

JOSÉ MARTÍ AND THE GLOBAL DIMENSIONS OF LATE NINETEENTH-
CENTURY CUBAN NATION BUILDING

By

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To the Faculty of Washington State University

The members of the Committee appointed to examine
the dissertation of ARMAND GARCIA find it satisfactory and recommend that it
be accepted.

Chair

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Abstract

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This transnational study of the nation building efforts of the late nineteenth-century Cuban independence leader José Martí (1853-1895) argues that the Cuban anti-colonial struggle had significant, yet overlooked global dimensions. In five chapters, it demonstrates that, in his work to free Cuba from Spain and in raising Cuban national awareness and Latin American consciousness, Martí transmitted political, ethical, and spiritual values aimed at resisting oppressive ruling systems and at building a democratic society in his biographies on U.S. luminaries and Civil War figures, primarily of Ulysses S. Grant (1822-1885), and in the world history narratives of his children's magazine, *The Golden Years (La Edad de Oro)*. It also reveals that, to inspire and promote Cuban nation building, Martí employed subjects from world history such as Hindu ideas in the *Bhagavad-Gita*. This dissertation reconceptualizes commonly-held perceptions of the 1895 Cuban independence movement by engaging notions of gender and demonstrating that, although highly nationalistic, it transcended national and regional boundaries. The dissertation also reveals that the didactic historical writings surveyed provide a means to decipher Martí's visions for the independent Cuba he did not live to see.

By disclosing how Martí engaged the world to promote progressive notions of race, gender, and the value of non-European cultures in an age of rising racism and

“High” Imperialism, this dissertation also provides a basis for an interpretation of the patterns of globally oriented Latin American revolutions as having their genesis in the nineteenth- and not the twentieth-century. Through Martí’s “globalism,” the 1895 Cuban revolution thus marks a divergence in Latin America from the Atlantic-oriented revolutions of the late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-centuries (e.g. the Haitian & Simón Bolívar’s uprisings in northern South America) to the globally-charged ones of the twentieth-century (e.g. the 1910s Mexican Revolution), an understanding facilitated by the global approach of this study.

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To Scott
Para Carmita

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

José Martí (1853-1895), at twenty-six, arrived in New York City in 1880 with dreams of liberating his island home from Spanish colonial rule. After having served hard labor in a political prison as a teenager in Cuba, he earned both law and philosophy degrees during enforced exile in Spain, and later established himself in elite literary circles in Mexico City. He had visited New York briefly before in 1874 on his way to Mexico City from Spain where he had been earlier deported. Martí lived in New York City from 1880 to 1895, except for a brief stay in Venezuela, and after 1892 for short periods of political campaigning in the Cuban exile communities of Florida.¹ Since Martí spent most of his adult life in New York City, this dissertation concentrates on what Martí wrote while in the American metropolis.

Much has been written on Martí's life and his intellectual impact on Cuba. This dissertation reconceptualizes perceptions of the late nineteenth-century Cuban independence movement through a transnational perspective of the nation building efforts of its leader. This dissertation demonstrates that Martí transmitted messages to resist oppressive ruling systems and to build democratic societies in Cuba and Latin America, to both young and old, through the use of world subjects. For example, this dissertation links, as Cuban and Latin American themed historiographies have missed, Martí's nation building efforts to his critiques of nineteenth-century French imperialism in southeast Asia; to his constructive architectural analyses of Latin American indigenous

¹ Carlos Ripoll, "Nueva York en José Martí" *Diario Las Américas*, January 28, 1994, sec. 2C in box 4, "Leví Marrero Papers," Latin American Collection 5030, Florida International University, Miami.

civilizations; to his biographies on U.S. luminaries and Civil War figures; and finally to the Hindu sacred text, the *Bhagavad-Gita*. Revealing how Latin America and other global regions operated in Martí's efforts allows for a more sophisticated understanding of Cuba's long anti-colonial struggle as one that, although highly nationalistic, transcended national and regional boundaries.

By disclosing how Martí engaged the world to promote progressive notions of race, gender, and the value of non-European cultures in an age of rising racism and "High" Imperialism, this dissertation provides the basis for an interpretation of the patterns of globally oriented Latin American revolutions as having their genesis in the nineteenth- and not the twentieth-century. Through Martí's "globalism," the 1895 Cuban revolution marks a divergence in Latin America from the Atlantic-oriented revolutions of the late seventeenth- and early eighteenth-centuries (e.g. the Haitian & Simón Bolívar's uprisings in northern South America) to the globally-charged ones of the twentieth-century (e.g. the 1910s Mexican Revolution), an understanding facilitated by the global approach of this dissertation.

This dissertation shows that Martí's historical writings were globally-derived, instrumental to his anti-colonial efforts, and they also serve as a means to decipher his visions for the independent Cuba he did not live to see.

Although Martí criticized much of New York City life, the harsh winters and the overwhelmingly fast paced, consumer driven society, New York provided an opportunity for a stable income by writing for Latin American newspapers and direct access to an established Cuban exile community. New York City was also free from a politically oppressive environment, as the ones Martí left behind in Mexico under Porfirio Díaz, in

Guatemala under Juan Rufino Barrios, and significantly under Spanish colonial rule in Cuba. Living in New York also kept him closer to the island, where he could more easily organize a renewed independence effort than in other places such as Peru or Argentina where he had considered living.²

“Triste, sí se siente en Nueva York (sad, indeed, one feels in New York),” wrote Martí, yet in New York City, Martí felt “internally strong as well, as strong as when one leaves [its] shores, except when heading to those of the homeland where the earth is sweet, it seems as if ones leaves the noble joy of true freedom, as if distancing from one’s own self!”³ In New York City, he felt stable, self-reliant, and liberated –notwithstanding the more general criticisms he wrote regarding life in the City and in the United States. This dissertation seeks to rebalance the portrayals of Martí’s views on the U.S. such as he loved the poets and hated the politicians.⁴ Not that he admired all U.S. politicians; rather, this dissertation demonstrates that Martí employed subjects of his world’s present and past to promote values. Among the chosen world history subjects, U.S. individuals and events figure prominently. Martí depicted positive and negative qualities of the U.S. in various ways to facilitate transmitting values that would build nation. He presented the negative qualities of the U.S. to caution Cubans and Latin Americans and the positive

² Carlos Ripoll, “Nueva York en José Martí” *Diario Las Américas*, January 28, 1994 , sec. 7C in box 4, “Leví Marrero Papers,” Latin American Collection 5030, Florida International University, Miami. According to Martí scholar, Carlos Ripoll, the Cuban leader considered moving to Peru or Argentina, but did not for it would have taken him further away from Cuba and the communities of Cuban exiles.

³ José Martí, *Obras Completas*, 2d ed., 27 vols. (Havana: Editorial Ciencias Sociales, 1975), 10:283. “-pero firme también; ¡se siente uno tan firme que, cuando se aleja de estas playas, ¡en no siendo para las de la patria, donde la roca es dulce! parece como que se aparta uno del goce digno de la libertad real, que se aleja de sí propio!”

⁴ Anne Fountain states “understanding Martí’s literary criticism, therefore, is central to grasping his whole interpretation of the United States –a largely negative view of politics and politicians tempered by an enthusiastic embrace of poets and poetry.” Anne Fountain, preface to *José Martí and U.S. Writers* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2003), xiii.

ones, even of the U.S. political system and its politicians, for Cubans and Latin Americans to emulate. To focus on Martí's negative portrayals of the U.S. by relying on the last writings that precede his untimely death in the 1895 Cuban independence struggle and to consider them typical of his views on the U.S., ignores other equally significant depictions of the U.S. in his literary production and of the U.S.'s role in his nation building.

Thomas, Pérez, Scott, and Ferrer have written on how Cuban independence developed on the ground, and de la Fuente, Helg, and Guerra on how the 1902 Cuban republic unfolded.⁵ This dissertation seeks to complement these contributions through a new perspective on José Martí's nation building by exploring its global dimensions. Rojas's study of what he calls José Martí's "invention of Cuba" surveys how Martí's views of a new nation relate to the United States, to other Latin American political activists, and in the context of the intellectual environment of Martí's time.⁶ This dissertation argues that examining the global sources of Martí's Cuban independence project sheds light on the program that heavily impacted the post-1902 development of the island.⁷ Guerra demonstrates how Martí's vision and how Cuban national projects,

⁵ Hugh Thomas, *Cuba or the Pursuit of Freedom* (New York: Da Capo Press, 1971); Louis A. Pérez, Jr., *Cuba Between Empires, 1878-1902* (Pittsburgh, Pa.: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1983); Louis A Pérez, Jr., *Cuba: Between Reform and Revolution*, 3d ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006); Rebecca J. Scott, *Slave Emancipation in Cuba: The Transition to Free Labor, 1860-1899* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1985. Foreword, University of Pittsburgh, 2000); Ada Ferrer, *Insurgent Cuba: Race, Nation, and Revolution, 1868-1898* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1999); Alejandro de la Fuente, *A Nation For All: Race, Inequality, and Politics in Twentieth-Century Cuba* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2001); Aline Helg, *Our Rightful Share: the Afro-Cuban Struggle for Equality, 1886-1912* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1995); Lillian Guerra, *The Myth of José Martí: Conflicting Nationalisms in Early Twentieth-Century Cuba* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2005).

⁶ Rafael Rojas, *José Martí: la invención de Cuba* (Madrid: Editorial Colibrí, 2000).

⁷ Cuba was given conditional independence in 1902 with the U.S. right to intervene in its internal affairs.

based on constructions of the Cuban leader, competed and conflicted in the 1902 Cuban republic under the context of his unfulfilled ideal of a fully sovereign, democratic, racially- and socially-just Cuba.⁸ Studying Cuban independence through the global dimensions of a preeminent leader's visions for the new nation provides a more vivid picture of the figure that would impact the island's political development.

The next chapters explore Martí's nation building efforts through the literary record left by the Cuban leader, particularly selections scantily studied for their value in promoting Cuban independence such as biographies and world history narratives for children. The study of the global dimensions of José Martí's nation building magnifies his significance for a modern audience in several critical ways: it reveals, unlike some Martí scholars who view that "the written word is the sign of his poetics, while the spoken word is the instrument of his politics"⁹ that his prose (particularly the historical narrative) was as important to his nation building as his political rallying. The "written word" was indeed an instrument of his politics. Martí was deeply concerned with history, even though he never portrayed himself as a historian.¹⁰ Martí scholars have shown that the Cuban leader considered a written history of his nation's great independence struggle, the Ten Years' War (1868-1878), an epic of the Cuban nation's birth, as critical to Cuban

⁸ Lillian Guerra, *The Myth of José Martí: Conflicting Nationalisms in Early Twentieth-Century Cuba* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2005): 1-21.

⁹ Rojas, 36.

¹⁰ Graciella Cruz-Taura, "El pensamiento histórico de José Martí" in *Transcendencia cultural de la obra de José Martí. Actas del simposio internacional celebrado en Praga, del 21 al 23 de octubre de 2002* ed. Anna Housková (Prague: Department of Philosophy and Letters, Charles University of Prague, 2003), 99.

nationhood. It offered a “testimonio básico (basic, fundamental account)” for a “mitología nacional (national mythology).”¹¹

This dissertation expands this view by demonstrating that not only Cuba’s history was significant to Martí’s nation building efforts, but the history of other world regions also served to transmit the values that would elevate Latin American regional consciousness and Cuban national awareness. History to Martí served to explain and to educate Cubans and Latin Americans, expanding their knowledge, and it also functioned as a device to impart meaning. Many meanings Martí embedded in his historical narratives, for instance: (1) to teach children, the future active citizens of Latin America and of a new Cuba, civic values and to prepare them for adulthood; (2) to teach adult citizens what to expect or not accept from their leaders; (3) to teach leaders the proper qualities of governing; (4) to promote alternative spiritual values over ideologically constraining ones; (5) to reveal his philosophical and spiritual thoughts, releasing his emotions in depictions of different historical actors.

Although Martí did not provide detailed plans for the new Cuban republic’s governing system –he did not provide a constitution, for instance– he may have felt no need to for he was neither initiating nor creating an independence struggle.¹² His concern with writing a history of the Ten Years Cuban War of Independence suggests that he saw himself as continuing and redrafting an ongoing struggle that had not yet achieved its objective. A Cuban republic had been already declared at Yara in 1868 and it had had a

¹¹ Rojas, 131.

¹² Unlike Rafael Rojas who explores Martí in light of his “invention” of Cuban nationhood, I view that Martí considered himself an inheritor of a tradition, one who sought to continue, improve, and realize the goals of an ongoing independence effort previously led by Cuban national founders such as Carlos Manuel de Céspedes (1819-1873) and Ignacio Agramonte y Loynáz (1841-1873)

constitution and democratic institutions, albeit as a republic at siege and one ultimately overrun by Spanish colonial troops. Martí therefore, perhaps, felt no need to discuss the actual democratic structures and mechanisms of a Cuban republic, since documents existed on these matters. We do not know for certain if Martí considered outliving the Cuban independence war of 1895. If he did, he most likely would have participated in the construction of the sovereign Cuban republic.¹³ Therefore, a conspicuous blueprint for a Cuban republic does not remain. Nevertheless, this dissertation demonstrates that through Martí's use of history he directly and indirectly promoted how Cuba's republic should be run and what rights its citizens should have. Historical writings as Chapter Two, Three, and Four show and his personal correspondence and diary entries, as Chapter Five demonstrates, help decipher how Martí conceived the new nation through prescriptions of civic and life values embedded in portrayals of historical subjects and self-depictions.

This dissertation therefore argues that history to Martí was an important tool in Cuban nation building and in raising Latin American regional consciousness. The four chapters that follow delve into, develop, and demonstrate the global dimensions of Martí's nation building. Chapters Two, Three, and Four investigate his narratives of history. These chapters present, for the first time in English, Martí's historical narratives

¹³ According to Rojas, "if there is an endpoint to Martí's political practices and discourse is a civic-republican invention of a nation, the foundation of a modern citizenry in Cuba, and not the creation of a State. His objective, as he indicated, was to 'hand the entire country a free *patria* [nation].' What would come later is something that is not in his texts and that neither can be comfortably inferred or deciphered from his body of work (si hay alguna finalidad en el discurso y las prácticas políticas de José Martí esa es la invención civico-republicana de una nación, la fundación de una ciudadanía moderna en Cuba, y no la creación de un Estado. Su objeto, como el mismo señaló, era 'entregar a todo el país la patria libre.' Lo que vendría después es algo que no está en sus textos y que ni siquiera puede inferirse o descifrarse, comodamente, del cuerpo de su escritura.)" Rojas, 140. One should not assume that what exists today as Martí's body of work is what he intended it to be. His untimely death at the hands of the Spaniards during the early phases of the final independence push put an end to his body of work. As this dissertation demonstrates, Martí's writings on history *do* reveal and one *may* infer what he envisioned as state practices through his allegorical prescriptions to citizens and leaders.

such as “The Story of Humanity, told through its Houses”; “A Journey through the Land of the Annamese”; and biographical essays on Ulysses S. Grant (1822-1885) and Philip Henry Sheridan (1831-1888). The works surveyed have never before been systematically considered in a historical context that discloses Martí’s political prescriptions. Chapters Two, Three, and Four argue that Martí taught history to transmit ideas on nation building by depicting his political and spiritual views through historical characters, affirming the values imparted. Chapter Five examines the global dimensions of his views on nation building (views presented in the history narratives of Chapters Two, Three, and Four). Chapter Five supports how, to Martí, the political and the spiritual were linked. Global connections are highly visible in his spiritually-infused visions of nation. Chapter Five also compares Martí’s views on nationhood with Indian philosophy as presented in the sacred Hindu text the *Bhagavad-Gita*.¹⁴

The global dimensions of Martí’s nation building exceed representations from world regions, distant from Cuba. Martí’s biographies introducing North American individuals for the first time to Latin America also represent cross-cultural and inter-regional interactions that are vital to the effective study of World History and the Atlantic world. This dissertation seeks to bring Martí’s views of the U.S. and the world, how he communicated them to Cubans and to Latin Americans, to a modern English-speaking

¹⁴ *The Bhagavad-Gita: Krishna’s Counsel in Time of War*, trans. Barbara Stoler Miller (New York: Bantam Books, 1986). The *Bhagavad-Gita* is the seven hundred verses from the great Hindu epic, the *Mahabharata*. Considered as Hindu sacred scripture, many believe it was written between the fifth and second centuries, BCE by the poet Vyasha. In the long epic of the *Mahabharata*, prior to going to war at Kurukshetra (scene of the *Bhagavad-Gita*), the Kauravas are given a choice to fight the Pandavas with the assistance of a large army or of the avatar Krishna alone. The Kauravas select the formidable army presented, while Arjuna (the Pandavas) prefers the guidance of Krishna. In dialogue format, Krishna instructs Arjuna on the true nature of the soul; on the need to follow one’s duty; to renounce the fruits of one’s actions; and how to attain eternal union with the Divine. The *Bhagavad-Gita* is also subsequently referred to as the *Gita*.

audience, creating another cross-cultural interaction. For an English-speaking audience to understand how a late nineteenth-century Cuban freedom-fighter perceived his struggle and his new nation is another guiding objective of this dissertation. Through this dissertation Martí emerges as more than a compelling hemispheric figure.¹⁵ Through his cross cultural interactions; by taking from the East for Cuban purposes; in adopting subjects from the North and transmitting them to the South for Cuban and Latin American objectives, his work has significant global dimensions.

Since Martí emerged from a slave society and spent most of his life working with African-Cubans and for the cause of both Hispanic- and African-Cuban freedom on the island, to register why Africa and African subjects seldom appear in Martí's nation building narratives is imperative. The following conclusions support this situation: (1) Martí did not specifically wish to highlight Africa or African history in his views on nation building since it would fuel the Spanish (his opposition's) debate that Cuba should remain a colony of a European power for fear of becoming another black republic like Haiti. The Spaniards manipulated notions of race for Hispanic-Cubans to continue supporting Spanish rule. Beyond the highly-charged notions of race, association with African religions and non-literate societies would have also motivated anti-Cuban independence partisans. Martí also did not highlight Spanish and European history in his narratives as the best models for a Cuban republic. Chapter Two on world history narratives for children reveals how he downplayed the European role and readjusted notions that the European/Spanish conquest of America was a positive event. (2) His prescriptions for nation building were directed to all Cubans. He did not distinguish in his

¹⁵ Jeffrey Belnap and Raúl Fernández, eds. *Jose Martí's "Our America" From National to Hemispheric Cultural Studies*, (Durham: Duke University Press, 1998).

writings that his nation building ideas applied to Spanish-Cubans and not to African-Cubans. He avoided speaking in racial terms; indeed, he consistently wrote and spoke against racism. Race, to Martí, was a constructed notion and promoted by those who wished Cubans to be divided and for Cuba to remain under Spanish tyrannical, colonial rule. When he spoke on race, it was to go against the notion.¹⁶ He therefore avoided highlighting African subjects as proper models to either emulate (for fear of raising racism among non-African-Cubans) or to avoid (to not contribute to anti-African rhetoric). He also refrained from prominently presenting Spanish or European historical subjects as examples; he yearned to create original, Western Hemispheric (American, in the broad sense of the term) approaches to nation building. Other scholarly works also explore this subject and discuss this construction of the ideal of a "raceless nation" and how it ultimately unraveled under the Cuban republic in the early twentieth-century when African-Cubans demanded equal participation in the political process (as per Martí's ideals) and were shut out.¹⁷ (3) Since Martí often adapted and rewrote news stories or other items in the literature of his day, the greater availability of information on Asia over Africa in the West during the late nineteenth-century allowed the Cuban leader to employ more Asian subjects over African ones in his transmission of nation building values.

Other reasons for the absence of African subjects include the following: (4) Martí highlights in his world history narratives Native American and Asian history since they were "safe" topics for Cubans. In Cuba, Native American society was mostly eradicated

¹⁶ Ada Ferrer's article "The Silence of Patriots: Race and Nationalism in Martí's Cuba" in *José Martí's 'Our America': From National to Hemispheric Cultural Studies*, ed. Jeffrey Belnap and Raúl Fernández (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1998), 228-249, expands this issue.

¹⁷ See Ada Ferrer, Alejandro de la Puente, Lillian Guerra, and Aline Helg's works referenced in footnote no. 5.

by the late nineteenth-century (unlike the Spanish mainland colonies where a significant Native American cultural presence survived). Due to the absence of any distinct Native American groups in Cuba participating in an independence movement, it was safe to promote Native American history. Native American heritage also provided a foundation for notions of a distinct regional Spanish-American consciousness as an alternative to the Anglo-Saxon North. (5) Furthermore, Asia (for example, Vietnam as in “A Journey through the Land of the Annamese”) was sufficiently removed from Cuba that it would also not fuel political biases or fears on the island. (6) Finally, when discussing the spiritual basis of nation building in this dissertation, Chapter Five explores the visible evidence of Martí’s Hindu-derived ideas through exposure to the *krausistas* in Spain and the Transcendentalists in the U.S. who engaged Hindu thought. There remains hardly any visible evidence of Martí writing on African spiritual traditions, whereas there is evidence of his writings on Hindu thought (which has been largely ignored by Martí scholars). The ideas presented in this dissertation were written during the 1880s and early 1890s. Martí engaged in a discourse that found sources in South and East Asia, albeit through European and North American thinkers. African anti-colonial thought had not gained currency until the early decades of the twentieth-century, decades after Martí’s death in 1895. The global dimensions examined in this dissertation are therefore mainly Eastern. Nonetheless, Chapter Two presents an analysis of Martí’s brief presentations of African history in “Stories of Elephants” in *The Golden Years*.

