuba. The two were closely linked because many of the Cuban elite, especially land holders, feared they would lose control of their slave force if they challenged Spanish sovereignty over their island. In other words, they lacked confidence in their ability to maintain a slave-based monocultural export economy without the military force of Spain to back them up.

Céspedes was remarkable for his willingness to see the interrelatedness of the issues and to take courageous action on both. On October 10, 1868, he freed his own slaves and issued the cry for revolt against Spain, known as *el Grito de Yara*. The latter was in the name of a conspiracy that had been brewing among discontented planters and freemen in eastern Cuba.

Upon freeing his slaves, he told them, "From this moment forward, you are as free as I. Cuba needs all of its sons to fight for its independence."[15]

In December of the same year, now as president of a rebel government, he issued a decree stating: "Free Cuba is incompatible with enslaved Cuba. In terms of the abolition of Spanish institutions, it must be understood, understood for reasons of necessity and of the highest justice, that slavery is the most unjust of them all."[16] In fact, this commitment to abolition was only partial. The manifesto announced support for "gradual and indemnified abolition of slavery." Furthermore, the rebels only committed themselves to carry out this policy once Spain had been defeated.

This qualification, which contrasted with Céspedes's willingness to emancipate his own slaves, reflected a deep split within the Cuban elite. In the west of the island, where the largest and most productive sugar plantations lay, planters were antagonistic to abolition. Many planters and merchants thought that without slaves their economy would crumble. In the east, where the revolt was concentrated, the less prosperous planters were not as devoted to a long-term slave economy. Thus, from the beginning, the rebels faced deep divisions among their potential followers. Céspedes attempted to reconcile these conflicting interests by crafting for the rebel government a moderate (i.e. gradual) proposal on abolition.

At the same time, Céspedes had to deal with his more radical supporters in the east. They were especially alienated by the repression with which the Spanish were meeting the uprising, which was to ignite a revolt that lasted 10 years—from 1868 to 1878. Yet the rebel government never won the unified support of the Cuban-born elite despite conspicuous concessions on abolition.

The rebel government took another step that compromised the ideal of freedom. In 1869, the rebel leadership proclaimed itself in favor of Cuban annexation to the United States. In fact, from the beginning of the revolt, a rebel delegation had been in Washington negotiating recognition of belligerency and eventual admission to the United States. Clearly, Cuban nationalism still had its limits.

Given these divisions, it is not surprising that the revolt went badly. Unfortunately for the rebels, the Spanish had been able to reinforce heavily their troops in Cuba. The rebels never successfully carried the campaign outside the east. Even there, control was limited to the countryside. Defections, dwindling supplies, and bickering among commands, including on racial lines, had weakened the rebels. Céspedes became the scapegoat for these failings. In Lord Thomas's words, by 1873 he was "surrounded by rivals, nearly blind, ill-dressed and ill-fed, attempting to sustain a ghostly government through arrogance and pride alone."[17] He now bore little resemblance to the elegant aristocrat who had toured Europe in his youth.

His days of leadership were over. In late October 1873, Céspedes was deposed by a rump meeting of the revolutionary assembly. He already had sent his family to the United States to escape the violence. Céspedes himself could not escape the fate of a losing rebel. On February 27, 1874, he was gunned down in an ambush by, among others, a soldier in the Spanish army who, ironically, was Cuban-born. The revolt sputtered on for four more years. It ended in 1878 with a pact that included minimal concessions to the Cubans.

Those who had followed Céspedes tasted bitter defeat. Was Cuba fated to live forever as a Spanish colony—a striking exception among the independent republics of Latin America? Along with Spanish victory came a new wave of disillusionment about Cuba's capacity ever to break free. Yet the message

had not gone unheeded. Two military heroes of the revolt, Antonio Maceo and Máximo Gómez, lived to fight again in 1895. The message was also taken up by José Martí, the second man whose life and death we honor today.

José Martí and the Legacy of Céspedes

Martí was not a planter but a poet and writer. His bourgeois origins contrasted with the aristocratic background of Céspedes. Martí was only sixteen in 1869, when, under the influence of the Céspedes-led rebellion, he wrote a letter adjudged treasonous by the Spanish authorities. His reward was six months forced labor, the prelude to a virtual lifetime of exile.[18] Martí's life offers an interesting profile of the tensions inherent in any attempt at Cuban independence. As a young man, Martí married the daughter of a rich planter. But that connection with the Cuban power structure soon conflicted with his increasing interest in independence. Martí took his bride with him into exile but increasingly became estranged from her and her family. He began a career of journalism that took him to Europe, North America, and Latin America.

A man without a country, Martí became a spokesman for Latin American culture at the time it was menaced by the expansion of North American culture. His newspaper articles, Martí's preferred form of expression, were reprinted widely in the Latin American press. Not least among his topics was the nature of North American culture and how it differed from Latin America. He praised North American high culture, although he had harsh words for the vulgarity of its popular culture. He admired the idealism of American democracy, while attacking the power of great wealth. As a perennial exile, Martí's mission was to the Cubans abroad, especially in the United States, whom he summoned to support a new break with Spain.

Martí's vision for Cuba was never detailed. He avoided laying down a formula for the government of an independent Cuba. On one point, however, he was explicit. Cuba must be on guard to preserve its integrity vis-à-vis the United States. As he wrote on May 18, 1895: "It is my duty—in as much as I

realize it and have the spirit to fulfill it—to prevent, by the independence of Cuba, the United States from spreading over the West Indies and falling, with that added weight, upon other lands of our America."[19] He never forgot the brand of U.S. expansion demonstrated so dramatically in the Mexican-American War. Finally, he sought to preserve much of the Spanish heritage of Cuba while at the same time calling for the removal of Spanish authority.

Martí's frequent lack of specificity in part explains why his legacy has been interpreted so variously in the twentieth century. Another reason is his untimely death. Martí never had to decide on such humiliating concessions to American power as the Platt Amendment of 1902. He also escaped involvement in the vortex of Cuban electoral politics, soon to be notorious for their obsession with patronage and petty personal interests. Martí could therefore enter history less compromised than Céspedes, who had faced the bitter reality of trying to direct a rebel government.

By his oratory and organizing zeal, Martí brought to life a more radical version of the vision of Céspedes. He helped to set off the revolt of 1895, which he quickly joined by returning from exile. Yet his ultimate fate was no better than that of Céspedes. He, too, fell to Spanish guns. Like Céspedes before him, he did not live to see Cuban independence.

What conclusions can we draw from this tale of two men and two and a half countries? First, don't live next to a rising world power. Second, no independence movement can hope to succeed without a high degree of unity among the would-be patriots. Third, the politics of nationalism are always problematical in a multiracial society. Fourth (and this is related to the first), even if successful, the rebels would have faced the need to reach some accommodation with the U.S., whose lengthening shadow darkened Cuba's future. The Platt Amendment to the Cuban Constitution, with its blank check for U.S. intervention, was the eventual accommodation.

Finally, could the story have turned out differently? What must impress any observer is the limited leverage the Cubans had over their own fate. Repeated interventions by larger powers could and did neutralize the efforts of brave Cubans. One thinks of analogies with other countries that geography

has treated cruelly. Poland is a nation that for centuries has suffered intervention by its powerful neighbors. Its borders have been redrawn repeatedly and involuntarily. Cubans can therefore certainly sympathize with the last line of the Polish national anthem: "All is not lost yet."

Cuba is an unfinished story. It still faces a future heavily influenced by outside powers, and the story of Cuba remains the story of Cubans' struggle to choose Cuba. Although Céspedes and Martí did not live to see their choices realized, their eloquence and their courage will never fade from Cuban history.

Notes

[1]I am indebted to Professor José Amor y Vázquez, who had the idea, the energy, and the generosity to organize this conference. I am thankful also to Count Franco Antamoro for his generosity in endowing the Céspedes Chair at Brown. Lisabeth Pimentel furnished invaluable research and secretarial assistance.

[2]For recent discussions of the missile crisis, see James G. Blight and David A. Welch, *On the Brink: Americans and Soviets Reexamine the Cuban Missile Crisis* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1989); and James G. Blight, Bruce J. Allyn, and David A. Welch, *Cuba on the Brink: Castro, the Missile Crisis, and the Soviet Collapse* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1993).

[3]The best overview of the revolution against the background of Cuban history is Louis A. Pérez, *Cuba: Between Reform and Revolution*, second edition (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995).

[4]Fernando Ortiz, *Cuban Counterpoint: Tobacco and Sugar* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1995): 89-90.

[5]Fernando Ortiz, *Africanía de la música folklórica de Cuba* (Havana: Editora Universitaria, 1965); and *Los bailes y el teatro de los negros en el folklore de Cuba* (Havana: Ministerio de Educación, 1951).

[6]The Brazilian story is told in Robert Conrad, *The Destruction of Brazilian Slavery 1850-1888* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1972); and the Cuban story is told in Rebecca Scott, *Slave Emancipation in Cuba* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1985).

[7]Hugh Thomas, *Cuba: The Pursuit of Freedom* (New York: Harper and Row Publishers, 1971).

[8]Louis A. Pérez, Jr., *Slaves, Sugar, and Colonial Society: Travel Accounts of Cuba, 1801-1899* (Wilmington: Scholarly Resources, Inc., 1992): xi-xxvi.

[9]Franklin W. Knight, *Slave Society in Cuba During the Nineteenth Century* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1970): 86.

[10]Pérez, *Slaves, Sugar, and Colonial Society*, 18.

[11]*Ibid.*, 22.

[12]*Ibid.*, 217.

[13]Herminio Portell-Vilá, *El padre de la patria*, second edition (Miami: La Moderna Poesía, Inc., 1989): 13. This is the standard biography of Céspedes.

[14]Fernando Portuondo and Hortensia Pichardo, *Carlos Manuel de Céspedes Escritos*, Volume I (Havana: Editorial de Ciencias Sociales, 1982): 5-6.

[15]*Ibid.*, 105.

[16]*Ibid.*, 139.

[17]Thomas, *Cuba*, 260.

[18]For works on Martí in English, see John M. Kirk, *José Martí, Mentor of the Cuban Nation* (Tampa: University Presses of Florida, 1983); and Christopher Abel and Nissa Torrents, *José Martí: Revolutionary Democrat* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1986).

[19]José Martí, *Inside the Monster: Writings on the United States and American Imperialism* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1975): 1.

Approaching Martí: Text and Context

Louis A. Pérez, Jr.

Approaching José Martí is fraught with hazards: perhaps similar to the project undertaken by Icarus as he euphorically soared in flight—and all that this analogy implies. One hundred years after Martí's death, he remains an enormously complex figure, enveloped in legend and lore, insulated by apotheosis: an unassailable icon onto whom generations of Cubans have projected their fondest renderings of patria.[1]

It remains as difficult today to approach Martí critically as it was one hundred years ago. Perhaps more so. Part of this, of course, is due to the fact that Martí *was* an extraordinary man. Greatness is seductive and does not easily admit skeptics and critics. But no less important, the discourse on Martí is itself very much alive, and very much a part of a larger debate.

Martí dedicated his entire adult life to the cause of *patria* and *Cuba Libre*. He fell in battle and immediately became a martyr. In death he became larger than life. Hagiography and historiography fused into a unique genre of literature and has assumed vast proportions. Cubans of all ideological persuasions found in his life a model of political rectitude and in his death a purpose to pursue; they arrived at substantially similar interpretations of the meaning of Martí and the implications of his work. An uncommon consensus prevailed for decades—until 1959, after which everything changed. Not that Martí ceased to serve as a standard of political morality and a source of legitimacy—he did not. On the contrary, the power of Martí as a symbol of patria deepened and indeed acquired new resonance.

What changed was the character of the discourse on Martí, specifically the clash of claims of those who professed to uphold "*los principios martianos*:" between revolutionaries and counterrevolutionaries. The historical Martí became highly contested terrain, in which the subtext often had less to do with the past than it did with the present. Much of the discussion about Martí after 1959 was largely a debate about the Cuban Revolution. Both defenders and detractors of the revolution claimed Martí as a source of validation. For defenders, the

revolution represented a vindication of the vision; for the detractors, the revolution represented a betrayal of the ideal. On the island, Martí has served as a source of legitimacy; in exile, Martí has been invoked in opposition—"Radio Martí" and "TV-Martí," to cite two of the most obvious examples. The passion of this debate is testimony to the power of Martí: neither side is willing to surrender Martí to the other.[2]

This paper is not designed to quarrel with the conventional wisdom and the prevailing truths about Martí. His place in history is indeed secure. He was a man of his time, possessed with remarkable lucidity and clarity of vision. Before suggesting new thresholds to explore, however, we should briefly locate Martí within the larger context of the Cuban historical experience.

The Cuban Revolutionary Party

José Martí arrived at an independence movement already in process; he arrived late and as an outsider. He was convinced that the principal source of weakness within the separatist movement stemmed from the lack of political organization through which to promote the objectives of the patriotic cause. The Ten Years War (1868-1878), Martí affirmed, was "lost only through a lack of preparation and unity." The struggle for Cuban independence could not be based on quixotic military adventures organized by well-meaning and dedicated men and women who believed that justice and virtue were sufficient for the triumph of Cuban arms. "The revolution," Martí insisted in 1882, "is not merely a passionate outburst of integrity, or the gratification of a need to fight or exercise power, but rather a detailed understanding dependent on advanced planning and great foresight."[3]

Martí gave institutional form to his political ideas in 1892. In the "Tampa Resolutions" and the "Bases of the Cuban Revolutionary Party," Martí outlined a general set of principles that called for the unification of all revolutionary elements on and outside the island, the renewal of armed struggle, and the "creation of a just and frank republic—unified in territory, laws, work, and cordiality, built by all for the benefit

of all." The "Bases of the Cuban Revolutionary Party" detailed the structural organization of a proposed political party. The party would "assemble the revolutionary elements and unite...all additional elements possible, resolving to establish in Cuba, by means of a war waged with republican methods and spirit, a nation capable of assuring a durable happiness to its children." The revolutionary party would strive to eliminate an "authoritarian spirit and the bureaucratic composition of the colony," and establish in free Cuba a "sincerely democratic nation" through a war that would be "fought for the integrity and welfare of all Cubans and to give all Cubans a free country."[4]

After protracted debate and discussion, the "bases" were adopted as the guiding principles for the formation of the Cuban Revolutionary Party (PRC). The bases were subsequently ratified among revolutionary clubs in Cuba, the United States, and Latin America.

The PRC was arguably one of the most significant achievements by Martí—in fact, it was brilliant. Nothing quite like this had ever been known in Latin America: a revolutionary party, multiclass, men and women, black and white—in fact, it would not be until well into the next century that similar anticolonial movements of national liberation would take form.

Cuba Libre

Everything changed after 1892. For much of the nineteenth century, the idea of *Cuba Libre* had not evolved much beyond an amorphous and largely ambiguous sentiment. Apart from a commonly if loosely shared notion that *Cuba Libre* implied separation from Spain, the final structure of free Cuba had persisted as a vague and incompletely defined project. Martí was the first to give a coherent ideological form and compelling political structure to *Cuba Libre*. He purposefully chose cigarworkers as the principal constituency around which to organize politically, and in so doing brought to the fore of the separatist polity the most progressive sector of the expatriate community. Cigarworkers had long been in the vanguard of the trade union movement in Cuba. They were

heir to socialist traditions, veterans of political conflicts with Spanish colonial authorities, and most of all exponents of the most exalted view of free Cuba.

Martí's collaboration with workers had far-reaching effects. Most immediately it broadened the social base of the separatist movement. Of perhaps far greater consequences, it obliged Martí to expand the social content of separatist ideology. Martí discovered in the émigré communities the promise of the new republic: entire townships of Cubans, of all classes, black and white, united in their defense of *patria*, governed equitably by leaders chosen from their own ranks. Here was evidence that Cubans were capable of sustaining a democratic sovereign republic. Martí found important corroboration for his long-time defense of the efficacy of Cuban independence. "Doctors and workers," he exulted, "factory owners and mechanics, tradesmen and generals, united to vote and elect their own representatives."[5]

José Martí transformed the émigré communities into a unified constituency for *Cuba Libre* and in so doing transformed free Cuba into a social project. Martí's rendering of *patria* derived new purpose and moved into a central place in the cosmology of independence. Perhaps Martí alone understood the importance of incorporating "*los humildes*" and "*los pobres de la tierra*" into the separatist amalgam, for only through their participation could the claim of *Cuba Libre* as a representation of the whole nation be sustained. In turn, Martí was changed by his association with Cuban workers, and through him the very character of the independence movement was transformed. An inexorable reciprocity bound Martí to "*los humildes*." He organized them politically; they shaped him ideologically. He provided the means; they suggested the ends.[6]

In the years that followed, Cuban separatism evolved increasingly into a populist mass-based movement. Martí's intellectual development, no less than the ideological orientation of Cuban separatism, was increasingly identified with "*los humildes*." Martí increasingly occupied himself with questions of property relationships, social justice, and racial equality. This is not to suggest that these were entirely new issues in the separatist discourse. On the contrary, these

themes had previously if irregularly found voice within the separatist polity.

What was different after 1892 was a matter of degree and eventually the difference in degree was sufficiently great to make it a distinction in kind. Martí subsumed a social imperative into the struggle for national liberation, and in doing so transfigured the very character of separatism. Henceforth, the struggle for *Cuba Libre* signified more than the pursuit of independence. The proposition of nation was fused with the promise of social justice. Martí conceived of a movement that promised not only to free Cubans from the old oppression, but to give them a new place in society and a new country to belong to. The appeal was directed at the most exploited sectors of colonial society. *Cuba Libre* was as much committed to ending exploitive relationships within the colony as it was dedicated to ending the colonial relationship with Spain. "Our goal is not so much a mere political change," Martí vowed, "as a good, sound, and just and equitable social system without demagogic fawning or arrogance of authority. And let us never forget that the greater the suffering the greater the right to justice." The goal of the war of independence was "not a change in forms but a change of spirit." Toward this end, it was "necessary to make common cause with the oppressed, to secure a system opposed to the interests and habits of the oppressors."[7]

Martí sought to give these formulations programmatic context. "A mere change of form would not warrant the sacrifice to which we are lending ourselves," he asserted in March 1892. He committed the new Cuba to racial justice. The "revolution in which all Cubans are involved, regardless of their color, will be equally just." He categorized the armed struggle as a war of redemption and redistribution. "The war is being planned...," he wrote in 1892, "for the redemption and benefit of all Cubans." He spoke of a "holy revolution" and the "redemptive virtue of just wars that would join all Cubans around one burning idea of decent redemption."[8]

But social justice was not possible within a system of economic inequities. *Cuba Libre* represented balanced agricultural development based on an economy of small independent farmers. "Cuba has vast expanses of uncultivated land," he

wrote in 1893, "and it is obviously just to make it available to anyone eager to put it to use and to deny it to those who will not use it." With such agrarian structures, Martí predicted, Cuba would "balance...its social problems" and provide "stability for a republic that should be one of work and enterprise." Martí mobilized support from those sectors of Cuban society most susceptible to appeals for a new order, and in the process he too was transformed.[9]

So it was that the dispossessed and disinherited on both sides of the Florida Straits responded to this summons. An expatriate proletariat, a dispossessed peasantry, blacks and whites, the landless and the poor, ratified Martí's vision of free Cuba—"with all and for the well-being of all."[10]

Martí was not merely attempting to overthrow Spanish rule. He aspired to a fundamental change in Cuban politics by creating new ways of mobilizing and sharing power. Independence promised to produce a new republic that stood for political democracy, social justice, and economic freedom. He added a social agenda to the historic program of national liberation and instantly converted a movement devoted to the establishment of a new nation into a force dedicated to shaping a new society. This was the way the proposition of *patria* assumed form and meaning, the way it acquired content and purpose. Martí transformed rebellion into revolution. His revolutionary formula was a conglomeration of national pride, social theory, anti-imperialism, and personal intuition. He rationalized it all into a single revolutionary metaphysics. Like a master weaver, Martí pulled together all the separate threads of Cuban discontent—social, economic, political, racial, historical—and wove them into a radical movement of enormous vitality.

Postponed Revolution

In 1895, Cubans were called to heroic action but failed to produce a heroic denouement. Martí perished early in the insurrection, and the hope that the war would be short and decisive, so central to the success of the separatist project, proved ill-founded. The North American intervention in 1898 ended all hopes for the social transformations that Martí had

envisioned and left as legacy what historian Ramón de Armas has called a "postponed revolution," an ideal that served repeatedly to summon subsequent generations to complete the project of *patria*.[11]

The cause of *patria* as conceived by Martí has served as the central element of the nationalist discourse for almost a century. Martí's role in this process is indisputable: he towers, looms large, and of course was larger in death than in life. His legacy lingered long after his life ended.

It is also clear, however, that it is time to examine Martí critically, with dispassion and detachment. This may not be an easy task, indeed it may be an impossible one—at any time, much less than in the centennial of his death. Historians of Cuba have long-celebrated the genius of Martí, and this consensus has endured for one hundred years. Nor is this consensus necessarily misplaced. The passage of time, however, sets in sharp relief the need to explore alternative approaches to an understanding of the circumstances that have contributed to the Cuban condition, past and present, and it is from this vantage point that the place of Martí should be examined and the forces he released be reconsidered. This essay seeks tentatively to pose some alternative perspectives on Martí.

Martí placed *patria* at the heart of being Cuban, for which no struggle was too long and no sacrifice was too great. Martí did not invent these sentiments, of course, but he gave them new resonance and set the standard—a high standard indeed that cost his life—and when called upon, who could do less?