The dissertation is structured as follows:

*Chapter Two: Nation-Building at an Early Age: José Martí's
World History Narratives for Children*

Chapter Two expands the understanding of late nineteenth-century Cuban and Latin American history, as well as views on the historiography of the field of World History in multiple ways. First, the chapter argues that *The Golden Years*, Martí's children's monthly magazine (from July to October 1889), was an integral part of Martí's program to build a new nation.¹⁸ Yet, *The Golden Years* has not been seriously examined in this context. Second, Chapter Two examines how Martí's history narratives for children teach civic values to future citizens, such as resisting and overthrowing oppressive ruling systems, be they externally- (imperialism) or internally- (dictatorship) derived. Third, the chapter demonstrates that the stories in *The Golden Years* represent an instance when world history narratives are employed beyond explaining the past, for providing general meaning, when World History is specifically utilized as a tool for national edification.

Chapter Two examines four narratives, "Three Heroes" (July 1889); "Stories of Elephants" (October 1889); "The Story of Humanity, told through its Houses" (August 1889); and "A Journey through the Land of the Annamese," (October 1889) with greater emphases on the last two. By examining how Martí wrote world histories, the chapter reveals how they diverged from traditional late nineteenth-century narratives by instructing children to critically approach authority and by de-centering the narrative of the world's past away from Europe and towards the Americas.

¹⁸ Salvador Arias, *Un proyecto martiano esencial: 'La Edad de Oro'* (Havana: Centro de Estudio Martianos, 2001), 68. See also Fryda Schultz de Montovani, introduction to *José Martí: 'La Edad de Oro'* (San Salvador, El Salvador: Departamento Editorial Ministerio de Cultura, 1955), 22.

Chapter Three: U.S. Subjects and Martí's Self-Depictions in Nation Building Efforts through Biographies

Chapter Three focuses on Martí's biographical narratives of U.S. prominent individuals and analyzes the nation building ideas intended for an adult audience, focusing on essays on Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803-1882), Peter Cooper (1791-1883), Walt Whitman (1819-1892), and Ulysses S. Grant (1822-1885). This chapter demonstrates that Martí taught values he wished for a new Cuban society by depicting U.S. subjects and events, and his own spiritual and philosophical views through biographies.

Cuba's freedom was Martí's preeminent concern. He dedicated his adult life to it, sacrificed his marriage, a financially rewarding career as a writer, and even as a businessman (he had many friends who urged him to go into business),¹⁹ and the employment he procured was subject to his working for the cause of Cuban independence. Since it was such an important and defining part of his life, his biographical essays should be understood in this context. Martí depicted a biographical subject's positive and negative qualities to promote the values that Cubans in a future independent Cuban republic should have (as well as to raise Latin American consciousness in his Latin American readers); the positive ones were to be emulated, the negative to be avoided.

Chapter Three, along with Chapter Four, readjusts commonly held notions of how the U.S. was portrayed by Martí in his nation building efforts. The U.S. served to warn

¹⁹ José Martí, *Obras Completas*, 2d ed. (Havana: Editorial de Ciencias Sociales, 1975), 20:150. In a letter to his close friend Manuel Mercado regarding his efforts at writing *The Golden Years*, Martí wrote "please know –since I forgot [to tell you] –that I'm buying a train (a cable streetcar) for Buenos Aires and selling an oil concession to please my friends who tell me that 'I'm good for bigger things' (sepa –me olvidaba– que estoy comprando para B. Aires un ferrocarril (tranvía) de cable, y vendiendo una concesión sobre petróleo, por complacer a amigos míos, que dicen que "sirvo para cosas mayores.)"

against both external and internal threats to sovereignty and democracy, serving as both a negative and positive point of reference.

Chapter Three reveals and delves into several major themes, essential values to Martí, present in the biographical narratives surveyed. In the Emerson essay, independent thinking against ideologies; in the Cooper essay, love, forgiveness, and charity; in the Whitman essay, humility, love, tolerance, and originality; and, finally in the Grant piece, on determination, resourcefulness, and tenacity, and against sectarianism, favoritism, deceit, and corruption, are all examined.

Chapter Four: Prescriptions for Cuba's Future Leaders through Biographies of U.S. Subjects

This chapter expands the study of Martí's use of biographies in nation building efforts. It demonstrates that biographies on U.S. subjects serve as a means to decipher Martí's visions of how the future independent Cuba should be ruled. The chapter specifically examines Martí's biographical essays on former U.S. leaders such as Philip Henry Sheridan (1831-1888), Chester Alan Arthur (1829-1886), and Ulysses S. Grant (1822-1885). The chapter highlights Martí's critiques of militarism and his use of U.S. subjects in positive and negative light.

Chapter Five: The Eastern Dimensions of Nation Building: José Martí and the Bhagavad-Gita

Chapter Five contributes to this dissertation's view of the global dimensions of Martí's nation building by examining the role of Hindu thought, as displayed in the *Bhagavad-Gita*. It examines Martí's conceptions of nation under three thematic elements

common to the *Bhagavad-Gita* and Martí's work –sacrifice, duty, and the knowledge of the true nature of the human soul. The chapter is therefore structured in three parts: duty (*dharma*); sacrifice (humility, love, and selflessness); and knowledge (the awareness of the true nature of the human soul). The chapter explores how these three themes appear in the *Bhagavad-Gita* and in Martí's works, documenting the global dimensions of Martí's nation building.

Through these three themes, the chapter also establishes connections between Martí and individuals from other global regions such as Ralph Waldo Emerson and Annie Besant (1847-1933) who also sought alternative sources from prevailing late nineteenth-century Western political discourses. The chapter demonstrates the ways in which Martí's program for an independent Cuba was influenced by Eastern traditions, beyond western philosophies of "natural rights," positivism, or Roman Catholicism, for instance.²⁰

By analyzing Martí's writings and declarations, this chapter employs a Hindu perspective that enriches the discussion developed by literary scholars regarding the *modernistas*, the late nineteenth-century Spanish and Spanish-American literary movement's adaptations of Eastern notions in reformulating a unique interpretation of their reality.²¹ The chapter argues that, in Martí's case, employing Hindu notions is not only significant in a literary sense or for the value of how it served in interpreting his reality. Rather, it has greater historical significance. Martí employed Hindu views to

²⁰ Rafael Rojas explains how the politics of Martí and other Latin American political activists of the time are reminiscent of Montesquieu's ideas. Rojas also has an innovative analysis comparing Francisco Madero (1873-1913) of Mexico and Jose Martí. Rojas discusses the *Bhagavad-Gita* as an example of the mysticism of Madero and Martí. He does not link specifically Martí's ideas on nation building to the major tenets of the *Bhagavad-Gita*, as Chapter Five of this dissertation.

²¹ Araceli Tinajero, *Orientalismo en el modernismo hispanoamericano* (West Lafayette, Indiana: Purdue University Press, 2003).

inspire and to formulate his nation building. In this respect, Martí's views compare favorably to French philosopher Ernest Renan's (1823-1892) of "a nation as a spiritual principle." Martí knew Renan's work and would expand the French intellectual's notions by crafting his notions of nation in spiritual terms, and infusing them with metaphysical ideas from India, as the chapter demonstrates. Martí's views on nationhood do not, however, entirely fit Benedict Anderson's conception of an "imagined community," since he may be viewed as hyperbolizing a national consciousness that already existed before the rise of print journalism. Chapter Five therefore shows that Martí led an unparalleled campaign of resistance, independence, and renewal by staging a revolution inspired by non-Western derived spiritual notions, as Chapter Two also examines in the presentation of Buddhist philosophy in "A Journey through the Land of the Annamese." Chapter Five's major objective is therefore to reveal that Martí adapted ideas from distant regions (India) for local concerns (Cuban nation building), affirming how Martí's national project was globally derived. Martí's world-derived nation building supports that the Cuban independence struggle was the first major revolutionary movement in Latin America of global dimension, diverging from previous revolutions that were developed in an Atlantic world context.

In short, "Jose Martí and the Global Dimensions of Late Nineteenth-Century Cuban Nation-Building" highlights and examines the role of interregional history and connections in the Cuban leader's nation building, breaching an important gap in the scholarship on Martí. It aims to show that the Cuban leader employed distant historical subjects to censure immediate problems.²² The dissertation also strives to readjust the

²² In Chapter Two, Martí depicts evil disciples who misuse Buddha's philosophy to promote control of populations, most certainly, a critique on the Spanish conquest and domination of Spanish-America. In

ways his portrayals of U.S. subjects in nation building have been perceived; to disclose how he depicted himself through world historical actors he identified with, releasing feelings and transmitting views on nation building; and to reverse the neglect of non-Western themes and ideas in his work. The dissertation ultimately seeks to place José Martí's nation building efforts beyond a hemispheric context and in one of greater world significance and the 1895 Cuban independence struggle as the first major globally-derived Latin America revolution.

CHAPTER TWO

NATION BUILDING AT AN EARLY AGE: JOSÉ MARTÍ'S WORLD HISTORY NARRATIVES FOR CHILDREN

[*The Golden Years*] carries profound thought, it shall help what I would like to help, which is to supply our lands with genuine men and women, raised to live happily in the land they live, and to live in harmony with it, without divorcing themselves from it, nor living unfruitfully in it, like superfluous citizens, or disdainful foreigners forcefully born in this other side of the world. Other areas may fertilize the crop, but the farming must be done according to our soil. Our children, we must raise as men and women of their time, and as men and women of the Americas.¹

Padrino, Kindergarten is so hard, they don't even let you take a nap!²

If a five year-old thinks Kindergarten is difficult, how do you prepare the child for life? And, for a nation struggling against colonialism, how do you equip it to lead an independent future? From July to October 1889, Cuban poet and independence leader José Martí (1853-1894) addressed these issues by writing and editing a Spanish-language journal dedicated to the children of Latin America. *La Edad de Oro* (*The Golden Years*) was Martí's attempt at replacing a "disheartening and rhetorical poetry," then in fashion, "with another more pure and useful [one] that comes from knowledge of the world."³ *The Golden Years* was also a moral venture, presenting poems, short fictional stories,

¹ José Martí, *Obras Completas*, 2d ed., 27 vols. (Havana: Editorial de Ciencias Sociales, 1975), 20:147. All subsequent references of José Martí's writings are to this edition of his complete works. Since there are as of yet no English translations of the stories in *The Golden Years* examined by this dissertation, all direct citations and quotations of José Martí's writings are original English translations from the Spanish. Each quotation and direct or indirect reference is footnoted by the original Spanish. Martí consistently wrote in the masculine form when referring to individuals and people in general. This is traditional practice in Spanish; however, the translations in this dissertation will consider both female and male forms when dealing with terms such as people, humanity, individuals, and so forth.

² *Padrino* is Spanish for godfather. My five year-old godson, Mitchell Evan Llerena, compares his first days in Kindergarten with his previous pre-Kindergarten class.

³ Martí, 18:296. From Martí's original introduction in the first issue of *The Golden Years*.

contemporary journalistic pieces, and, importantly, for this discussion, essays on world history. Many, at the time, chided the Cuban leader for a project perceived as infantile, yet Martí's journal for youngsters reveals sophisticated views on freedom and resistance, as well as, on how life should be led. Over one hundred years later, it remains a teaching tool in elementary schools throughout Spanish-speaking Latin America. To the modern reader, *The Golden Years* appears refreshingly innovative, creatively instructive, and remarkably prescient.

The children's magazines in English that Martí knew, such as *Harper's Young People* and *St. Nicholas*, were free of the conspicuous moralizing intent the Spanish ones of the time presented.⁴ The most popular children's magazines published in Spain during the late nineteenth-century were *Los Niños* (The Children), *El Camarada* (The Buddy), and *El Museo de la Juventud* (The Museum for Youngsters). They contained articles such as "The Lives of Saints" and "Moral Sentiments" that promoted how "submission and dependency are so important in this world that going against them could be the cause of innumerable evils."⁵ Martí intended to go against these traditions by writing articles such as "A Journey through the Land of the Annamese," which are iconoclastic and visibly subversive.

⁴ Silvia A. Barros, "La literatura para niños de José Martí en su época" in *Estudios Críticos sobre la prosa modernista hispanoamericana* ed. Jose Olivio Jiménez (New York: Eliseo Torres & Sons, 1975), 110.

⁵ Salvador Arias, *Un proyecto martiano esencial: 'La Edad de Oro'* (Havana: Centro de Estudios Martianos, 2001), 49. "La literatura escrita en lengua española para niños y jóvenes parecía apegarse a los moldes más convencionales y retrogradados, en revistas peninsulares como *Los Niños* (*conferencias infantiles*), *El Camarada* y *El Museo de la Juventud*, que entre "Vidas de santos" y "Sentimientos morales" presentaba narraciones donde se postulaba que "tan necesarios son en este mundo la sumisión y dependencia, que el quebrantarlas puede ser origen de males sin cuentos." For a thorough description of the development of educational writings for children through the centuries, from the Spanish thirteenth to nineteenth, see Herminio Almendros, *A propósito de "La Edad de Oro": notas sobre literatura infantil* (Havana: Instituto Cubano del Libro, 1972).

Martí's children's journal, unfortunately, lasted only four issues. It ended abruptly, even though he had material for many more issues; since in what became the last issue, an epilogue relays forthcoming themes and story ideas. Philosophical differences with the publisher caused Martí to cease publication since, in his own words to his beloved friend Manuel Mercado, "due to conviction or commercial apprehension, [the publisher] wanted me to speak of 'the fear of God,' and that the name of God, and not tolerance and a divine spirit guide all the articles and stories."⁶ Martí did invest a "divine spirit" in the publication; it was, however, one not modeled after the publisher's expectations or late nineteenth-century Western social conventions.

Latin American literary critics have written enlightening studies on *The Golden Years*⁷; however, Martí's work to educate children has received little attention from English-speaking scholars, particularly historians. This chapter seeks to redress this deficiency and to shed new light on this aspect of Martí's political efforts and literary productions by taking a historiographical approach to *The Golden Years*.

This chapter specifically examines Martí's presentation of world history in "The Story of Humanity, told through its Houses" appearing in the August 1889 issue and "A Journey through the Land of the Annamese" in the October 1889 issue. It also analyzes, to a lesser extent, Martí's nation-building efforts in the short biographical narrative,

⁶ Martí, 20:153. Martí wrote to his close friend Manuel Mercado in a November 1889 letter "por creencia o por miedo de comercio, quería que yo hablase del 'temor de Dios', y que el nombre de Dios, y no la tolerancia y el espíritu divino, estuvieran en todos los artículos e historias."

⁷ Salvador Arias, *Un proyecto martiano esencial: 'La Edad de Oro'* (Havana: Centro de Estudios Martianos, 2001); José Martí, *La Edad de Oro. Edición Crítica de Eduardo Lolo* (Miami: Ediciones Universal, 2001); Fina García Marruz, "Lecciones de 'La Edad de Oro'" in *Temas martianos: tercera serie* (Havana: Centro de Estudios Martianos, 1995); Roberto Fernández Retamar, introduction to *José Martí: La Edad de Oro. Edición crítica anotada y prologada por Roberto Fernández Retamar* (Mexico: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1992); and Fryda Schultz de Montovani, introduction to *José Martí: 'La Edad de Oro'* (San Salvador, El Salvador: Departamento Editorial Ministerio de Cultura, 1955) are among the most extensive literary examinations of *The Golden Years*.

“Three Heroes” appearing in the first issue (July 1889) and his presentation of Africa in “Stories of Elephants” in the October 1889 installment. By examining how Martí wrote and represented the histories of different world cultures, this chapter demonstrates that the Cuban leader’s narratives diverged from traditional late nineteenth-century stories, for instance, by instructing children to take a critical approach to authority.

This chapter’s analysis of “The Story of Humanity, told through its Houses”; “A Journey through the Land of the Annamese”; “Three Heroes”; and “Stories of Elephants” will demonstrate that *The Golden Years*, indeed, carried “profound thought” in its attempt to build nation and national awareness; to equip a new independent Cuban republic with civic values; and to nurture a new Spanish-American consciousness by inculcating moral lessons in children, the future citizens of Latin America. In a greater sense, these four stories also teach children how to lead their lives and what examples to follow and which figures to emulate. If “authors such as Bancroft in the U.S. [and] Michelet in France developed historical writing to a level sufficient to inform and inspire national consciousness,”⁸ Martí developed a historical writing with similar effect; however, Martí’s transcended national boundaries. His historical writing sought to develop a national consciousness, a Cuban identity; but more significantly, Martí sought to write histories for Spanish-speaking Americans that would “supply our lands with genuine men and women.”⁹

What moral values did Martí teach youngsters? Were they the prevailing moral norms of his time? Were they the values that late nineteenth-century society sought to

⁸ Patrick Manning, “Methods and Materials” in *World Histories*, ed. Marnie Hughes-Warrington, (London and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), 47.

⁹ Martí, 20:147.

instruct its children? As a deeply personal endeavor, *The Golden Years* was a painful form of indirect confession of his own situation,¹⁰ particularly a longing to be with his young son who remained in Cuba. Martí sought to impart the “proper” values he considered modern individuals should share. Many of these conflicted with prevailing attitudes, as this chapter demonstrates. The “proper” values Martí sought to transmit were not, for instance, traditional late nineteenth-century narratives’ high conception of the European conquest of the Americas and the low regard for non-European cultures. Rather, Martí sought to re-craft traditional late nineteenth-century views of the world, specifically as they were taught to children at the time.

Martí had two major reasons behind *The Golden Years*: first, to engender new values for a soon-to-be independent nation and second, to regenerate Spanish-American regional consciousness. Martí aimed to achieve these by teaching children, as well as adults. He expected many adults to read and, indeed, many were interested in his children’s writings just as today many grownups read Lewis Carroll or Antoine Saint Exupéry’s works (the eminent Cuban intellectual, Enrique José Varona, affirmed in 1889 that “it’s a journal for the little ones, but deserves all the attention of the grownups”).¹¹ Martí therefore sought to inculcate children and adults with values derived from local traditions as well as from other world regions –indeed, “other areas may fertilize the crop, but the farming must be done according to our soil.”¹²

¹⁰ Fina García Marruz, “Lecciones de ‘La Edad de Oro’” in *Temas martianos: tercera serie* (Havana: Centro de Estudio Martianos, 1995), 223.

¹¹ Roberto Fernández Retamar, introduction to *José Martí: La Edad de Oro. Edición crítica anotada y prologada por Roberto Fernández Retamar* (Mexico: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1992), 12.

¹² Martí, 20:147.



Fig. 1 Cover of the first issue of *La Edad de Oro* (*The Golden Years*), July 1889 ¹³

“Three Heroes”

In the July 1889 inaugural issue of *The Golden Years*, the first major story of the magazine is “Three Heroes,” a biographical account of the early nineteenth-century Spanish-American independence leaders, Simón Bolívar of Venezuela, José de San Martín of Argentina, and Miguel Hidalgo of Mexico. This story shows how Martí placed Spanish-American consciousness at the heart of his children’s project. By inaugurating

¹³ All images in this chapter are from original illustrations as they appeared in *The Golden Years*, reproduced in José Martí, *Obras Completas*, 2d ed., 27 vols. (Havana: Editorial Ciencias Sociales, 1975).

his children's magazine with an account of the three Spanish-American independence leaders, he affirms the significance of a pan-Spanish-American awareness in the upbringing of a Cuban, Mexican, or Argentine child. Martí begins the story with

they say that a traveler arrived in Caracas one day at sunset, and without dusting himself off from his journey, he didn't ask where he could eat or sleep, instead, he asked which way to Bolívar's statue. And they also say that among the tall and scented trees of the square, he wept in front of the statue, like a father when embraced by a child. The traveler did well, because all Americans should love Bolívar like a father. Bolívar, and all who fought like him for America to be of the Americans. All [should be admired]: the famous hero, and [even] the last soldier, who is an unknown hero.¹⁴

Martí depicts himself as the traveler who arrives in Caracas, alluding to his own first visit to the Venezuelan capital in January 1881. Martí teaches children to love Bolívar for what he represents, an individual who fought for Spanish-Americans to be free from an intrusive power, Spain. This piece may not be considered world historical, since it is more regional in nature. Yet, it is an attempt to build, beyond an individual national consciousness, such as a Mexican or a Venezuelan one, a broad, regional Spanish-American awareness through the presentation of these three historical figures, albeit within the "great man" common narrative of the time. Nevertheless, Martí wrote that the last soldier "is an unknown hero," to be loved as much as Bolívar and the more famous ones.

¹⁴ Martí, 18:304. "Cuentan que un viajero llegó un día a Caracas al anochecer , y sin sacudirse el polvo del camino, no preguntó donde se comía ni se dormía, sino como se iba adonde estaba la estatua de Bolívar. Y cuentan que el viajero, sólo con los árboles altos y olorosos de la plaza, lloraba frente a la estatua, que parecía que se movía , como un padre cuando se le acerca un hijo. El viajero hizo bien, porque todos los americanos deben querer a Bolívar como a un padre. A Bolívar, y a todos los que pelearon como él porque la América fuese del hombre americano. A todos: al héroe famoso, y al último soldado, que es un héroe desconocido."

Martí teaches, first, to place love of country above one's personal needs (the traveler pays respect to Bolívar's statue before dusting him/herself off); second, that the love for nation should be considered as important and as personal as the love of a parent for a child (the traveler wept like a father for a child); third, that both the great hero and the common, unassuming individual who fought for America's freedom should be equally venerated; and fourth, these figures are important for their efforts in seeking Spanish-Americas' freedom from foreign control. These are lessons in Cuban nation building: Cuban children should revere figures like Bolívar, San Martín, and Hidalgo who fought for the continent to be free. They are also lessons in raising Spanish-American consciousness. The Mexican hero is as significant as the New Granadan and the Argentine ones. Children should value these figures for resisting foreign aggression and domination, as well as for being individuals who sacrificed fortune or their own lives for noble causes.

Although the "Three Heroes" story is not central to this chapter's discussion, its prominent place in the inaugural issue demonstrates that *The Golden Years*'s overarching objective was to inculcate values that served in nation building and in increasing Spanish-American unity—a unity that proved illusive and that was more of an ideal than a reality during Martí's and even in contemporary times. Martí felt both love and compassion for what he termed "Our America" (i.e. Latin America) and his devotion was, according to Enrico Mario Santí, "tempered by a tragic knowledge of the petty interests that prevented the so-called sister republics from acting as a political block [in assisting and defending Cuban independence]—a reluctance [Martí] knew would seal, as it did, the fate of his

country of origin.”¹⁵ Nevertheless, inaugurating his cherished children’s project with a historical account of these three Spanish-American independence leaders underscores the prominent place history held in Martí’s mind, particularly how important he deemed history as an instrument in nation building.

Martí also presents his views on freedom and democracy in “Three Heroes.” Martí wrote that “freedom is the right all men and women have to be honest and honorable, to think and to speak without hypocrisy.” Martí teaches children the significance of resisting and defeating corrupt and oppressive governments. He does not specify whether this is valid only for foreign nefarious governments; he implies his prescription applies to internally corrupt ones as well.¹⁶ Martí writes

Since the moment they’re able to think, children should be aware and think of everything they see around them. Children should feel for those who cannot live honorably [freely] and should work so that all humans could be honorable [free]. The child that is happy to live without knowing or without the awareness of whether he or she is living honorably [freely] is like a child who lives from the work of a lazy brute and is on the path of becoming one.¹⁷

¹⁵ Enrico Mario Santí, “Our America,’ the Gilded Age, and the Crisis of Latinamericanism” in *José Martí’s “Our America”: From National to Hemispheric Cultural Studies* ed. Jeffrey Belnap & Raul Fernández (Durham: Duke University Press, 1998), 188.

¹⁶ Chapter Four of this dissertation explores Martí’s prescriptions against domestically corrupt governments as they appear in an essay on Ulysses S. Grant.

¹⁷ Martí, 18:305. “Libertad es el derecho que todo hombre tiene a ser honrado, y a pensar y a hablar sin hipocresía. En América no se podía ser honrado, ni pensar, ni hablar. Un hombre que oculta lo que piensa, o no se atreve a decir lo que piensa, no es un hombre honrado. Un hombre que obedece a un mal gobierno, sin trabajar para que el gobierno sea bueno, no es un hombre honrado. Un hombre que se conforma con obedecer a leyes injustas, y permite que pisen en el país en que nació los hombres que se lo maltratan, no es un hombre honrado. El niño, desde que puede pensar, debe pensar en todo lo que ve, debe padecer por todos los que no pueden vivir con honradez, debe trabajar porque puedan ser honrados todos los hombres, y debe ser un hombre honrado. El niño que no piensa en lo que sucede a su alrededor, y se contenta con vivir, sin saber si vive honradamente, es como un hombre que vive del trabajo de un bribón, y está en camino de bribón.”

To a late nineteenth-century reader Martí's words may appear subversive. Martí teaches children to not accept uncritically their existence. He urges them to think about their surroundings; to look at the type of government over them; and to feel and work for the freedom of others. The complacent child, the one who does not know whether he or she lives freely, is like one who works for a lazy scoundrel and is on the path of becoming one, according to Martí.

Although the Cuban leader sought to nurture Cuban nationhood, he was careful not to directly promote it in the magazine, since it was also shipped and sold in colonial Cuba. He did not outright mention which governments should be resisted. Instead, by teaching in the story of "Three Heroes" to live honorably and honestly and to fight for defending an overarching truth, he instructs the reader to resist any type of corrupt government, be it colonial as in the case of Spanish rule over Cuba or dictatorial as in the case of Porfirio Díaz's government in Mexico.¹⁸

Freedom is sacred to Martí. He views Bolívar, San Martín, and Hidalgo as freedom-fighters and these three men as "*sagrados* (sacred)."¹⁹ Martí draws a clear distinction between virtue, honor, and freedom, and complacency and apathy that enables, in his mind, oppression. Viewing oppression as criminal, Martí teaches children to admire as heroes those who fight for their society's freedom and who suffer poverty and misfortune for defending an overarching truth. Those who fight for ambition, to enslave other societies, or to gain more power, or to take land away from other peoples,

¹⁸ In 1877, Martí left Mexico after an extended stay because of his incompatible views on government, freedom, and society under Porfirio Díaz's dictatorship.

¹⁹ Martí, 18:305.

are not heroes, according to Martí, they are criminals.²⁰ The Cuban writer links a political message of fighting for freedom to a social and ethical one. One must fight not only to be politically independent, but also to become socially and personally free. One must think independently and one must also defend the right of others to do so without allowing any one individual or group to overwhelm others in imposing an evil, corrupt government. Martí does not say that if corrupt governments are internally-derived they are more acceptable or that oppression from the outside deserves more attention. Rather, Martí's views on freedom and self-autonomy are indivisible, affirming that he did not condone home-grown, domestic abuses in the name of defending against external threats.

“Stories of Elephants”

Although “Stories of Elephants” is not a historical narrative in the sense of other stories surveyed, it represents an instance when Martí depicts Africa in his children's narratives, particularly important for a national leader whose nation's character is profoundly marked by African-derived culture.²¹ The story follows the line of popular late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century Western jungle stories, patterned after other narratives such as Rudyard Kipling's *The Jungle Books* (1894) and Edgar Rice Burroughs's *Tarzan of the Apes* (1914).²² “Stories of Elephants” teaches children more

²⁰ Martí, 18:308. “El corazón se llena de ternura al pensar en esos gigantescos fundadores. Esos son heroes; los que pelean para hacer a los pueblos libres, o los que padecen en pobreza y desgracia por defender una gran verdad. Los que pelean por la ambición, por hacer esclavos a otros pueblos, por tener más mando, por quitarle a otro pueblo sus tierras, no son heroes, sino criminales.”

²¹ For more on Africa in Martí's nation building efforts refer to my discussion in “Chapter One: Introduction.”

²² Eduardo Lolo, ed., *José Martí, La Edad de Oro, Edición crítica de Eduardo Lolo* (Miami, FL: Ediciones Universal, 2001), 269.

than about elephants. Even though Martí provides minute details on the anatomy of the elephant (e.g. its trunk has over forty thousand muscles), the story teaches how elephants are employed and viewed in South (India) and Southeast Asia (Siam) and how they are hunted in Africa, indirectly offering assessments on these different cultures.

Martí wrote this narrative to substitute another, “Electric Lights” (now lost) that due to its size did not fit in the October 1889 issue of *The Golden Years*.²³ Martí wrote from memory, basing his story on diverse sources such as newspaper articles of late nineteenth-century events in Africa and other works such as Charles F. Holder’s *The Ivory King: A Popular History of the Elephant and its Allies* (1888) and M. Vincent’s *The Land of the White Elephant* (1874).²⁴

Martí begins the story by describing how,

from Africa come strange news since European people are over there discovering the land and the nations of Europe want to govern those rich lands where with the heat of sun, fragrant and nutritious plants grow, and others that give fibers for textiles, and there are gold and diamonds, and elephants which create wealth, because, all over the world, the ivory of their tusks is sold at very high prices.²⁵

Martí recounts how “there also comes news of the courage with which the Blacks defend themselves, and of their wars, [who] like all nations when they begin to live, they fight to see who is stronger, or to take away from their neighbor what they wish for

²³ Lolo, 269.

²⁴ Lolo, 269.

²⁵ Martí, 18:485. “De Africa cuentan ahora muchas cosas extrañas, porque anda por allí la gente europea descubriendo el país, y los pueblos de Europa quieren mandar en aquella tierra rica, donde con el calor del sol crecen plantas de esencia y alimento, y otras que dan fibras de hacer telas, y hay oro y diamantes, y elefantes que son una riqueza, porque en todo el mundo se vende muy caro el marfil de sus colmillos.”

themselves.”²⁶ Martí continues, “in these wars the prisoners that the victor takes are made into slaves who [are sold] to the vile Moors that are over there searching for prisoners to buy, and then they sell them in Moorish lands.”²⁷ Martí presents Africa as a wealthy land, a land where wars caused by a certain perceived immaturity and greed for power and resources have different African groups in conflict. Nonetheless, the Moors, in this passage, are the ones portrayed as evil since they seek to trade in enslaved humans, buying them in Africa and selling them in their lands. By presenting slavery and slave traders in a harsh, negative manner, Martí teaches the child reader to loathe human bondage and those who benefit from it.

Martí explains that

from Europe good men go to Africa who do not wish the world to have these sales of men; and others go yearning for knowledge, and they live many years among brave tribes, until they find a rare herb, or a bird that has never been seen before, or a lake where a river begins: and others go in armies, paid by the Khedive who rules Egypt, to see how they can expel a famous fighter who’s known as the Mahdí, who says he should be the one to govern, because he is a free Moor, a friend of the poor, and not like the Khedive, who rules as a servant of the foreign Turkish Sultan, and hires Christian fighters to fight against the Moors of the land, and to take the land away from the black Sudanese.²⁸

²⁶ Martí, 18:485. “Cuentan muchas cosas del valor con que se defienden los negros, y de las guerras en que andan, como todos los pueblos cuando empiezan a vivir, que pelean por ver quién es más fuerte, o por quitar a su vecino lo que quieren tener ellos.”

²⁷ Martí, 18:485. “En estas guerras quedan de esclavos los prisioneros que tomó en la pelea el vencedor, que los vende a los moros infames que andan por allá buscando prisioneros que comprar, y luego los venden en las tierras moras.”

²⁸ Martí, 18:485. “De Europa van a Africa hombres buenos, que no quieren que haya en el mundo estas ventas de hombres; y otros van por el ansia de saber, y viven años entre las tribus bravas, hasta que encuentran una yerba rara, o un pájaro que nunca se ha visto, o el lago de donde nace un río: y otros van de tropa, a sueldo del Khedive que manda en Egipto, a ver como echan de la tierra a un peleador famoso que llaman el Mahdí, y dice que él debe gobernar, porque él es moro libre y amigo de los pobres, no como el Khedive, que manda como criado del Sultán turco extranjero, y alquila peleadores cristianos para pelear contra el moro del país, y quitar la tierra a los negros sudaneses.”

In the above passage, Europeans are portrayed in both positive and negative light. Those who go to Africa to end the slave trade and to search for knowledge are depicted favorably; those Christians who go hired to expand the Turkish Sultan's rule are not. Also, the Khedive is portrayed negatively since he represents foreign rule by the Turkish Sultan.

Martí relates how,

in those wars a very brave Englishman died, a certain 'Gordon, the Chinaman,' who wasn't Chinese, but was very white and of very blue eyes, but he had the nickname of Chinaman because in China he committed many heroic acts, and subdued rebellious people with tenderness, more than with power, which was what he did in Sudan, where he lived among the Blacks of the land, like their ruler, and he confronted them to scold them like children, without greater weapon than his blue eyes, when he was attacked by darts and spears, or he began crying [moved by] mercy for the Blacks when, in the solitude of night, he saw them faraway making gestures [and signals], to join in the hills, to see how they could attack white men. The Mahdí was more powerful than he, and they say that Gordon has died, or the Mahdí has him prisoner.²⁹

A foreigner such as Gordon is depicted favorably since he rules more with "tenderness" than with "power." Martí implies that Gordon lives among the locals without exploiting them. The Cuban leader relates to children how the Europeans are motivated by commercial interests in Africa, "many Germans and French are over there exploring,

²⁹ Martí, 18:485-6. "En esas guerras dicen que murió un inglés muy valiente, aquel "Gordon el chino", que no era chino, sino muy blanco y de ojos muy azules, pero tenía el apodo de chino, porque en China hizo muchas heroicidades, y aquietó a la gente revuelta con el cariño más que con el poder; que fue lo que hizo en el Sudán, donde vivía solo entre los negros del país, como su gobernador, y se les ponía delante a regañarlos como a hijos, sin más armas que sus ojos azules, cuando lo atacaban con las lanzas y las azagayas, o se echaba a llorar de piedad por los negros cuando en la soledad de la noche los veía de lejos hacerse señas, para juntarse en el monte, a ver cómo atacarían a los hombres blancos. El Mahdí pudo más que él, y dicen que Gordon ha muerto, o lo tiene preso el Mahdí."

discovering lands, trading and exchanging with the Blacks, and seeing how they can take commerce away from the Moors.”³⁰

In the rest of the story, Martí describes how different types of elephants have lived in what is now Siberia and how they live in Siam, where they are

worshipped when they are of light skin, that they believe to be divine, since Siamese religion teaches that Buddha lives in all places, and in all beings, and sometimes in one or the other, and since there is no being of greater body than the elephant, nor color that makes one think more of purity than white, the white elephant is worshipped, as if in him there would be more Buddha than in other living beings.³¹

Martí explains how in South Asia, “the princes of Hindustan travel on velvet covered elephants” where, as they go, people hang rich tapestries from their balconies and “fill the streets with rose petals.”³² In Africa, Martí relates, “they [elephants] are not seen by the people as gods; rather, they place traps in the forest, and they jump on them when they see them fall: to nourish themselves from the meat, that is succulent and special” or “they kill them to take their tusks.”³³

³⁰ Martí, 18:486. “Muchos alemanes y franceses andan allá explorando, descubriendo tierras, tratando y cambiando con los negros, y viendo cómo les quitan el comercio a los moros.”

³¹ Martí, 18:488-9. “En Siam no es sólo cariño lo que le tienen al elefante, sino adoración, cuando es de piel clara, que allá creen divina, porque la religión siamesa les enseña que Buda vive en todas partes, y en todos los seres, y unas veces en unos y otras en otros, y como no hay vivo de más cuerpo que el elefante, ni color que haga pensar más en la pureza que lo blanco, al elefante blanco adoran, como si en él hubiera más de Buda que en los demás seres vivos.”

³² Martí, 18:488. “Los príncipes del Indostán van a sus viajes en elefantes cubiertos de terciopelos de mucho bordado y pedrería, y cuando viene de Inglaterra otro príncipe, lo pasean por las calles en el camarín de paño de oro que va meciéndose sobre el lomo de los elefantes dóciles, y el pueblo pone en los balcones sus tapices ricos, y llena las calles de hojas de rosa.”

³³ Martí, 18:489. “En Africa no los miran los pueblos del país como dioses, sino que les ponen trampas en el bosque, y se les echan encima en cuanto los ven caer: para alimentarse de la carne, que es fina y jugosa... los matan para llevarse los colmillos”

The story ends with a dramatic elephant hunting scene. Martí writes “blood flows in spurts, and the infuriated animal, smashing thickets, heads to the river, to the river of water that heals. And it fills its trunk many times, and it empties it on the wound, and throws it over the hunter with confounding force.” Martí then concludes “the elephant already enters the deepest part. From his revolver, the hunter shoots five bullets into the [elephant’s] stomach, and he runs, as if to save himself, towards a nearby tree, while the elephant, with its trunk hanging, comes out towards the [river] bank, falls and collapses.”³⁴ This story has more of an informative value regarding the then current events of Africa. It also contains an entertaining aspect with its vivid descriptions of hunting scenes. In this story, Martí avoids explicit suggestions of nation building values, perhaps, for having been written to substitute another piece in the journal and therefore lacking the same amount of preparation as the other essays surveyed. Also, as mentioned in Chapter One, Martí avoided presenting Africa and African subjects as models, lest they be used by his political opponents to perpetuate Spanish rule of Cuba for fear of African-Cuban control of the island. Nevertheless, “Stories of Elephants” is significant for its representation of Africa, albeit in traditional late nineteenth-century Western terms, by a national leader who worked for and with Cubans of African descent.³⁵

³⁴ Martí, 18:490. “La sangre corre a chorros, y el animal enfurecido, aplastando el matorral, va al río, al río de agua que cura. Y se llena la trompa muchas veces, y la vacía sobre la herida, la echa con fuerza que lo aturde, sobre el cazador. Ya va a entrar más a lo hondo el elefante. El cazador le dispara las cinco balas de su revólver en el vientre, y corre, por si se puede salvar, a un árbol cercano, mientras el elefante, con la trompa colgando, sale a la orilla, y se derrumba.”

³⁵ Chapter One develops the notion of why Martí did not employ Africa or African history in the same manner as Native American or more distant world cultures. For more on the silence of “blackness” in Cuban nationalism see Ada Ferrer, “The Silence of Patriots: Race and Nationalism in Martí’s Cuba” in *José Martí’s ‘Our America’: From National to Hemispheric Cultural Studies*, ed. Jeffrey Belnap and Raúl Fernández (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1998), 228-49.

“The Story of Humanity, told through its Houses”

“The Story of Humanity, told through its Houses” was patterned after French essays on the 1889 Paris Exposition pavilions that showcased the development of human dwellings;³⁶ however, Martí infuses significant amounts of political and social philosophy in his adaptations. Reflecting methodologies developed by scholars such as Giambattista Vico (1668-1744) and Cesare Cantù (1804-1895) who employed architecture as historical source,³⁷ Martí imparts information to children on different global societies through a look at different types of human dwellings. In each depiction, there is much of the traditional outlook of Martí’s time, yet there are also elements that depart from traditional attitudes such as new ways of considering the European conquest of Native American societies.

Regarding the “*menhir*,” a prehistoric upright, standing stone created in Europe to commemorate past events, Martí relates how the Maya Indians called their own version, “*katún*.” Martí describes, in “The History of Humanity, told through its Houses” that the Mayas and the Europeans had similar traditions, except the Mayas were unaware that the Gauls were “on the other side of the ocean.” Nevertheless, the Mayans, according to Martí, created similar items like the faraway Gauls and the Germanic tribes of Europe.³⁸

³⁶ Lolo, 91. According to Eduardo Lolo, this story is modeled after P. Legrand’s “*L’Habitation Humaine. Histoire de la Maison à travers les siècles*,” Emile Goudeau’s “*L’Histoire de L’Habitation*,” and Victor Champier’s “*Les 44 habitations humaines*.” All deal with the 1889 Paris Exposition Pavilions, particularly the forty-four buildings that represented human dwellings since the prehistoric to late nineteenth-century times.

³⁷ Graciella Cruz-Taura, “El pensamiento histórico de José Martí” in *Transcendencia cultural de la obra de José Martí. Actas del simposio internacional celebrado en Praga, del 21 al 23 de octubre de 2002* ed. Anna Housková (Prague: Department of Philosophy and Letters, Charles University of Prague, 2003), 99.

³⁸ Martí, 18:357. “Para recordar las cosas elevaban en el suelo una piedra grande, como una columna, que llamaban “*menhir*” en Europa, y que los indios mayas llamaban “*katún*” porque los mayas de Yucatán no sabían que del otro lado del mar viviera el pueblo galo, en donde está Francia ahora, pero hacían lo mismo que los galos, y que los germanos, que vivían donde está ahora Alemania”

Martí teaches the commonality of all peoples by providing examples of how peoples may create items with similar purposes yet in different ways. He does not present the Mayans as beneath the Europeans. Rather, European and Native American cultures may be viewed as equally significant to human history since they had similar traditions. Since the Mayans and the Gauls had similar traditions and the former did not know about the existence of the latter, then the Mayans were not able to duplicate European culture, complicating notions of Europeans bringing “civilization” to the Indians. Martí instructs his reader that all humans across the globe are equal. “[They] appear and grow in similar fashion and think about the same things, with the only difference being the land where they live because a human who is born in a land of trees and flowers thinks more about beauty and adornment, and has more things to say than one who is born in a cold land, where he sees a dark sky and his cave [is] among rocks.”³⁹ If all humans on Earth are similar, think and act in similar fashion with then the only difference, to Martí, is how the environment affects human behavior. By showing how humans have developed different types of dwellings according to their surroundings, Martí stresses that the environment conditions human responses and, therefore, development. Some societies are more complex than others not due to an inherent superiority. Civilization is not the singular outcome of human ingenuity; rather, the environment plays a key role.