This ideal sustained Cubans during a ferocious war of national liberation one hundred years ago, and the proposition of *Cuba Libre*—at any cost—seems to many of us today as heroic. Certainly the historiography almost universally celebrates the valor and virtue of the many tens of thousands of Cubans who suffered, struggled, and sacrificed in the face of enormous obstacles. Historians have written almost with reverent awe of Salvador Cisneros Betancourt's vow to "reduce the island to ashes" before accepting the continuation of Spanish rule.[12] But this is precisely the same sentiment that serves to summon Cubans today: Fidel Castro's *patria o muerte* possesses as much resonance as Máximo Gómez's vow in 1897 that Cubans would not "falter in their course until triumph or

death crowns their efforts."[13] Any understanding of the capacity of the Cuban Revolution today to sustain itself, and especially during the recent difficult years, must begin with acknowledgment of the notion of *patria* that Martí formulated one hundred years ago.

New scholarship must begin to reconsider the place of Martí's conception of *patria* in shaping Cuban nationality. *Patria* as an all-encompassing proposition, the transcendent nation to which all are enjoined to submit, may resonate romantic as a condition of the past, but how do we measure it in the present? Does, in fact, the repeated invocation of struggle and sacrifice, which had as its implicit original purpose the promise of redemption and upward mobility but which one hundred years later has resulted in devastating downward mobility, discredit a proposition that has been central to Cuban self-representation?

And more: the very movement that Martí summoned into existence should be reevaluated. He called for a "redemptive war," but he may have underestimated Spanish tenacity to hold on and/or overestimated the Cuban capacity to win out. At the heart of Martí's notion of the "redemptive war" was a rapid war: one that would end Spanish rule before U.S. intervention. "Once the United States is in Cuba who will drive it out?" Martí asked rhetorically—and prophetically.[14]

On this question the issues are very clear on one point: insofar as it is possible to hold any one person responsible for war—with all the obvious caveats recognized and acknowledged—the war of 1895 was Martí's war. The principal purpose of the PRC was to prepare for war, to prosecute the war, to prevail in war. "I called up the war," Martí wrote to Federico Henríquez y Carvajal in March 1895. "My responsibility begins rather than ends with it."[15] Two months later he was dead.

The island was subjected to nearly four years of a frightfully destructive war, during which Cubans impoverished themselves, and together with the Spanish did indeed "reduce the island to ashes." The war more than adequately paved the way for North American intervention. But more important, the degree to which Cubans gave everything they had to the cause of *Cuba Libre* meant they had nothing with which to

resist the North Americans. In fact, it is at least an arguable proposition that the expansion of U.S. hegemony after 1898 was vastly facilitated by the greatly weakened condition in which Cubans of all classes found themselves at the end of the war. In other words, the very conditions that Martí had dreaded—and correctly so—were made inevitable by his project, thereby opening the island to half a century of North American domination.

Anyone who has studied Martí, even casually, is made immediately aware of the sheer magnitude of his intellectual output, the extraordinary vitality and energy that sustained his writing over three decades. The *Obras completas* are now approaching nearly thirty volumes, and we will probably never be fully certain that the works are indeed "complete." And what has been written *about* Martí is so vast that it defies even the most active imagination.

We know what Martí thought about religion and race, about Bolívar and Buffalo Bill, on workers, women, and Walt Whitman—in short, on almost everything. But we are not as clear on how Martí himself was shaped, how he was intellectually formed and politically informed. Surely Martí received letters; surely the countless numbers of persons to whom Martí wrote responded. We are sadly lacking in any comprehensive collection of letters written to Martí. Were these letter preserved?

These questions are raised for a specific reason. We need to know how Martí received information from Cuba. *What* did he receive? He lived abroad for 25 years of his life: how did he know what was happening in Cuba? How did he know that Cuba was "ready" for revolution? Is it possible that Martí erred, that he miscalculated? The "Grito de Baire" in February 1895 was, in the final analysis, initially a dismal failure almost everywhere outside a few zones in Oriente province. Historians have been so given to celebrate—and justifiably so—heroic Oriente, the central and decisive role played by the *orientales* in reviving a moribund movement, that we have tended to overlook the fact that almost everywhere else the uprising experienced an ignominious and inglorious beginning.

Not all agreed with the timing or even the necessity of a new war of liberation. Even as late as mid-1897, Martín Morúa

Delgado could proclaim that he was among "the many who did not approve of the movement." This disapproval, Morúa affirmed, "had at its base precisely the love of *patria*: the wish not to deliver yet another blow in vain and that which after more or less sacrifice would result in a new debilitating truce that would sap the popular spirit."[16]

Conclusion

These comments are offered in the spirit of suggesting a new research agenda following the centennial year of Martí's death. The observations are presented cautiously, with full recognition too that they run counter to prevailing historiographical truths. The larger purpose is to point to new possibilities and suggest the need to ask new questions. The vastness of the literature on Martí notwithstanding, scholars need to consider different kinds of approaches that will aid on understanding the Cuba that Martí had so central a role in forming.

Notes

[1]The scholarly literature on José Martí has reached vast proportions. He has been the subject of many thousands of books and articles, principally in Cuba, of course, but also in Latin America, Europe, and the United States. The Centro de Estudios Martianos in Havana and its *Anuario del Centro de Estudios Martianos* are dedicated exclusively to the study of Martí. Researchers would be well served to consult the extensive bibliography published in the *Anuario*.

[2]"He is, indeed," Peter Turton could write of Martí in 1986, "the forerunner of the present Cuban revolution." And Turton at another point: "He appears as the true political forefather of Fidel Castro." See Peter Turton, *José Martí, Architect of Cuba's Freedom* (London, Zen Books, Ltd., 1986): 2, 64. Carlos Ripoll countered: "Martí's commitment to individual rights and liberties is incompatible with the Marxist-Leninist design for the Cuban state. It is virtually impossible to reconcile his concepts of pluralistic democracy and national sovereignty with Soviet-style dictatorship and proletarian internationalism." See Carlos Ripoll, *José Martí, the United States, and the Marxist Interpretation of Cuban History* (New Brunswick, Transaction Books, 1984): 15. Some of these issues of the Martí debate are addressed in Enrico Mario Santí, "José Martí and the Cuban Revolution," *Cuban Studies/Estudios Cubanos* XVI (1986), 139-150.

[3]José Martí to Máximo Gómez, July 20, 1882, in José Martí, *Obras completas*, edited by Jorge Quintana, Volume I, Part 1 (Caracas, 1964): 74.

[4]José Martí, "El Partido Revolucionario Cubano," April 3, 1982, in Martí, *Obras completas*, Volume I, Part 2, 303-307; and "La proclamación del Partido Revolucionario Cubano, el 10 de abril," in *ibid*., 307-313. See also Fernando Portuondo Prado, "Martí y el Partido Revolucionario Cubano," *Islas* XI (October-December 1968), 171-174; and Jorge Ibarra, *José Martí, dirigente político e ideológico revolucionario* (Havana, Editorial de Ciencias Sociales, 1980).

[5]José Martí, "Discurso conmemorativo," in Martí, *Obras completas*, Volume I, Part 1, 40.

[6]These themes are discussed in Orlando Castañeda, *Martí, los tabaqueros y la revolución de 1895* (Havana, Editorial Lex, 1946); María Ayón, "Martí y los trabajadores," *El Caimán Barbudo* IV (January 1972), 9-11; and John M. Kirk, *José Martí, Mentor of the Cuban Nation* (Tampa, University of South Florida Press, 1983).

[7]José Martí, "Nuestra América," September 27, 1889, in Martí, *Obras completas*, Volume III, 109.

[8]José Martí, "Nuestras ideas," March 14, 1892, in José Martí, *El Partido Revolucionario Cubano y la guerra*, edited by Pedro Alvarez Tabío (Havana, Editorial de Ciencias Sociales, 1978): 12-13.

[9]José Martí, "Guatemala," in Martí, *Obras completas*, Volume I, 345. See also Manuel Navarro Luna, "Martí y la reforma agraria," *Hoy Domingo*, May 20, 1962, 2.

[10]José Martí, "Con todos y para el bien de todos," November 26, 1891, in Martí, *Obras completas*, Volume I, Part 2, 697-706.

[11]See Ramón de Armas, *La revolución pospuesta* (Havana, Editorial de Ciencias Sociales, 1975).

[12]See interview in *New York Journal*, January 17, 1897, 6.

[13]Maximo Gómez to John R. Caldwell, December 5, 1897, *New York Herald*, December 29, 1897, 3.

[14]José Martí to Gonzalo de Quesada, October 19, 1889, in Martí, *Obras completas*, Volume I, Part 2, 656. See also Emilio Roig de Leuchsenring, *Martí anti-imperialista* (Havana, Instituto Cubano del Libro, 1967): 8-9.

[15]José Martí to Francisco Henríquez de Carvajal, March 25, 1895, Martí, *Obras completas*, Volume I, 248.

[16]Martín Morúa Delgado, "Cuba para los cubanos," *Cuba y América* (July 1, 1897), 7.

Stephen Crane's Cuban War[1]

George Monteiro

Samuel Carlton arrived in Jacksonville in late November 1896. He had $8,000 in gold, furnished by the Bacheller & Johnson syndicate, a syndicate to supply special articles and short stories to newspapers and magazines throughout the United States. The syndicate's money was intended to finance a stay in Cuba, during which Carlton would provide copy for the syndicate. He planned to sail out of Jacksonville on one of the several boats rumored to be running arms and munitions to the Cuban insurgents. It would take him over a month to ship out on a filibuster. By that time, Samuel Carlton had quietly disappeared—his cover blown almost immediately upon his arrival by local newspaper reports.[2] And Stephen Crane had surfaced in his place. He also had met, admired, and courted Cora Stewart, the proprietor of the Hotel de Dream, a watering hole with several friendly women on the premises. Cora became Crane's common-law wife (illegal since she was still married to one Major Stewart), traveled with him to Greece (this time she assumed a name, Imogene Carter) to cover the Greco-Turkish War, and subsequently lived with Crane in England until his death in 1900.

The *Commodore* sailed on New Year's eve, straight into an "atrocious fog." Less than two miles out of Jacksonville the pilot rammed the bow of the ship "hard upon the mud and in this ignominious position" the ship remained until daybreak. Help arrived and the ship was successfully dragged out of the mud. A revenue cutter then accompanied the ship to keep her from taking on men for the Cuban insurgent army. But at Mayport the *Commodore* was beached again, although this time she managed to extricate herself without aid. Once out in the open sea, the ship encountered what Crane called "enormous rollers." During the night she began to take on water. Pumps were not working well or probably at all. The lifeboats were lowered and launched, and the ship was abandoned. From their boat Crane, the captain, the cook, and the oiler saw the *Commodore* sink below the waves. Their twenty-four hour ordeal in this boat—a "ten-foot dingy"—in which three of

them finally made it to shore, with the oiler drowning, is of course the basis for Stephen Crane's magnificent story, "The Open Boat."

The sinking of the *Commodore* effectively ended Crane's budding career as a filibuster. He turned to other journalistic and fictional tasks. After all, he had gone to Jacksonville in the first place on assignment, not because he was a patriot. He had no political interest in the questions of a "Cuba Libre" or of annexation. He never once mentioned the name of José Martí, and the twin questions of Spanish and American imperialism did not interest him. None of these matters came up in his newspaper writings during the period of 1895-1897. Indeed, his one venture into the question of imperialism involved German expansionist efforts in China, which he treated satirically in a one-act play that was published in April 1898 in the *New York Press*. He took no part in the heavy war propaganda engaged in by American newspapers, led by William Randolph Hearst's *New York Journal* and, eventually, Joseph Pulitzer's *New York World*.

After the sinking of the American battleship, the *Maine*, in Havana harbor (the causes of which still remain a mystery) the United States declared war on Spain and began mobilizing for an invasion of Cuba. So did the New York newspapers, especially the *World* and the *Journal*, both of which had their own "press" boats outfitted to make travel from Tampa and Key West to the "war" easier and faster for their small companies of war correspondents. Hearst's *Journal* started out with a 138-foot yacht aptly named *Buccaneer*; the *Herald* chartered a steam yacht less flamboyantly named the *Sommers N. Smith*; and Pulitzer's *World* tried to make do with two tugboats, the *Triton* and the *Confidence*.

Since it took the United States longer to mobilize its naval, infantry, and cavalry forces than it took the Hearsts and Pulitzers to mobilize their reporters, Florida became the center of all prefighting activity and a restless, vexing wait for all. Crane, who had signed on to report for Pulitzer's *World*, later reported on the way news that came into Key West became transformed as it went out to New York:

> Battle-ships, monitors, cruisers, gunboats and torpedo craft arrived, departed, arrived, departed. Rumours sang about the ears of warships hurriedly coaling. Rumours sang about the ears of warships leisurely coming to anchor. This happened and that happened and if the news arrived at Key West as a mouse, it was often enough cabled north as an elephant. The correspondents at Key West were perfectly capable of adjusting their perspective, but many of the editors in the United States were like deaf men at whom one has to roar. A few quiet words of information was not enough for them; one had to bawl into their ears a whirlwind tale of heroism, blood, death, victory—or defeat—at any rate, a tragedy.[3]

He suggested half-facetiously that instead of war correspondents the newspapers should have sent playwrights to the war, at least to the first part.

> Play-wrights are allowed to lower the curtain from time to time and say to the crowd: 'Mark, ye, now! Three or four months are supposed to elapse.' But the poor devils at Key West were obliged to keep the curtain up all the time. 'This isn't a continuous performance.' 'Yes, it is, it's got to be continuous performance. The welfare of the paper demands it. The people want news.' Very well: continuous performance.[4]

Then Crane concluded about the strange ways that persons behave: "It is strange how men of sense can go aslant at the bidding of other men of sense and combine to contribute to a general mess of exaggeration and bombast. But we did[.]"[5] Two of Crane's basic principles as a writer—in reporting as well as fiction—are at stake here. Reporters who were capable

of "adjusting their perspective" failed Crane's own test for realism: "a man is born into the world with his own pair of eyes and he is not at all responsible for his quality of personal honesty."[6] Secondly, just as he abhorred the unreality and melodrama of the day's theater, he was ever mindful of the way individuals factitiously falsified life into theater. He was repelled especially by the evidence that an individual or individuals were dramatizing. Of course, he would not engage in reporting that was exaggerated or bombastic. And he would not suffer theatrics.

A case in point was the return of Hobson, a navy man who (along with the seven sailors who had helped him) had been captured by the Spaniards after his attempt to close off the passage into Santiago by scuttling the American ship *Merrimac*. The Americans lined the roadway as he was brought back from his Spanish prison. We have two accounts of this piece of drama and the difference between the accounts reveals the difference between Crane and Richard Harding Davis, who relates the account as well.

Before looking at the two accounts, however, first look at Davis for a moment. A 34 year old when he went to Cuba—Crane was 26—he was the ideal war correspondent. Davis was an established reporter and a successful novelist, and, along with Crane, had covered the Greco-Turkish war in 1897. Davis was, an Englishman noted, "the most brilliant of the younger American Writers" and "a fine type of the Anglo-Saxon as they make him in the States."[7] Davis considered Crane to be a "literary genius." Of *The Red Badge of Courage*, he said to his brother, "Stephen Crane seems to me to have written the last word as far as battles or fighting is concerned."[8] Crane, however, seeing in Davis a rival, impugned his intelligence: "He has, I believe, the intelligence of the average saw-log,"[9] enjoying the applause of an audience that "hang upon the out-skirts of good society and chant 143 masses per day to the social gods and think because they have money they are well-bred."[10] Davis and Crane would become better acquainted in Greece and then in Cuba, and although Davis always supported Crane, Crane seems never to have changed his mind about Davis.

Here is how Davis first reported Hobson's release after six weeks of imprisonment and his return to a hero's welcome, an account that he included in his book *The Cuban and Porto Rican Campaigns* published in 1898:

> The trail up which they [Hobson and his seven comrades] came was a broad one between high banks, with great trees meeting in an arch overhead. For hours before they came officers and men who were not on duty in the rifle-pits had been waiting on these banks, broiling in the sun and crowded together as closely as men on the bleaching-boards of a base-ball field....The sun was setting behind the trail, and as he came up over the crest he was outlined against it under this triumphant arch of palms. The soldiers saw a young man in the uniform of the navy, his face white with the prison pallor, and strangely in contrast with the fierce tan of their own, and with serious eyes, who looked down at them steadily.
>
> For a moment he sat motionless, and then the waiting band struck up "The Star-Spangled Banner." No one cheered or shouted or gave an order, but every one rose to his feet slowly, took off hat slowly, and stood so, looking up at Hobson in absolute silence....
>
> And then a red-headed, red-faced trooper leaped down into the trail and shouted, "Three cheers for Hobson;" and the mob rushed at him with a roar of ecstasy, with a wild welcome of friendly cheers. Few men, certainly very few young men, have ever tasted such a triumph. These men who had made it possible for him to leave his cell and to breathe fresh air again were not of his branch of the service, they were not even brother officers, their attitude toward him was one of attention and

> salute, they were the men who had been gathered from every point of the Union to be drilled and hammered and fashioned into the thing called a regular. They were without local or political friends or conditions, they had no staff of artists and reporters at their heels to make them heroes in spite of themselves; but they were the backbone of the war—the professional fighting-machines, the grumbling, self-respecting, working regulars. As brave men they honored a brave man; and this sun-tanned, dirty, half-starved, fever-racked mob of regulars danced about the educated, clever engineer as though the moment was his, and forgot that at the risk of their lives they had set him free, that the ground he rode over had been splashed with their blood....
>
> It was no time for choosing similes. Men were dancing up and down on the trenches and the hills, waving hats and shrieking. Officers were shouting Hobson's name. Photographers were leaping about, perpetuating a moment.[11]

Notice that Davis's eye scanned the whole scene, on the spectacle of weary fighting men cheering the returning hero, a glance of superficial seeing that quickly lead him to generalizations about the professional soldier's dirty, wearying, dangerous work.

Crane, reporting the same scene, saw what Davis saw but then he saw something else.

> Along the cut roadway, toward the crowded soldiers, rode three men, and it could be seen that the central one wore the undress uniform of an officer of the United States navy. Most of the soldiers were sprawled out on the grass, bored and wearied in the sunshine. However, they aroused at the old circus-parade, torch-light procession cry, "Here they come." Then

> the men of the regular army did a thing. They arose *en masse* and came to "Attention." Then the men of the regular army did another thing. They slowly lifted every weather-beaten hat and drooped it until it touched the knee. Then there was a magnificent silence, broken only by the measured hoof-beats of the little company's horses as they rode through the gap. It was solemn, funereal, this splendid silent welcome of a brave man by men who stood on a hill which they had earned out of blood and death—simply, honestly, with no sense of excellence, earned out of blood and death.
>
> Then suddenly the whole scene went to rubbish. Before he reached the bottom of the hill, Hobson was bowing to right and left like another Boulanger, and, above the thunder of the massed bands, one could hear the venerable outbreak, "Mr. Hobson, I'd like to shake the hand of the man who _____." But the real welcome was that welcome of silence. However, one could thrill again when the tail of the procession appeared—an army wagon containing the blue-jackets of the *Merrimac* adventure. I remember grinning heads stuck out from under the canvas cover of the wagon. And the army spoke to the navy. "Well, Jackie, how does it feel?" And the navy up and answered: "Great! Much obliged to you fellers for comin' here." "Say, Jackie, what did they arrest ye for anyhow? Stealin' a dawg?" The navy still grinned. Here was no rubbish. Here was the mere exchange of language between men.[12]

The grand simplicity of the "scene" goes to rubbish when, as Crane detects (what Davis did not report) that the hero's theatricality in bowing to his those honoring him, bowing right and left—like that historical four-flusher on horseback,

Boulanger. Davis himself, reporting on "Our War Correspondents in Cuba and Puerto Rico" in the May 1899 *Harper's Magazine*, saw the virtue of Crane's ability to "see" and to "make the public see what he saw."

"The best correspondent is probably the man who by his energy and resource sees more of the war, both afloat and ashore, than do his rivals, and who is able to make the public see what he saw," wrote Davis. "If that is a good definition," he continues, "Stephen Crane would seem to have distinctly won the first place among correspondents in the late disturbance."[13]

Davis's premise has been questioned in the case of Crane. According to Joyce Milton in her book about American foreign correspondents in the mid to late 1890s,

> Crane was a failure, when it came to reporting hard news. His sketches, whatever literary value they may retain, did not reach New York until weeks after the incidents they describe, and even then they offended many readers. The public at home, the wives, parents, and sweethearts of the men at the front, did not care to read realistic descriptions of what it was like to be shot at.[14]

Hearst, Pulitzer, Bennett, and all the other editors throughout the United States decided that what the readers back home wanted were names, numbers, victories for the home team, defeats for the enemy. Crane did not want to play that reportorial game and largely avoided it. On the rare occasion, such as reporting the deaths of Privates McColgan and Dunphy, when he relied on information furnished to him by others, he had to eat crow. Originally, he reported that "In the First Land Fight Four of Our Men are Killed:"

> The bodies of Privates McColgan and Dunphy were found in the brush. Both were shot in the head. The large cavities caused by the bullets, which inside a range of 500 yards have a rotary motion, indicate that they were killed at close

> range. Their bodies were stripped of shoes, hats and cartridges and horribly mutilated.[15]

Two days later he filed a corrective retraction:

> The story of the mutilation of the bodies of the two young privates of Captain Spicer's company of marines, which was sent in on Saturday last, is now found to be entirely untrue. The officers and men of the party which recovered the bodies were misled by the frightful tearing effect of the Mauser bullets when deflected by anything like brushwood, or from close range.
>
> The men had apparently been fired on by guerrillas at a distance of fifteen feet. One body had eight bullet wounds, causing dreadful havoc. Surgeon Edgar states positively that the wounds were due to bullets only. Lieutenant Ingrate today took out a party to try and get the body of Sergeant Smith...[which] had been lying within the enemy's lines nearly two days, and consequently any mutilating by the Spaniards could easily have been accomplished. The body, however, was found divested only of the rifle and accouterments. There was positively and distinctly no barbarity whatever.[16]

The lesson Crane appears to have learned here is not so much to check his sources but to question what others see (or think they see). The author of *The Red Badge of Courage* could imagine what went on in the head of a civil war recruit before, during, and after a battle, but he could not rely on any one else's observation, let alone imagination. Prepared to recognize the evidence when they saw it that the Spaniards were barbaric, the American soldiers saw what they feared but wanted to see.