Martí continues, “and we learn something else, where the wild, savage man is born, without knowing about other societies and civilizations, he begins living as men

³⁹ Martí, 18:357. “Estudiando se aprende eso : que el hombre es lo mismo en todas partes, y aparece y crece de la misma manera, y hace y piensa las mismas cosas, sin más diferencia que la de la tierra en que vive, porque el hombre que nace en tierra de árboles y de flores piensa más en la hermosura y el adorno, y tiene más cosas que decir, que él que nace en una tierra fría, donde ve el cielo oscuro y su cueva en la roca.”

who lived thousands of years ago.”⁴⁰ Martí’s notion of a “savage man” rings of late nineteenth-century Western masculinist biases. Nevertheless, within his understanding of what is “savage” and we do not exactly know which societies he referred to as such; perhaps, he meant men and women who lived a nomadic lifestyle, Martí does not promote that “savages” or “uncivilized men” are a result of an inherent deficiency. To be a savage is, instead, linked to not knowing about other cultures and other societies. Martí explains that “even in our current times, if people do not know about other cultures, they live as ancient savages.” Societal development, according to Martí, is not a product of the linear progression of innate intellectual exceptionalism. Societal development, in Martí’s mind, is linked not to the time it takes to develop inherent qualities, but to a willingness and an ability to acquire knowledge of the world and of other cultures. In this sense, Martí believed that cross-cultural interactions facilitated growth and development. He shows that developed, sophisticated, and civilized societies are a product of effective responses to the environment and to the challenges of cross-cultural interactions. Martí’s views of how societies exchange knowledge and technology are not too distant from William McNeill’s notions of cultural diffusion appearing several decades later.⁴¹ His conceptions of the role of and the responses to the environment as human and societal determinants find resonance in Jared Diamond’s more contemporary views on the environment, except that Diamond’s argument favors European exceptionalism.⁴²

⁴⁰ Martí, 18:357. “Y otra cosa se aprende, y es que donde nace el hombre salvaje, sin saber que haya pueblos en el mundo, empieza a vivir lo mismo que vivieron los hombres de hace miles de años.”

⁴¹ William McNeill, *The Rise of the West: A History of the Human Community* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1963).

⁴² Jared Diamond, *Guns, Germs, and Steel: the Fates of Human Societies* (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 1997).

Regarding human development and societal advances, Martí taught children that no society is inherently superior over another and that if all humans shared the same environment and level of cross-cultural interactions, then all human groups would have experienced similar levels of societal complexity.

Reiterating the case for cultural diffusion, Martí writes

it is not the case that there was a Stone Age when all societies lived exactly alike, and then a Bronze one, when men began to work metal, and then an age of Iron. There are societies that live, as France does today, in the most beautiful part of the Iron Age, with its Eiffel tower that [penetrates] clouds; and there are other societies that live in the Stone Age, like the Indians who build their homes from tree branches, and with their stone arrows kill birds in the forest and impale flying fish in the air. But societies today grow at a more hurried pace, because they come together with older societies, and learn from them what they do not know; not as in older times, when they had to discover things little by little on their own.⁴³

Beyond promoting the role that cultural diffusion plays in societal development, Martí instructs that societies, in modern times, develop faster for what they learn from older societies. Inter-societal relations hasten the pace of development. What modern historians may consider globalization, Martí, without the distinct terminology essentially teaches children that “a hurried pace” –the globalization we refer to today– allows societies to leap forward by acquiring knowledge and technology from other societies and therefore permitting to overpass development patterns of other societies.

⁴³ Martí, 18:358. “No es que hubo una edad de piedra, en que todos los pueblos vivían a la vez del mismo modo; y luego otra de bronce, cuando los hombres empezaron a trabajar el metal, y luego otra edad de hierro. Hay pueblos que viven, como Francia ahora, en lo más hermoso de la edad de hierro, con su torre de Eiffel que se entra por las nubes; y otros pueblos que viven en la edad de piedra, como el indio que fabrica su casa en las ramas de los árboles, y con su lanza de pedernal sale a matar los pájaros del bosque y a ensartar en el aire los peces voladores del río. Pero los pueblos de ahora crecen más de prisa, porque se juntan con los pueblos más viejos, y aprenden con ellos lo que no saben; no como antes, que tenían que ir poco a poco descubriéndolo todo ellos mismos.”

Martí's use of poetic language in describing the Eiffel tower and in portraying it as the most beautiful symbol of the Iron Age reveals how he viewed technology. He did not consider technology as evil, alienating, or restraining humanity. Instead, he describes technology in the same poetic manner as the Native American who lives closer to nature. By portraying both modern France and the indigenous American in similar terms, Martí imparts that there is no inherent superiority of the former over the latter. Therefore, not only does the story's content profess his views, but also the form of the narrative gives equal attention to both cultures.

In "The Story of Humanity, told through its Houses," Martí teaches children that a society has no greater value over another in world history. De-centering the historical discussion from Europe, he rebalances Eurocentric ideas of the superiority of European civilization, so prevalent in the late nineteenth-century and he visibly diverges from conventional late nineteenth-century Western thought. Wasn't he after all a child of Europeans? Wasn't he writing his children stories while in New York City, a major metropolis and focal point of Western culture in North America? Martí writes,

When European men lived in the Bronze Age, they built better houses, although not as detailed or perfected, as the Mexicans and the Peruvians of the Americas who lived simultaneously in two ages, because they continued working with flints when they already developed their gold mines, and their temples with golden suns like the ones in the sky, and their *huacas*, which were Peruvian cemeteries, where they placed their dead with the jars and jewels they used while living.⁴⁴

⁴⁴ Martí, 18:359. "Cuando los hombres de Europa vivían en la edad de bronce, ya hicieron casas mejores, aunque no tan labradas y perfectas como las de los peruanos y mexicanos de América, en quienes estuvieron siempre juntas las dos edades, porque siguieron trabajando con pedernal cuando ya tenían sus minas de oro, y sus templos con soles de oro como el cielo, y sus huacas, que eran los cementerios del Perú, donde ponían a los muertos con las prendas y jarros que usaban en vida."

Although Europeans in the Bronze Age developed better, more functional houses, they were not as perfect or ornate as the Peruvian and Mexican ones. Martí does not specifically refer to these indigenous American societies as the Inca, the Mexica, or the Aztec, but rather employs the nationalist term of “Mexicans” and “Peruvians” in order to emphasize that the Mexicans and Peruvians of his time owe their culture not only to the legacy of European conquest, but to an equally significant indigenous one. During Martí’s time, “Mexican” and “Peruvian” were nationalist terms that referred to individuals living in the modern nation-states of Mexico and Peru; yet Martí also employed “Mexicans” and “Peruvians” to refer to the pre-colonial and colonial natives.



Fig. 2 Aztec Building⁴⁵

By referring to people in Mexico and Peru as “Mexicans” and “Peruvians” before European penetration and after decolonization, then the European elements in Mexican and Peruvian cultures are subordinated to native ones. By continuing to refer to these peoples as “Mexicans” and “Peruvians” and not as “Spanish-Americans,” Martí indirectly teaches that indigenous American elements within Spanish-American society

⁴⁵ Martí emphasizes the significance of indigenous American cultures in world history by publishing this image of an Aztec building within the larger sized ones in “The Story of Humanity, told through its Houses,” appearing in the August 1889 issue of *The Golden Years*.

have successfully overcome nearly four centuries of European cultural suppression. Even with his late nineteenth-century views of a fast moving technological world, the houses of the Mexicans and the Peruvians were more “perfect” than the European ones.

Martí challenged children to think not in linear terms and to not apply European conceptions of development to Native American societies. The Mexicans and Peruvians lived simultaneously in the Stone and the Bronze Ages since they continued using flints while still mining precious metals and constructing beautiful buildings of gold. A deeper reading of this passage reveals that Martí’s declarations regarding how Native American societies employed techniques of both ages and how they lived simultaneously in two developmental periods were a moral commentary on the value of maintaining older traditions. By showing that Native Americans maintained older techniques and simultaneously embraced new technologies, Martí implies that technology is not necessarily incompatible with longstanding traditions. In this context, Martí’s passage is also a commentary against a society driven by consuming and discarding which he particularly pointed to in separate essays on American life. Although it would be a stretch to believe that a young child might understand this point; an adult reading the story would most likely not have missed it.

Martí also implies that patterns of European development should not be projected unto other world societies, in this case Native American ones. One should not assume that other societies should or must develop according to European patterns. Martí teaches that societies developed in different patterns and different types of development are not inherently or morally inferior or superior, only distinct from each other. These points are particularly remarkable considering Martí lived in a time of rising racism, when

Europeans employed judgments of “technological and civilizational development”⁴⁶ along with notions of race to craft policies towards non-Europeans. How Europeans perceived others and to what degree they were considered culturally inferior played a critical role in how they treated other world societies. The media and particularly schools and children’s books expounded these notions of European cultural superiority. Teaching children to view the indigenous peoples of the Americas, for so long portrayed as inferior, as more perfect, more beautiful, equally valuable, and in many ways technologically superior, complicates traditional late nineteenth-century presentations of non-European societies as substandard. Martí innovatively and courageously diverged from the social pressures and expectations of his late nineteenth-century Western environment (his publisher pressured him to modify his narratives)⁴⁷ in order to strengthen a Spanish-American consciousness where the Indian would not be looked down upon. Martí also attempted to build national and regional awareness by teaching children to embrace the local past, regardless of how the “civilized” Europeans and their descendents perceived it.

Martí structures his narrative on the development of humanity along the lines of Earth’s own geological development, an innovative approach for his time. Not only did the planet develop mountains and volcanoes through each “*capa* (layer)” of earth, but through the *capas* (layers)

we know how man has lived because in each layer there are human bones buried, and remains of animals and trees of that period, and cups and axes; and when comparing the layers of Earth of one

⁴⁶ See Michael Adas, *Machines as the Measure of Men: Science, Technology and Ideologies of Western Dominance* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1989).

⁴⁷ Martí, 20:153.

place to those of another, one notices that men have lived in the same manner in each Earthly age: the only difference being that the Earth takes a long time to pass from one period to another, as well as to grow a new layer, and the same thing happens with the Romans and the Bretons during the time of Julius Caesar, that when the Romans had marble palaces with golden statues, and wore outfits of very fine wool, the people of Brittany lived in caves, and wore wild fur, and fought with maces made from hard tree trunks.⁴⁸

Human development is not only affected by the environment, as Martí showed earlier, but in this section of “The Story of Humanity, told through its Houses,” he describes societies or civilizations according to geography and geological conditions, as Felipe Fernandez-Armesto would much later do in greater detail.⁴⁹ Martí believed in employing archaeology to study history. He also considered that societies evolved slowly just as the layers of Earth’s rock. By describing societal development in terms of geology and planetary evolution, Martí reiterates to children how there is no inherent superiority in any one people over another. Humans are a product of the Earth and the Earth is the same planetary home of all, albeit with very different climates and topographical conditions for different peoples.⁵⁰ The Romans had a more complex society than the Bretons in France, but during Martí’s time Brittany (in France) was more economically developed than many regions of Italy. Hence, Martí’s descriptions of how human dwellings developed

⁴⁸ Martí, 18:360-1. “Por esas capas de tierra es por donde se sabe cómo ha vivido el hombre, porque en cada una hay enterrados huesos de él, y restos de los animales y árboles de aquella edad, y vasos y hachas; y comparando las capas de un lugar con las de otro se ve que los hombres viven en todas partes casi del mismo modo en cada edad de la tierra: solo que la tierra tarda mucho en pasar de una edad a otra, y en echarse una capa nueva, y así sucede lo de los romanos y los bretones de Inglaterra en tiempo de Julio César, que cuando los romanos tenían palacios de marmol con estatuas de oro, y usaban trajes de lana muy fina, la gente de Bretaña vivía en cuevas, y se vestía con las pieles salvajes, y peleaba con mazas hechas de los troncos duros.”

⁴⁹ Felipe Fernández-Armesto, *Civilizations: Culture, Ambition, and the Transformation of Nature* (London: MacMillan, 2000).

⁵⁰ Martí, 18:360.

lead the reader to confront notions of European civilizational superiority. European civilization, as Martí taught children, was not on an equal footing throughout Europe during the same historical period, for example, the Romans and the Bretons had different levels of societal complexity. The former wore fine wool and the latter wore animal fur. The reader should therefore not consider Native American societies as beneath or behind European ones for even within Europe, societies were less complex than other European ones.

Significantly, “The Story of Humanity, told through its Houses” is a comparative approach to teaching world history. In the narrative, Martí did not devote a section to the Europeans, another to the Americas, and another to Africa, for instance. Rather, within the same paragraph, he compares and juxtaposes through the model of architecture examples of how each society approached or developed a building technique. Regarding burials and religious edifices, Martí writes

and we also see that all societies have taken good care of burying their dead with great respect and have all built tall monuments, as to be closer to the sky, just as we do today with our towers. Construction workers made mountains of earth, where they would bury their corpses: the Mexicans placed their temples at the summit of their tallest pyramids: the Peruvians had their ‘*chulpa*’ of stone, which was a wide tower at the top, like the handle of a cane: on the island of Sardinia, there are big towers known as “*nuraghs*”, that no one knows to which society they belonged to; and the Egyptians raised their pyramids with gigantic stones, and with the hardest marble rock, they made their obelisks, where they wrote their history with signs known as ‘hieroglyphics.’⁵¹

⁵¹ Martí, 18:361. “Y se ve también que todos los pueblos han cuidado mucho de enterrar a los muertos con gran respeto y han fabricado monumentos altos, como para estar más cerca del cielo, como nosotros hacemos ahora con las torres. Los terrapleneros hacían montañas de tierra, donde sepulataban los cadáveres: los mexicanos ponían sus templos en la cumbre de unas pirámides muy altas: los peruanos tenían su “*chulpa*” de piedra, que era una torre ancha por arriba, como un puño de bastón: en la isla de Cerdeña, hay unos torreones que llaman “*nuragh*”, que nadie sabe de qué pueblo eran; y los egipcios levantaron con piedras enormes sus pirámides, y con el pórvido más duro hicieron sus obeliscos famosos, donde escribían su historia con los signos que llaman ‘jeroglíficos.’”

Martí teaches children that the Egyptians lived in “historic times” since their history may be written with what they have left behind; however, those societies of earlier times, may be considered as “pre-histórica [pre-historic],” before history. “The truth is,” according to Martí, that

there is still much prehistoric within many historic cultures, because we have to speculate how and where they lived. Who knows how the Quechuas built their aqueducts and their highways and sidewalks in Peru? Nor when the Chichas of Colombia began to make their dikes and their golden vases? Nor which society lived in the Yucatán before the Mayans that the Spaniards encountered there? Nor where did the unknown society that raised the Pueblo mounds and homes in North America come from?⁵²

Martí compares and provides examples of European and African cultures in order to raise more specific questions regarding indigenous American ones. His narrative is Americas-centric for he emphasizes throughout his story a teaching of Native American societies as equal, if not more advanced than the European ones.

Martí continues employing environmental frameworks to explain the rise of civilizations. When explaining how European societies emerged and developed, Martí describes how

man began living where it was less cold and at a higher elevation. Since it was where he lived longest, he soon came to learn and to discover metals and to produce [items]. With wars, floods, and the desire to see the world, men came down by land and sea. It is in the most fertile and elevated parts of the continent that Transatlantic man first civilized himself. In our America, the same

⁵² Martí, 18:361-2. “Ya los tiempos de los egipcios empiezan a llamarse “tiempos históricos”, porque se puede escribir su historia con lo que se sabe de ellos: esos otros pueblos de las primeras edades se llaman pueblos “prehistóricos”, de antes de la historia, o pueblos primitivos. Pero la verdad es que en esos mismos pueblos históricos hay todavía mucho prehistórico, porque se tiene que ir adivinando para ver dónde y cómo vivieron. ¿Quién sabe cuándo fabricaron los quechuas sus acueductos y sus caminos y sus calzadas en el Peru; ni cuándo los chichas de Colombia empezaron a hacer sus dirjes y sus jarros de oro; ni qué pueblo vivió en Yucatán antes que los mayas que encontraron allí los españoles; ni de dónde vino la raza desconocida que levantó los terraplenes y las casas-pueblos en la América del Norte?”

occurs: in the highlands of Mexico and Peru, in the high valleys of good soil, the American Indians had their best cities.⁵³

By describing that “civilized man” appeared in the Americas in similar environmental and topographical conditions as in Europe, Martí attempts to undermine notions of European exceptionalism; indigenous American societies also urbanized, as did the Europeans under similar environmental conditions.

Martí also emphasizes cultural diffusion in explaining the development of human societies. He writes,

there were societies born in each of these countries [Egypt, Persia, Greece] but those who came from older societies knew more, and defeated them, or taught them what they knew, and would unite with them. From the north of Europe came stronger men, ready to fight with beasts and to live in the cold: and from what we know today as Hindustan came fleeing, after a great war, mountain people and they united with the Europeans from the cold lands, who later came down from the north to fight the Romans, because the Romans had taken their freedom away, and because they were fierce and poor, who envied Rome for she was rich and wise, as daughter of Greece. Peoples of the world have traveled like this, like currents in an ocean, like the wind through the air.⁵⁴

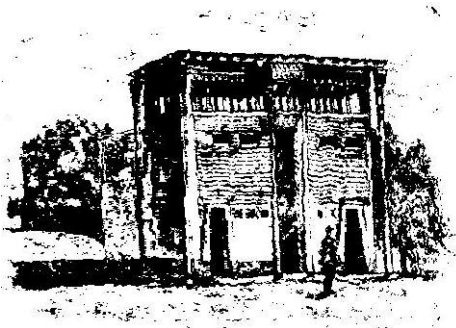
⁵³ Martí, 18:361-2. “Casi los mismo sucede con los pueblos de Europa; aunque allí se ve que los hombres aparecieron a la vez, como nacidos de la tierra, en muchos lugares diferentes, pero que donde había menos frío y era más alto el país fue donde vivió primero el hombre: y como que allí empezó a vivir, allí fue donde llegó más pronto a saber, y a descubrir los metales, y a fabricar, y de allí, con las guerras, y las inundaciones, y el deseo de ver el mundo, fueron bajando los hombres por la tierra y el mar. En lo más elevado y fértil del continente es donde se civilizó el hombre transatlántico primero. En nuestra América sucede lo mismo: en las altipanicies de México y del Perú, en los valles altos y de buena tierra, fue donde tuvo sus mejores pueblos el indio americano.”

⁵⁴ Martí, 18:362-3. “Había pueblos nacidos en todos estos países (Egipto, Persia, Grecia) pero los que venían de los pueblos viejos sabían más, y los derrotaban en la guerra, o les enseñaban lo que sabían, y se juntaban con ellos. Del norte de Europa venían otros hombres más fuertes, hechos a pelear con las fieras y a vivir en el frío: y de lo que se llama ahora Indostán salió huyendo, después de una gran guerra, la gente de la montaña, y se juntó con los europeos de las tierras frías, que bajaron luego del Norte a pelear con los romanos, porque los romanos habían ido a quitarles su libertad, y porque era gente pobre y feróz, que le tenía envidia a Roma, porque era sabia y rica, y como hija de Grecia. Así han ido viajando los pueblos en el mundo, como las corrientes van por la mar, y por el aire los vientos.”

Societal complexity is a combination of experience (a society's age) as well as their contacts and interactions with other societies. Some of these interactions are through wars, others peaceful. Martí does not present the "barbarians" in evil light against Rome. Rome is portrayed as rich and wise, but Rome sought to take freedom away from others. Martí therefore implies that struggles for freedom are not a phenomenon of his day (for example, his struggle to free Cuba from Spanish colonialism). Rather, liberation battles have occurred since much earlier times. His description that people move, travel, or migrate like ocean currents or like the wind in the air is not only an artistic device, but also a reiteration of how people are a product of and directly related to and affected by the Earth's environment.

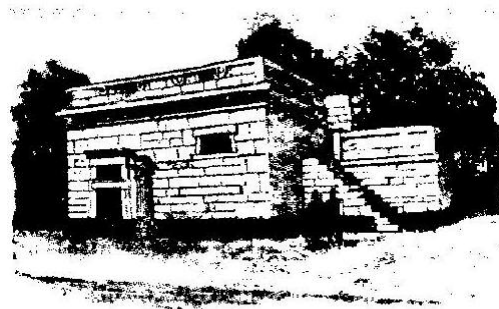
Martí made judgments on cultures and societies in the manner he presented and described each house or dwelling. Martí did not escape certain stereotypes of his time regarding earlier societies. Many of the stereotypes in his descriptions of human dwellings continued well into the twentieth-century and many are still in the process of being adjusted by modern-day historians. In "The Story of Humanity, told through its Houses," Martí describes each house as a representation of its specific society. Some houses may appear completely unique, representative of societies that had little contact with others, while other houses share common elements, representing those that had greater contact. Egypt is described as the "father society of the Transatlantic continent" (Martí refers to Afro-Eurasia as the Transatlantic continent). Egypt is presented as a rich society: "the house of the Egyptian is attractive and elegant. Egypt was very rich, because the great Nile river rose every year, and with the dry mud left behind that allowed great

crops: houses were thus placed high for fear of flooding”⁵⁵ Martí was not only interested in teaching children about the beauty of Egyptian houses, but also in explaining how the houses were affected by the Nile river. The Hebrews are presented as hardworkers, industrious individuals. When describing the Hebrew dwelling, Martí writes “the Hebrews lived a long time as slaves in Egypt and were the ones who knew best how to make bricks. Later when freed, they made their homes with crude bricks, like our adobes, and the roof was from their beloved tree, from sycamore branches.”⁵⁶



Casa egipcia

Fig. 3 The Egyptian House



Casa hebrea

Fig. 4 The Hebrew House

The Assyrians have a palace, not a home, in Martí’s description. They are presented as “a warrior people who placed towers on their houses so they could see from farther away the enemy.”⁵⁷ The Phoenicians, also have a palace, and their culture is

⁵⁵ Martí, 18:363. “Egipto es como el pueblo padre del continente transatlántico: el pueblo más antiguo de todos aquellos países “clásicos”. Y la casa del egipcio es como su pueblo fue, graciosa y elegante. Era riquísimo el Egipto, como que el gran río Nilo crecía todos los años, y con el barro que dejaba al secarse nacían muy bien las siembras: así que las casas estaban como en alto, por miedo a las inundaciones.”

⁵⁶ Martí, 18:363. “Los hebreos vivieron como esclavos en el Egipto mucho tiempo, y eran los que mejor sabían hacer ladrillos. Luego, cuando su libertad, hicieron sus casas con ladrillos crudos, como nuestros adobes, y el techo era de vigas de sicomoro, que es su árbol querido.”

⁵⁷ Martí, 18:363-4. “Fueron un pueblo guerreador, que les ponía a sus casas torres, como para ver más de lejos al enemigo.”

described as a synthesis of various traditions, since they were navigators and a commercial people: “the Phoenicians, since they were a navigating people, who lived from their commerce, soon began imitating the houses of the people they came more into contact who were the Hebrews and the Egyptians and later the Persians who conquered Phoenicia in war. Their houses were like that, with a Hebrew entrance, and high walls like Egyptian houses, or like the Persians.”⁵⁸ Martí describes the Persians as a powerful and wealthy people. “The Persians were a people with a lot of power. There was a time when all their surrounding peoples lived as their slaves. Persia is a land of jewels: everything there is full of jewels,” Martí writes.⁵⁹



Fig. 5 The Assyrian and Phoenician Palaces

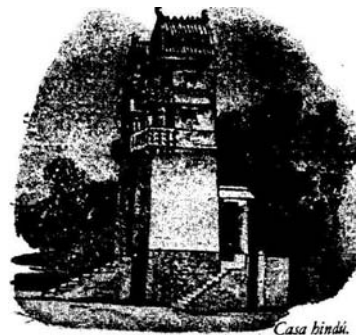


Fig. 6 The Hindu House

India is described as a rich and ancient society.

Next to Persia is Hindustan, one of the oldest societies on Earth and they have golden temples. Their temples, their burial places, their palaces, [and] their homes, are like poetry; they are like poetry that appears written over ivory with colors, and it speaks as if among leaves and flowers. But what is [most] beautiful about the

⁵⁸ Martí, 18:364. “Los fenicios –pero como eran gente navegante, que vivía del comercio, empezaron pronto a imitar las casas de los pueblos que veían más, que eran los hebreos y los egipcios, y luego las de los persas, que conquistaron en guerra el país de Fenicia. Y así fueron sus casas, con la entrada hebrea, y la parte alta como las casas de Egipto, o como las de Persia.”

⁵⁹ Martí, 18:364. “Los persas fueron pueblo de mucho poder, como que hubo tiempo en que todos los pueblos de los alrededores vivían como esclavos suyos. Persia es tierra de joyas: todo está allí lleno de joyas.”

Hindu houses is the marvel of their décor, which are like braids of flowers and feathers that never end.⁶⁰

Martí poetically describes Hindu structures; by contrast, the Greek dwelling reflects Martí's representation of the Greeks as a simple people. "Greece was not like that, instead, everything was simple and white, without the luxury of colors. In Greek homes, there were no windows because to the Greeks the home was always a sacred place where the foreigner should not look in."⁶¹ Did Martí imply that the Greeks were xenophobic? Continuing his description of Greek structures, he writes, "they say that there is no more beautiful building in the world than the Parthenon." In describing the Parthenon, Martí expresses the elements he values; principles he also wishes to transmit to children:

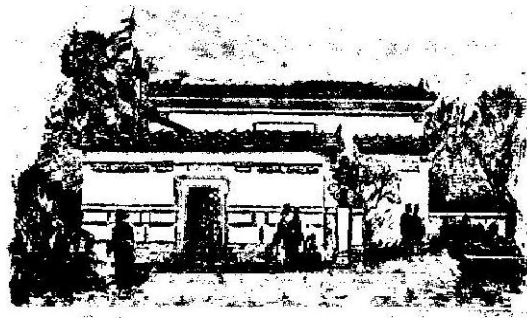
Decorating motifs are not there just for decoration, that's what ignorant people do with their clothing and houses, rather beauty emerges from a certain type of music that one feels and that cannot be heard, because proportions and measurements are done in a way that fit with color, and there is not one element that does not fit precisely, nor a [decorative object] placed where it does not disturb. These structures are as if they had a soul. They are modest and humble and seem like friends to those who view them. They appeal to one's heart, like good friends. They seem as if they can speak.⁶²

⁶⁰ Martí, 18:365. "Junto a Persia está el Indostán, que es de los pueblos más viejos del mundo y tiene templos de oro, trabajados como trabajan en las platerías la filigrana. Sus templos, sus sepulcros, sus palacios, sus casas, son como su poesía, que parece escrita con colores sobre marfil, y dice las cosas como entre hojas y flores. Pero lo hermoso de las casas hindúes era la fantasía de los adornos, que son como un trenzado que nunca se acaba, de flores y de plumas."

⁶¹ Martí, 18:365. "En Grecia no era así, sino todo blanco y sencillo, sin lujos de colorines. En la casa de los griegos no había ventanas, porque para el griego fue siempre la casa un lugar sagrado, donde no debía mirar al extranjero."

⁶² Martí, 18:366-7. "Dicen que en el mundo no hay edificio más bello que el Partenón, como que allí no están los adornos por el gusto de adornar, que es lo que hace la gente ignorante con sus casas y vestidos, sino que la hermosura viene de una especie de música que se siente y no se oye, porque el tamaño está calculado de manera que venga bien con el color, y no hay cosa que no sea precisa, ni adorno sino donde no pueda estorbar. Parece que tienen alma las piedras en Grecia. Son modestas, y como amigas del que las ve. Se entran como amigas por el corazón. Parece que hablan."

The beauty of Greek structures is not a result of mere artistic decoration; there is a harmonious musicality in the beauty of Greek structures, Martí states.⁶³ He portrays the Greek structure, in this case the Parthenon, as a living being, a friend, and personifies it with all the elements associated with friendship, namely the ease and comfort felt by being close and familiar with other individuals.



Casa griega

Fig. 7 The Greek House

Of all the dwellings Martí describes in the story, the Greek Parthenon is the only description that has human qualities. By emphasizing the human qualities of beauty and friendship, the Cuban leader makes a moral statement regarding which types of structures are distinctive. He also informs the reader what he considers as ignorant behavior. People that adorn, decorate, or embellish themselves without a deeper purpose are foolish. Beauty to Martí is a result of its function. The Parthenon makes one hear music; it makes one feel at ease, comfortable as when being with a good friend. In a specific sense, throughout “The Story of Humanity, told through its Houses” Martí employs linguistic devices that create a more musical, poetic narrative. These poetic devices are particularly

⁶³ Martí, 18:366-7.

significant for he uses them not in creating a poem or a fictional narrative; instead, to teach children the world's past as means to impart moral lessons. Martí does not directly instruct the importance of friendship; rather, he does so in describing the Greek Parthenon. Martí therefore imparts conspicuous lessons such as how the actual dwellings appear and how societies created them and less visible ones by leading the child to think about the values of freedom, friendship, and humility and to consider what constitutes beauty.

According to Martí, a direct relationship exists between the development of a people and their degree of freedom, whether they are free or enslaved, for instance. Employing the example of the Etruscan dwelling, Martí writes that “while they were a free republic, the Etruscans lived happily with very good teachers of medicine and astronomy and men who spoke well of life's duties and how the world was made. Etruria was famous for its wise men. But with slavery they became full of vice and [interested in] riches, like their owners the Romans.”⁶⁴ Martí explains how under slavery the Etruscans became driven by vices and turned materialistic. These are elements, he transmits, that republics should not share nor values they should have. Freedom allows for knowledge and for virtue to thrive; a slave society creates corruption and licentiousness. What should a society do to thrive, indeed an individual? One must fight to be free –a lesson Martí sought to teach Cuba's future citizens as well as Latin America's adults and children.

⁶⁴ Martí, 18:367. “Casa etrusca.- Los etruscos vivieron al norte de Italia, en sus doce ciudades famosas, y fueron un pueblo original, que tuvo su gobierno y su religión, y un arte parecido al de los griegos, aunque les gustaba más la burla y la extravagancia, y usaban mucho color. Todo lo pintaban, como los persas. Mientras fueron república libre, los etruscos vivían dichosos, con maestros muy buenos de medicina y astronomía, y hombres que hablaban bien de los deberes de la vida y de la composición del mundo. Era célebre Etruria por sus sabios, y por sus jarros de barro negro, con figuras de relieve, y por sus estatuas y sarcófagos de tierra cocida, y por sus pinturas en los muros, y sus trabajos en metal. Pero con la esclavitud se hicieron viciosos y ricos, como sus dueños los romanos.”

In describing the Roman house, Martí explains his views on people under slavery, or under the undemocratic rule of others

it was first like the Etruscans but later they encountered Greece and imitated their homes as well as in everything else. Later Rome owned all the countries around it, until it had so many societies it could not govern, and each society started earning their freedom and naming their king who was the most powerful warrior within the country and lived in a stone castle like all who were called “sirs” at that time of struggle and the laborers lived surrounding the castle in unhappy shacks.⁶⁵

Both Persians and Romans are described as societies dominating others; but not all who opposed the Romans did so in the name of democratic ideals. Martí states that warriors were called “sirs” or “lords” and the workers surrounding their castles “lived in unhappy shacks.” Martí implies that these warriors, apparently, fought for control of the land and for their benefit and did not improve the “unhappiness” of the surrounding inhabitants, the laborers.

In describing Spain, Martí eschews a Christian bias, “in Spain the Romans had also ruled, but later the Moors came to conquer, and built those temples known as mosques, and those palaces that seem the thing of dreams.”⁶⁶ He later recounts how with “the wars and friendships, these different societies began to join and when the king was able to command more than the lords of the castles, and all men believed in the new heaven of the Christians [he writes as if he were not a Christian], they began building

⁶⁵ Martí, 18: 367-8. “La casa de los romanos fue primero como la de los etruscos, pero luego conocieron a Grecia, y la imitaron en sus casas, como en todo. Luego Roma fue dueña de todos los países que tenía alrededor, hasta que tuvo tantos pueblos que no los pudo gobernar, y cada pueblo se fue haciendo libre y nombrando su rey, que era el guerrero mas poderoso de todos los del país, y vivia en su castillo de piedra, como todos los que llamaban ‘señores’ en aquel tiempo de pelear; y la gente de trabajo vivia alrededor de los castillos, en casuchos infelices.”

⁶⁶ Martí, 18:369. “En España habían mandado también los romanos; pero los moros vinieron luego a conquistar, y fabricaron aquellos templos suyos que llaman mezquitas, y aquellos palacios que parecen cosa de sueño.”

‘Gothic’ churches with their pointed arches and their needle-like towers that reached the heavens.”⁶⁷ Martí later explains how Renaissance architecture emerged,

the Christians began not to believe as much in heaven as before. They spoke much about how great Rome had been: they celebrated Greek art for its simplicity: they said that there were already too many churches: they looked for new ways to make palaces: and all that created a new way of building, like the Greeks, known as the architecture of the ‘Renaissance.’⁶⁸

Gothic architecture was a product of men believing in the Christian heaven, i.e. the Christian religion. The new architecture of the Renaissance, according to Martí, was a product of people turning their backs, believing no longer in Christianity to the same degree. Martí describes the time of the Renaissance as times of “richness and art, of great conquests; therefore, there were many nobles and merchants with palaces. Never had humans lived nor have they again lived in such beautiful houses.”⁶⁹ A modern observer may recognize Martí’s biases of the Renaissance as being a “glorious” period, notions surely shared by many at the time. Nevertheless, this “glorious” period was a result of men believing not as much in the Christian “heaven” or religion. Is Martí’s statement a

⁶⁷ Martí, 18:369. “Con las guerras y las amistades se fueron juntando aquellos pueblos diferentes, y cuando ya el rey pudo mas que los señores de los castillos, y todos los hombres creían en el cielo nuevo de los cristianos, empezaron a hacer las iglesias ‘góticas’ con sus arcos de pico, y sus torres como agujas que llegaban a las nubes.”

⁶⁸ Martí, 18:370. (The Renaissance) “Pero los adornos llegaron a ser muchos, y los cristianos empezaron a no creer en el cielo tanto como antes. Hablaban mucho de lo grande que fue Roma: celebraban el arte griego por sencillo: decían que ya eran muchas las iglesias: buscaban modos nuevos de hacer los palacios: y de todo eso vino una manera de fabricar parecida a la griega, que es lo que llaman arquitectura del ‘Renacimiento.’”

⁶⁹ Martí 18:370. “Eran tiempos de arte y riqueza, y de grandes conquistas, así que había muchos señores y comerciantes con palacio. Nunca habían vivido los hombres, ni han vuelto a vivir, en casas tan hermosas.”

judgment on the merits of turning one's back on religion and looking towards simplicity like the Greeks?⁷⁰

Further diverging from conventional views, Martí rebalances notions that the Spanish or European conquest of the Americas was a positive event. Martí writes

in our America, houses have something of the Romans and of the Moors, for Roman and Moor had been the Spanish society who dominated America and brought down the homes of the Indians. They brought them down at their foundations: they brought down their temples, their observatories, their communication towers, their homes, everything that was Indian the Spanish conquerors burned and tore down, except the paved roads, since they did not know how to transport the stones that the Indians knew how to place, and the aqueducts, since it brought them water to drink.⁷¹

The Spaniards uprooted and tore down Indian architecture, structures, “everything” the Indians had built, except the structures Spaniards relied upon and could not replace since European technology at the time was not able to substitute the indigenous one. Spaniards and Europeans are presented not as saviors and harbingers of civilization, education, technology, and progress; rather, they are portrayed as “barbarians,” uncivilized people who tore everything down by their ignorance (they were not able to replace all of the indigenous technology). Does Martí make a case for tolerating ethnic diversity? In his description of how the Spaniards treated Native American structures and cultures, he teaches children the consequences of not tolerating perceived cultural differences. Native American technology surpassed the European one in many ways, in bringing

⁷⁰ In Chapter Three I demonstrate that Martí opposed ideological (and religious) fanaticism by examining his essays on Peter Cooper and Ralph Waldo Emerson.

⁷¹ Martí, 18: 371. “En nuestra América las casas tienen algo de romano y de moro, porque moro y romano era el pueblo español que mandó en América, y echó abajo las casas de los indios. Las echó abajo de raíz: echó abajo sus templos, sus observatorios, sus torres de señales, sus casas de vivir, todo lo indio lo quemaron los conquistadores españoles y lo echaron abajo, menos las calzadas, porque no sabían llevar las piedras que supieron traer los indios, y los acueductos, porque les traían el agua de beber.”

indispensable water and creating a system of paved roads that allowed for communication and commerce, essential for the survival and dominance of transplanted European societies in the Americas.

Martí concludes “The Story of Humanity, told through its Houses” on an optimistic note. He writes

Now all the peoples of the world know each other better and visit each other: and in each society there is a way of building, according to whether its cold or hot, or whether they are of one race or another; but what appears new in cities is not the way of building houses, rather that in each city there are Moorish, and Greek, and Gothic, and Byzantine, and Japanese houses, as if [we are] in a happy period when all humans treat each other as friends, and come together.⁷²

“The Story of Humanity, told through its Houses” ends as a story of “coming together,” of unity and friendship. Modern cities, new technologies, and the new era are presented positively for they allow for different cultural expressions (for example, Moorish, Greek, Gothic, Byzantine, and Japanese structures in cities). Was Martí implying that a new “globalization” allowed people to connect and unite? The term “globalization” had not gained currency during his time; yet isn’t what he referred to as “now people know each other more,” i.e. have more contact and share more information with one another, imply the development of globalization?

“The Story of Humanity, told through its Houses,” demonstrates Martí’s “globalism.” His use of global subjects to promote values that strengthen Cuban and

⁷² Martí, 18:371. “Ahora todos los pueblos del mundo se conocen mejor y se visitan: y en cada pueblo hay su modo de fabricar, segun hay frio o calor, o sena de una raza o de otra; pero lo que parece nuevo en las ciudades no es su manera de hacer casas, sino que en cada ciudad hay casas moras, y griegas, y góticas, y bizantinas, y japonesas, como si empezara el tiempo feliz en que los hombres se tratan como amigos, y se van juntando.” The Spanish term for *raza* (race) has a broader definition than the English “race.” It may be understood as a culture or ethnicity, not necessarily linked to color of the skin, but integrating notions of common heritage and history of an individual and society.

Latin American awareness affirm that Martí's independence efforts were globally derived; and in turn, places the Cuban revolution as a Latin American, globally-oriented one. Martí taught children to admire cultural and ethnic differences. By embracing cultural and ethnic diversity, women and men could embark, as he suggests, on a "new period when humans come together" and "relate to one another in friendship," an idealistic proposition, indeed.

"A Journey through the Land of the Annamese"

The second story of world historical significance is "A Journey through the Land of the Annamese." In this narrative, Martí promotes his views on resisting empires and on nurturing democracy by writing a historical account of a foreign society, Annam, an ancient state now part of Vietnam.⁷³ Distant from the daily concerns of the average Latin American, and particularly even more so for a Spanish-American child, Martí's vivid descriptions, nonetheless, place the reader in Annam's history by describing scenes in theaters and pagodas to explain its past and present. In "Journey through the Land of the Annamese," Martí exposes his views on religion, particularly regarding Eastern spiritual traditions. Chapter Five of this dissertation will examine in greater detail the relationship between Eastern (Hindu) spiritual thought and Martí's own formulations for revolution and independence. This chapter continues its historiographical approach to Martí's nation building by examining "A Journey through the Land of the Annamese," shedding light on how this story fits within our notions of world history narratives. It also explores how the story of the Annamese educates children to be more responsible, globally conscious

⁷³ Although Martí never visited Annam, his knowledge of south and southeast Asian peoples was a result of his readings on the subjects.

adults, as well as successful citizens. The history of Annam serves Martí in transmitting nation building values.

The story begins with Martí's adaptation of a traditional Jain folk tale of six blind men and an elephant. In Martí's version of the parable, four blind men travel to an Indian prince's palace to determine through their sense of touch the structure of an elephant. When they meet the raja, an Indian prince, he declares, "blind men are saints." "Men who seek knowledge are saints: men should learn everything on their own, and not believe without inquiring, nor speak without understanding, nor think like slaves who are told what to believe: go forth, four blind men to see, with your hands, what the docile elephant is like."⁷⁴ In the prince's positive reaction to those who seek knowledge, Martí praises those who seek knowledge and arrive at their own conclusions. The Cuban leader transmits to children the approval of independent critical thinking.

Embarking on a journey in search of knowledge and learning, "to know what an elephant is like," each blind man latches on to a different part of the elephant's body when confronting the animal. By one touching a foot, the other its trunk, and so forth, each receive a different impression of the elephant. They then argue with each other, asserting that their individual assessments are the accurate descriptions of an elephant's appearance. Martí writes,

and men are also like that, each one believes only what he thinks and what he sees is the truth, and relates in prose and verse that one should not believe but what he believes; with the four blind men as well, when what one should do is to learn with tenderness what men have thought and created, and that's what gives great

⁷⁴ Martí, 18:459. "Los ciegos son santos", dijo el rajá, "los hombres que desean saber son santos: los hombres deben aprenderlo todo por sí mismos, y no creer sin preguntar, ni hablar sin entender, ni pensar como esclavos lo que les mandan pensar otros: vayan los cuatro ciegos a ver con sus manos el elefante manso."

pleasure, to see that all men have similar sorrows, and the same history, and the same love, and that the world is a beautiful temple, where all the Earth's men fit in peace since all men have yearned to know the truth, and have written in their books that it is useful to be good, and have suffered and fought to be free, free in their land, free in their thinking.⁷⁵

By recognizing that people have individual and at times diverging viewpoints, yet all are equally worthy, Martí teaches children the significance of respecting intellectual differences. In fact, “men have written prose and poetry,” created ideologies and religions based on what each holds to be true. Martí promotes that individuals are indeed unique and distinct and maintain different outlooks; however, all humans share, essentially, a similar history, a common global one, since all humans share “the same Earth.” Martí’s imbues this passage with idealism: “the world is one beautiful temple” where all men in peace may join and share. By writing that “where all men of the Earth fit in peace,” Martí informs that no one person should exclude another from her or his right to live peacefully in this temple; as no one should ridicule or persecute anyone for differences of beliefs or opinions. If Martí’s entire adult life was led with the overarching objective of freeing Cuba and establishing an independent republic on the island, then these were lessons he wished the future citizens of Cuba and those of Latin America would learn.

Women and men are indeed different, yet all are linked by their search for truth and by an ability to experience sorrow since “all have written in their books that it is useful to be good.” World religions and philosophical systems, all teach, according to

⁷⁵ Martí, 18:460. “Y así son los hombres, que cada uno cree que sólo lo que él piensa y ve es la verdad, y dice en verso y en prosa que no se debe creer sino lo que él cree, lo mismo que los cuatro ciegos del elefante, cuando lo que se ha de hacer es estudiar con cariño lo que los hombres han pensado y hecho, y eso da un gusto grande, que es ver que todos los hombres tienen las mismas penas, y la historia igual, y el mismo amor, y que el mundo es un templo hermoso, donde caben en paz los hombres todos de la tierra, porque todos han querido conocer la verdad, y han escrito en sus libros que es útil ser bueno, y han padecido y peleado por ser libres, libres en su tierra, libres en el pensamiento.”