Besides Richard Harding Davis, Crane had one other rival for literary fame in the Cuban war. Another literary type was right in the middle of things, although he probably saw no

more action than did many of the correspondents and whose own involvement was not as varied. Before the United States declared war on Spain, Theodore Roosevelt, as assistant secretary of the Navy, prepared quietly for war. He saw to it that the Pacific fleet under Admiral George Dewey was well-fitted and fueled, ready for launching an immediate attack by the Americans on the Philippines. Ultimately Roosevelt would not go to war in Cuba as a correspondent, but as the commander of a volunteer regiment of cavalry he had raised himself. Even before leaving Florida for Cuba, that regiment had become known as the "Rough Riders." By May 1, 1899, Roosevelt had finished his account of the wartime experiences of his regiment. The opening sentences of *The Rough Riders* illustrate the broadest politics of the war—something that is almost entirely missing in the reporting done by Crane or Davis.

> During the year preceding the outbreak of the Spanish War I was Assistant Secretary of the Navy. While my party was in opposition, I had preached, with all the fervor and zeal I possessed, our duty to intervene in Cuba, and to take this opportunity of driving the Spaniard from the Western World. Now that my party had come to power, I felt it incumbent on me, by word and deed, to do all I could to secure the carrying out of the policy in which I so heartily believed; and from the beginning I had determined that, if a war came, somehow or other, I was going to the front.[17]

Roosevelt took up these interests in Washington with an army surgeon who had served in campaigns against the Apaches. "We both felt very strongly that such a war [against Spain] would be as righteous as it would be advantageous to the honor and the interests of the nation; and after the blowing up of the *Maine*, we felt that it was inevitable."[18] The former assistant secretary of the Navy was authorized to raise a regiment of cavalry, ultimately numbering a thousand men. Raising the regiment, along with its training in discipline, was part of an overall experiment on Roosevelt's part, a fact that he

does not reveal in his book. Before the existence of the "Rough Riders," Roosevelt had gone on record that "raw militia are utterly incompetent to make head against trained regular forces."[19] But the example of Andrew Jackson at New Orleans inspired him, for Jackson, "a very good general," had "under him troops whom he had trained in successive campaigns against Indians and Spaniards."[20] Roosevelt would reprise Jackson.

"The only organized bodies we were at liberty to accept were those from the four Territories"—not the numerous companies from the various States, he wrote, but they were permitted to accept individuals who were not from the Territories, but "who possessed precisely the same temper that distinguished our Southwestern recruits, and whose presence materially benefited the regiment."[21] Who were these extraterritorial recruits? Roosevelt is especially proud of them.

> We drew recruits from Harvard, Yale, Princeton, and many another college; from clubs like the Somerset, of Boston, and Knickerbocker, of New York; and from among the men who belonged neither to club nor to college, but in whose veins the blood stirred with the same impulse which once sent the Vikings over sea. Four of the policemen who had served under me, while I was President of the New York Police Board, insisted on coming—two of them to die, the other two to return unhurt after honorable and dangerous service.[22]

Yet it is in describing the college contingent that Roosevelt waxed most warmly.

> Harvard being my own college, I had such a swarm of applications from it that I could not take one in ten....The Harvard contingent was practically raised by Guy Murchie, of Maine. He saw all the fighting and did his duty with the utmost gallantry, and then left the service

> as he had entered it, a trooper, entirely satisfied to have done his duty—and no man did it better. So it was with Dudley Dean, perhaps the best quarterback who ever played on a Harvard Eleven; and so with Bob Wrenn, a quarterback whose feats rivaled those of Dean's, and who, in addition, was the champion tennis player of America, and had, on two different years, saved this championship from going to an Englishman. So it was with Yale men like Waller, the high jumper, and Garrison and Girard; and with Princeton men like Devereux and Channing, the foot-ball players; with Larned, the tennis player; with Craig Wadsworth, the steeple-chase rider; with Joe Stevens, the crack polo player; with Hamilton Fish, the ex-captain of the Columbia crew, and with scores of others whose names are quite as worthy of mention as any of those I have given.[23]

Added to these blue-blood, Eastern collegians, if not always blue-chip, were the Southwesterners, "a splendid set of men:"

> tall and sinewy, with resolute, weather-beaten faces, and eyes that looked a man straight in the face without flinching. They included in their ranks men of every occupation; but the three types were those of the cow-boy, the hunter, and the mining prospector—the man who wandered hither and thither, killing game for a living, and spending his life in the quest for metal wealth.[24]

Roosevelt's book is a campaign book: it campaigns on behalf of the American of Anglo-Saxon stock, it describes that portion of the Cuban campaign in which the Rough Riders participated (one irony was that they participated almost entirely on foot for the army never did ship their horses, which

remained in Florida), and *The Rough Riders* served Roosevelt astonishingly well as a campaign biography. (By 1899 he was governor of New York, by 1900, vice-president of the United States, and upon McKinley's death in 1902, president.)

Key to the ethic promoted in Roosevelt's self-serving narrative are his accounts of skillful fighting and noble dying. The death of William O. "Bucky" O'Neill is paradigmatic. He was hit just before the charge up Kettle Hill in the battle of the San Juan Hills.

> Bucky O'Neill was strolling up and down in front of his men, smoking his cigarette, for he was inveterately addicted to the habit. He had a theory that an officer ought never to take cover—a theory which was, of course, wrong, though in a volunteer organization the officers should certainly expose themselves very fully, simply for the effect on the men; our regimental toast on the transport running, "The officers; may the war last until each is killed, wounded, or promoted." As O'Neill moved to and fro, his men begged him to lie down, and one of the sergeants said, "Captain, a bullet is sure to hit you." O'Neill took his cigarette out of his mouth, and blowing out a cloud of smoke laughed and said, "Sergeant, the Spanish bullet isn't made that will kill me." A little later he discussed for a moment with one of the regular officers the direction from which the Spanish fire was coming. As he turned on his heel a bullet struck him in the mouth and came out at the back of his head; so that even before he fell his wild and gallant soul had gone out into the darkness.[25]

Richard Harding Davis attached himself to the Rough Riders, serving Roosevelt and his regiment much as Frederic Remington, the painter and sculptor, served William Randolph Hearst. Coincidentally, Hearst is reputed to have taken, single-handedly, a Spanish prisoner of war. This curious incident

may be related to a motif in the reporting of this war, namely that the Spanish and non-Spanish Cubans seemed to be uncommonly ready to surrender their villages and towns. Both Davis and Crane reported on the town that managed to surrender four times—the first time to several correspondents, and another town that surrendered to a single American ensign. Davis later filed a story about the town that surrendered to Stephen Crane acting on his own. Significantly, Crane never wrote the story himself.

Davis, to return to the Rough Riders, shared Roosevelt's fascination with names and pedigrees. Perhaps the fact that the Rough Riders were volunteers, and not regulars, had something to do with this, as it did, Davis insisted, when he took up a rifle and shot away as an unofficial Rough Rider himself. (Davis noted that Crane, who accompanied the regulars, did not take part in the actual warfare.) In "The Price of the Harness," a story published in December 1898, Crane recorded the death of a regular, James Nolan:

> He saw Grierson biting madly with his pincers at a barbed-wire fence. They were half-way up the beautiful sylvan slope; there was no enemy to be seen, and yet the landscape rained bullets. Somebody punched him violently in the stomach. He thought dully to lie down and rest, but instead he fell with a crash.
>
> The sparse line of men in blue shirts and dirty slouch hats swept on up the hill. He decided to shut his eyes for a moment because he felt very dreamy and peaceful. It seemed only a minute before he heard a voice say, "There he is." Grierson and Watkins had come to look for him. He searched their faces at once and keenly, for he had a thought that the line might be driven down the hill and leave him in Spanish hands. But he saw that everything was secure, and he prepared no questions.
>
> "Nolan," said Grierson clumsily, "do you know me?"

The man on the ground smiled softly. "Of course I know you, you chowder-faced monkey. Why wouldn't I know you?"

Watkins knelt beside him. "Where did they plug you, old boy?"

Nolan was somewhat dubious. "It ain't much. I don't think but it's somewheres there." He laid a finger on the pit of his stomach. They lifted his shirt, and then privately they exchanged a glance of horror.

"Does it hurt, Jimmie?" said Grierson, hoarsely.

"No," said Nolan, "it don't hurt any, but I feel sort of dead-to-the-world and numb all over. I don't think it's very bad."

"Oh, it's all right," said Watkins.

"What I need is a drink," said Nolan, grinning at them. "I'm chilly—lying on this damp ground."

"It ain't very damp, Jimmie," said Grierson.

"Well, it is damp," said Nolan, with sudden irritability. "I can feel it. I'm wet, I tell you—wet through—just from lying here."

They answered hastily. "Yes, that's so, Jimmie. It *is* damp. That's so."

"Just put your hand under my back and see how wet the ground is," he said.

"No," they answered. "That's all right, Jimmie. We know it's wet."

"Well, put your hand under and see," he cried, stubbornly.

"Oh, never mind, Jimmie."

"No," he said, in a temper. "See for yourself." Grierson seemed to be afraid of Nolan's agitation, and so he slipped a hand under the prostrate man, and presently withdrew it covered with blood. "Yes," he said, hiding his hand carefully from Nolan's eyes, "you were right, Jimmie."

> "Of course I was," said Nolan, contentedly closing his eyes. "This hillside holds water like a swamp." After a moment he said, "Guess I ought to know. I'm flat here on it, and you fellers are standing up."
>
> He did not know he was dying. He thought he was holding an argument on the condition of the turf.[26]

Davis called this "story of Nolan, the regular, bleeding to death on the San Juan hills," the "most valuable contribution to literature that the war has produced."[27]

Both Davis and Roosevelt, of course, paid their obligatory tributes to the army regular. "The Regular soldier was professionally indifferent," complimented Davis in a curiously left-handed way, and "regarded soldiering as a business."

> Indeed, some of them regarded it so entirely as a business, and as nothing more, that those whose time had expired in camp did not re-enlist for the war, but went off into private life in the face of it. That is where they differed from the Volunteer, who left private life the moment war came. But a great many of these time-expired Regulars did not re-enlist, because they preferred to join the Volunteers, where advancement is more rapid, and where their superior experience would soon obtain for them the rank of sergeant, or possibly a commission.[28]

Roosevelt was more directly complimentary, possibly because he was well-satisfied that his Rough Riders had measured up as soldiers.

> How can I speak highly enough of the regular cavalry with whom it was our good fortune to serve? I do not believe that in any army of the world could be found a more gallant and soldierly body of fighters than the officers and

> men of the First, Third, Sixth, Ninth, and Tenth United States Cavalry, beside whom we marched to blood-bought victory under the tropic skies of Santiago. The American regular sets the standard of excellence. When we wish to give the utmost possible praise to a volunteer organization, we say that it is as good as the regulars. I was exceedingly proud of the fact that the regulars treated my regiment as on a complete equality with themselves, and were as ready to see it in a post of danger and responsibility as to see any of their own battalions.[29]

On July 9, 1898, Crane filed a story that appeared under the title "Regulars Get No Glory." The piece responds bitingly to the extravagantly favorable press accorded to Roosevelt's Rough Riders. "The public wants to learn of the gallantry of Reginald Marmaduke Maurice Montmorenci Sturtevant," Crane wrote, "and for goodness sake how the poor old chappy endures that dreadful hard-tack and bacon. Whereas, the name of the regular soldier is probably Michael Nolan and his life-sized portrait was not in the papers in celebration of his enlistment." He then offered a sketch of the typical regular soldier:

> Just plain private Nolan, blast him—he is of no consequence. He will get his name in the paper—oh, yes, when he is "killed." Or when he is "wounded." Or when he is "missing." If some good Spaniard shoots him through he will achieve a temporary notoriety, figuring in the lists for one brief moment in which he will appear to the casual reader mainly as part of a total, a unit in the interesting sum of men slain.
>
> In fact, the disposition to leave out entirely all lists of killed and wounded regulars is quite a rational one since nobody cares to read them, anyhow, and their omission would allow room for oil paintings of various really

> important persons, limned as they were in the very act of being at the front, proud young men riding upon horses, the horses being still in Tampa and the proud young men being at Santiago, but still proud young men riding upon horses.
>
> The ungodly Nolan, the sweating, swearing, overloaded, hungry, thirsty, sleepless Nolan, tearing his breeches on the barbed wire entanglements, wallowing through the muddy fords, pursuing his way through the stiletto-pointed thickets, climbing the fire-crowned hill—Nolan gets shot. One Nolan of this regiment or that regiment, a private, great chums in time of peace with a man by the name of Hennessy, him that had a fight with Snyder. Nearest relative is a sister, chambermaid in a hotel in Omaha. Hennessy, old fool, is going around looking glum, buried in taciturn silence, a silence that lasts two hours and eight minutes; touching tribute to Nolan.[30]

If Roosevelt's "Bucky" O'Neill foreshadowed the gallant heroes of P. C. Wrenn's *Beau Geste* in 1925, Crane's Private Nolan was a forerunner of James Jones's Private Robert E. Lee Prewitt of *From Here to Eternity* in 1951. Crane continued to exonerate Reginald Marmaduke Maurice Montmorenci Sturtevant and "his life-sized portraits," calling him "a man and a soldier, although not so good either as man or soldier as Michael Nolan," and blaming the public that in wartime wants its news from the "society reporter," not the war correspondent. He had not yet read Roosevelt's reports on the Sturtevants and their ilk.[31]

Crane remained in Havana for several months after peace was declared, but he continued to file an occasional piece. He offered a meditation on Spanish marksmanship.

> The Spanish guns hit nothing. If a man shoots, he should hit something occasionally....In truth, the greatest fact of the whole campaign

> on land and sea seems to be the fact that the Spaniards could only hit by chance, by a fluke. If he had been an able marksman, no man of our two unsupported divisions would have set foot on San Juan hill on July 1. They should have been blown to smithereens. The Spaniards had no immediate lack of ammunition, for they fired enough to kill the population of four big cities....[T]he Spanish troops seemed only to try to make a very rapid fire. Thus we lost many men. We lost them because of the simple fury of the fire; never because the fire was well-directed, intelligent.[32]

Even Roosevelt admitted that Spanish marksmanship at San Juan Hill left a lot to be desired:

> With a force half of regulars and half of volunteers, we drove out a superior number of Spanish regular troops, strongly posted, without suffering a very heavy loss. Although the Spanish fire was very heavy, it does not seem to me it was very well directed; and though they fired with great spirit while we merely stood at a distance and fired at them, they did not show much resolution, and when we advanced, always went back long before there was any chance of our coming into contact with them.[33]

The players in the Cuban war, apart from the Americans—as Crane had not yet learned in 1896 when he tried his hand at filibustering—listed three groups: the Spanish army, the Cuban guerrillas, and the Cuban insurgents. The Spanish army was opposed by the insurgents and the insurgents were being fought by the guerrillas. While Roosevelt dismissed the guerrillas, Crane defined "the corps of guerrillas, native-born Cubans, who preferred the flag of Spain," as men "who knew the craft of the woods," adding,

Each seemed to possess an individuality, a fighting individuality, which is only found in the highest order of irregular soldiers. Personally they were as distinct as possible, but through equality of knowledge and experience, they arrived at concert of action. So long as they operated in the wilderness, they were formidable troops. It mattered little whether it was daylight or dark; they were mainly invisible. They had schooled from the Cubans insurgent to Spain. As the Cubans fought the Spanish troops, so would these particular Spanish troops fight the Americans.[34]

Reading through the books by Crane, Davis, and Roosevelt, one discovers that only Crane made the effort to understand the enemy beyond the superficialities of color and outward appearance. Roosevelt, who subscribed to the superiority of the Anglo-Saxon, had once invited Crane "to write another story of the frontiersman and the Mexican Greaser in which the frontiersman shall come out on top; it is more normal that way!"[35] He saw confirmation for his racial views in the Spanish cavalry.

After the capitulation of Santiago but before the war was declared over, the volunteers were ordered home. Roosevelt wrote:

> As soon as it was known that we were to sail for home the spirits of the men changed for the better. In my regiment the officers began to plan methods of drilling the men on horseback, so as to fit them for use against the Spanish cavalry, if we should go against Havana in December. We had, all of us, eyed the captured Spanish cavalry with particular interest. The men were small, and the horses, though well trained and well built, were diminutive ponies, very much smaller than cow ponies. We were certain that if we ever got a chance to try shock tactics against them they

> would go down like nine-pins, provided only that our men could be trained to charge in any kind of line, and we made up our minds to devote our time to this. Dismounted work with the rifle we already felt thoroughly competent to perform.[36]

Davis, who shared most of Roosevelt's values, attitudes, and prejudices, provided the context for understanding how much Roosevelt was boasting here. He described the American cavalry man as he drilled among "the pines and palms of Florida:"

> The American trooper, with his deep saddle and long stirrup, swings with the horse, as a ship rides at anchor on the waves; he makes a line of grace and strength and suppleness from the rake of his sombrero to the toe of his hooded stirrup. When his horse walks, he sits it erect and motionless; when it trots, he rises with it, but never leaves the saddle; and when it gallops, he swings in unison with it like a cowboy, or a cockswain in a racing-shell.[37]

Then, typically, Davis turned to the larger spectacle:

> It was a wonderful sight to see two thousand of these men advancing through the palmettos, the red and white guidons fluttering at the fore, and the horses sweeping onward in a succession of waves, as though they were being driven forward by the wind. It will always puzzle me to know what the American people found to occupy them that was of such importance as to keep them from coming to see their own army, no matter how small it was, while it was rehearsing and drilling among the pines and palms of Florida. There will be few such chances again to see a brigade of cavalry advancing through a forest

> of palms in a line two miles long, and breaking up into skirmishes and Cossack outposts, with one troop at a trot and another at a walk, and others tearing, cheering through the undergrowth, their steel swords flashing over their heads and the steel horse-shoes flashing underfoot.[38]

Oddly, the American cavalry never made it to Cuba, and therefore there was no opportunity to bring the Spanish cavalry down like nine-pins.

Crane's analysis of courage and fear did not end with the writing of *The Red Badge of Courage* in 1894. In this sense, the war in Cuba provided just one more proving ground for his theories and speculations.

Roosevelt, whose personal score with Crane dated from his days in New York City as police president, never once mentioned Crane in *The Rough Riders*, although he mentioned many of the correspondents reporting the battles around Santiago. He wrote about how Edward Marshall, the correspondent, was severely wounded, but failed to mention (as did Davis) that Crane unselfishly filed Marshall's story at the expense of his own. Roosevelt seemed to deny, however, any validity to Crane's depiction of the psychology of the American soldier. "I did not see any sign among the fighting men, whether wounded or unwounded, of the very complicated emotions assigned to their kind by some of the realistic modern novelists who have written about battles," he decided. "At the front everyone behaved quite simply and took things as they came, in a matter-of-course way."[39]

Davis, on the other hand, referred to Crane and his fiction approvingly. In *The Cuban and Porto Rican Campaigns* he described three black soldiers crouching at their wounded lieutenant's feet, "each wearing his red badge of courage."[40] At San Juan, Crane was seen as one of the few journalists who advanced to the top of the hill, "shar[ing] whatever danger there was with the soldiers...while the hills were still swept with the enemy's fire."[41] And Davis told the story of Crane's standing up alone to face enemy fire.

> Crane was the coolest man, whether army officer or civilian, that I saw under fire at any time during the war. He was most annoyingly cool, with the assurance of a fatalist. When the San Juan hills were taken, he came up them with James Hare, of *Collier's*. He was walking leisurely, and though the bullets passed continuously, he never once ducked his head. He wore a long rain-coat, and as he stood peering over the edge of the hill, with his hands in his pockets and smoking his pipe, he was as unconcerned as though he were gazing at a cinematograph.
>
> The fire from the enemy was so heavy that only one troop along the entire line of the hills was returning it, and all the rest of our men were lying down. General [Leonard] Wood, who was then colonel of the Rough Riders, and I were lying on our elbows at Crane's feet, and Wood ordered him also to lie down. Crane pretended not to hear, and moved farther away, still peering over the hill with the same interested expression. Wood told him for the second time that if he did not lie down he would be killed, but Crane paid no attention. So, in order to make him take shelter, I told him he was trying to impress us with his courage, and that if he thought he was making me feel badly by walking about, he might as well sit down. As soon as I told him he was trying to impress us with his courage, he dropped on his knees, as I had hoped he would, and we breathed again.[42]

It was later rumored that Crane was trying to be killed because he was suffering from syphilis, a charge that on one occasion Davis denied to the extent of going outside with the informant to argue out the matter. A better answer is that Crane was trying to find out something. He needed to know

what it was like to concentrate on performing some task that required you to stand still before enemy fire that might kill you without having the benefit of holding a loaded gun that might be used in defense or in attack on the enemy. He would publish in *McClure's* magazine in February 1899 a piece entitled "Marines Signaling under Fire at Guantanamo." Davis, who was a perceptive reader of Crane's work, wrote about this piece:

> His story of the marine at Guantanamo, who stood on the crest of the hill to "wigwag" to the war-ships, and so exposed himself to the fire of the entire Spanish force, is also particularly interesting, as it illustrates that in his devotion to duty, and also in his readiness at the exciting moments of life, Crane is quite as much of a soldier as the man whose courage he described. He tells how the marine stood erect, staring through the dusk with half-closed eyes, and with his lips moving as he counted the answers from the war-ships, while innumerable bullets splashed the sand about him. But it never occurs to Crane that to sit at the man's feet, as he did, close enough to watch his lips move and to be able to make mental notes for a later tribute to the marine's scorn of fear, was equally deserving of praise.[43]

When Crane stood up amidst enemy fire at San Juan Hill, he was doing his job. What he learned at that moment he used later in his story about the marine signaling the ships at Guantanamo. Crane recalled watching his face, but now he could describe that face as being "as grave and serene as that of a man writing in his own library."[44]

It is futile to go to Crane's Cuban war writings—journalism or fiction—for accounts of the generals' war, the admirals' or even the politicians' war. One cannot imagine Crane's ever portraying battle—or even an incident in a battle—as "a sharp and bloody little fight,"[45] as Roosevelt did, or the whole war as "a splendid little war," in the words of John Hay before he became the first modern secretary of state of a

newly empowered imperialistic United States. Crane assumed that Cuba would become a free nation since there was nothing to be gained by annexing it, but he was silent about empire. Roosevelt and Davis were explicit that the Manifest Destiny of the United States called naturally for imperialistic expansion, at least in the cases of Puerto Rico and (later) the Philippines. Crane's job in Cuba was neither political nor even basically patriotic. Looking back a quarter of a century later at Crane's *Wounds in the Rain*, the American novelist Willa Cather put the essential matter this way: "[Crane] knew that the movement of troops was the officers' business, not his. He was in Cuba to write about soldiers and soldiering, and he did."[46] His interest lay in character. That, I think, gets it just about right.

Notes

[1]The three books referred to most frequently in this paper are *The Cuban and Porto Rican Campaigns,* a gathering of stories filed by Richard Harding Davis and published in 1898, immediately after the war; *The Rough Riders*, Theodore Roosevelt's historical account of his volunteer regiment published in 1899; and Stephen Crane's *Wounds in the Rain*, a collection of journalism and fiction about the war in Cuba published in 1900. The three authors were professional writers. In addition to his war correspondence, Davis produced an appreciable body of writing—fiction, essays, and drama; Roosevelt wrote numerous books and essays—both before and after serving as president of the United States; and Crane, in less than a decade, wrote several novels and a great many short stories, while producing a sizable body of journalistic pieces and sketches. Although the Davis and Roosevelt books are well-written by professional journalists, Crane's book is a consciously aesthetic representation of his Cuban war experience.

[2]Joseph Katz, "Stephen Crane, 'Samuel Carlton,' and a Recovered Letter," *Nineteenth-Century Fiction* 23 (September 1968), 220-25.

[3]Stephen Crane, *Wounds in the Rain* (London: Methuen, 1900): 196.

[4]*Ibid*., 196.

[5]*Ibid*., 197.

[6]Stephen Crane, *The Correspondence of Stephen Crane*, edited by Stanley Wertheim and Paul Sorrentino (New York: Columbia University Press, 1988): 195.

[7]Arthur Lubow, *The Reporter Who Would be King: A Biography of Richard Harding Davis* (New York: Scribner's, 1992): 145.

[8]*Ibid*.

[9]Crane, *The Correspondence of Stephen Crane*, 186.

[10]Lubow, *The Reporter Who Would be King*, 146.

[11]Richard Harding Davis, *The Cuban and Porto Rican Campaigns* (New York: Scribner's, 1898): 265-66, 269-70.

[12]Crane, *Wounds in the Rain*, 297-99.

[13]Richard Harding Davis, "Our War Correspondents in Cuba and Puerto Rico," *Harper's New Monthly Magazine* 98 (May 1899), 941.

[14]Joyce Milton, *The Yellow Kids: Foreign Correspondents in the Heyday of Yellow Journalism* (New York: Harper & Row, 1989): 354.

[15]Stephen Crane, *Reports of War*, Volume 9 of *The University of Virginia Edition of The Works of Stephen Crane*, edited by Fredson Bowers (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1971): 129.

[16]*Ibid*., 131.

[17]Theodore Roosevelt, *The Rough Riders* (New York: Scribner's, 1899): 1.

[18]*Ibid*., 5.

[19]Theodore Roosevelt, "National Life and Character," in *Literary Essays,* Volume 14 of *The Works of Theodore Roosevelt* (New York: Scribner's, 1924): 250.

[20]*Ibid*., 251.

[21]Roosevelt, *The Rough Riders*, 9.

[22]*Ibid*., 9-10.

[23]*Ibid*., 10-11.

[24]*Ibid*., 15.

[25]*Ibid*., 123-24.

[26]Crane, *Wounds in the Rain*, 27-29.

[27]Davis, "Our War Correspondents in Cuba and Puerto Rico," 941.

[28]Davis, *The Cuban and Porto Rican Campaigns*, 78-79.

[29]Roosevelt, *The Rough Riders*, 167-68.

[30]Crane, *Reports of War*, 171-72.

[31]*Ibid*., 173.

[32]Crane, *Wounds in the Rain*, 284-85.

[33]Roosevelt, *The Rough Riders*, 103.

[34]Crane, *Wounds in the Rain*, 147.

[35]Stanley Wertheim and Paul Sorrentino, *The Crane Log: A Documentary Life of Stephen Crane 1871-1900* (New York: G. K. Hall, 1994): 201.

[36]Roosevelt, *The Rough Riders*, 212.

[37]Davis, *The Cuban and Porto Rican Campaigns*, 80, 83.

[38]*Ibid*., 83.

[39]Roosevelt, *The Rough Riders*, 107.

[40]Davis, *The Cuban and Porto Rican Campaigns*, 211.

[41]*Ibid*., 235.

[42]Davis, "Our War Correspondents in Cuba and Puerto Rico," 942.

[43]*Ibid*., 941.

[44]Crane, *Wounds in the Rain*, 188.

[45]Roosevelt, *The Rough Riders*, 87.

[46]Willa Cather, Introduction to *Wounds in the Rain*, Volume 9 of *The Work of Stephen Crane*, edited by Wilson Follett (New York: Knopf, 1926): xii.

The Relevance of Martí's Thought Today

Wayne S. Smith

"Martí's thought *must* be relevant today," a friend recently commented. "After all, both the anti-Castro exiles in Miami and the Castro government claim to base themselves on his ideals. At least one side must be right."

But my friend was not necessarily right; both sides may claim to adhere to José Martí's vision, but that does not mean either is correct.

In the area of relations with the United States, Castro is a more accurate disciple of Martí than are the exiles in Miami. From the beginning, Castro said that he intended to carry out Martí's expressed objective of making Cuba fully independent of the United States, and, in the main, he has succeeded. No one can read *Nuestra America* and *Inside the Monster* and come away thinking that Martí wanted a close relationship with the United States, as the exiles tend to claim. He did not hate it, as some have alledged. On the contrary, there was much about the country that he admired. The exiles are right on that score. But over the years, he had become deeply suspicious of its acquisitive tendencies and its rampant greed. He wanted Cuba to steer well clear and he warned the other Latin American states to do the same. He contemplated normal trade and diplomatic relations with the United States, but he was vehemently opposed to any form of U.S. domination or hegemony. Martí doubtless would regard those exiles who support the Helms-Burton bill recently passed by Congress as outright traitors to the Cuban nation, given that the bill aims to impose an approved-in-the-U.S. model on the Cuba of the future. Indeed, it even includes provisions much akin to the infamous Platt Amendment, by which the United States established a protectorate status over Cuba in 1902.

And certainly Martí would have deplored the fact that a U.S. government radio station as well as a television station that broadcast propaganda to Cuba are named for him: Radio Martí and TV Martí. He probably would have considered them a dishonor to his name.

But if the exiles are dead wrong in trying to portray Martí as someone who would have been willing to use the power and resources of the United States against his beloved island, so wrong also are those Cubans still on the island who have suggested that Martí would have approved of its Marxist-Leninist configuration. Few ever went so far as to suggest that Martí was in fact a socialist. Rather, the idea more often advanced was that given the evolution of his ideas, had he lived today, he would have become a socialist and certainly would have approved of the kind of society produced by the Castro Revolution. As Juan Marinello, the veteran Cuban Communist leader put it in 1963: "The liberation movement headed by Fidel Castro is the most exact projection of Martí's objectives into the time of socialist victory."[1]

And, in truth, there are some consequences of the revolution of which Martí would have approved. Martí's Redemptive Revolution was aimed at producing an egalitarian society, and certainly Cuban society today is the most egalitarian in this hemisphere, if not the world. Martí also insisted on the need for all citizens to be educated. That was one of his key building blocks—and in Castro's Cuba, it has been achieved.

Martí was far ahead of his time in advocating total racial equality. It mattered not in the least to him that a citizen might be black, white, Asian, or a mixture of all. The central fact was that as a Cuban citizen, he or she was equal to all other Cuban citizens. This equality was advocated by Martí as part of his Redemptive Revolution, and to a high degree, achieved.

But Martí was also a democrat to the core. Freedom of expression and the right to disagree were sacrosanct to him. A society in which citizens are jailed for expressing views opposed to the government's would have been totally unacceptable to him. And in the same vein, he also gave great importance to the organization of labor unions and the right to strike—the absolute right to strike. That of course is absent in the Cuba of today, as are the kind of civil freedoms on which he would have insisted.

Present Cuban society, then, is not based on Martí's ideals, although it does not stand in contradiction to them all—as the exiles often insist. Some it has advanced, most it violates.

But Cuba, after all, is changing. The collapse of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War have produced a vastly altered world, to which Cuba has no choice but to adjust. There are no more sister socialist republics with which Cuba can trade and depend upon for investments and credits. It must adjust its economy to the market economies upon which it must now depend. It need not turn back to capitalism, but neither can it hold to a purely socialist system. Further, Marxism-Leninism is not, as it turns out, the wave of the future Castro thought it was. Cuba must find new models and new approaches. Already, one notes, the stress on Marxism-Leninism is waning, giving way to new stress on Cuban nationalism and historical roots. The billboards of Marx, Engels, and Lenin that one used to see all over Havana have given way to images of national heroes such as Martí, Máximo Gómez, and Antonio Maceo. And gone are the efforts to portray Martí as an inchoate Marxist. To my knowledge, not a single article or tract to that effect has been published in the last five years. Martí is again the unvarnished nationalist hero. Efforts to paint in a foreign ideological mantra have been abandoned.

There is even talk now of abolishing the paragraph in the constitution that says the Communist Party is the only party and the driving force of the revolution. There is talk also of changing the name of the party to the Cuban Revolutionary Party, or Partido Revolucionario Cuban (PRC), i.e., Martí's old party.

It is likely to be many years before Cuba comes to a multiparty system, if it ever does. Meanwhile, it will be in a transitional status—in a sense, where Martí was when he was formulating his political blueprint for Cuba. His principal and overriding objective was winning Cuba's independence from Spain. The PRC was forged with and for that purpose, and Martí did not envisage a role for other parties; rather, what he proposed was a single party system: the PRC. Had Martí lived, would his vision have evolved to a multiparty system? Perhaps. We cannot know for sure, but given his devotion to democracy, it is likely that it would have. Meanwhile, the single party he did organize was to be totally open and democratic in its style and operating procedures. Martí urged,

for example, that elections be held every year and that all members must vote and otherwise participate in the PRC's decisions. On the other hand, Castro would have been comfortable with the PRC, for it was to be led by a single delegate (though one whose mandate had to be renewed annually with the consent of all members).

As Cuba moves from the Marxist-Leninist configuration of the past toward something more attuned to today's reality, the kind of one-party state envisaged by Martí in which all citizens are guaranteed participation and in which their civil rights are assured should offer an increasingly attractive model. As was Martí's, it would be a transitional arrangement, but one that would carry Cuba in the right direction. If Cuba wants to go back to its roots, this is a good one to choose.

Martí's thoughts as to how the economy of an independent Cuba should be organized were by no means precise. It was socially unjust and unacceptable, he wrote, for a few to have vast wealth while others went hungry. Clearly, then, wealth should be redistributed.[2] On that, he and Fidel Castro would have agreed. Martí, however, gave no indication at all as to how that redistribution was to be achieved. He said nothing of land reform or redistribution, though one must assume he would have sympathized with the concept. But cooperatives and state farms would not have been to his liking. Rather, he seemed to envisage Cuba as an agrarian-based society of small private farmers (something akin to Thomas Jefferson's vision of the ideal system). Thus, again, as Cuba moves, as it is, away from the collective agricultural model it accepted from the Soviet Union and toward a system that stresses greater individual initiative and ownership (even if the latter be as usufructuary), Martí's vision should have ever greater relevance.

Martí, one sees quickly, was long on principles, short on specifics. As Cuba moves into a new transitional phase, the thought of José Martí cannot offer any blueprints for a new society, or even of its political and economic underpinnings. That is not to say, however, that it is irrelevant to the effort. Quite the contrary, if the Castro Revolution evolves in the direction of the kind of society Martí wanted—one that is highly egalitarian, that emphasizes social justice and a more

equitable distribution of the wealth, that assures the equality of the races, that offers education to all, and that is also truly democratic, even if it begins with a one-party system, and that respects the civil and political rights of its citizens—then Martí will rest easier, and Cuba's future will be a happier one.

But is the Castro government moving in that direction, i.e., toward a more democratic system and respect for civil rights? One cannot say for certain. True, in 1993, elections were held for the first time at the National Assembly level. Unfortunately, the process of nominating candidates was quite closed, and, worse, there was only one candidate for each slot. There is no reason, however, to suppose that is the end of the process. Further reforms can be implemented and there is a good chance that at some point in the future, voters will be able to choose from among two or more candidates.

Respect for full freedom of expression and various other civil liberties, however, seems far away. Some progress has been made. The margins for debate have been widened. But Castro is an authoritarian leader with little tolerance for dissent. Citizens are still arrested for criticizing the government, or for "dangerousness," i.e., for constituting some unspecified danger to society. As the years pass and Castro begins to prepare for his own transition, some softening will likely happen, but that is certainly years in the future. Meanwhile, let us hope Castro and other Cuban leaders will reread José Martí and give more attention to his insistence on individual liberties.

Notes

[1]Juan Marinello, *Once ensayos martianos* (Havana: Cuban National Commission for UNESCO, 1964): 17.

[2]José Martí, *Obras completas*, Volume VII (Havana: Editorial Nacional de Cuba, 1964): 134.

Martí Confronts Modernity

Cathy L. Jrade

José Martí's struggle for justice, his belief in the perfectibility of man, and his insistent moral stance so unequivocally permeated his written work and his life activities that they have tended to overshadow other considerations. He is perhaps best known as a Cuban patriot, adopted as spiritual guide by Cubans of all political persuasions. His place within the Modernist movement, however, has remained less clear. With the early but persistent misconception that Modernism was basically an aesthetic movement unconcerned with the "real" world, Martí appeared anomalous and hard to explain. For the most part, his poetry was not as elegant and refined as that of other Modernists. On the contrary, it asserted its own unreworked nature and openly defied easy categorization. At the forefront of the sometimes difficult attempt to claim for Martí his rightful place among Modernists were Ivan Schulman and M. Pedro González.[1]

More recent studies—including those by Rama, Ramos, Schulman, Zavala, Rivera Mélendez, and myself—have approached Modernism from a new perspective.[2] These studies have sought to place the movement in the context of modernity in general or, more specifically, in relationship with the formation of modern nation-states. It is from this angle that Martí as writer and creative artist appears to fit effortlessly into the kaleidoscopic puzzle that is Modernism. At the same time, by examining Martí's writings from this new perspective, we begin to see how he and his fellow Modernists set the foundation for and/or anticipated many of the literary endeavors that follow—including some of the most popular Spanish American texts of the twentieth century.

It is clearly not possible to elucidate all these points within one article. This paper elaborates on the basic thesis upon which the others rest, that is, that Martí's writings are best understood as a response to modernity—a response that is simultaneously political, philosophical, and literary.

In the broadest of terms, modernity is defined by an emphasis on science, technology, industrialization, materialism, and

pragmatism.[3] As modernization arose first in Europe, it is only natural that it was there that modernization first generated literary reactions. Matei Calinescu has studied this development in his *Five Faces of Modernity* and has effectively delineated what Octavio Paz alluded to in his *Los hijos de limo*. Paz had noted that modern poetry has always represented a reaction against the modern era and its various manifestations, whether they be the Enlightenment, critical reason, liberalism, positivism, or Marxism.[4] Calinescu clarifies the nature of the antagonistic relationship between modernity and the literary responses that it generates. He finds that "...at some point during the first half of the nineteenth century an irreversible split occurred between modernity as a stage in the history of Western civilization...and modernity as an aesthetic concept."[5] What Calinescu calls the "bourgeois idea of modernity" picked up and continued the tradition dominant within earlier periods in the history of the modern idea, emphasizing the doctrine of progress, the cult of reason, the ideal of freedom, and confidence in the beneficial possibilities of science and technology. All these features were reinforced by an ever stronger capitalist orientation toward pragmatism and by the cult of action and success held sacred by the middle class.

The other modernity, which begins with the romantics and continues through the avant-gardes, manifests radical antibourgeois attitudes. This other modernity turned against the middle-class scale of values and expressed its disenchantment in many different ways ranging from offensive effrontery to aristocratic self-exile. Calinescu claims, in short, that "what defines cultural modernity is its outright rejection of bourgeois modernity."[6] Consequently, cultural modernity actually operates as a type of "anti-modernity."[7]

The same division arose in Spanish America especially after the adoption of positivism as the predominant political philosophy. During the peace that followed the political consolidation of the 1860s, positivism became the philosophy of order, promoting progress, science, and the miracles of free enterprise. Yet many of the artists and intellectuals began to sense that scientific knowledge could neither provide all the answers nor be the measure of all things.[8]

This situation was complicated further by a unique confluence of events in post-colonial Spanish America. Within both the newly- and the soon-to-be-independent nations, intellectuals were addressing issues related to nationhood. They were acutely aware of the interplay among language, literature, and national identity. Many intellectuals questioned the ability of Spanish, with its conservative rules and archaic associations, to express either their new sense of self or their perceptions of the changing social scene that was the product of their incipient integration in the world economy.[9] Increasingly marginalized artists found solace and inspiration in the works of the Europeans that they had read in their enthusiastic embrace of new ideas and modern ways of thinking. They saw how others had begun to deal with what they believed to be their inherent incompatibility with the dominant value system. Still another model loomed large in the imagination of Spanish American writers, providing what seemed to be the epitome of both the positive benefits and the negative repercussions of modern life. This model was the United States.

For Martí, living in the United States and working for an independent Cuba, the issues of bourgeois modernity, national identity, and the role of the artist/intellectual became particularly intense. Seeking not only an ideal political, philosophic, and ethical stance but also a means of survival, Martí tied all these factors together and proposed an antidote to the excesses of modernization and North American hegemony as well as a truer way of knowing. If knowledge brings strength, superior perceptivity and consciousness could balance the odds for the less powerful Spanish American nations. This visionary framework lies at the core of Modernist poetics. In Martí's writings, poetics and politics come together more assertively than in those of other Modernists. This merger is infused with a transcendental impetus appropriate to shaping national identity.

The Modernist vision has its roots in ancient beliefs that had been resurrected by the romantics and symbolists in response to the sense of loss and alienation, which they blamed on the insensitive materialism and unrelenting pragmatism of modern life. The design that the romantics elaborated for

possible recovery, and that was later adapted by the symbolists and the Modernists, centers on age-old images of recuperation and unity.[10] By holding that unity is the natural order of things, that everything is interrelated, and that the living is continuous with the inanimate, the romantics provided a response to the Enlightenment, its mechanistic world view, and its analytic divisiveness. The symbolists and Modernists adopted and extended this vision as they sought to dramatize similar feelings of anguish and crisis. They made analogy the basis of their poetics, turning the poet into a seer who is in touch with existence. They saw poetry as a means of discovery, a way of seeing beyond the confusion and lies of surface reality.

The special language through which the macrocosm and microcosm reveal themselves to each other is the language of symbols, metaphors, and analogies. The mission of poetry is to rediscover this means of communication and to achieve a renewed unity of spirit. When restored to its full efficacy, language evokes a pure, untarnished view of the universe. Music, because it is indefinite and innocent of reference to the external world, became the ideal of poetic creation. Like Paul Verlaine before him, Darío in "Dilucidaciones" ["Explanations"], his introduction to *El canto errante* [*The Wandering Song*], addressed the issue of poetry and music and the need for a constantly revitalized and perfectly adaptable poetic form. He wrote:

> No gusto de *moldes* nuevos ni viejos....Mi verso ha nacido siempre con su cuerpo y su alma, y no le he aplicado nunguna clase de ortopedia. He, sí, cantado aires antiguos; y he querido ir hacia el porvenir, siempre bajo el divino imperio de la música—música de las ideas, música del verbo.[11]
>
> [I do not like either new or old *molds*....My poetry has always been born with its body and its soul, and I have not applied any type of orthopedics to it. I have indeed sung old airs; and I have always wanted to go toward the

> future under the divine command of music—
> music of ideas, music of the word.]

Martí had made a similar disclaimer with regard to his verse in his introduction to *Versos libres*.[12] He noted: "Ninguno me ha salido recalentado, artificioso, recompuesto, de la mente; sino como las lágrimas salen de los ojos y la sangre sale a borbotones de la herida" (*Poesías completas*).[13] ["Not one has come from my mind reheated, contrived, recomposed; but rather like tears come from the eyes and blood in gushes from the wound."]

This longing for a fluid, responsive, musical language reflects a view of literature that reaches beyond the aesthetic into the realm of the epistemological and the political. Within this framework, the poet is able to claim both a moral and conceptual superiority. One of the earliest examples of this tendency appears in Martí's famous prologue to Juan Antonio Pérez Bonalde's *El poema del Niágara*. In this piece, written in New York in 1882, Martí confronts the impact of modern life upon literary production and defends poetry despite its intrinsic insignificance within the capitalist scheme. The opposition that is established is between "ruines tiempos" ["vile times"] and the spirit of the poet. The images of modern times are easily recognizable: an emphasis on material accumulation and fashionability, a tendency toward vulgarization, and a loss of ideals and idealism. Martí's response grows out of the timeless dialectic between nature and society but reflects the subtle tension between modernity and those aspects of life that he hopes to salvage from the all-encompassing impact of "progress." His language is most revealing:

> So pretexto de completar el ser humano, lo interrumpen. No bien nace, ya están en pie, junto a su cuna, con grandes y fuertes vendas preparadas en las manos, las filosofías, las religiones, las pasiones de los padres, los sistemas políticos. Y lo atan; y lo enfajan; y el hombre es ya, por toda su vida en la tierra, un caballo embridado....Se viene a la vida como cera, y el azar nos vacía en moldes prehechos.