Martí, that it is useful to be good, honorable, and virtuous. Interestingly, he did not indicate that these were Christian teachings. These principles are not presented as European or Western values, but rather as ones common throughout human history. All women and men are also united, according to Martí, by their suffering and their struggle to be free, to be free in their homeland, and to be free in thought. The struggle for freedom throughout history is a unifying element of the human experience. This struggle for freedom is not merely a struggle for physical liberty, to have an independent homeland, free from outside intrusion and imperial powers, but importantly the struggle is one for freedom of thought. To think freely without constraints and pressures, to think independently, and to search for truth freely are the prime principles that inspire Martí's recounting of the parable of the blind men and the elephant, one that ultimately preaches tolerance. All men and women, according to Martí, have a place in the beautiful temple that is Earth, in peace, not in conflict or war. These words strike at Martí's idealism, an idealism that led him to teach children to be like the blind men who search for the docile elephant and like the prince who appreciates those who search for knowledge. He also teaches children to know when they are acting prejudicially like the blind men who clasped to their impression of the elephant and to be, in essence, tolerant and accepting of the opinions of others.

This story, however, is not a candy-coated account of the goodness of humankind. To be noble and virtuous should be everyone's objective, according to Martí; however, in "A Journey through the Land of the Annamese," the Cuban writer recounts how the people of Annam have suffered at the hands of outsiders. Martí interestingly employed cultural stereotypes of the time to defend viewpoint of the Annamese. By presenting

European perceptions of these Southeast Asians and rebutting them in a dialogue with a fictional Annamese speaker, Martí teaches children that conceptions of beauty are relative and significantly that European ones are not necessarily better than Asian perceptions. Martí describes the Annamese as, “they don’t appear with beautiful-like bodies, nor do we appear handsome to them: they say that it’s a sin to cut one’s hair, since nature gave us long hair, and he who believes himself wiser than nature is presumptuous.”⁷⁶ Martí continues,

[the Annamese] say that men do not need to have stronger, wider backs because the Cambodians are taller and more robust than the Annamese, yet in war, the Annamese have always defeated their Cambodian neighbors; and that one’s gaze should not be blue, because the color blue flees, forsakes, and deceives, like the clouds in the sky and the water in the sea; and that white should not be one’s [skin] color, for the land which gives all that’s beautiful is not white, rather it’s like the Annameses’ hues of bronze; and that men should not have beards, they’re beast-like: even though the French, who are now masters of Annam, respond that, regarding the [issue of the] beard, the Annamese are only jealous.⁷⁷

To a Cuban or Latin American child who most likely never met a Southeast Asian, an Annamese, or a Cambodian, Martí teaches that, when following Western cultural stereotypes, Western judgments of how the Annamese appear may be flawed. What the Annamese find attractive or hold dear is not necessarily what Europeans may consider valuable. Martí undermines European cultural conventions and stereotypes of superiority.

⁷⁶ Martí, 18:460-1. “No nos parecen de cuerpo hermoso, ni nosotros les parecemos hermosos a ellos: ellos dicen que es un pecado cortarse el pelo, porque la naturaleza nos dio pelo largo, y es un presumido el que se crea más sabio que la naturaleza.”

⁷⁷ Martí, 18:461. “Ellos dicen que el hombre no necesita ser de espaldas fuertes, porque los cambodios son más altos y robustos que los anamitas, pero en la guerra los anamitas han vencido siempre a sus vecinos los cambodios; y que la mirada no debe ser azul, porque el azul engaña y abandona, como la nube del cielo y el agua del mar; y que el color no debe ser blanco, porque la tierra, que da todas las hermosuras no es blanca, sino de los colores de bronce de los anamitas; y que los hombres no deben llevar barba, que es cosa de fieras: aunque los franceses, que son ahora los amos de Anam, responden que esto de la barba no es más que envidia.”

Through the voice of an Annamese character, Martí teaches that, although one may believe European perceptions as valid and superior, these perceptions are not equally accepted by others. Europeans may view the Annamese as unattractive and inferior, yet Martí presents that the Annamese find themselves beautiful. Martí promotes a belief that the Annamese's self-respect and self-appreciation are more important qualities than European conceptions of beauty. Also, Martí teaches to be careful with first impressions.

The Cuban leader writes in the voice of an Annamese character that,

we are yellow, small, sickly, and ugly; yet we simultaneously craft bronze and silk; and when the French came to take our Hanoi, our Hue, our wooden-palaced cities, our ports, full of bamboo houses and reed boats, our fish and rice warehouses, even then, with these almond-shaped eyes, we have known how to die, by thousands and thousands, to stop them in their paths. Today they are our masters; but tomorrow, who knows?⁷⁸

“We are yellow, small, sickly, and ugly,” Martí does not embellish the way that a European or European-descendant may perceive an Annamese, a rhetorical device to more effectively have his child reader identify with the characterization and absorb the underlying teaching. Children after all are often painfully honest. Yes, “we [may be] yellow, small, sickly and ugly, [but we know how] to stop [the French] in their path,” Martí tells his young reader. Although the Annamese may appear inferior to Western eyes, they are proud, defensive, and defiant. They are morally virtuous. They know how to defend their homeland. More importantly, they know how to struggle to be physically free, a thread the Cuban leader weaves throughout the narrative. That French rule over

⁷⁸ Martí, 18:461. “Somos amarillos, chatos, canijos y feos; pero trabajamos a la vez el bronce y la seda; y cuando los franceses nos han venido a quitar nuestro Hanoi, nuestro Hue, nuestras ciudades de palacios de madera, nuestros puertos llenos de casas de bambú y de barcos de junco, nuestros almacenes de pescado y arroz, todavía, con estos ojos de almendar, hemos sabido morir, miles sobre miles, para cerrarles el camino. Ahora son nuestros amos; pero mañana ¡quién sabe!”

Annam is critically questioned is particularly remarkable. The French should not go unchallenged. The French are not presented as harbingers of Western civilization or as saviors. Throughout the story, Martí does not portray Western civilization as superior to Annam's. Considering that Martí promoted these beliefs in children's narratives during an age many consider of "high" imperialism when European powers extended their grip over the world under the guise of a civilizing mission, his words are radical. The French are not presented as those who came to civilize. Throughout the narrative the Annamese are portrayed as already a highly civilized people. Although they may appear inferior to European eyes, they have the knowledge and technology "to work silk beautifully as well as bronze."

According to Martí, the Annamese have had material wealth, "beautiful cities with palaces and stock-piled warehouses." He emphasizes that the Annamese have known to stand against foreign aggression in defense of their homeland and to die in order to remain free. To know how to fight for a greater, noble cause and to give one's life, if need be, to achieve a greater purpose, in this case Annam's freedom, are highly noble. These views on sacrifice displayed through depictions of the Annamese are not too distant from Martí's own regarding Cuban independence. Chapter Five delves deeper into how Martí conceived sacrifice and related it to his struggle for Cuba's freedom. Martí also promotes in the passage that French colonial rule should not be deemed permanent or long lasting. "Today they are our masters; tomorrow, who knows?" This "who knows?" indicates that this foreign rule is not assured, and if the Annamese have laid their lives to close the path of the French in the past, then in the future they will, most certainly, be expelled from Annam. For a late nineteenth-century children's story, these

views of undermining traditional Western perceptions of non-European peoples and of empowering the colonial subject are indeed subversive. Martí's views may be considered incongruous (he praises the French in other pieces on the 1889 Paris Exposition), yet in a larger sense they are harmonious and constant. The French in Annam were not on a mission of peace. They were not there to gain knowledge (to know what an elephant is like); rather, they came to take away the cities and the wealth of the Annamese. In this sense, Annamese rebellion is justified. Children as well as adults should rise in defense of communal and national freedoms, to fight for a society to be free from the rule of outsiders, yet equally significant, individuals should also rise to be mentally- and spiritually-liberated.

Martí writes

And this society of followers, is it the same one that raised three storied pagodas, the one who built gigantic porcelain and bronze lions? This is what happens to societies who tire from defending themselves: they haul like beasts their masters' carriages: while the master rides in the carriage, [looking] tanned and fat. The Annamese are now tired. It's a difficult life for small societies. The Annamese people have always been defending themselves. Strong neighbors, like the Chinese and the Siamese, have wanted to conquer them. To defend themselves from the Siamese, they entered in a friendship with the Chinese who spoke beautiful things to them and received them with river parties and parades and fireworks, and called them "dear brothers." Yet after entering the land of Annam, they wished to command them like [masters], it was almost two thousand years ago: and it's been two thousand years since the Annamese defend themselves from the Chinese!⁷⁹

⁷⁹ Martí, 18:462. "Y ese pueblo de hombres trotones es el que levantó las pagodas de tres pisos; el que fabricó leones de porcelana y gigantes de bronce? A eso llegan los pueblos que se cansan de defenderse: a halar como las bestias de carro de sus amos: y el amo va en el carro, colorado y gordo. Los anamitas están ahora cansados. A los pueblos pequeños les cuesta trabajo vivir. El pueblo anamita se ha estado siempre defendiendo. Los vecinos fuertes, el chino y el siamés lo han querido conquistar. Para defenderse del siamés, entró en amistades con el chino, que le dijo muchos amores, y lo recibió con procesiones y fuegos y fiestas en los ríos, y le llamó "querido hermano." Pero luego que entró en la tierra de Anam, lo quiso mandar como dueño, hace como dos mil años: ¡y dos mil años hace que los anamitas se están defendiendo de los chinos!"

Martí promotes the following in the above passage: first, regarding the Annamese's condition, the true nature of the situation is not as it appears. The Annamese seem like submissive followers of French masters. How could this civilization who built such glorious structures fall into the disgrace of being subjects of a foreign power? Martí explains that the Annamese have become tired of struggling for so long for their independence. Second, he teaches that for "smaller societies" it is significantly more difficult to survive independently than for larger nations, but these smaller societies, nevertheless, have a right to exist independently. Third, he illustrates how the Annamese have sought alliances with other nations who offer friendship and who present themselves as saviors and subsequently enslave the ones who were in need. Martí implies to be careful of those who profess good intentions and later turn away from their original messages of good will. For two thousand years the Annamese have defended themselves from the Chinese, Martí exclaims. By presenting a brief overview of Annamese history, Martí transmits moral, political, and spiritual views on resisting oppression.

To Martí the spiritual was never too distant from the political. He considered his service to Cuban independence a sacred, spiritual mission, as Chapter Five explores in more detail. By presenting at the beginning of "A Journey through the Land of the Annamese" the parable of the four blind men who have different impressions of an elephant, Martí imparts how one should not be led by first appearances. He continues this line of thought with how the Annamese appear to be a "society of followers." Like the blind men's perceptions of the elephant, the Annamese, to an outside observer, may appear docile and domesticated; however, what appears passive and submissive is truly not. The Annamese continue fighting for their independence; it only seems as if they do

not. They are merely “tired” for the moment of defending themselves, according to the Cuban leader. Martí instructs that there is indeed a deeper truth to situations whose major determining elements are not at first plainly visible. This applies to the blind men’s impressions of the elephant as well as to a distant observer’s impression of the Annamese. Throughout “A Journey through the Land of the Annamese,” Martí emphasizes how the Annamese who appear weak, submissive, complacent, and even unworthy of praise, in reality and in a deeper sense, are heroic and even worthy of emulating. Although the French are often portrayed as refined and civilized in other stories of *The Golden Years*, Martí presents in this narrative the French as “[they] are from another world, a world that knows more of wars and of ways of murder; and town by town, with blood up to their waists, they have been taking away from the Annamese their country.”⁸⁰

Relating how the Annamese behave under French rule, Martí writes

Since they’ve been living as slaves, the Annamese visit their pagodas a lot for there their priests speak of the saints of their homeland who aren’t the saints of the French: they visit their theaters a lot where they are not told things to laugh about, instead the history of their generals and of their kings: they kneel to listen, quietly, the history of their battles.⁸¹

Describing the condition of the Annamese under the French as slavery, Martí recounts how their increasing presence at temples and at local theaters is related to a yearning for knowledge of their local traditions. This knowledge, the true knowledge of their nation, is not taught at schools where one would expect the history of battles would be taught.

⁸⁰ Martí, 18:463. “Pero el francés es de otro mundo, que sabe más de guerras y de modos de matar; y pueblo a pueblo, con la sangre a la cintura, les ha ido quitando el país a los anamitas.”

⁸¹ Martí, 18:464. “Desde que viven en la esclavitud, van mucho los anamitas a sus pagodas, porque allí les hablan los sacerdotes de los santos del país, que no son los santos de los franceses: van mucho a los teatros, donde no les cuentan cosas de reír, sino la historia de sus generales y de sus reyes: ellos oyen encucillados, callados, la historia de las batallas.”

Instead, the Annamese must go underground to keep their history and culture alive. By doing so, they nurture their identity.

Even though this historical narrative appears in a children's newspaper, Martí presents themes that deal with what are considered adult matters: for instance, his suggestions to resist oppression and to nurture and defend local culture in the face of adversity. This story reflects how Martí combined political, moral, and spiritual lessons: first, through the parable of the blind men, and second, through passages where the Annamese speak and present their own perceptions of their world, in contrast to the Western view of them. Most impressively for a late nineteenth-century Latin American author writing in Spanish for Hispanic-American children is how Martí presents, rather, exemplifies, non-Western spiritual views. Specifically, Martí's exposé on the Buddha is striking for its candor in explaining Buddhist principles to children most likely educated as Roman Catholics. Regarding the Buddha, Martí writes,

but he went away in the dark of night, to the mountains, to think about life which had so much sorrow, to live without desire and without blemish, to speak his thoughts to those who wished to listen; to beg alms for the poor, like a monk. And he didn't eat, only as much as a bird: and he didn't drink, only as much as not to die of thirst: and he didn't sleep, except on the ground of his cabin: and he didn't walk, except barefooted.⁸²

In this passage on the Buddha, Martí continues with the theme that perceptions are not always reflections of reality; they may be false illusions. Martí informs that, even though what may appear worthwhile to pursue such as one's longings and desires, the truth is that to follow one's sense of inner duty is in reality more precious and beneficial.

⁸² Martí, 18:465. "Pero se fue, en lo oscuro de la noche, al monte, a pensar en la vida, que tenía tanta pena, a vivir sin deseos y sin mancha, a decir sus pensamientos a los que se los querían oír, a pedir limosna para los pobres, como el monje. Y no comía, más que lo que un pájaro: y no bebía, más que para no morir de sed: y no dormía, sino sobre la tierra de su cabaña: y no andaba, sino con los pies descalzos."

Regarding the Buddha, the Cuban author writes, “and when Mara the demon came to talk about his wife’s beauty, and of his delightful child, and of the luxuries of his palace, and of the arrogance of leading his people as king, he summoned his disciples to dedicate himself to virtue once more before them: and Mara, the demon, would frighteningly flee.”⁸³ What may a child infer by this passage? When temptation came to the Buddha, temptations that attempted to stray him from his path, allurements that included the beauty of his wife, the playful antics of his child, elements surely missed dearly, along with other worldly attractions such as his palace’s luxuries and importantly the pride in ruling his kingdom, the Buddha reaffirmed his commitment to virtue and to a life of humility and sacrifice. Martí continues,

What people imagine, and label as demons to that bad advice that comes from the ugly part of the heart; since people perceive themselves with a body and a name, they give name and body, as if they were human to all the forces and powers they imagine: and it’s truly powerful, what comes from the ugly side of the heart, and it tells people to live only more for their desires than for their duties when the truth is that there is no greater pleasure than a life of fulfilling one’s duty, [even if it’s] one enveloped by thorns!: but what’s more beautiful, or what has a [sweeter] aroma than a rose?⁸⁴

What children are taught to be the work of the devil or demons are nothing but illusions, illusions that come from “the ugly side of one’s heart.” These illusions from the ignoble part of the heart are named demons for humans tend to perceive only in terms of bodies.

⁸³ Martí, 18:465-6. “Y cuando el demonio Mara le venía a hablar de la hermosura de su mujer, y de las gracias de su niño, y de la riqueza de su palacio, y de la arrogancia de mandar en su pueblo como rey, él llamaba a sus discípulos, para consagrarse otra vez ante ellos a la virtud: y el demonio Mara huía espantado.”

⁸⁴ Martí, 18:465. “Esas cosas que los hombres sueñan, y llaman demonios a los consejos malos que vienen del lado feo del corazón; sólo que como el hombre se ve con cuerpo y nombre, pone nombre y cuerpo, como si fuesen personas, a todos los poderes y fuerzas que imagina: ¡y ése es poder de veras, el que viene de lo feo del corazón, y dice al hombre que viva para sus gustos más que para sus deberes, cuando la verdad es que no hay gusto mayor, no hay delicia más grande, que la vida de un hombre que cumple con su deber, que está lleno alrededor de espinas!: ¿pero qué es más bello, ni da más aromas que una rosa?”

Humans name and categorize emotions in terms of their material world, Martí informs his reader. These illusions, according to the Cuban leader, are evil since they entice; they lead one astray from fulfilling a sense of duty and also direct one towards the pursuit of desires. Martí teaches that the most important and greatest pleasure comes from fulfilling an inner sense of duty.⁸⁵ Martí illustrates these notions of fulfilling duty and resisting material and ephemeral temptations in the example of the Buddha who may appear to have led a life of thorns, but in reality, according to the Cuban narrator, led one of sublime beauty.

In this story what Martí actually teaches is Buddhist philosophy. Although examples of virtue and humility may be taken from the life of Jesus and other spiritual figures, Martí was motivated to teach these principles not in a Judaeo-Christian framework. Instead, he wished to expose children to an alternative philosophy of Buddhism over the Christian and above even the more common Roman Catholic ethic of Spanish-American schooling. “A Journey through the Land of the Annamese” is hence not a Christian story; neither is it one applauding Europeans and their actions nor one devoid of godliness and spirituality. Martí reaffirms his interest in teaching children Buddhist principles as a way to sensitize children to other foreign cultures. He also demonstrates that distant societies share ideas, although considered inferior by prevailing late nineteenth-century mindsets, that are valuable and that may equally serve as guiding sources. He explains

Buddha believed that salvation rested in knowing four truths which speak that life is all suffering, and that suffering comes from desire, and [in order] to live without suffering one must live without desire, and that a sweet nirvana which is beautiful like the light that selflessness gives the soul is not reached by living like a

⁸⁵ Chapter Five examines in detail Martí’s concept of duty and how it relates to his nation building efforts.

crazy or greedy person with yearnings for materialism and [for] accumulating through the force of hatred and humiliation power and fortune; rather, by understanding that one should not live for vanity, nor should one covet what others have, nor should one harbor remorse, nor should one doubt the harmony of the world nor disregard nothing in it or be hurt by the insults and envy of others, nor should one rest until one's soul becomes like the light of an aurora, that fills with beauty and clarity the world, and cries and suffers for all that's sad in it, and until one sees oneself as a healer and a parent to all who have reason to suffer: it's like living in a hue of blue that never ends with such pure pleasure which must be what they call heaven where arms are always open. That's how Buddha lived.⁸⁶

Earlier in the story Martí indicated that the Annamese undermined imperialist intruders, a teaching of resistance and of love and defense for one's homeland. The above passage on the Buddha's teachings are meant to offer an alternative role model to children to the one, perhaps, witnessed at home or in their world where most adults lead lives much unlike the Buddha. In describing the Buddha, Martí places a high regard for humility and compassion. One does not reach nirvana by pursuing one's material desires; one must nurture the spirit. Martí employs the story of the Buddha to teach children which attitudes are truly valuable. One should not desire what others have, nor should one hold remorse towards others. Although he spoke against the French, one should not, like the Buddha, hold hatred towards an enemy. In his own struggle against Spanish colonialism, Martí reiterated how he was free from hatred towards the Spaniards, only

⁸⁶ Martí, 18:466. "Buda ...pensó...que estaba la salvación en conocer las cuatro verdades, que dicen que la vida es toda de dolor, y que el dolor viene de desear, y que para vivir sin dolor es necesario vivir sin deseo, y que el dulce nirvana, que es la hermosura como de luz que le da al alma el desinterés, no se logra viviendo, como loco o glotón, para los gustos de lo material, y para amontonar a fuerza de odio y humillaciones el mando y la fortuna, sino entendiendo que no se ha de vivir para la vanidad, ni se ha de querer lo de otros y guardar rencor, ni se ha de dudar de la armonía del mundo o ignorar nada de él o mortificarse con la ofensa y la envidia, ni se ha de reposar hasta que el alma sea como una luz de aurora, que llena de claridad y hermosura al mundo, y lllore y padezca por todo lo triste que hay en él, y se vea como médico y padre de todos los que tienen razón de dolor: es como vivir en un azul que no se acaba, con un gusto tan puro que debe ser lo que se llama gloria, y con los brazos siempre abiertos. Así vivió Buda."

despising the government that kept Cuba under tyranny. To feel for the needy and for those less fortunate is not enough. One must be a healer. One must be a mother or father to those who suffer in order to improve humanity and to reach nirvana. Nirvana, Martí advises, is not the sole result of satisfying one's duties or desires. Nirvana, instead, is achieved by helping one's larger world. In this sense, redemption is not confined to serving the nation. In Martí's views of nirvana and in teaching children who is qualified to serve as a role model, for example, the Buddha, he goes beyond Christian conceptions, towards a more global approach in teaching others about the path to spiritual purification. Martí's passage ends with heaven depicted as a place with "open arms."