> Las convenciones creadas deforman la existencia verdadera, y la verdadera vida viene a ser como corriente silenciosa que se desliza invisible bajo la vida aparente, no sentida a las veces por el mismo en quien hace su obra santa, a la manera con que el Guadiana misterioso corre luengo camino calladamente por bajo de las tierras andaluzas.[14]
>
> [Under the pretext of completing the human being, they interrupt him. No sooner is he born that they are already standing beside his cradle with great and strong bindings prepared in their hands, the philosophies, the religions, the passions of their fathers, the political systems. And they tie him and they girdle him, and man is already, for his whole life on earth, a bridled horse....One comes into life like wax, and fate empties us into premade molds. Created conventions deform true existence, and true life becomes like a silent current that slips, invisible, beneath the feigned life, not felt by the very one in whom it works its holy deed, in the same way that the mysterious Guadiana River follows a long path silently beneath Andalucian lands.]

We see here a sophisticated view of selfhood based on the dichotomies between culture and nature, between rigidity and fluidity, between bondage and freedom. From the earliest age, from the very first days of existence, one is molded, shaped, and, worse still, deformed by outside forces. These forces are represented as coercive (great and strong bindings) and conservative (*las pasiones de los padres*—imposing a vision from the past). The aggressive and destructive nature of this process is further emphasized by the verbs chosen: *lo atan*, *lo enfajan*. All options are channeled; the individual's being, thinking, and behavior are restricted. The self is poured into previously established molds, made to conform, left with no choices. One might assume that, as a result, the self loses all

sense of individuality and simply functions as an agent for existing social arrangements and belief systems, unable to see the world or act upon it for itself. But regardless of how modern Martí is, he is most definitely not postmodern, and he adamantly defends the concepts of self, identity, and agency.

The true self eludes the absolute oppression of these outside forces by slipping invisibly beneath the surface, which Martí calls *la vida aparente*, thereby moving the discussion into another realm of issues, for what is true and real is different from what appears on the surface. He goes on to compare the underlying current with the mysterious Guadiana River, which flows silently beneath Andalucian lands. Remarkably, for Martí the true self is not destroyed but finds freedom in a hidden, subterranean region. Martí thus affirms the everlasting ability of the self to assert its true nature, one that is portrayed as fluid and unconstrained but also as hidden, as unseen, and perhaps as inaccessible within the daily routines.

Although Martí's focus in this section is on the self, his entire presentation underscores the epistemological implications that are central to his and most Modernist writings. Not only is the self prevented from being true to itself, but it is also prevented from perceiving and responding to the world around it in an unobstructed manner. The double meaning of the word *venda*, both bindings and blindfold, highlights this overlap. Because the self is bound by religions, philosophies, passions, and politics, it is unable to achieve an undistorted view of the outside world. In contradiction to the dominant bourgeois culture that operates on the assumption that outside reality can be measured and assessed, and rational judgments can be made on those measurements, Martí presents a view of self that implies a profound distrust of such naive empiricism; he presents a view that shows his sympathies with the radical philosophical shift that occurred in the nineteenth century and that forms the foundation for philosophical positions that run throughout the twentieth century.

As Henry Aiken has pointed out, before the nineteenth century, philosophers

> did not, on the whole, seriously doubt that there is a common, independent, and objective

> reality which can to some extent be understood. Nor did they question whether there is an objective way of thinking about reality, common to all rational animals, which does not radically modify or distort the thing known. Actually they did not deeply ponder the concept of objectivity itself; they merely used it to express a half-conscious conviction about the adequacy of the rational faculty to grasp its object and the correspondence between the thing itself and the thing-as-known.[15]

He goes on to note that "[f]rom Kant on, however, the assumption of a preordained correspondence between the mind and its object was regarded as dogmatic and uncritical."[16] Thinkers became aware that every conception of reality presupposes a way of thinking about the world and affects what the world is understood to be. Historical consciousness went a step further by acknowledging that not only human nature but also reason develops within history and is continually affected by the changing conditions of individual and social life.[17]

Whether or not he was introduced to these ideas by German philosophers such as Hegel or Marx, Martí demonstrates a receptivity to this "new" way of thinking. In an 1883 article, "Honores a Karl Marx, que ha muerto" ["Honors to Karl Marx, who has died"], Martí wrote: "Karl Marx estudió los modos de asentar al mundo sobre nuevas bases, y despertó a los dormidos, y les enseñó el modo de echar a tierra los puntales rotos."[18] ["Karl Marx studied ways to place the world on new foundations. He awoke the sleepers and showed them how to cast down the broken pillars."][19] This breaking down or breaking out is both epistemological and political for Martí, as it was for Marx. Martí's defense of fluidity, spontaneity, mystery, and individuality, reveals his distrust of molds, structures, and conventions, and, by implication, the visible, measurable, material, and the mass-producible. In a later section of Martí's prologue to *El poema del Niâgara*, he himself establishes the link between poetry and politics.

> Asegurar el albedrío humano; dejar a los espíritus su seductora forma propia; no deslucir con la imposición de ajenos prejuicios las naturalezas vírgenes; ponerlas en aptitud de tomar por sí lo útil, sin ofuscarlas, ni impelerlas por una vía marcada....Ni la originalidad literaria cabe ni la libertad política subsiste mientras no se asegure la libertad espiritual. El primer trabajo del hombre es reconquistarse.[20]
>
> [To assure human free will; to leave to these spirits their own seductive form; to not tarnish virgin personalities with the imposition of another's prejudices; to ready them to take what is useful for itself alone, without confusing them nor pushing them along a marked route....Neither literary originality belongs nor political freedom subsists as long as spiritual freedom is not assured. Man's first task is to reconquer himself.]

Martí's central concern with struggle and renewal is clearly evident in this final militaristic image, but the source of his militancy is hidden within the alternative way of knowing discussed in this paper.[21] He proposes a reconquest of self and others armored with a different type of power. He assumes a moral and political superiority that is derived from a vision that resists the limitations of preset cognitive structures and that relies upon a poetic and premodern mode of understanding.

Even though he does not elucidate the exact nature of this alternative way of knowing, Julio Ramos agrees that it is a source of power and authority. For Ramos it becomes the means by which

> literature begins to authorize itself as an alternate and privileged mode to speak about politics. Opposed to the 'technical' ways of knowing and to the imported languages of official politics, literature presents itself as the

> only hermeneutics capable of resolving the enigmas of the Latin American identity.[22]

Using Marxist terminology, he points out literature's ongoing struggle with "bourgeois modernity." He writes: "Its [literature's] economy will be, at times, a way of granting value to materials—words, positions, experiences—*devalued* by the utilitarian economies of rationalization."[23]

Of course, this "privileging" of the literary voice in the cacophony that filled the political debates of the day is made possible by asserting literature's grounding in a much older, "truer" way of knowing. It is the imagery based on analogy that becomes the foundation of the Modernist epistemology as well as its response to bourgeois values. The premise that nature holds a hidden system of correspondences that reveals a divine and harmonious order toward which man must be free to aspire becomes the Modernist answer to the stultifying rules of Spanish poetics. More importantly, however, it supplies a satisfying response to the modern world, to facile assumptions about science, scientific knowledge, and to the unexamined positivist pursuit of progress. By extension, analogy offers an answer to North American hegemony as well, one in which the values of democracy can be praised without resigning Spanish American reality to a second-class status.

The virtual universality among Martí's contemporaries of this desire to create a language that flows harmoniously in accord with inspiration and intent and that realizes unrestricted, direct contact with the universe is evident in the prevalence of water imagery throughout Modernist writings. In everything from springs, to rivers (as in the passage by Martí quoted above), to fountains, water represents the sometimes hidden, sometimes evasive source of musical purity, as well as the ability to achieve ideal consonance with the surroundings. These surroundings may be the soul of the poet or the perfection of nature to which language must conform in order to secure visionary power and lasting truth.[24]

Similarly, the emphasis on sincerity in the writings of Martí, Darío, and other Modernists can best be understood from this context of overlapping influences. Sincerity is the purest, least contrived expression of the natural concordance

between the poet and the world. In the introduction to *Versos libres,* Martí underscores his unwillingness to accept established forms or to alter the true nature of his vision. He wrote:

> Estos son mis versos. Son como son. A nadie los pedí prestado. Mientras no pude cerrar íntegras mis visiones en una forma adecuada a ellas, dejé volar mis visiones: ¡Oh, cuánto áureo amigo que ya nunca ha vuelto! Pero la poesía tiene su honradez, y yo he querido siempre ser honrado. Recortar versos, también sé, pero no quiero. Así como cada hombre trae su fisonomía, cada inspiración trae su lenguaje.[25]
>
> [These are my verses. They are as they are. I borrowed them from no one. Since I could not entirely enclose my visions within a form adequate to them, I let my visions fly. Oh, how many golden a friend that has never returned! But poetry has its integrity, and I have always wanted to be honest. I also know how to clip verses, but I do not want to. Just as each man brings his own physical attributes, each inspiration brings its own language.]

The goal that Martí sets for his poetry is that of *honradez*, which, as Roberto González Echevarría has pointed out, should be contrasted with *decoro*. *Honradez* emphasizes the need for poetry to be faithful to the spontaneous and unfettered nature of the poet's vision. *Decoro*, on the other hand, is the classical concept that alludes exclusively to a faithfulness to established poetic norms.[26] With his selection of the word *honradez* Martí stretches, once again, what is a predominantly poetic concept for others into a moral imperative, one that ultimately demands more than verbal honesty; it points to a life that must be lived with integrity.

The linking of poetry, politics, and morality and the elaboration of the fundamental tension between nature and society are well-studied features of Martí's writing. Whereas Martí

offers this poetic vision as a response to the failings of modern life and as a source of hope, it is not immune from the disheartening realities that surrounded him. Indeed, Martí's modernity can be measured, in part, by the irreconcilability of his aspirations and the world that intrudes upon him. "Yo sé de Egipto y Nigricia," the second poem from *Versos sencillos*, exemplifies this dynamic and many other of the points already made in this paper.

> Yo sé de Egipto y Nigricia
> y de Persia y Xenophonte,
> y prefiero la caricia
> del aire fresco del monte.
>
> Yo sé las historias viejas
> del hombre y de sus rencillas
> y prefiero las abejas
> volando en las campanillas.
>
> Yo sé del canto del viento
> en las ramas vocingleras:
> nadie me diga que miento,
> que lo prefiero de veras.
>
> Yo sé de un gamo aterrado
> que vuelve al redil, y expira,
> y de un corazón cansado
> que muere oscuro y sin ira.[27]
>
> [I know about Egypt and Nigritia and about Persia and Xenophon, and I prefer the caress of the fresh air of the countryside. I know the old stories about man and his quarrels, and I prefer the bees flying among the bellflowers. I know about the wind's song among the chattering branches. Let no one say that I lie; I truly prefer it. I know about the terrified buck that returns to the fold and expires,—and about the tired heart that dies dark and without anger.][28]

The contrast here is clearly between the great ancient cultures and the simple, untouched purity of the countryside. The verb *saber*, which is repeated in the first person singular at the beginning of each stanza, makes the focus of the poem knowledge; the structure of the first two stanzas emphasizes the tension between nature and society and the ways of knowing represented by each. The contrast between "yo sé" and "y prefiero" underscores that the preference expressed is the result of an informed choice. The natural world is more desirable than the cultural achievements of the past, for inherited models are limited and limiting. Histories are filled with quarrels that are presented as eternal repetitions of the same old mistakes: "las historias viejas/del hombre y de sus rencillas." The earthbound failings are contrasted with the flying bees, the stale histories with the fresh air of the mountainside, the voices of the past with the song of the wind.

Given the origin of *Versos sencillos*, it would not be unreasonable to see in these oppositions—in addition to the obvious poetic and epistemological implications—less obvious metaphoric associations related to nationhood and national identity. In 1888, the government of the United States called for the First Conference of American States, which was held in Washington, D.C., between October of 1889 and April of 1890. In an article entitled "Congreso internacional de Washington," Martí expressed his fear that the conference was convoked by the United States in order to try out a new type of colonialism from which Spanish America would have to declare its second independence.[29] These worries are tied to *Versos sencillos* by Martí himself, who states that he wrote these poems as an escape from the anxieties brought on by the meetings.

As a result, we may conclude that patterns from the past that Martí alludes to have as much to do with politics as poetic structures or ways of knowing. Those that do not correspond to the reality of Spanish America can only be seen as inadequate. It is folly to hope to impose a foreign blueprint on national essence. Yet this conclusion does not forestall the terror that one feels upon seeing oneself forced to alter one's nature, forced to conform, forced into the fold, which is literally the word chosen by Martí to describe the manner in which the buck dies. John M. Bennett, in discussing the end of the

poem, refers to an ancient hunting practice by which an animal is trapped by continually tightening a net that covers a certain territory. There is no need to belabor the obvious parallels.[30]

At this point in the poem, Martí, unrelenting in his vision, acknowledges his own exhaustion. His is the tired heart. It dies in the dark, unrecognized, but resigned to the struggles of modern life.

This linking of literature with knowledge—metaphysical and political—cannot be emphasized enough, for it dispels, once and for all, lingering doubts about the seriousness of the Modernist project. For no one was it more serious than for José Martí, who struggled with the issues of modern life, of shifting philosophic paradigms, as well as of nationhood. These are the issues that remain strong in Spanish American literature. One needs simply think of some of the most recent works to see how contemporary authors follow in Martí's footsteps. Martí's life and works stand as a beacon illuminating issues that continue at the core of Spanish American concerns.

Notes

[1]I am referring to Ivan A. Schulman, *Génesis del modernismo: Martí, Nájera, Silva, Casal* (Mexico City: El Colegio de México, 1966); and Ivan A. Schulman and Manuel Pedro González, *Martí, Darío y el modernismo* (Madrid: Gredos, 1969), along with countless articles.

[2]See Angel Rama, *Los poetas modernistas en el mercado económico* (Montevideo: Universidad de la República, 1967); Julio Ramos, *Desencuentros de la modernidad en América Latina: Literatura y política en el siglo XIX* (Mexico: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1989); Ivan A. Schulman, *Relecturas martianas: Narración y nación* (Atlanta: Rodopi, 1994); Iris Zavala, *Colonialism and Culture: Hispanic Modernisms and the Social Imaginary* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1992); Blanca Margarita Rivera Meléndez, "Poetry and Machinery of Illusion: José Martí and the poetics of modernity," Dissertation, Cornell University, 1990; Cathy L. Jrade, "Modernist Poetry," *Cambridge History of Latin American Literature*, Volume 2, edited by Roberto González Echevarría and Enrique Pupo-Walker (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996): 7-68.

[3]See Alfredo A. Roggiano, "Modernismo: Origen de la palabra y evolución de un concepto," in Catherine Vera and George R. McMurray (eds.), *In Honor of Boyd G. Carter* (Laramie: University of Wyoming, 1981): 93-103, on the origins of the term *modernismo*.

[4]Octavio Paz, *Los hijos del limo: Del romanticismo a la vanguardia* (Barcelona: Seix Barral, 1974): 10. Translation to English, *Children of the Mire: Modern Poetry from Romanticism to the Avant-Garde,* Translated by Rachel Phillips (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1974): vi.

[5]Matei Calinescu, *Five Faces of Modernity: Modernism, Avant-Garde, Decadence, Kitsch, Postmodernism* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1987): 41.

[6]*Ibid*., 42.

[7]I like this term because it parallels discoveries in quantum physics of antimatter and antiparticles. It also hints at the type of love/hate relationship that has existed between science and the humanities, in which the language of one mimics the language of the other as both decry the inadequacies of the other. The tense interrelationship between these two supposedly diverse ways of looking at the universe began with scientist/philosophers such as Kant and has remained strong throughout the twentieth century with intriguingly imaginative discoveries in mathematics and quantum theory. Borges, of course, offers an obvious example of a writer both drawn to and critical of scientific method and discourse.

[8]For extensive background to this period, see E. Bradford Burns, *The Poverty of Progress: Latin America in the Nineteenth Century* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980).

[9]For additional background regarding the Modernist reaction to the socio-economic changes in Spanish America, see Noé Jitrik, *Las contradicciones del modernismo: Productividad poética y situación sociológica* (Mexico City: El Colegio de México, 1978); and Françoise Pérus, *Literatura y sociedad en América Latina: El modernismo* (Havana: Casa de las Américas, 1976).

[10]For the following discussion, I am particularly indebted to Meyer Howard Abram's "The Circuitous Journey: Pilgrims and Prodigals" in *Natural Supernaturalism: Tradition and Revolution in Romantic Literature*, (New York: W. W. Norton, 1973), which remains one of the best studies on the way the major English and European poets of the nineteenth century differed from their eighteenth-century predecessors. It explores how their common themes, modes of expression, and ways of feeling were causally related to the drastic political and social changes of the age. For additional details, see chapter 1 of my *Rubén Darío and the Romantic Search for Unity: The Modernist Recourse to Esoteric Tradition* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1983).

[11]Rubén Darío, "Dilucidaciones" *El canto errante. Poesía* (Caracas: Biblioteca Ayacucho, 1977): 304.

[12]The poems of *Versos libres* were written between 1878 and 1882. The collection itself was published posthumously in 1913.

[13]José Martí, *Poesías completas* (Buenos Aires: Ediciones Antonio Zamora, 1970): 43.

[14]José Martí, "El poema del Niágara," *Nuestra América,* Introduction by Pedro Henríquez Ureña (Buenos Aires: Editorial Losada, 1980): 111.

[15]Henry D. Aiken, *The Age of Ideology: The 19th Century Philosophers* (New York: New American Library, 1956): 14-15.

[16]*Ibid*., 15.

[17]*Ibid*., 15-16.

[18]José Martí, *Obras completas* Volume 9 (Havana: Editorial Nacional de Cuba, 1963-1973): 388.

[19]In Luis E. Aguilar (ed.), *Marxism in Latin America* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1978): 103.

[20]Martí, "El poema del Niágara," 111.

[21]Blanca Margarita Rivera Meléndez, *Poetry and Machinery of Illusion: José Martí and the poetics of modernity*, Disertation, Cornell University, 1990, 112-13; and Evelyn Picon Garfield and Ivan A. Schulman, *"Las entrañas del vacío": Ensayos sobre la modernidad hispanoamericana* (Mexico: Cuadernos Americanos, 1984): 79-96, discuss Martí's recourse to warrior imagery in this piece and in the contemporaneous *Ismaelillo*.

[22]Translation mine. The original: "En el ensayismo—'Nuestra América' y algunas crónicas anteriores de Martí son los primeros ejemplos—la literatura comienza a autorizarse como un modo alternativo y privilegiado para hablar sobre la política. Opuesta a los saberes 'técnicos' y a los lenguajes 'importados' de la política oficial la literatura se postula como la única hermenéutica capaz de resolver los enigmas de la identidad latinoamericana." Ramos, *Desencuentros de la modernidad en América Latina*, 16.

[23]Translation mine. The original reads: "Su economía será, por momentos, un modo de otorgar valor a materiales—palabras, posiciones, experiencias—*devaluados* por las economías utilitarias de la racionalización." *Ibid*., 9-10.

[24] For an examination of the appearance in romantic poetry of the Neoplatonic figure of the soul as a fountain or overflowing spring see Meyer Howard Abrams "Romantic Analogues of Art and Mind," *The Mirror and the Lamp: Romantic Theory and the Critical Tradition* (London: Oxford University Press, 1971): 47-69. See also my analysis of Darío's "La fuente" in *Rubén Darío*, 20.

[25]Martí, *Poesías completas,* 43.

[26]Roberto González Echevarría, "Martí y su 'Amor de ciudad grande': notas hacia la poética de *Versos libres*," *Isla a su vuelo fugitivo: Ensayos críticos sobre literatura hispanoamericana* (Madrid: José Porrúa Turanzas, 1983): 31.

[27]Martí, *Poesías completas,* 129.

[28]My literal prose translation seeks to clarify certain images obscured by the more poetic translation by Elinor Randall published

in *José Martí, Major Poems: A Bilingual Edition* (New York: Holmes & Meier Publishers, 1982): 65:

> I know about Persia and Xenophon,
> Egypt and the Sudan,
> But I prefer to be caressed
> By fresh mountain air.
>
> I know the age-old history
> Of human grudges,
> But I prefer the bees that fly
> Among the bellflowers.
>
> I know the songs that breezes sing
> In the chattering branches;
> Don't tell me that I lie—
> I do prefer them.
>
> I know about the frightened buck
> Returned to its pen, expiring;
> I know that weary hearts die darkly
> But free from anger.

[29]For additional commentary on this article, see Roberto Fernández Retamar, *Introducción a José Martí* (Havana: Casa de las Américas, 1978): 23-26.

[30]John M. Bennett, "Yo sé de Egipto y Nigricia," *Antología comentada del modernismo* (Medellin: Porrata y Santana, 1974): 31-36.

Revisioning Martí's Modernism

Ivan A. Schulman

Literary critics, particularly those of Hispanic letters, have been reluctant to rethink the nature of literary discourse, with a view toward conceptualizing its production in terms of texts tied to broadly defined ideas of periodicity. Instead, they insist on historiographic description that is grounded in the establishment of sequentially organized, narrow limits of schools and movements, which is an all too common practice that frequently yields little more than critical fictions.[1] In contrast, notes Claudio Guillén, "historians of non-art...[that is to say, historians rather than literary critics] use periods as a temporal backdrop of neutral conventional content...to which more interesting constructions can be referred."[2] We will argue in favor of these broadly conceived notions, which we hope to demonstrate and which characterize Martí's perception of the rise of the literature of Spanish America's modern age whose texts literary critics of the twentieth century universally have identified with Hispanic Modernism. In this revisioning, we have taken into account Terdiman's view that the "'making' of the text as text begins to be thinkable as a process connected to the world beyond the text itself and inevitably intimate with it."[3]

The comprehensive critical modeling that deals with the text and the world beyond has by and large been accepted today by revisionist critics. Curiously enough, these constructs already had been inscribed in the literature of major critics and creators of Modernist literature at the turn of the century. And they were embedded in the prose and poetry Martí wrote during the last two decades of his life. His texts that unveil a theory of Modernism as perceived by one its initiators contain the signs of the contradictory, alienating historical and cultural devolutions and evolutions[4] of the late nineteenth-century social text read by a spirit with an uncommon vision of "futurity,"[5] a writer, a politician, a man of action, and a revolutionary theorist. However, Martí's writings, whether literary theory or social commentary, transcend the limits of contemporary circumstance and project

themselves upon a screen of the future as so many images of a visionary soul.

But, if the Cuban was a visionary, he was so in more than the sense literary historians have been willing to grant him. He was not only one of the first to see the need for energizing the prose and poetry of the late nineteenth century by breaking with the traditional molds of the academy, but also prognosticated and fought for the regeneration of humankind and its liberation from political, economic, moral, and psychological bonds so as to create a more ecumenical, harmonious universe for men and women of the future and provide them with an eternity whose attributes Martí never fully detailed.[6]

This paper argues in favor of retextualizing Martí's notion of Modernism in terms of both literary and social codes, and of broad revolutionary concepts that transcend the confining idea of a monolithic codified style: that is, a truncated, purely aesthetic Modernism represented as a distilled form of romantic discourse or a derivative rendition of the artistic innovations of nineteenth-century French Parnassians, Symbolists, Impressionists, or Expressionists, filled with painterly visions of swans, owls, princesses, exotic lands, and populated by self-represented anguished artists isolated from life in ivory towers.

Martí's concept of Modernism is much of this and more. It is inscribed in a literature of ending—in texts that suggest that modern man by the late nineteenth century had reached the last stage of an era, that he stood at a crossroads and faced new, unknown, and terrifying existential conditions. But in his writings he also spoke of the *dawning* of an age—that of the modern world or "orbe nuevo" as he preferred to call it—an era he hoped would be more perfect than past historical periods, but whose aggregate he failed to perceive in clear focus. On the one hand, he yearned for an ideal universe, on the other, he was conscious of the fact that it was probably beyond immediate reach. In spite of this enduring neoidealism, he was a pragmatist who fought for social justice, for liberation of the human spirit and of the word. And this immutable search for empyrean values—represented in his texts both graphically and stylistically in Bachelardian symbolic constructions—was tied to a sense of "futurity" and an ideological proscription of the existence of immovable totalities. His

rejection of hegemonic, all-encompassing, binding tenets, which today we would term Postmodern, anticipated Lyotard's war against totality and the defense of the ad hoc, the contextual, the plural. More than other writers of the early Modernist period—1875 to 1918—he understood, on a very conscious level, the metamorphic nature of existence, and the challenges presented by a new set of social and historical circumstances that, in his view, demanded fresh, open-ended ideas and a corresponding literary style capable of refracting social and cultural shifts. "The literature of our times—he wrote in 1883—is inapt because it is not the expression of our times....We need to give new blood to literature."[7] And this is precisely what he and the Mexican, Manuel Gutiérrez Nájera, the initiators of literary Modernism, proposed and achieved from 1875 forward, in a textual praxis that established some of the first codes of a bold, unorthodox style, loosely referred to as Spanish American Modernism.

In rethinking the beginnings of Modernism in unorthodox terms, that is, not merely as an Hispanic, but rather as a universal phenomenon, Clement Greenberg's theory that "Flaubert, Baudelaire, maybe Gautier, maybe other French writers show early signs of Modernist activity..." provides useful insights, especially, in relation to Martí's Modernism, his conclusion that "...as an unmistakable, full-fledged fact, as a phenomenon that declared itself to be radically new, Modernism arrived only in Manet's paintings of the early 1860s."[8]

Manet's role as the leader and standard bearer of nineteenth-century Impressionist painting attracted Martí's attention from the time he first saw exhibitions of Impressionist art in Paris in 1874. In Manet, whose work did not please the Cuban's tastes entirely, the young art critic found unsavory "crudezas"—bold, rugged visions of reality that at times seemed to him to border on the naturalistic.[9] However, he also perceived in his canvases qualities of innovation, daring, explosion, rapidity, and prophecy—stylistic practices that mirrored some of his own sense of the requisites of the subjective personal style demanded by a new age and its rapidly evolving social and cultural constructions. And though he may not have always felt comfortable with the experimentations of Manet or other modern French artists, he respected

them and lauded their creations, productions, as he put it, of an age "without altars."[10] From their art and from his own visionary experiences, he ultimately formulated an aesthetic theory, applicable to modern writing, particularly his own, which he expressed in symbols that resonate with the more evident, surface embodiments of Modernist style:

> Every individual [he wrote of the Impressionists] carries within the duty of adding, taming and revealing. Lives that are employed in the comfortable repetition of already discovered truths are culpable lives. Young artists find in the world a painting of *silk*, and with the grandiose arrogance of students they seek to be *artisans of earth and sun*. Lucifer has seated himself before the easel, and in his magnificent chimera of vengeance he wishes to cover the canvas with the blue heaven from which he was expelled, seated like a prisoner on his mount. [emphasis added][11]

The fundamental concept of opposition to hegemony is embodied in the luciferian symbolization used here and elsewhere in Martí's writing to express the breaking down of barriers and the falling away from tradition. The attraction of the Impressionists lay not merely in their break with academic painting, but with their search for originality via an identification with nature—the artisans of earth and sun whom Martí equated with Impressionism—and the fact that their art was both revolutionary and devolutionary. In Manet, Martí discovered a link with the past, with the art of Goya, and this nexus was fundamental to his abiding belief that painters and writers when reaching for new frontiers never break entirely with tradition; instead they reinvent or resemanticize it. Hence it is not surprising that in developing a new style of writing prose and poetry Martí was moved and influenced by the classical writers of Spain, especially Cervantes, Santa Teresa, San Juan de la Cruz, Quevedo, and Gracián. Other Modernists, most of whom preferred French models, followed Martí's lead in recasting the past. Rubén Darío, whose revolutionary

volume of verse, *Cantos de vida y esperanza*, has been remembered in recent centennial celebrations, spoke in a similar vein of his "recreaciones arqueológicas," his modern renderings of echoes from the past that he found indispensable in creating a modern discourse, or, as he termed it, in undertaking the task of Modernity's reform ("la obra de reforma y de modernidad").

Modernists and moderns expanded the horizons of their art by ransacking the storehouse of the past. In an 1882 piece on Oscar Wilde, Martí defended the need for broadening horizons and for expanding the confines of Hispanic culture. After all, he noted, "those of us who speak Spanish, live imbued with Horace and Vergil, and it seems that the frontiers of our spirit are those of our language."[12] In defending the reading of other literatures, he validated the role of the past in the present, yet at the same time he demanded writers seek renewal not merely by revisiting tradition but through contact with contemporary culture. "The borderline work of culture" was for Martí in the nineteenth century as for Homi Bhabha in the twentieth, "an encounter with 'newness' that is not conceived exclusively as part of the continuum of past and present." It creates a sense of the new as an insurgent act of cultural translation. Such art does not merely recall the past as social cause or aesthetic precedent; it renews the past, refiguring it as a content 'in-between' space, that innovates and interrupts the performance of the present."[13]

In explicating the need for expansive rather than compressed critical constructions, and in underscoring the "futurity" of Martí's formulations, it was never our intention to suggest their total absence from critical discourse until recent years. The fact is, as Ricardo Gullón documented so well in 1980 in *El modernismo visto por los modernistas* (Modernism viewed by Modernists), Hispanic criticism was not entirely remiss in the development of a rationalized conception of the nature and limits of Modernism. Federico de Onís and Juan Ramón Jiménez are two notable examples of critics who as early as the 1930s expressed unorthodox notions that have been validated by contemporary scholars. In the 1930s, few scholars took their ideas into much account; indeed it was not until some fifteen years ago when Hispanic critics began to reexamine Modernist literary texts with the tools of stylistic

theory that a revisionist historiography developed with respect to the nature and chronology of Hispanic Modernism. In terms of the revisioning we have suggested, what distinguished Onís' and Juan Ramón's conception of Modernism were the ample parameters of their vision—that is, a Modernism perceived as the outgrowth of a social and cultural upheaval and comparable to that of the Renaissance, in response to a crisis, universal in scope, that in turn generated a new set of literary, social, and spiritual circumstances and practices. Modernism, wrote Onís in 1934,

> is the Hispanic form of the universal crisis of the spirit and letters, which about 1885 initiated the dissolution of the nineteenth century, and which manifested itself in art, science, religion, politics and gradually in all the other aspects of life, with all the characteristics, therefore, of a deep historical change whose process continues today.[14]

Martí's theory of Modernism mirrors many of Onís's assumptions and is neither systemic nor organic. He was primarily a poet of existence rather than of essences. His discourse contributed to the inscription of the "master narrative" of a fundamentally anti-essentialist way of organizing the world, a "heteroglotic construct of a collective subject and its new national identities."[15] He witnessed the modernization of Western social and economic systems, and he concerned himself with the construction of self in relation to the evolution of these systems. Much of what he tells us with regard to Modernism and Modernity—both the *bourgeois* and *aesthetic* paradigms, to use Calinescu's terms—is the product of his astonishingly perceptive analyses of the social and cultural events of contemporary Europe, Latin America, and the United States. But in representing the cultural and societal other, his unwavering central concern was the modernization of "Our America"—Latin America. The scope of his writing and the uncanny clarity of his vision allowed him to grasp what escaped others. And toward the end of his troubled existence, looking back over almost twenty years of modernization, two

years prior to his death in 1895, he was gratified to see that a new literature had taken root in Latin America—the literature of Modernism whose origins Onís linked to Martí's first volume of verse, *Ismaelillo*, published in 1882. In a necrology on Julián del Casal (1863-1893), Martí confirms that in Latin America new writers were springing up everywhere and demanding substance in prose and what he described as "condition" in verse; in the same breath, he added that they also sought work and reality in politics and literature. The social and the literary aspects so conjoined are a constant in Martí's theoretical statements on the rise of the Modern Age and the structure of Modernist culture. In this same short essay on Casal, he made reference to the generation of innovative writers whose vision of Spanish American Modernism matched his:

> Pomp has worn thin as has empty and rudimentary politics, and that false strength of letters that recalls the stray dogs of Cervantes' madman. This literary generation in America is like a family that began by searching for the derivative, and has now acquired a flowing and concise elegance in an artistic and sincere expression, brief and sculptured, of personal sentiment and direct Creole wisdom. Verse for these workers must resound and take flight. Verse, the child of emotion, must be delicate and profound like the note of a harp. One should not express what is rare but the rare instant of noble and gracious emotion.[16]

As we reread Martí's texts in the light of our contemporary culture—many of whose complications Martí prophesied in his essays on the United States—and as we attempt to grant to his abundant, disparate prose and poetry a sense of system, we are struck by the "eruption" of a discourse on the construction of self, of the artist as artisan or worker, and the nexus he established between self and nation. Cintio Vitier has drawn our attention to the significance of the eruptions of Martí's discourse, a perception on his part that captures the sense of

rapid, unexpected change and evolution that Martí associated with the modern world, whose codes of development are refracted in his aesthetic theory and Modernist style of nervous, apotegmic prose and fragmented vision.

The paradigm for the narration of the modern world is derived largely from the inscription in his texts of U.S. culture in the 1880s. It can be said that the formulation of Martí's Modernism is embedded in a performative discursive act, a representation "that moves between cultural formations and social processes...."[17] In short, his theory is tied to icons of his discourse whose movements embrace the concepts of nation, its multiple, polymorphic narrations, and the marginalized role of the social subject in modern society. Narration and nation are not necessarily related concepts. But in Martí's texts they constitute a dynamic construction resulting from a discursive symbiosis whose ideological center discloses the conflicts of bourgeois modernity and a proposed countermodernity in relation to nationhood and cultural identity. There is in his discourse a "doubleness of writing," an open-endedness, tied to the refraction of the processes of the formation of the modern nation suggested by the U.S. model that the Cuban Modernist contrasts—sometimes negatively, other times, positively—with the social, cultural, and moral dynamics of "los países azules" ["the blue countries"], a chromatically charged metaphor describing the less-developed Latin American societies of his age. His narrations of these social and cultural complexities constituted a constant ideological strategy that produced a spatial or geographic dismemberment that decentered and, at the same time, enlarged the focus of his writing. And, finally, it created a disjunctive vision that prefigured postmodern narrations and eschewed systematic formulation while mapping the cardinal social and literary coordinates of Modernist art.

Embedded in his narrations of the process of modernization is an internalized nature, linked to a centripetal discursive movement in Martí's Modernity, a stylistic and ideological practice whose imaginary he examines in its philosophic and aesthetic parameters in his "Prologue to the Poem About Niagara" in 1882, as well as in his numerous essays on U.S. culture and society. Nature is both socialized and subjectivized.

To initiate the process of legitimating the modern condition of difference, a desacralized nature was displaced "into collective transformation and emancipatory energies of self."[15] Nature for Martí and the Spanish American Modernists, maintains Zavala, was "rematerialized in arguments against the system of selfishness and the expansionist power games of capitalism. In this enclave, nature becomes both the concrete material landscape and a poetic symbol in the production of new imagery."[19]

Martí's Modernist narrations perceive the relationships of self, society, and culture. Hence the significance of his social commentary, which in a dialogical operation conditions his aesthetic discourse. The social text and the literary text are tied to each other, and through a process of cross-fertilization they contribute to the negation of exploitation and defend the sovereignty of the subject. In this unified social and aesthetic inscription, Martí's texts acquire an emancipatory dimension, and the traditional schism of the social and literary becomes meaningless. His social texts are just as much a part of Modernist writing as his essays on art and literature or the poems of *Versos libres*, which contain self-reflexive formulations of Modernist theory, with an embedded critical discourse that rejects the derivative excesses of early Hispanic Modernist style. In one such poem, "Mi poética" ["My poetics"], an anti-Modernist dialogue is developed that parallels that of Silva's "Sinfonía color de fresa con leche" ["A symphony, the color of strawberry with cream"]. In a lengthy exposition, the poet/narrator auto-censures his foolish attempt at adorning his verses with pearls, sapphires, and onyx—Modernist imagery of Parnassian origin—to create a work of dazzling craftsmanship that, he realizes, lacks the authentic sense of invention generated by an internalized nature and the subject's surrender to "automatic writing."

Formulating a theory of Modernism not only fuses social and aesthetic projects, but also dovetails the narration of nation and culture. In an essay from October 15, 1886, for example, the central theme revolves around a textualization of the degenerate life of an American city, a contrast of the extremes of wealth and poverty, and a sense of horror at the deformed and sickly children of urban factory workers.[20] This

essay atomizes the narrative universe and validates Zavala's recent suggestion that Modernist culture demythifies traditional perceptions of the victimized social subject, with the desire of establishing new structures that mark and legitimate the differences between past situations and the projected possibilities of a transformed future. Modern subjectivity, notes Zavala, "seeks to master both inner and outer nature, a mastery which is not a repetition of the traditional liberal vision of individual freedom."[21] Freedom of the individual and freedom of the word are intertwined entities. In writing, internal and external worlds are (re)visualized and (re)contextualized in a style that parallels the syncopated rhythm of economic modernity, generating a new discourse, one that has been tagged Modernist by virtue of its images, its punctuation, its chromatic effects, its rhythm.

The sense of an ending referred to earlier is constantly drawn to our attention in luciferian portraits of societal collapse—the crisis of modernization—which prompts the Cuban to project a restructuring of the universe, an operation characteristic not merely of Martí's discourse but also of other Modernists who follow him. Whereas perceptions of social change are embedded in their writing, they are intuited rather than rationalized and cast in less profound, less probing enunciations of the contradictions, anxieties, and complexities of the Modern Age. In contrast, Martí's remarks are more poignant, his focus sharper, his grasp of the emergence of a new culture astonishingly prophetic. In one of his notebooks he wrote, "The old world has crumbled, and it's natural that the materials of the one that will replace it be gathered stone by stone."[22] And, although he speaks in the same breath with the assurance of a resplendent new world that will rise, phoenix-like, to replace the old order, he is aware his narration of the future is flawed by human doubt about the construction of what he terms "the new universal factory" ["la nueva fábrica del mundo"].[23]

At times, this Modernist's anxieties reach fever pitch; he is terrified by the scenes of social regeneration he contemplates. In his poem, "Amor de ciudad grande" ["Urban Love"], for example, the narrator equates the urban experience of modernization with merrymaking and intense energy. The

metaphoric discourse of the text suggests the frenetic pace and ceaseless movement of modern life in the context of technological innovation. The machine is demonized in verses that might well have been written by Futurists or Surrealists, and, in fact, the verses anticipate some of the nightmarish poematic prose visions penned by Juan Ramón Jiménez in 1917 to describe the tumult and chaos of New York in "City Tunnel" ["Túnel ciudadano"].[24]

In Martí's poetry, the internalization of the world in symbolic and chromatic visions embraces aesthetic constants of prototypical Modernist style as early as 1882. This is the year that marks the publication of *Ismaelillo*, Martí's first book of collected poetry, which Onís, in his classic anthology of Spanish American poetry, described as a revolutionary volume that signaled radical departures in Latin American verse. It is a volume of internalized visions, of flight, fear, trembling, flickering anger, and tender filial outpourings. It is much more than the book of filial love that Darío found in its texts; its dedication sets the tone for what will be a major theme of Modernist writing: Dyonisian representations of a universal upheaval that clash with Apollinean constructs of a world at rest. And while some later Modernists embraced and preferred the performative Dyonisian discursive constructs that established the tormented patterns of Modernity, Martí was less accepting of the decentered universe of Modernist experience. His writing shows a moral and ideological divide, an aporia in his conceptualization of Modernism and Modernity. In the metamorphic, experimental aesthetic innovations of early Modernist style that Martí and Gutiérrez Nájera introduced, there is a discourse of intense metaphysical uneasiness over the ideological conflicts, the loss of traditional social and moral values, and the spiritual isolation writers, artists, and intellectuals associated with turn-of-the century culture. Martí linked the vicissitudes of late nineteenth-century metaphysical doubt with the evolution of bourgeois Modernity whose values he rejected, reinscribing in their place countermodernist codes of human dignity, honor, friendship, kinship, nationhood, cultural independence, and freedom. Although his enunciation of these values may appear to cast him in the role of a latter-day idealist or a Romantic visionary—and he was both—

his countercultural discourse constitutes a resemantization of past and present history that foreshadows fundamental philosophic concerns of the twentieth century. The "doubleness" of his portraits of the Modern Age—a reading of the past, an acute understanding of the present, and a sense of the future—had no rival among his contemporaries. No writer of Martí's time, Modernist or not, came close to understanding the philosophical and ideological shifts of aesthetic and economic Modernity. Martí cultivated what elsewhere has been termed a discourse of desire, an alternative view of Modernity that he distilled and cast in a counterhegemonic mold.[25] Its inscription, a Latin American antidote to the modernity he observed in the United States, is counterbalanced and conditioned by a value system in which optimism occupied a central place, in spite of the age of anxiety he chronicled in prose and verse. There was, he was convinced, a sublime internal demon in humankind that pushed it to pursue ideals—whether social or individual—incessantly.

Outlined up to this point in terms of ideology and art are cardinal ideas that appear as early as 1882 in Martí's writing. They are incorporated in a prologue that has attracted scant critical attention, written for an edition of Pérez Bonalde's poetry.[26] In this piece, modestly entitled "Prologue to the Poem About Niagara,"[27] revisionist readers find the first manifesto of Modernism and Modernity. Poets, Martí noted, can no longer be either epic or lyric; authentic poetry must be the product of internal visions, since the autonomy of individual existence is one of the only remaining stable elements of modern life. No one, he wrote, feels secure in his faith. Everyone is a soldier in an army on the march. These revolutionary notions of self and society reflect a Kirkegaardean preoccupation with existence while foreshadowing the philosophy of later existentialists. Metaphor prevails over metonymy in the search for expressing the ineffable. Transition and inconstancy are the keywords he identifies with Modernism. His synopsis of the metamorphic nature of existence defined his age:

> No work is permanent—he tells us—because the works of an age of readjustment and remodeling—that is to say, the Age of Modernism—

> are by their very nature mutable and movable; there are no constant paths. The new altars, broad and open like trees, are barely in view. From every direction the mind is besieged by diverse ideas—and the ideas are like polyps, and like the light of stars and the waves of the sea. We incessantly yearn to learn of something that will confirm our beliefs, or we are afraid of finding out something that will change our current beliefs. The elaboration of the new social order makes the battle for personal existence insecure....[28]

In one of his darker moments he characterized his age as one of vague hope, secret vision, intranquility, and insecurity. He never used the term Modernism. Instead he spoke of a modern age, of modern man, or of the evolution of modern art and literature. In a critical discourse rich in metaphor, he defended the writing of verse that was sonorous, that is, musical, chromatic, and unfettered by over-correction. Verses, he said, should be like pearls, not like roses with hundreds of petals, more like the jasmine of Malabar full of aromas. Writers should prune their poetic language so that the wind can pass through its branches and promote the growth of better fruit. Martí was unalterably opposed to the over-decoration of followers of the Parnassian aesthetic, and he condemned the wholesale incorporation of foreign words into literary Spanish but applauded the renovation of literary language to which he contributed neologisms and striking metaphors. In line with his sense of the self, the autonomy of the individual, and the fragmentary nature of the universe, he proscribed, but never prescribed.