Fig. 8 An Anamese God

Further in "A Journey through the Land of the Anamese," the Cuban leader explains how religions and ideologies that are inherently good have been employed by

men who sought power over others. In this case, did Martí mask the conquest and colonization of the Americas by the Spanish under the cloak of a story on Buddha's disciples? Considering other stories in *The Golden Years*, particularly one on Father Bartolomé Las Casas, defender of Native Americans, and how he portrayed the Spanish in "The History of Humanity, told through its Houses," we may safely assume that by depicting a corrupt band of Buddhist disciples he wished to rebalance notions regarding the European conquest and colonization of the Americas. In writing "A Journey through the Land of the Annamese," Martí demonstrates an interest in teaching Annamese history in order to expose Western actions and readjust Western perceptions of Asians and to teach broader moral lessons regarding outsiders who usurp others' freedoms and institutions.

Since *The Golden Years* was a venture, according to Martí, to create "genuine men and women"⁸⁷ for the Americas, his account of the Buddha and of how Buddhist principles were used to further the earthly ambitions of Asian rulers informs children, the future citizens of a free Cuba and the current ones of Spanish-American republics, that in history religion and, by extension, ideologies have been employed in taking people's freedom. Martí, understandably, would not outright criticize the role of Roman Catholicism in the conquest and colonization of Spanish America, to avoid injuring sensibilities and on a more material level if he wished to sell more copies of *The Golden Years* in the newsstands of Latin America. The passage on the disciples of the Buddha is a condemnation of employing overarching ideologies to further earthly ambitions of power and material gain. He writes

⁸⁷ Martí, 20:147.

Some [of Buddha's] disciples did what the king wanted, and went with the king's army to take away the freedom from the surrounding countries, under the pretext of teaching Buddha's truths: and then there were others who said that these disciples were lying and that the king was stealing, and that the freedom of a small nation is more important to the world than the power of an ambitious king, and the lies of the priests that serve the king for money, and if Buddha were alive, he would've said the truth, that he did not come down from heaven, instead [he came] like all other people, with heaven within themselves, and they see him, like they see the sun, when for love of humanity and honesty they become as if they weren't of flesh and bone, but of a clear light, and for the evil person they have compassion, as for sick men who need healing and to the good ones they give strength, so that they won't tire of inspiring and serving the world: now that's truly heaven, and divine joy!⁸⁸

Not all of Buddha's disciples followed the evil king who wished to gain control over others. There were those who had the courage to expose the king's actions and to continue the proper teachings of the Buddha. The actions of these good disciples are comparable to Martí's views on Father Bartolomé Las Casas, the benevolent Spanish priest who broke away from prevailing priests who legitimized the enslavement of Native Americans through Christianity. The images of disciples dissenting and breaking away teach children to also have the courage of their convictions, to call out abuses as they happen, and to correct wrongdoings wherever they occur. To teach children these values during the late nineteenth-century may have indeed been considered subversive. The story of the Buddha reflects what Martí wished to teach regarding the use of Roman

⁸⁸ Martí, 18:467. "Hubo unos discípulos que hicieron lo que el rey quería, y salieron con el ejército del rey a quitarles a los países de los alrededores la libertad, con el pretexto de que les iban a enseñar las verdades de Buda: y hubo otros que dijeron que eso era engaño de los discípulos y robo del rey, y que la libertad de un pueblo pequeño es más necesaria al mundo que el poder de un rey ambicioso, y la mentira de los sacerdotes que sirven al rey por su dinero, y que si Buda hubiera vivido, habría dicho la verdad, que él no vino del cielo sino como vienen los hombres todos, que traen el cielo en sí mismos, y lo ven, como se ve el sol, cuando por el cariño a los hombres y la honradez llegan a ser como si no fuesen de carne y de hueso, sino de claridad, y al malo le tienen compasión, como a un enfermo a quién se ha de curar, y al bueno le dan fuerzas, para que no se canse de animar y de servir al mundo: ¡ese sí que es cielo, y gusto divino!"

Catholicism or any other ideology to advance the goals of an elite at the expense of the masses: it should be exposed and defeated.

The above passage also reveals Martí's personal and spiritual beliefs. Buddha did not "come down from Heaven"; rather, Heaven is within everyone, a belief certainly shared with the New England Transcendentalists and inspired by Eastern philosophy (further explored in Chapter Five). Martí also presented images of good Buddhist monks to provide role models for children. Individuals should aim to be like the Buddha and the good monks who shine like the sun and who for their love and affection for others become as if made not from flesh and bone but from "a clear light." Throughout the story, Martí consistently identifies who are the wrongdoers, for instance, the French imperialists, the Siamese, and Chinese who have attempted to take Annam away from the Annamese. Although these wrongdoers are identified, Martí teaches not to have hatred towards these outsiders. Actions of resistance should be based on love; indeed, one should see the evil person with "compassion" as a "sick man who needs healing."

"If to the pagodas the sorrowful Annamese go," according to Martí, to ask the "heavenly unknown for the help they can no longer find on Earth," then "to the theater they go so that they won't lose the strength within their hearts. At the theater, there aren't any French people! In the theater the comic actors tell them stories when Annam was a great country, and so, rich neighbors wished to conquer it," Martí writes.⁸⁹ He resumes his descriptions of Annamese resistance to French intrusions by emphasizing how the cultural expression of one's nation should be nurtured and kept alive.

⁸⁹ Martí, 18:468. "Y al teatro van para que no se les acabe la fuerza del corazón. ¡En el teatro no hay franceses! En el teatro les cuentan los cómicos las historias de cuando Anam era país grande, y de tanta riqueza que los vecinos lo querían conquistar"



Una fiesta en la pagoda

Fig. 9 Festival in the Pagoda

Martí writes,

In Annam, the theater is not about what goes on today, rather it's about the country's history; and about the war that the brave An-Yan won against the Chinese Chau-Tu; and the military engagements of two women, Cheng Tseh and Chen Urh who dressed as warriors rode horses and went as generals of the people of Annam. [They] expelled the Chinese from their trenches; and the royal wars, when the brother of the dead king wished to rule Annam, instead of his nephew, or when a faraway king came to take the land away from King Hue.⁹⁰

⁹⁰ Martí, 18:468. "En Anam el teatro no es de lo que sucede ahora, sino la historia del país; y la guerra que el bravo An-Yan le ganó al chino Chau-Tu; y los combates de las dos mujeres, Cheng Tseh y Chen Urh, que se vistieron de guerreras y montaron a caballo, y fueron de generales de la gente de Anam, y echaron de sus trincheras a los chinos; y las guerras de los reyes, cuando el hermano del rey muerto quería mandar en Anam, en lugar de su sobrino, o venía el rey de lejos a quitarle la tierra al rey Hue."

By explaining how comic actors relay past figures and events in their plays, Martí teaches actual Annamese history to his child readers, as well as how the theater serves as a platform that nurtures resistance.

Although in *The Golden Years* gender roles may be polarized according to the rigid binarism of the times, where “little girls are told that they are the mothers of tomorrow, while little boys will grow up to be virtuous ‘gentlemen,’”⁹¹ Martí portrays in this passage females as warriors, as fierce heroines who expelled the Chinese from their trenches and fought for Annam’s freedom. This masculinized-for-its-time portrayal of two Annamese females demonstrates that Martí did not shy from presenting women in the same light as men, departing from traditional late nineteenth-century attitudes. Young girls, although expected to be raised as future mothers, could nevertheless identify with female warriors. There are however few instances when girls can identify with non-traditional Western conceptions of feminine roles, yet “A Journey through the Land of the Annamese” contains an example.

Martí concludes “Journey through the Land of the Annamese” with this final passage

While leaving the theater, the Annamese talk a lot amongst themselves, in heated passion, as if they’d started a race, and it seems as if they wish to convince their cowardly friends that they’re threatened. From the pagoda they leave silent with their heads down, [Csince many were built by avaricious kingsC] with their hands in [their] blue shirt pockets. And if along the way, a Frenchman asks [them] something, they respond in their language: “I don’t know.” And if a fellow Annamese speaks [to them softly in the ear] they answer: “Who knows!”⁹²

⁹¹ Oscar Montero, *José Martí: An Introduction* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), 13-14.

⁹² Martí, 18:470. “Al salir del teatro, los anamitas van hablando mucho, como enojados, como si quisieran echar a correr, y parece que quieren convencer a sus amigos cobardes, y que los amenazan. De la pagoda salen callados con la cabeza baja, con las manos en los bolsillos de la blusa azul. Y si un francés les

There is a distinction in how the Annamese leave the theater and the pagoda. The pagoda is a product of Buddhist religion; it may be viewed as institutionalized Buddhism, implying that one should be suspicious of institutionalized religions, no doubt a notion related to his own views on institutionalized Christianity. Moreover, Martí describes earlier in the story how evil monks who did the king's bidding built pagodas and statues commemorating each other. Although he did not mention that all pagodas were built by the corrupt monks (many honorable monks also built pagodas), the Annamese from the pagoda emerge quiet –perhaps, resigned, docile and even submissive? Does Martí imply in these statements that institutionalized religion and even ideologies facilitate passivity with the status-quo and rule by an elite? From the theater, where their history is taught on stage; where their culture is kept alive; and where through stories of the Annamese past, they are taught of their ability to defend against intruders, the Annamese emerge encouraged. Martí concludes “A Journey through the Land of the Annamese” with a final sentence that alludes to an earlier utterance of an Annamese character, the “who knows,” a statement undermining assumptions of the permanence of French rule in Annam.

To focus solely on the aspect of Martí's teachings that chastise the wrongdoings of others, such as his critiques of economic and military control by the French (an imperial power) over colonial peoples, is to miss a more complete picture of what Martí professed. He blamed not only the outsiders for interloping, for deceiving, for stealing, and for depriving the Annamese of their freedom, but he also taught that freedom must be defended individually. Freedom begins with the actions and attitudes of individuals. One should search for knowledge like the blind men. One should honor those who are wise

pregunta algo en el camino, le dicen en su lengua: ‘No sé.’ Y si un anamita les habla de algo en secreto, le dicen: ‘¡Quién sabe!’”

and seek wisdom, like the Indian raja. One should be tolerant of others' viewpoints and beliefs, unlike the blind men who maintained that their perceptions of the elephant were the correct ones. How there are unifying elements in the human condition across the globe; how perceptions may deceive, what appears weak (the Annamese) may indeed be strong (for example, their two thousand year-old defense of freedom and independence); how one should approach evil doers as people who are sick and need healing; how one should be wary of temptations that lead astray from fulfilling a heroic action or an inner call of duty; all are teachings that affirm the "profound thinking" that his project for children, *The Golden Years*, carried as Martí indicated in an August 3, 1889 letter to his close Mexican friend Manuel Mercado.⁹³



El teatro anamita.

Fig. 10 The Annamese Theater

⁹³ Martí, 20:146.

To conclude this chapter, Martí's children's magazine was a literary production abundant in poetry, prose, and metaphorical descriptions of world historical figures and events. Martí purposefully created a narrative for Latin American children, centered on the Western Hemisphere, to raise Spanish-American regional awareness and to eschew the Eurocentric perspectives of historical writings for children. In writing stories for children, Martí surely had his own distant and longed-for young son in Cuba. One may safely assume that he disguised teachings for Cuba's future citizens through historical subjects, allegories, and metaphors to avoid the antagonisms that more direct critiques of the Spanish rule of Cuba would have brought the children's magazine. Nevertheless, *The Golden Years* was written as an effort to build nation. Martí imbued his children's narratives with raw language. In these stories, there is death. There is pain. There is suffering. There is deceit, exploitation, selfishness, vanity, greed, and egotism. His collection of stories, particularly the ones that deal with the European conquest of America and the role of Europe in the world do not embellish Europeans and their actions. *The Golden Years* is therefore not entirely set in magical, imaginary worlds, as would be expected of children's tales. Martí's magazine sheds light on the child's present with its glories and injustices. And, to a child who considers Kindergarten difficult because she or he can no longer take naps, these notions may, indeed seem sad, depressing, or even beyond comprehension. Yet Martí's idealism is what remains with the reader—the past may be sorrowful, but the present and the future are influenced by human agency. Martí suggests there is a greater chance of securing a happier present and future if the lessons contained in his historical essays are affirmed.

Martí's objectives were therefore multifold: to give the Latin American child a firm grounding in her or his regional past and, in a larger sense, the global past in order to better understand the present and to be better equipped for adulthood. Since Martí deemed Latin America's prosperity linked to a sovereign and democratic Cuba, to cause children to have pride in their region and nation also furthered nation building in young Cubans. This chapter has demonstrated that the teachings in *The Golden Years* were efforts at promoting values that edified national and regional consciousness. *The Golden Years* is a significant component in his efforts to free Cuba that included the more recognized speech-giving, fundraising, campaigning, and organizational activities. *The Golden Years* was an attempt to expand his nation building efforts to include children. Child readers may have been a more receptive and malleable audience⁹⁴ to teach his concepts on how an individual should act in society; how one should defend and uphold moral values in the face of adversity; how one should follow a sense of inner duty; how one should nurture and defend local culture; how one should tolerate and respect ethnic and ideological differences; and how one should work to improve one's place in the world by elevating the condition of those less fortunate.

To Martí content was essential in expounding his views, the issues "he would like to help with." Yet significantly as well, he considered the form of the content, characterized as Impressionist,⁹⁵ equally important. As a poet, Martí imbued his

⁹⁴ Marnie Hughes-Warrington, "Readers, Responses, and Popular Culture" in *World Histories* (London and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005.), 222.

⁹⁵ Martí is credited with introducing Impressionist style to Spanish-language children's writings. According to Silvia Barros, even though Impressionism as a technique fell out of use in children's literature by the time Martí wrote *The Golden Years* in 1889, it was still a technique he followed. For more information on the different styles of children's books and magazines during Martí's time refer to Silvia A. Barros, "La Literatura para niños de José Martí en su época" in *Estudios Críticos sobre la prosa modernista hispanoamericana* ed. José Olivio Jiménez (New York: Eliseo Torres & Sons, 1975), 107-19. Manuel

narratives with musicality and linguistic devices that not only made his passages more vivid, but also a joy to read. In one of his last writings, a letter written to María Mantilla, a young girl he loved as a daughter, he instructed her to write when translating works from other languages in “a pure and simple Spanish” and told her “I wished to write like that in *The Golden Years* so that children would understand me and so that the language would be musical and make sense.”⁹⁶

Content and form; the spiritual and the material; for the Cuban cause, but also with the objective of elevating Latin American awareness; fiction and history –all these were important elements characterizing Martí’s children’s narratives. In attempting to give proper attention to these binaries, Martí sought to transcend them. By achieving one, he did not believe in sacrificing the other. Many of Martí’s ideas may seem incompatible to the reader, in one story of *The Golden Years* he praises the French (“The 1889 Paris Exposition”) while in another he criticizes them (“A Journey through the Land of the Annamese”). All these reflect Martí’s conceptions of focusing on people’s actions and not believing in perceived inherent and enduring character flaws.⁹⁷ In *The Golden Years*, Martí composes an art form, in this case a literary one, for children that transmitted these

Pedro González and Ivan A. Schulman also indicate that “literary impressionism, artistic function that flourished in European literature during the last third of the nineteenth-century, manifests itself in Martí’s work by 1877, three years after Claude Monet’s exhibition of “Impressions.” Manuel Pedro González and Ivan A. Schulman, *Jose Martí, Esquema ideológico* (Mexico: Editorial Cultura, 1961), 183.

⁹⁶ Martí, 20:217. Letter to María Mantilla written from Cap Haitien, Haiti, dated April 9, 1895. “Y no recuerdo, entre los que tú puedes tener a mano, ningún libro escrito en este español simple y puro. Yo quise escribir así en *La Edad de Oro*; para que los niños me entendiesen, y el lenguaje tuviera sentido y música.”

⁹⁷ This notion is further explored in Chapter Three’s analysis of Martí’s Walt Whitman essay.

values. This literary art form, created from the world's history, employs subjects of the global past as ennobling personal and social catalysts.⁹⁸

Martí presents an imperfect world where good and evil Buddhist monks exist; where exploiters and the exploited live; but also where happiness (nirvana, for instance) can be found by healing the “evil” ones around us and by encouraging those who improve the world to continue their constructive tasks. *The Golden Years* is therefore not only an attempt to re-craft the present and future by educating the young and old citizens of a soon-to-be independent Cuba and of the Spanish-American nations, but a blank canvas where the Cuban leader could artistically give life to his personal and political beliefs through figures and events in the history of the globe.

This chapter's analysis of “The Story of Humanity, told through its Houses” and “A Journey through the Land of the Annamese” expands our views of late nineteenth-century world histories, particularly for children, as well as our understanding of Cuban nation building. To examine the moral lessons contained in Martí's world historical depictions allows for *The Golden Years* to be understood as an integral part of his program to build a new nation from an oppressed colonial condition. Although these two short stories are not a comprehensive attempt at presenting the history of humanity, Martí nevertheless teaches about different world cultures and histories to an audience that may consider the subjects presented as distant and foreign. The presentation of world history, ironically, served Martí for local purposes, to build nation, to fight foreign intrusion, and to nurture democratic values in both young and old.

⁹⁸ Ivan A. Schulman, introduction to *José Martí: Ismaelillo, Versos Libres, Versos Sencillos* (Madrid: Ediciones Cátedra, 1999), 19. Martí considered art as useful in improving personal and social conditions.

This chapter's global approach to his nation building through children's historical narratives also reveals that Martí created stories of the global past with significant themes, such as employing the framework of human dwellings in "The Story of Humanity, told through its Houses"; in juxtaposing different cultural histories for the reader; by organizing civilizational growth along non-traditional lines (his use of the environment as influential factor in societal development in "The Story of Humanity, told through its Houses"); and finally in rebalancing notions of the European conquest of the Americas (which many consider crucial to "the rise of the West") as a positive event and as a product of distinct and inherent European qualities.

In a time when children's books aimed at reinforcing the dominant social values (and these were mainly European), these two stories de-center a global historical perspective away from Europe and towards the Americas. "The Story of Humanity, told through its Houses" places the Americas, and particularly its indigenous peoples, in a more central position in nineteenth-century world historical writings by demonstrating their equally significant role in the history of humanity. "The Story of Humanity, told through its Houses" and "Journey through the Land of the Annamese" also readjust notions of European exceptionalism and superiority.⁹⁹ Even though Martí's stories contain late nineteenth-century Western cultural assumptions, particularly, in regards to gender (for example, how young girls should be mothers and more enlightened companions to men), he did not shy from overturning many of these conceptions –for

⁹⁹ Noemí Beatriz Tornadú, introduction to *José Martí, 'La Edad de Oro'* (Buenos Aires: Editorial Huemul, 1966), 17. According to Tornadú, in his "The Story of Humanity, told through its Houses" and "Journey through the Land of the Annamese," Martí seeks to awaken the idea that foreign individuals and cultures, both temporally and spatially, are intrinsically as valuable as contemporary Western culture. ("En su 'Historia del hombre contada por sus casas' y en 'Un paseo por la tierra de los annamitas,' Martí quiere despertar la idea de que los hombres y las culturas lejanas temporal y espacialmente del lector, son intrínsecamente tan valiosas como la cultura occidental contemporánea.")

instance, the belief that “lesser” peoples should be ruled by more “superior” ones. Martí indeed subverted prevailing racial and ethnic notions and taught children to do so as well. He employed world history to build nation at an early age by imparting values of resisting and overthrowing oppressive ruling systems, whether externally-imposed (imperialism) or internally-derived (dictatorships). Martí’s world history narratives for children propose for readers of all ages broad and forceful ideas on history and on how individuals should live in a nation. They also emerge as iconoclastic efforts at building the Cuban nation.¹⁰⁰

¹⁰⁰ For more on how Martí’s “Modernist” ideology in *The Golden Years* is subversive for its time, see Howard M. Fraser, “*La Edad de Oro* and José Martí’s Modernist Ideology for Children,” *Revista Interamericana de Bibliografía* 42, no. 2 (1992): 223-32.

CHAPTER THREE

U.S. SUBJECTS AND MARTÍ'S SELF-DEPICTIONS IN NATION BUILDING EFFORTS THROUGH BIOGRAPHIES

Considering biographies as a means to teach history, many nineteenth-century Western scholars followed Georg W. F. Hegel's (1770-1831) view that all events, "including world-historical actions, culminate with individuals as subjects giving actuality to the substantial."¹ During the late nineteenth- and early twentieth-centuries, biographies of "great men" were in vogue and sought to portray history through the lives of prominent individuals. To more fully understand José Martí's efforts at nation-building, examining his use of biographies is particularly enlightening. This chapter demonstrates that Martí taught values he wished for a new Cuban society by depicting U.S. subjects and events, as well as on his own spiritual and philosophical views through biographies.