His Modernist discourse springs from the arrhythmia and disfunctions of an age of rapid change and grows out of his realization that art must be revolutionary and emancipatory. Rama refuted Modernism's genesis in crisis. Instead, he proposed viewing its discourse as the product of a vigorous maturation of Latin American letters.[29] In his brief existence, Martí saw the beginnings of the continent's incipient literary maturity. But as a writer and social revolutionary, who

appeared early in the Modernist evolutionary process, his view of Modernist art is focused on the unhinging of traditional culture. His anticolonial, counterhegemonic imaginary inscribed negation in his discourse in the face of economic constructs, moral codes, and scientific and technological advances, which, in his view, vitiated human spirit or threatened to undermine political independence or freedom of choice. His most persistent fear, of course, was that Cuba and Puerto Rico would remain colonies. In short, like twentieth-century moderns, Martí found himself caught in a web: on the one hand he espoused change and promoted the modernization of Latin American societies, yet, on the other, he rejected the political and economic consequences he feared social and economic modernization might bring in its wake. His writing is equally divided and sometimes ambivalent; it evidences this paradox of values, the conundrum of a Modernist whose counterculturism cast him on occasion in the anomalous role of an anti-Modernist.

Notes

[1]See Aníbal González's remarks on this issue, bolstered by the authority of Braudel, Foucalt, White, and Said, with reference to Spanish American Romanticism. "El romanticismo hispánico: alteridad y asimilación," *Revista de Estudios Hispânicos* XXIV (May 1990), 1-2.

[2]Claudio Guillén, *Literature as System. Essays Toward the Theory of Literary History* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1971): 422-23.

[3]Richard Terdiman, *Discourse and Counterdiscourse* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1985): 18.

[4]Clement Greenberg considers Modernist art to be more devolutionary than evolutionary or revolutionary. "Beginnings of Modernism," *Modernism; Challenges and Perspectives*, edited by Monique Chefdor, Ricardo Quiñones, and Albert Wachtel (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1986): 22.

[5]Cintio Vitier's view, for example, is that "en toda su obra [la de Martí] hallamos esa continua referencia a un momento superior y sintetizador todavía no alcanzada por la historia humana...." "Martí futuro," *Temas martianos* (with Fina García Marruz) (Havana: Biblioteca Nacional, 1969): 124.

[6]*Ibid*., 122.

[7]José Martí, *Obras*, Volume 22 (Havana: Trópico, 1936-1953): 125. All translations of Martí's texts are mine.

[8]Greenberg, "Beginnings of Modernism," 19.

[9]José Martí, *Obras completas,* Volume 13 (Havana: Editorial Nacional, 1963-1973): 303.

[10]*Ibid*., Volume 19, 305.

[11]*Ibid*., 303-04.

[12]*Ibid*., Volume 15, 361.

[13]Homi K. Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* (London: Routledge, 1994): 7.

[14]Federico de Onís, *Antología de la poesía española e hispanoamericana (1882-1932),* Reprint edition (New York: Las Américas Publishing Company, 1961): xv.

[15]Iris M. Zavala, *Colonialism and Culture; Hispanic Modernisms and the Social Imaginary* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1992): 9.

[16]Martí, *Obras completas*, Volume 5, 222.

[17]Bhabha, *The Location of Culture*, 293.

[18]Zavala, *Colonialism and Culture*, 41.

[19]*Ibid*.

[20]José Martí, *Nuevas cartas de Nueva York*, edited by Ernesto Mejía Sánchez (Mexico City: Siglo Veintiuno, 1980): 64.

[21]Zavala, *Colonialism and Culture*, 41.

[22]*Ibid*.

[23]Manuel Pedro Gónzalez and Ivan A. Schulman, *Esquema ideològico de Josè Martí* (Mexico City: Cultura, 1961): 316.

[24]Juan Ramón Jiménez, *Diario de un poeta reciencasado* (Barcelona: Editiorial Labor: 1970).

[25]See Ivan A. Schulman, "José Martí y las estrategias del discurso (contra)moderno," *Soy el amor: soy el verso; Josè Martí, créateur* (Paris: Ecole Normale Supérieure, 1995): 118.

[26]With the notable exceptions of Evelyn Picon Garfield and Ivan A. Schulman, *"Las entrañas del vacío": ensayos sobre la modernidad hispanoamericana* (Mexico City: Cuadernos Americanos, 1984); and José Olivio Jiménez, *La raíz y el ala; aproximaciones críticas a la obra literaria de Josè Martí* (Valencia: Pre-Textos, 1993).

[27]In our discussion of Martí's essay we paraphrase his ideas in English translation. For the original text in Spanish see Martí, *Obras completas*, Volume 7, 223-38.

[28]*Ibid*., 225.

[29]Angel Rama, "Prólogo:" or "La modernización literaria latinoamericana (1870-1910)," *Clásicos hispanoamericanos* (Barcelona: Círculo de Lectores, 1983): 23.

Unamuno and St. José Martí, the Good

Nelson R. Orringer

José Martí, héroe y mártir de la emancipación cubana, ha servido a Unamuno de modelo para el carácter del protagonista de San Manuel Bueno, mártir. La presencia martiana en la novela de 1930 ha pasado inadvertida, mientras que la crítica ha enfocado la influencia del Martí de Versos libres *en* El Cristo de Velázquez *de Unamuno. El estudio presente define lo que entiende Unamuno por mártir, resume y sintetiza sus dos artículos de 1919 sobre Martí titulados "Cartas de poeta" y "Sobre el estilo de José Martí," y muestra el probable impacto de la correspondencia personal de Martí en la caracterización de Don Manuel Bueno. Unamuno, orientado por Kierkegaard, concibe el mártir en general como un testigo de una visión divina tan temible que mata. En Kierkegaard, la finitud humana frente a lo divino puede definirse como el pecado; pero en Unamuno, es definible como la duda de la inmortalidad. El José Martí de Unamuno y el personaje Don Manuel Bueno, escépticos uno y otro, dependen de sus sendos pueblos para inmortalizarse. Los dos artículos de 1919 sobre Martí espigan citas de sus cartas principalmente para insinuar el sentimiento trágico de la vida de su autor. No pocas de estas citas y otras tomadas de las cartas citadas parecen pasar a* San Manuel Bueno, mártir, *donde afectan a las relaciones del personajes principal tanto con su parroquia como consigo mismo en su esfuerzo por dar un sentido creador a su afán de aniquilarse.*

Victor Ouimette, author of *Reason Aflame: Unamuno and the Heroic Will*, defined Don Manuel Bueno as Unamuno's hero of "creative doubt." Unwilling to seek fame to immortalize himself, the doubting priest, according to Ouimette,[1] depended on his community for spiritual support: "Debo vivir para mi

pueblo, morir para mi pueblo. ¿Cómo voy a salvar mi alma si no salvo la de mi pueblo?" [I should live for my people, die for my people. How am I going to save my soul if I don't save my people's [soul]?][2] In this respect, as well as in many others, he greatly resembled José Martí, who wrote, "Nada es un hombre en sí, y lo que es, lo pone en él su pueblo."[A man is nothing in himself, and what he is, his people puts in him.][3] The purpose of this study is to show that the apostle of Cuban freedom served as a major model for the protagonist of *San Manuel Bueno, mártir*.

Unamuno regarded Martí as a modern martyr. Once he quoted from Martí's letter of October 9, 1885 to J. A. Lucena: "Cada cubano que muere es un santo más; y cada cubano que vive debe ser un templo donde honrarlo; así mi corazón lleno de estas memorias, de manera que fuera de ellas no vive, y muere de ellas."["Each Cuban who dies is one more saint; and each Cuban who lives should be a temple devoted to him; so my heart is full of these memories to such an extent, that it can't live without them, and dies because of them."][4]

In Unamuno's personal library are fifteen volumes of writings by Martí in all the genres he cultivated, including lyric poetry and prose, children's literature, political articles, speeches, and private correspondence. These works were published between 1902 and 1930. One anthology of verse, *Poesías de José Martí* [*José Martí's Poetry*], published in Havana in 1928, two years before Unamuno wrote *San Manuel Bueno, mártir*, evinces much usage by him and contains numerous marginal markings.[5] Yet Martí's presence in Unamuno's best-loved novella has escaped the notice of the critics, who, while recognizing in Martí "un profundo sentido trágico, apenas atenuado por el fervor y la ternura con que se dio a su misión redentora,"[6] have concentrated exclusively on the impact of Martí's anthology *Versos libres* [*Free Verses*] upon Unamuno's great poem *El Cristo de Velázquez* [*The Christ of Velázquez*].[7]

On the hundredth anniversary of Martí's death in 1895, let me briefly define what Unamuno means by martyrdom, summarize the most salient ideas of his two articles of 1919, "Cartas de poeta" ["A Poet's Letters"] and "Sobre el estilo de José Martí" ["On José Martí's Style"], and finally show the

probable influence of the Cuban martyr's correspondence on *San Manuel Bueno, mârtir*.

Unamuno, a Greek philologist, traced the etymology of the word "martyr" to the Greek *μαρτυρ*, "witness."[8] Martyr denotes in Unamuno the witness to a truth so terrible that it kills. The etymon harks back to Søren Kierkegaard's doctrine of God as an Absolute, irreducible to an object for the finite and relative human being. In His loftiness, sovereignty, majesty, omnipotence, eternity, omniscience, and omnipresence, God is so awesome, that in His presence the human feels fear and trembling. Hence, Kierkegaard delighted in pointing out that for the ancient Jews whoever sees God must surely die.[9] For the Danish philosopher the finiteness of humans is sin; whereas for Unamuno what accounts for human limitations is doubt in immortality. Unamuno first read Kierkegaard in 1901.[10] Afterwards, when absorbing Kierkegaard into his own writings, he always replaced Kierkegaard's concern with redemption from sin, or soteriology, with his own problematics of salvation after death, or eschatology.[11] The greater the doubt in immortality to be overcome, the more the doubter witnesses the terrible truth, becomes a martyr, and must struggle to achieve life eternal through hard-won faith. Hence, in *San Manuel Bueno, mártir*, the priest as protagonist, a nonbeliever in immortality who nonetheless preaches it, confesses to his most sophisticated followers,

> Como Moisés, he conocido al Señor, nuestro supremo ensueño, cara y cara, y ya sabes que dice la Escritura que el que le ve la cara a Dios, que el que le ve al sueño los ojos de la cara con que nos mira, se muere sin remedio y para siempre. Que no le vea, pues, la cara a Dios este nuestro pueblo mientras viva, que después de muerto ya no hay cuidado, pues no verá nada.[12]
>
> [Like Moses, I have met the Lord face to face, and you know that the Scriptures say that whoever sees the face of God, our supreme

> daydream, whoever sees in the dream the eyes of that face looking out at us, shall surely die forever. Let our people never see God's face as long as it lives, since after death there's no problem, as it won't see anything.]

Against this disheartening vision, the parish priest must struggle to maintain the unquestioning faith of his flock in salvation. Goodness or saintliness, therefore, signifies for Unamuno whatever promotes personal immortality; evil or perversity, whatever hinders it.

Unamuno clearly admired the goodness of José Martí as a promoter of the immortality of the Cuban people, whatever the pain it caused him personally. Obsessed with immortality, Unamuno took special note of Martí's phrase, "Se juega con la sangre del país a la carta de la inmortalidad" ["You gamble for immortality with the blood of your country"]. [13] Yet Unamuno found Martí's most noteworthy writing in his private correspondence, "verdaderas cartas brotadas espontánea e improvisadamente del corazón y escritas al correr de una vida vertiginosa" ["true letters which sprang from the heart on their own and were written while a life sped on its breakneck course"]. These letters seemed to Unamuno to contain spontaneous poetry, dictated to Martí by his "poetic genius."[14] Of Martí's epistolary style, the self-monologuing Don Miguel wrote that "sus palabras parecen creaciones, actos. Están, desde luego, escritas en una lengua convencional, pero de uno que habla consigo mismo, son de estilo de monólogo ardoroso" ["his words seem to be creations, acts. Of course they are written in a conventional language, but like one used for talking to oneself, as in a heartfelt monologue"].[15] Writing seems to Unamuno to harm both the verses and the letters of Martí. In his letter of July 28, 1882 to Enrique José Varona, concerning the poetry of his anthology *Versos sencillos*, Martí has described his poems as a "tropel de mariposas" ["swarm of butterflies"] rushing around his brow in the days he composed them, and as a "visita de rayos de sol" ["visit from sunbeams"].[16] Yet when he read them set down on paper, he felt that the light had gone out of them.

In his July 1919 essay on Martí, Unamuno prepared what he called a "pequeña antología de frases de Martí sacadas de sus cartas." Some phrases contain merely a memorable image, but others reflect Martí's tragic sense of life in Unamuno's rigorous sense of the word: individual obsession with immortality, producing a clash between faith and reason, a struggle to reach truth through suprarational means, an intuition of truth as God's need of His worshippers, with charity defined as sympathy for self, for other creatures, and for the Creator, and with problematic hope in the salvation of all humankind. Such salvation is to be deserved day by day, according to Unamuno, in a life of pessimistic self-sacrifice.[17] Nothing exemplified this existence better than Martí's tragic urgency, reflected in the phrase quoted by Unamuno,[18] "Quisiera relámpagos a mi lado" ["I would like lightening bolts by my side"].[19] Because service to his country defined his life, his letters, to use one of his phrases as Unamuno does, were full of root ["llena[s] de raíz"] with very little foliage.[20]

It impressed Unamuno that Martí's spirit of self-sacrifice penetrated to the depths of his being: "Y aunque se echen a comerme las entrañas, yo las sacaré triunfantes en el puño, en el puño. Ya sabe usted cuáles son mis entrañas: la libertad de nuestro país" ["And even if they try to eat my guts, I will win out by grabbing my innards in my fist, in my fist. You know what my innards are: the liberty of my country"].[21] In a letter to Serafín Bello quoted by Unamuno,[22] Martí urged, "Sáquese una página del corazón. Demos de nuestra sangre, si sirve de riego" ["Take a page out of your heart. Let us donate our blood if it irrigates the soil"].[23] Not only did Martí seem to Unamuno to be an integral patriot, but also, like Unamuno, his desire to immortalize his nation with his reason often went beyond and above reason itself. One of the best stated thoughts that Unamuno has ever read appears in one of the quixotic Martí's personal letters: "Pondré actividad de loco en el empleo de mi razón" ["I will act like crazy to use my reason"].[24] Yet Martí has recognized, with Unamuno, the tragedy of confronting truth, particularly the truth of one's own limitation. Martí once wrote that being a man "es, en la tierra, dificílisimo y pocas veces lograda carrera" ["is a very difficult career, seldom

successful on this earth"].[25] It follows that "sólo desdeña a los demás quien en el conocimiento de sí halla razón para desdeñarse a sí propio" ["scoffers at others are only those who know themselves well enough to find a reason to scoff at themselves"].[26] Recognizing his own limitations, like the man of flesh and blood in Unamuno's *Del sentimiento trágico de la vida* [*The Tragic Sense of Life*], Martí yearned to love and to be loved. Unamuno has noticed how often in Martí's intimate correspondence to his fellow Cuban patriots phrases appear like, "Quiérame" ["Love me"];[27] "gozo en quererlo [a usted]" [I take pleasure in loving you"];[28] "es un placer amar" ["it is delightful to love"];[29] "no cese de querer a su amigo J. Martí" ["never stop loving your friend J. Martí"].[30] Unamuno saw Martí, as he saw himself, basically as a pessimist. Hence Unamuno has quoted Martí's hopeless statement, "Cuando se está dispuesto a morir se piensa poco en la muerte, ni en la propia ni en la ajena" ["When you are willing to die, you think little about death, whether yours or someone else's"].[31] On the other hand, Unamuno dared hope, as did Martí, in the Cuban patriot's words, that "el infierno tiene derecho al cielo y los criminales a la redención" ["hell has the right to heaven, and criminals the right to redemption"].[32] In this desperate hope, Martí lived, as Unamuno tried to do, making each of his acts a prayer for immortality. Shortly before his death, Martí wrote to his mother a famous statement quoted by Unamuno, "¿Por qué nací de usted con una vida que ama el sacrificio?" ["Why did you give birth to me so I could live to love self-sacrifice?"] For this reason, Martí asked his mother, "Ahora bendígame y crea que jamás saldrá de mi corazón obra sin piedad y sin limpieza" ["Now give me your blessing and be assured that my heart will never let me act without piety and clean intention"].[33] Unamuno finds that such a deed was Martí's own death. In Unamuno's opinion, he died a martyr's death, in other words, the death of a "testigo" ["witness"]. "Testigo, entre otras cosas, de la torpeza de los que le mataron cuando iba a hacer obra de paz, acaso a acabar la guerra como debió haberse acabado" ["Witness, among other things, to the turpitude of those who killed him when he was about to perform an act of peace, perhaps to end the war as it should have been ended"].[34]

Given the tragic sense of life governing Unamuno's choice of quotations from Martí, Unamuno's tragic Martí may have helped inspire the conception of Unamuno's best-loved fictional character, the unbelieving priest-protagonist of *San Manuel Bueno, mârtir*. Both heroes took as their points of departure their intimate experiences of living as spiritually agonizing, and both expressed this pain in an aphoristic style, as if the agony abbreviated the complete expression, or at least robbed the time for univalent exposition. Hence Martí: "Sufrir es más que gozar: es verdaderamente vivir" ["To suffer is to go beyond enjoying: it is living to the utmost"];[35] and Manuel Bueno, whose religion is "consolarme en consolar a los demás, aunque el consuelo que les doy no sea el mío" ["to console myself by consoling others, although the consolation I give them may not be mine"].[36] Just as Unamuno compiled a list of Martí's aphorisms, so we would find it easy to compose one comprised of Manuel Bueno's: "Yo no puedo perder a mi pueblo para ganarme el alma;" "Hay que vivir. Y hay que dar vida;" "El rico tiene que resignarse a su riqueza, y a la vida, y también el pobre tiene que tener caridad para con el rico;" "Pensar ocioso es pensar para no hacer nada o pensar demasiado en lo que se ha hecho y no en lo que hay que hacer. A lo hecho pecho, y a otra cosas, que no hay peor que remordimiento sin enmienda" ["I can't lose my people and win my own soul;" "It is necessary to live, as well as to give life;" "The rich must resign themselves to their riches and to living, and the poor also need to be charitable with the rich;" "Idle thinking is thinking how to do nothing or thinking too much about what's been done and not what needs to be done. Let's get to work, since nothing hurts worse than endless remorse"].[37]

The flavor of folk wisdom in these aphoristic styles of expression reflects the closeness of their authors to the common folk. Martí's writings reflected his rootedness in his beloved Cuba; Manuel Bueno's physical appearance, with his height as impressive as the local mountain, his eyes as blue as the local lake, identifies him with the village parish for which he lives and dies.[38] Like Martí, he was a child of the provinces, of the countryside. Moreover, in a letter of late 1893 to General Antonio Maceo, Martí apologized for not writing, in terms

proclaiming his own priesthood in the Cuban cause: “Vd. debe ver de allá mi agonía, mi responsabilidad, la imposibilidad absoluta de valerse de medianeros, *la cura de almas incesante* que permitió la acumulación de estas fuerzas” [“You over there should see my agony, my responsibility, the absolute impossibility of resorting to third persons, *the endless curing of souls* that enabled me to gather this strength”] (my emphasis). Martí added that he did not labor for fame, nor “por bien alguno de esta vida triste, que no tiene para mí satisfacción mayor que el salir de ella: trabajo para poner en vías de felicidad a los hombres que hoy viven sin ella” [“for any advantage in my miserable existence, that holds no greater satisfaction for me than taking leave of it: I labor to put on the road to happiness those presently living without it”].[39]

Likewise, Manuel Bueno was “siempre ocupado, y no pocas veces en inventar ocupaciones. Escribía muy poco para sí” [“always busy, and often engaged in making things to do. He wrote very little for himself”].[40] To his disciple Lázaro, he confessed his temptation to commit suicide in terms faintly reminiscent of Martí’s: “¡Mi vida, Lázaro, es una especie de suicidio continuo, un combate contra el suicidio, que es igual; pero que vivan ellos, que vivan los nuestros!” [“My life, Lázaro, is a kind of endless suicide, a battle against suicide, which is the same thing; but let them, let our people, keep living!”][41] Also like Martí, he was sacrificing himself for the happiness of his parishioners: “Yo estoy para hacer vivir a las almas de mis feligreses, para hacerles felices, para hacerles que se sueñen inmortales y no para matarles” [“I am here to give life to the souls of my parishioners, to make them dream of immortal life, not to kill them”].[42] Martí wrote the aphorism, “La vida es una prueba: ¡la muerte es un derecho!” [“Life is a test; death is a right!”][43] In short, Sumner Greenfield correctly defined *San Manuel Bueno, mârtir* as the story of how a death-wish acquires a life-promoting direction;[44] and now we can perceive how much Martí may have contributed to that vision.

It is also important to look at the specifics of Martí’s likenesses with his fictional counterpart, both in the practical, ethical sphere, and in deep relationships of the ego to itself. Both were men of deeds before all, but also gifted with words. Unamuno’s Martí was “un hombre de acción inmediata como

todo verdadero poeta es" ["a man of immediate action like any true poet"].[45] Of her parish priest, Don Manuel Bueno, the narrator Ángela said, "Su vida era activa y no contemplativa, huyendo cuanto podía de no tener nada que hacer" ["His life was active, not contemplative, and he avoided whenever possible having nothing to do"].[46] Even the words of both heroes, the real and the fictional one, contain the substance of acts. On July 20, 1882, Martí wrote to General Máximo Gómez of the "aborrecimiento en que tengo las palabras que no van acompañadas de actos" ["abhorrence I hold of words without deeds"].[47] In his prologue to Rafael de Castro Palomino's book *Cuentos de hoy y mañana*, Martí asserted, "En toda palabra, ha de ir envuelto un acto. La palabra es una coqueta abominable, cuando no se pone al servicio del honor y del amor" ["Into every word an act must get wrapped. Words are hateful flirts when not placed at the service of honor and love"].[48] Of Martí himself Unamuno has remarked, "Sus palabras parecen creaciones, actos" ["His words seem to be creations, acts"].[49] The narrator Ángela Carballino described Manuel Bueno, "¡Qué cosas nos decía! Eran cosas, no palabras" ["What things he used to tell us! They were things, not words"].[50] In sum, what he wrote had such substance that it virtually brought its referents into being, the way the divine Logos in the act of utterance brought forth new creatures. Yet both Martí and Manuel Bueno recognized, as martyrs, that the truth can kill. To be sure, Unamuno's Martí said, "En la verdad...hay que entrar con la camisa al codo, como entra en la res el carnicero" ["You have to get into the truth with your shirt sleeves rolled up, the way a butcher gets into the steer"].[51] Manuel Bueno once said to Angela's brother Lázaro, "La verdad, Lázaro, es acaso algo terrible, algo intolerable, algo mortal; la gente sencilla no podría vivir con ella" ["The truth, Lázaro, is something fearsome, insufferable, lethal; simple folk couldn't abide it"].[52]

For this reason, Manuel Bueno was a pious hypocrite: not believing in the existence of God or of the afterlife, he nonetheless preached both doctrines to his villagers for their consolation, and his bad conscience defined his martyrdom. Perceiving, like José Martí, the inevitable presence of fictionality in his life, he experienced, like Martí, the sensation of metatheater,

the sudden awareness of having performed virtually a literary role. To General Antonio Maceo, Martí wrote on April 20, 1894, in a moment of tension between them, that he considered himself the general's brother. He reminded Maceo that the latter's mother had caressed Martí like a son, and had even called him a son in public. Then Martí posed Maceo a painful question: "¿Soy yo un cómico abominable, que diga estas cosas en la hora de necesidad, y las diga sin sentido? ¿O es tal nuestra sociedad que estas cosas pueden decirse de comedia? Escribo con mi sangre y muero" ["Am I a bad comic actor to say these things in a time of urgency and to say them without meaning? Or is our society such that these things can be a laughing matter? I am writing with my blood and dying"].[53] Manuel Bueno also saw the potential of fiction to console in times of stress. He told the impressionable Angela not to read theology but fiction, especially the *Bertoldo*, a comic, eighteenth-century poem.[54] Likewise, the priest praised a clown for suppressing his own anguish about his dying wife to amuse the young with fictions. Manuel Bueno found him saintly because he labored not only to feed his own children, but also to give joy to the children of others. Then Manuel Bueno virtually played the clown by swallowing his own anguish and promising salvation for the clown and his deceased wife, a salvation that he himself considered a fiction.[55]

Like Martí, who expressed a clear wish to "consolar al triste" ["console the sad folks"],[56] Manuel Bueno desired only to console others, because like Unamuno's Martí, he yearned to love and be loved.[57] The narrator Ángela Carballino said of Manuel Bueno, "Por todos mostraba el mismo afecto" ["He showed the same affection toward all"] in his village.[58] In a letter quoted by Unamuno, Martí once wrote, "Dígame en seguida que me atiende y me quiere, aguardo con el corazón atravesado" ["Tell me right away you're listening to me and loving me: I'm waiting with my heart transfixed"].[59] Like Martí, who attributed to his own mother the loving sorrow of seeing him sacrifice his life,[60] Manuel Bueno bore an intense love for his mother, who once cried out to him, "¡Hijo mío!" ["My son!], in response to his anguished Holy Week sermon. According to the narrator, "creeríase que el grito maternal había brotado de la boca entreabierta de aquella Dolorosa—el

corazón traspasado por siete espadas—que había en una de las capillas del templo" ["one might have thought that the motherly scream had sprung from the half-opened lips of that mourning Virgin in one of the chapels, her heart transfixed with seven swords"].[61] Unamuno, as we know, defined love as compassion, and wrote that the male human being yearns to be loved, in other words, to arouse compassion, whereas the female of our species, ever motherly, yearns to give her love, her compassion, to the needful male.[62]

If Unamuno's Martí has both a yearning to love and one to be loved, then, like Manuel Bueno, he may well possess the androgynous wholeness of a Christ figure. Manuel Bueno was a "varón matriarcal" ["matriarchal male"], and like Christ and Martí before him, tenderly loved children.[63] Both Martí and Unamuno had lost children of their own. Hence Martí consciously sought consolation through friendships with the children of his friends. Of Pancho Gómez Toro, son of his friend Máximo Gómez, Martí once wrote that he won friends not only by virtue of his wandering father's personality, but also by himself, for his decorous reserve, his sympathy for the humble, and the adjustment of his thought to his words. "Y a mí me llena el corazón, porque es como si me hubieran devuelto el hijo que he perdido" ["And he makes my heart grow full, because it's as if the son I've lost had been returned to me"].[64] Analogously, Manuel Bueno carved balls out of wood for the boys of his parish and put together games for the small children. At one point, he took over the chore of a child, shivering with cold. He rescued a steer that had wandered into the hills, to the embarrassment of its owner, the child's father.[65]

Finally, carrying his almost maternal charity to an extreme, Don Manuel most often caressed and taught Blasillo, the village idiot, who learned to imitate his voice.[66] Both José Martí and Manuel Bueno, aware of their own imperfections, desired to cleanse their own souls and to promote spiritual purity in others, the way that a mother bathes her children. Recall Unamuno's novella *La tía Tula* [*Aunt Gert*], whose protagonist, with her vocation for motherhood, had a morbid passion for purity, out of which came her "culto místico a la limpieza" ["mystical cult of cleanliness"].[67] Martí wrote to his own mother that he would never perform any deed lacking

purity and piety. Manuel Bueno lived concerned "que anduviesen todos limpios. Si alguno llevaba un roto en su vestidura, le decía: 'Anda a ver al sacristán, y que te remiende eso'" ["that everyone was clean around the town. If someone wore a torn garment, he would say to him, 'Go see the sacristan so he can mend that for you'"].[68]

Yet even the most intractable, rebellious members of their societies received the sympathy of Martí and of Manuel Bueno. With admiration, Unamuno has quoted Martí's aphorism about the right of hell to heaven, and the right of criminals to redemption.[69] This dense phrase may well have inspired several episodes of *San Manuel Bueno, mârtir*: Ángela's unsettling discovery of her priest's nonbelief in the devil, and Manuel Bueno's compassion toward criminals. Once requested by a judge to extract a confession from the suspect of a heinous crime, the priest responded that human justice did not concern him, but he riveted the prisoner with a look when advising him, "Mira bien si Dios te ha perdonado, que es lo único que importa" ["Make sure that God has forgiven you, since that's all that matters"].[70]

Ángela Carballino observed with curiosity that Bueno, never a critic of the impious, the liberals, the Masons, or heretics, does criticize wagging tongues, "porque él lo disculpaba todo y a todos disculpaba" ["because he forgave everything and everyone"].[71] Analogously, on August 27, 1892, Martí affirmed he would gladly die at the feet of liberty, while embracing within her both Spaniards and Cubans and while eschewing base passions. Rising above ideologies of the poor and dogmas of the rich, he "declaró su respeto por todas las doctrinas, sean cualesquiera sus nombres; que busquen, con respeto a las de los demás, la plenitud del derecho humano" ["affirmed his respect for all doctrines, whatever their names, asking that, as concerns everyone else, they promote human rights to the fullest"].[72] As to established religions, Martí wrote,

> Las religiones todas son iguales: puestas una sobre otra, no se lleva un codo ni una punta....Las religiones todas han nacido de las mismas raíces, han adorado las mismas

> imágenes, han prosperado por las mismas virtudes y se han corrompido por los mismos vicios. Las religiones, que en su primer estado son una necesidad de los pueblos débiles, perduran luego como anticipo, en que el hombre se goza, del bienestar final poético que confusa y tenazmente desea.[73]
>
> [All religions are equal: setting one next to the other doesn't make it a whit loftier....All religions were born of the same roots, worship the same icons, grow stronger with the same virtues and weaken with the same vices. Religions, at first a need of weak people, later persist as a foretaste, enjoyable to man, of a final poetic state of which he vaguely and stubbornly desires.]

Likewise, Manuel Bueno told Lázaro, "¿Religión verdadera? Todas las religiones son verdaderas, en cuanto hacen vivir espiritualmente a los pueblos que las profesan, en cuanto les consuelan de haber tenido que nacer para morir" ["A true religion? All religions are true ones insofar as they give spiritual life to the peoples professing them, and consolation to them for having been born only to die"].[74] Manuel Bueno, like Martí, did not feel it his mission in life to submit the rich to the poor, nor the poor to the rich, but to offer resignation and charity to all, rich and poor alike.[75] Ángela has the vague impression that Don Manuel, healer of the possessed, did not believe in the devil, and that he also regarded the existence of hell as problematic. If Martí, despite his professions of faith, believed in the right of hell to redemption, and of criminals to forgiveness, his heterodoxy was not far from Manuel Bueno's.

Christ-like and with a motherly hand, both Martí and Manuel Bueno tried to heal the sick. Martí, in correspondence quoted by Unamuno, wrote, "Sentía como una piedad en mis manos cuando ayudaba a curar a los heridos" ["I felt something like piety in my hands when I helped heal the wounded"].[76] Manuel Bueno, in his attempts to heal the afflicted, wrote, "emprendió la tarea de hacer él de lago, de

piscina probática, y tratar de alivarles y si era posible de curarles" ["he undertook the task of serving as a lake, a cleansing pool, and tried to relieve them and, if possible, to heal them"]. Indeed, he achieved at times "curaciones sorprendentes" ["surprising cures"].[77] Even so, both Martí and Manuel Bueno lived and died sick at heart. Both, particularly at the ends of their lives, suffered from insomnia. In his journey of 1895 from Monte-Cristi to Cape Haitien, Martí recorded in his journal, "Duerme mal, el espíritu despierto. El sueño es culpa, mientras falta algo por hacer" ["Sleeping poorly, the spirit awake. Dreaming is to blame as long as something needs to be done"].[78] Manuel Bueno confessed to Lázaro, "Yo mismo con esta mi loca actividad me estoy administrando opio. Y no logro dormir bien y menos soñar bien. ¡Esta terrible pesadilla! Y yo también puedo decir con el Divino Maestro: 'Mi alma está triste hasta la muerte'" ["With this frenzied activity, I am administering opium to myself. And I can't manage to sleep well and even less to dream well. This fearful nightmare! And I too can say with the Divine Teacher, 'My soul is sad unto death'"].[79]

While helping their people to achieve the Promised Land, like Moses, neither leader lived to reach it themselves. Martí perished in battle on the threshold of an independent Cuba; Manuel Bueno died in church in the sight of all his parish, poised on the threshold of salvation. Each hero never expected to witness the fulfillment of his dreams. In a letter of March 25, 1895 to Federico Henríquez y Carvajal, Martí wrote, "Para mí la patria, no será nunca triunfo, sino agonía y deber" ["For me the homeland will never be a victory, but an agony and an obligation"].[80] He worried about the Cuban government after the emancipation and wondered how to govern peacefully both the intelligentsia and the vast, untutored majority. Once the narrator Ángela Carballino knew Manuel Bueno's terrible secret of unbelief in immortality, she compared her parish of believers to a caravan marching through the desert, like the Israelites despondent after the death of Moses, as if toward the end of their wandering, they took his corpse on their shoulders to thrust his lifeless body into the Promised Land.[81] Manuel Bueno himself, before dying, recited to the faithful the incident of Moses' death as related in Deuteronomy 33:48-34:6:

> Cuando los israelitas iban llegando al fin de su peregrinación por el desierto, el Señor les dijo a Aarón y a Moisés que por no haberle creído no meterían a su pueblo en la tierra prometida, y les hizo subir al monte de Hor, donde Moisés hizo desnudar a Aarón, que allí murió, y luego subió Moisés desde las llanuras de Moab al monte Nebo, a la cumbre de Fasga, enfrente de Jericó, diciéndole a él: '¡No pasarás allá!', y allí murió Moisés y nadie supo su sepultura.[82]
>
> [When the Israelites were coming to the end of their pilgrimage through the wilderness, the Lord said to Aaron and Moses that because they had broken faith with Him, they would not lead their people into the Promised Land, and He caused them to climb Mount Hor, where Moses had Aaron unclothed, and there he died, and Moses later climbed from the plains of Moab to Mount Nebo, to the top of Pisgah, which is opposite Jericho, and the Lord said to him, 'You shall not go over there!,' and Moses died there and no man knew the place of his burial.]

Nevertheless, Kierkegaard, omnipresent in *Saint Manuel Bueno, mártir*,[83] offered hope for the protagonist's attainment to a kind of life eternal. Men of Manuel Bueno's religious persuasion (or lack of it) have no starting point in history. For Kierkegaard, they simply discover at a given instant in time their own eternity, something infinitely loftier than what they are. Kierkegaard drew a contrast between the eternal "moment which is" ["Moment som er"] and the ephemeral "moment which has passed" ["Moment som er sorbi"].[84] Likewise, Unamuno affirms in the epilogue of his novel that "no pasa nada; mas espero que sea porque en ello todo se queda" ["nothing comes to pass; but I hope that is because everything persists"].[85] He may well be recalling the words of Martí the doer, quoted by himself, "Lo que se hace es lo que queda y no lo que se dice" ("Deeds persist, not words").[84] In a parable

based on Jude 9, in which St. Michael was said to have rescued Moses from hell, Unamuno hints that he has rescued Manuel Bueno from oblivion.[87] Analogously, in his essays of 1919 on Martí, Unamuno skimmed over the ideas and biography of the man because he implicitly recognized Martí's ability to seize the day in his own existence for finding his eternity. As Martí himself once wrote, "No hay que un medio de vivir después de muerto: haber sido un hombre de todos los tiempos—o un hombre de su tiempo" ["There is only one way to live after death: to have been a man for all seasons—or a man of one's own time"].[88]

Unamuno has endeavored to capture only Martí's style, yet equates the style with the man, and regards Martí as "todo un hombre...todo un estilo" ["a complete man...a complete style"].[89] The two articles from 1919 on Martí seem to have been exercises in acquiring eternity for their subject. They also may have served as literary dress rehearsals for the composition of the ethical and personal dimensions of one of Unamuno's most beloved fictional characters, St. Manuel Bueno, the martyr.

Notes

[1]Victor Ouimette, *Reason Aflame: Unamuno and the Heroic Will* (New Haven, Conn. and London: Yale University Press, 1974): 163-64.

[2]Miguel de Unamuno, *Obras completas,* Volume II (Madrid: Escelicer, 1966-1971): 1135.

[3]José Martí, *Esquema ideológico,* Edited by Manuel Pedro González and Ivan A. Schulman (Mexico: Editorial Cultura, 1961): 308-309.

[4]Unamuno, *Obras completas* Volume IV, 1038; Martí, *Obras Completas,* Volume I, 184.

[5]Mario J. de Valdés and María Elena de Valdés, *An Unamuno Source Book* (Toronto: University Toronto Press, 1973): 152.

[6]Martí, *Esquema ideológico*, 434.

[7]See César Chaves, *Unamuno y América,* Second Edition (Madrid: Ediciones Cultura Hispánica, 1970); Manuel García Blanco, *América y Unamuno* (Madrid: Gredos, 1964); Víctor García de la Concha, "Introducción," in Miguel de Unamuno, *El Cristo de Velázquez* (Madrid: Espasa-Calpe, 1987): 5-84.

[8]Unamuno, *Obras completas*, Volume IV, 1039.

[9]Exodus 33:20-3; Judges 13:22; Isaiah 6:5; Jesús-Antonio Collado, *Kierkegaard y Unamuno. La existencia religiosa* (Madrid: Gredos, 1962): 507-08.

[10]Collado, *Kierkegaard y Unamuno*, 15.

[11]Nelson R. Orringer, *Unamuno y los protestantes liberales. Sobre las fuentes de «Del sentimiento trágico de la vida»* (Madrid: Gredos, 1985): 33.

[12]Unamuno, *Obras completas*, Volume II, 1148.

[13]The context actually rejects this course of action as pretentious: "Un pretendiente a héroe no andaría con tantos remilgos" ["A would-be hero would not be so squeamish"]. Martí writes, "¡Se juega con la sangre del país a la carta de la inmortalidad, y se comete un crimen bajo la capa de una santa idea! Yo no hago eso; acato la realidad, y no quiero preeminencia para mí, sino felicidad para mi patria" ["You gamble for immortality with the blood of your country, and you commit a crime in the guise of a sacred idea! I never do that: I obey reality and want no advantage for me, but happiness for my homeland"]. José Martí, *Obras Completas,* Volume II (Havana: Editorial Nacional de Cuba, 1966): 426. Like Manuel Bueno, Martí consciously substitutes moral excellence for pretensions to life after death, but subconsciously harbors faith in salvation. The expressions of both the heterodoxical priest and the priestly patriot so often incorporate orthodox Catholic formulations. Hence in *ibid*., Volume XXI, 138, he writes, "En esta tierra, no hay más que una salvación—el sacrificio. No hay más que un bien seguro, que viene de sacrificarse—la paz del alma" ["In this land, there is only one salvation—self-sacrifice. There is only one sure benefit gotten from that sacrifice—peace of mind"].

[14]*Ibid*., Volume IV, 1034.

[15]*Ibid*.,1037.

[16]*Ibid*., Volume XX, 299.

[17]Orringer, *Unamuno y los protestantes liberales*.

[18]Unamuno, *Obras completas*, Volume IV, 1038.

[19]Martí, *Obras Completas*, Volume I, 406.

[20]*Ibid*., 349.

[21]Unamuno, *Obras completas*, Volume II, 1038.

[22]*Ibid*., 1038.

[23]Martí, *Obras Completas*, Volume II, 102.

[24]Unamuno, *Obras completas*, Volume IV, 1038.

[25]*Ibid*.

[26]*Ibid*., 1039.

[27]Martí, *Obras Completas*, Volume I, 406.

[28]*Ibid*., 405.

[29]*Ibid*., Volume IV, 48.

[30]Ibid., Volume III, 409.

[31]Unamuno, *Obras completas*, Volume IV, 1039.

[32]*Ibid*.

[33]Martí, *Obras Completas*, Volume XX, 475.

[34]Unamuno, *Obras completas*, Volume IV, 1039.

[35]Martí, *Esquema ideológico*, 435.

[36]Unamuno, *Obras completas*, Volume II, 1142.
[37]*Ibid*., 1136; 1143; 1146; 1133.
[38]*Ibid*., 1129.
[39]Martí, *Obras Completas*, Volume II, 459.
[40]Unamuno, *Obras completas*, Volume II, 1133.
[41]*Ibid*., 1144.
[42]*Ibid*., 1142.
[43]Martí, *Obras Completas*, Volume XXI, 130.
[44]Sumner Greenfield, "La 'iglesia' terrestre de San Manuel Bueno," *Cuadernos hispanoamericanos* 348 (1979): 612.
[45]Unamuno, *Obras completas*, Volume IV, 1039.
[46]*Ibid*., Volume II, 1133.
[47]Martí, *Obras Completas*, Volume I, 167.
[48]*Ibid*., Volume V, 108.
[49]Unamuno, *Obras completas*, Volume IV, 1037.
[50]*Ibid*., Volume II, 1129.
[51]*Ibid*., Volume IV, 1038-39.
[52]*Ibid*., Volume II, 1142.
[53]Martí, *Obras Completas*, Volume III, 149-50.
[54]Unamuno, *Obras completas*, Volume II, 1136.
[55]*Ibid*., 1135.
[56]Martí, *Obras Completas*, Volume XXI, 370.
[57]Unamuno, *Obras completas*, Volume IV, 1039.
[58]*Ibid*., Volume II, 1131.
[59]*Ibid*., Volume IV, 1039.
[60]Martí, *Obras Completas*, Volume XX, 475.
[61]Unamuno, *Obras completas*, Volume II, 1132.
[62]*Ibid*., Volume VII, 190.
[63]*Ibid*., 1129.
[64]Martí, *Obras Completas*, Volume III, 188-89.
[65]Unamuno, *Obras completas*, Volume II, 1133-34.
[66]*Ibid*., 1131.
[67]*Ibid*., 1095.
[68]*Ibid*., 1131.
[69]*Ibid*., Volume IV, 1039.
[70]*Ibid*., Volume II, 1132.
[71]*Ibid*., 1133.
[72]Martí, *Obras Completas*, Volume II, 144.
[73]Martí, *Esquema ideológico*, 463-64.
[74]Martí, *Obras Completas*, Volume II, 1142.
[75]Unamuno, *Obras completas*, Volume II, 1146.
[76]*Ibid*., Volume IV, 1038.
[77]*Ibid*., Volume II, 1131.
[78]Martí, *Obras Completas*, Volume XIX, 196.
[79]Unamuno, *Obras completas*, Volume II, 1146.

[80]Martí, *Obras Completas*, Volume IV, 111.

[81]Unamuno, *Obras completas*, Volume II, 1133.

[82]*Ibid*., 1148.

[83]Gemma Roberts, *Unamuno: afinidades y coincidencias kierkegaardianas* (Boulder, Colo.: Society of Spanish and Spanish-American Studies, 1986): 128-33.

[84]Søren Kierkegaard, *Samlede Vaerker,* Second Edition, Volume VII (Copenhagen: Gyldendalske Bøghandel, 1925): 564.

[85]Unamuno, *Obras completas*, Volume II, 1156.

[86]*Ibid*., Volume IV, 1037.

[87]*Ibid*., Volume II, 1153.

[88]Martí, *Obras Completas,* Volume XXI, 143.

[89]Unamuno, *Obras completas*, Volume IV, 1039.

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