Martí's extended stay in New York City from 1880 to 1895 compelled him to earn a living from writing, by translating popular works from English and French into Spanish, and as a foreign correspondent for prominent Latin American newspapers of the time such as *La Nación* of Buenos Aires, *La Opinión Nacional* of Caracas, and *El Partido Liberal* of Mexico City. Martí gained recognition in Spanish-America for his witty commentaries and clear insights into American life and figures. Among Martí's writings of life in the United States, his biographical sketches stand out for they introduced Cubans and Latin Americans to important figures such as the poet Walt Whitman (1819-1892) and since they provided first-hand testimony of North American

¹ Georg Wilhelm Feidrich Hegel, "World History" in *German Essays on History*, ed. Rolf Sältzer (New York: Continuum, 1991), 66.

life by a fellow Spanish-American. Cubans and Spanish-Americans are not the subject of the biographical pieces surveyed in this chapter; instead, Martí wrote about North Americans for a Cuban and Spanish-American audience. Martí's biographical efforts have cross national dimensions. His use of prominent (and ultimately historical) figures from one society (U.S.) as model for those in another society (Cuba and Latin America) documents an example of a meaningful cross cultural interaction, so essential to the study of Atlantic and world history. This chapter seeks to cross cultures once more by presenting for the first time in English Martí's biographical sketches.² This chapter transmits to a modern English-speaking audience the late nineteenth-century Cuban freedom fighter's values that edified nation, as he wrote them for his Latin American readers.

Martí scholars, particularly those interested in a literary perspective, have examined his writings on American writers. Living in New York City upon the death of Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803-1882) and Walt Whitman, Martí wrote essays on their lives for Latin American newspapers. Martí wrote on more than American authors, he also related the lives of major American military and political figures, including Philip Henry Sheridan (1831-1888), Chester Alan Arthur (1829-1886), and Ulysses S. Grant (1822-1885). Most of these biographical sketches are several paragraphs long. Others, such as

² Since English translations of most of the biographical essays examined in this chapter and in Chapter Four do not exist, all quotes, citations, and references to José Martí's works in this and the next chapter are original translations from José Martí, *Obras Completas*, 2d ed., 27 vols. (Havana: Editorial Ciencias Sociales, 1975), except for a few instances when Esther Allen's translations are employed for comparative purposes as in the essay on Walt Whitman. Chapters Three and Four translate and make available to an English-speaking audience for the first time important excerpts of the following biographical pieces surveyed on Ulysses S. Grant, on Philip Henry Sheridan, and on Chester Alan Arthur. Although I employ my translations of the Walt Whitman and Ralph Waldo Emerson essays, these have been translated before by Esther Allen. José Martí, *Selected Writings*, ed. & trans. Esther Allen (New York: Penguin Books, 2002).

the one on Grant, demonstrate greater care in preparation for they are much more extensive and academic in nature.

These biographical essays significantly reveal, as has not been shown, Martí's visions and values for a new independent Cuba. Beyond describing the character of and the events in an individual's life, biographies allowed Martí to reveal his personal views and assessments on the individual's life and surroundings. Writing these assessments allowed him to communicate his views on life which were linked, as this chapter demonstrates, conceptions of politics, government, and civic behavior. These biographical sketches have not been examined as efforts in Cuban nation building nor have they been considered in terms of how raise Spanish-American consciousness.

Cuba's freedom was Martí's preeminent concern, dedicating his adult life to it, sacrificing his marriage, a financially rewarding career as a writer, and businessman (his friends urged him to be more financially ambitious).³ Martí procured employment that allowed him to work for the cause of Cuban independence. His biographical essays should be understood in the context of someone who modeled his life on the struggle for Cuba's freedom.

This chapter reveals that Martí built nation through biographies on U.S. figures. Simplifying Martí's views on the U.S. by conveying that he admired the poets, but hated the politicians, as has been promoted, misses the more nuanced and varied ways Martí

³ José Martí, *Obras Completas*, 2d ed. (Havana: Editorial de Ciencias Sociales, 1975), 20:150. In a letter to his close friend Manuel Mercado regarding his efforts at writing *The Golden Years*, Martí wrote "please know –since I forgot [to tell you] –that I'm buying a train (a cable streetcar) for Buenos Aires and selling an oil concession to please my friends who tell me that 'I'm good for bigger things' (sepa –me olvidaba– que estoy comprando para B. Aires un ferrocarril (tranvía) de cable, y vendiendo una concesión sobre petróleo, por complacer a amigos míos, que dicen que "sirvo para cosas mayores."

depicted U.S. events and characters.⁴ Moreover, it emphasizes Martí's negative depictions of the U.S. in his nation building at the expense of understanding that the Cuban leader portrayed the U.S. in many ways. He portrayed the negative aspects of the U.S. to warn Cubans and Latin Americans against North American expansion and exploitation, but also negative U.S. portrayals served to warn Cubans and Latin Americans to be cautious of forces within their own societies that threatened democracy.⁵ In other instances, Martí projected the U.S. as a model for emulating North American democratic values and work ethic. Since analyses of Martí's biographical sketches have been limited to writers, the view of Martí as admirer of U.S. letters, but less receptive towards U.S. politics has gained ground. This chapter repairs a breach in the vast scholarship on the Cuban independence leader by approaching Martí's biographies as efforts in Cuban nation building and as means to decipher his visions for Cuba.

This chapter concentrates attention on Martí's twelve-part biographical essay on former Union General and U.S. President Ulysses S. Grant (1822-1885) and also examines minor sketches on Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803-1882),⁶ Peter Cooper (1791-

⁴ Anne Fountain states "understanding Martí's literary criticism, therefore, is central to grasping his whole interpretation of the United States –a largely negative view of politics and politicians tempered by an enthusiastic embrace of poets and poetry." Anne Fountain, preface to *José Martí and U.S. Writers* (Gainseville: University Press of Florida, 2003), xiii.

⁵ The former has received more attention in studies of Martí's use of the U.S. in his efforts to warn Latin Americans and Cubans. The latter is generally ignored because it promotes that Martí wished for Cuba a similar system, a democratic republic, but without the evils that threatened American democracy.

⁶ This chapter does not examine the Emerson essay extensively, for it does not display the same amount of political overtones or historical explanations as the other pieces. In addition, it receives more attention in Chapter Five when considered for its spiritual dimensions. The Emerson essay does not overtly seek to build nation –some may argue it doesn't at all, yet I view it as a biographical piece that, through its strong spiritual character, builds nation by presenting spiritual and philosophical views that may assist women and men in leading happier, more fulfilling lives. Therefore, I examine only those important instances in the essay that specifically relate to views on nation-building.

1883), Walt Whitman (1819-1892), and Chester Allan Arthur (1829-1886).⁷ As Martí's most extensive description and assessment of an individual's life, the essay on Grant exemplifies the varied ways Martí represented U.S. figures and events in promoting his visions for Cuba. Along with the Grant essay, other, lesser biographical pieces also demonstrate that Martí portrayed his feelings and views through characters and events to transmit ideas for a new nation and to relieve the stress and angst experienced by his personal struggle for a free Cuba. Unfortunately, Martí wrote no major pieces on females; however, the essay on Walt Whitman reveals Martí's notions on gender and sexuality. The Whitman piece also transmits, as this chapter argues, a never before disclosed nation building value that Martí wished for an independent Cuba –how to deal with perceived sexual deviancy.

Ralph Waldo Emerson

Published originally in the May 19, 1882 issue of *La Opinión Nacional* of Caracas, Martí's essay on Emerson is a composition full of metaphor and rhythm. Adapting Emerson's words for a Latin American audience, Martí weaves spiritual beliefs into a narrative on Emerson's life. The reader is often left wondering what originates in Emerson or in Martí. Since the Cuban leader admired, spiritually agreed with, and found a kindred soul in Emerson (although they never met), the positive depictions of the New England thinker's beliefs may be also safely accepted as Martí's. Chapter Five on the

⁷ Due to constraints of space and scope not all of Martí's short biographical pieces are included in this discussion; rather those Martí admired, since he mentions them in his literary testament (a letter to his assistant Gonzalo de Quesada y Aróstegui written before leaving for war in Cuba, instructing what to do with his writings if he weren't to return. Martí, 1:25), and the ones that deal with politicians or non-literary figures, except for the essays on Whitman and Emerson who were not about politicians or government officials, but which contain powerful insights and prose that I could not resist.

Hindu dimensions of Martí's nation building delves deeper into the Emerson essay. Martí's piece on Emerson presents important instances when the Cuban leader admires the New England Transcendentalist's approach to life in political and nation-building contexts. Martí writes, "he didn't obey any one system, he [Emerson] believed it was an act of blind men and of servants; nor did he create any [systems], he believed it an act of a weak, low, and conniving mind."⁸ The Cuban leader admired Emerson's respect for independent thinking. Martí also sought to teach children (as seen in Chapter Two on *The Golden Years*) and adults the value of free and independent thought. In the above citation, Martí eschews individuals who follow constrictive systems or group ideologies and those who create them. To Martí, individuals, and therefore citizens of republics, ought to be free thinkers as his world historical narratives for children and his essay on Emerson promote. Martí's admiration for Emerson's love of free thought reveals that he would have also applied this ideal to the independent republic he fought for, an independent nation that would allow free thought to exist and flourish. Hence, the Emerson essay, although highly focused on spiritual and philosophical matters, indirectly transmits a value Martí presented during his years of Cuban nation building, the respect for independent thinking.

Peter Cooper

Martí also admired Peter Cooper, an American capitalist and philanthropist who he viewed as a model wealthy individual. Peter Cooper distributed his wealth to social causes and was a "natural, practical man," in the way of other "practical" figures that

⁸ Martí, 13:20. "No obedeció a ningún sistema, lo que le parecía acto de ciego y de siervo; ni creó ninguno, lo que le parecía acto de mente flaca, baja y envidiosa."

Martí admired such as Ulysses S. Grant. The Cuban leader wrote two short pieces on Cooper. The more extensive one, published in *La Nación* of Buenos Aires on June 3, 1883, commemorates Cooper's death. Forgiveness appears as a major theme in the essay. Since forgiveness is commonly considered an act of love, love is a related theme also displayed throughout Martí's work, especially in the Walt Whitman essay. A love for *patria* (nation, homeland) fueled Martí's nation building efforts. In writing about Peter Cooper, the Cuban freedom fighter expresses his views on love by describing how the wealthy philanthropist also viewed the subject. Martí employs a U.S. figure such as Cooper to promote the value of love in a society. Martí writes, "only one key opens the door to happiness: Love. The one who loves, does not suffer, even when he [or she] does suffer, the [human] soul that is devoured by a love for humanity, emerges, like from a goblet of incense that burns, an intoxicatingly pleasing scent."⁹ To Cooper and Martí, love is the element that leads to happiness and that relieved human suffering.

Living a life of service for humanity, like Peter Cooper, by serving the cause of a free Cuba, Martí found philosophical resonance in Cooper's life. Martí based his actions to free Cuba and to build a republic on love. Even though he suffered because of his dedication to the Cuban cause, love provided relief for Martí. Through Cooper's words, Martí imparted that love was the element that led to happiness, and that the love for fellow men and women relieved suffering. The Cooper essay reveals that Martí portrayed his personal views and feelings through his biographical subject. The Cooper essay demonstrates that Martí taught the life values that relieved his pain in pursuing his

⁹ Martí, 13:50. "Sólo una llave abre las puertas de la felicidad: Amor. No sufre quien ama, aun cuando sufre, porque del alma a quien devora el amor a los hombres, surgen como de una copa de incienso que se quema, aromas embriagadoras."

overarching objective, a free Cuba. The biography served Martí in building nation by promoting the values he deemed important.

Like the Emerson essay, the Cooper piece promotes the importance of freedom of thought and of charity towards others. Regarding Peter Cooper, Martí wrote that “[Cooper] saw that whoever encloses him [or her-] self within him [or her-] self, lives like a lion [a beast]; and he [or she] who gives from within him [or her-] self, lives among doves.”¹⁰ According to Martí, no individual should live trapped within him or herself, nor should individuals exclude or impede others from expressing or giving of themselves freely. In the biographical sketch, Martí praises Peter Cooper and Cooper’s philanthropic activities such as the learning institution Cooper founded (Cooper Union).

Martí also relates his views on religion, particularly in the wider sense of *religión*, the word’s Spanish meaning connoting dogma, ideology, and creed. Paraphrasing Cooper, Martí writes, “the only religion that’s worthy of men [and women] is the one that excludes no man [and woman] from its heart [core],”¹¹ Did Martí envision a nation fueled by hatred for its enemy, the Spanish? Did he view a nation to be led by one ruler, or one group of people who excluded others from decision-making? Did he envision a nation where one or a single group of voices would be heard? In the Emerson and Cooper essays, the Cuban leader demonstrates Martí’s high regard for the role of love in a society; for tolerance, those who do not exclude others from any “religion” (Cooper); and for those who do not create and impose ideological systems (Emerson). Moreover, the Cooper essay echoes his concern for social justice –Cooper made sure to contribute to the

¹⁰ Martí, 13:50. “Y él vio que quien se encierra en sí, vive con leones: y quien se saca de sí, y se da a los otros, vive entre palomas.”

¹¹ Martí, 13:53. “O como Peter Cooper quiere que se diga que la única religión digna de los hombres es aquello que no excluye a hombre alguno de su seno.”

improvement of society and did so lovingly and made a fortune, free of greed, to be returned for humanitarian causes and for the public good.

Walt Whitman

The Whitman essay first appeared in *El Partido Liberal* (Mexico City) and in *La Nación* (Buenos Aires) in 1887 and has been examined from a literary perspective elsewhere.¹² The essay is noteworthy for introducing Whitman and his work to Latin American audiences and for the Cuban leader's praises of Whitman when many literary critics at the time shunned and censored the New England poet. Significantly for this discussion, the Whitman essays provides examples of how Martí wished Cubans and Latin Americans to perceive and to relate to their northern neighbor, visible through Martí's depictions of the U.S in the essay. The Whitman piece also transmits Martí's views on religion, politics, and history. This chapter presents how they relate to his project for an independent Cuba. The Whitman essay also displays important aspects of the Cuban nation-builder's views on gender and sexuality.

Applying a gender perspective to the Whitman essay expands this dissertation's discussion on the world historical dimensions of Martí's nation building. A world perspective connotes a global approach, a way of examining a subject that facilitates cross-cultural connections and seeks to reveal diversities and commonalities in and across societies. Introducing Whitman's work to a Latin American audience was significant for its transposing of ideas from North to Latin America and, particularly, for its transmitting the life and work of an individual who challenged his society's prevailing views on

¹² See Anne Fountain, *José Martí and U.S. Writers* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2003).

gender and sexuality. The Whitman essay challenges conventions, as he did with how children are taught world history; yet in the Whitman essay, the conventions questioned are on gender and sexuality in Latin America.

Martí's most extensive biographical essay is on a military man (Grant). The next chapter will examine essays on military leaders, such as Philip Henry Sheridan (1831-1888), to decipher how Martí conceived that Cuba should be ruled. Although most of Martí's biographies are on men in institutions long identified as masculine such as the military, and he confirms the male biographical subject's masculinity throughout the narratives by depicting them as physically strong, he also depicts military generals as humble and submissive.¹³ To Martí one could be masculine, yet the traits traditionally regarded as feminine in Western culture, such as forgiveness, submission, and obedience improved a male's character. In the biographies of military men, Martí praises qualities stereotypically assigned to females in the West, even though he did not label them as feminine, for he would have repelled many Latin American males he aimed his lessons at. Martí, respects, admires, and seeks for others to emulate many of the (traditionally Western) "feminine" traits in these men's characters. One could argue that it was these "feminine" traits that make these male figures "great"; perhaps, men that were "great" to Martí balanced the traditionally male attributed traits of bravado, courage, and physical strength with the more traditionally female qualities of tenderness, forgiveness, and submission. The Walt Whitman essay is particularly noteworthy in this sense. Whereas in the other essays Martí's views on gender are less visible, in the Whitman piece they are conspicuous.

¹³ As seen in Chapter Four's discussion on Sheridan knowing when to seek forgiveness of his troops.

Whitman was a homosexual man in the modern sense of the term, although at the time it had not gained currency. Whitman's works were prohibited due to the perceived male eroticism of its pages; however, Martí, manifesting a certain naïveté, was either unaware or ignored that Whitman was a man who could love men in erotic and sexual ways. He recognized the romanticism in Whitman's words; he probably associated them with his own displays of love and affection for close male friends. Nevertheless, Martí's love and affection for other men were detached from sexual attraction.

Martí admires, promotes, and defends Whitman in his biographical essay, demonstrating how he did not allow prevailing views of eschewing, ignoring, or censoring the New England poet to persuade him. One may argue for Martí was naïve in believing Whitman's romantic words as only odes to platonic friendship and nothing more. Yet whether he was naïve or not, Martí's promoting of Whitman in an environment where many denounced the New Englander magnifies the significance of his words on Whitman, particularly the ones that teach values. It would have been easier to promote someone generally accepted as an admirable (e.g., a president, a military general); more difficult to convince others of the worth of a neglected figure.

In depicting Whitman, Martí transmits values that edify personal, and in a larger sense, national consciousness. The Whitman essay reveals the Cuban leader's attitude towards people who were criticized, if not ostracized by a prevailing majority or by an establishment. Martí avoided following prevailing norms that he did not agree with; he did not allow himself to be driven by general fears and biases. He viewed Whitman as an idealized, wise old man that for his wisdom and intellectual, and even spiritual stature,

would not imbue words with meanings that reflected desires to engage in sexual intimacy with other men.¹⁴

Martí describes how Whitman “does not live in New York, in his ‘beloved Manhattan’, he lives taken cared for by ‘loving friends,’ since Whitman’s writing does not provide him enough to live by.” According to Martí, he lives “in a small house in a lively bend of country, where, in his old man’s carriage, horses take him, [the one who] loves to see the ‘strong [and manly] youths’ in their virile amusements, the ‘comrades [partners, friends]’ that do not fear to rub shoulders with this iconoclast who wishes to establish ‘the institution of camaraderie.’”¹⁵ The Cuban leader paraphrases Whitman, and is unafraid to write elements (as he directly cites Whitman) that could be deemed inappropriate, strange, or even sinful. Why would a man enjoy seeing “strong [and manly] youths in their virile amusements”? Martí follows the passage with “he [Whitman] says it in his ‘Calumus’, the *enormously strange* book that sings the love of friends: ‘Nor orgies, nor ostentatious parades, nor the continual procession of streets, nor the crammed windows of merchants, nor the conversations with erudites please me, [it’s when] I travel through Manhattan, [when] the eyes I find that offer me love; lovers, constant lovers is the only thing that satisfies me.’”¹⁶ To Martí, Whitman’s poems in

¹⁴ It also reveals, perhaps, a certain type of heterosexist idealism.

¹⁵ Martí, 13:132. “Él no vive en Nueva York, su ‘Manhattan querida’, su ‘Manhattan de rostro soberbio y un millón de pies’, a donde se asoma cuando quiere entonar ‘el canto de lo que ve a la Libertad’; vive, cuidado por ‘amantes amigos’, pues sus libros y conferencias apenas le producen para comprar pan, en una casita arrinconada en un ameno recodo del campo, de donde en su carruaje de anciano le llevan los caballos que ama a ver a los ‘jóvenes forzudos’ en sus diversiones viriles, a los “camaradas” que no temen codearse con este iconoclasta que quiere establecer ‘la institución de la camaradería.’”

¹⁶ Emphasis is mine. Martí, 13:133. “Él lo dice en sus “Calamus”, el libro enormemente extraño en que canta el amor de los amigos: ‘Ni orgías, ni ostentosas paradas, ni la continua procesión de las calles, ni las ventanas atestadas de comercios, ni la conversación con los eruditos me satisface, sino que al pasar por mi Manhattan los ojos que encuentro me ofrezcan amor; amantes, continuos amantes es lo único que me satisface.’”

Calumus, were “enormously strange” (*extraño* is Martí’s exact word, connoting strange, distant, and foreign). But Martí does not judge Whitman’s work as being “enormously strange”; rather, it is merely different, at times, incomprehensible. Being incomprehensible did not compromise the power and beauty of Whitman’s work to Martí. The Cuban leader may have found an ode to male friendship “enormously strange,” yet, he still recognized beauty and significance in Whitman’s work, enough for Martí to identify with Whitman and to transmit his views through depictions of Whitman.

Although Whitman is conspicuous in a love for men that includes friendship and love for greater humanity as well, Martí chose or, perhaps, overlooked that Whitman’s words could easily and equally be interpreted as either odes to brotherly friendship or to erotic male love. Martí did not engage the erotic aspect of Whitman’s writing. Instead, he defended Whitman’s work against sexually charged criticisms. In the piece, Martí writes, “one of the sources of his originality is the Herculean strength with which he lays down ideas as if he were to violate them, when he will only give them a kiss, with the passion of a saint.” Martí continues,

another fount is the source of his material, brutal, corpulent, in which he expresses his most delicate imaginative ideals. That language has appeared lascivious to those incapable of understanding his greatness; there have been idiots who when he celebrates in ‘Calamus,’ with the most ardent images of human language, the love for friends, believed that they saw, with the squeamishness of cynical and [dishonest] schoolboys [and girls], the return to those vile lusts of Virgil for Cebes and of Horace for Gyges and Lysisicus.¹⁷

¹⁷ Martí, 13:137. “Una de las fuentes de su originalidad es la fuerza hercúlea con que postra a las ideas como si fuera a violarlas, cuando sólo va a darles un beso, con la pasión de un santo. Otra fuente es la forma material, brutal, corpórea, con que expresa sus más delicadas idealidades. Ese lenguaje ha parecido lascivo a los que son incapaces de entender su grandeza; imbéciles ha habido que cuando celebra en ‘Calamus’, con las imágenes más ardientes de la lengua humana, el amor de los amigos, creyeron ver, con remilgos de colegial impúdico, el retorno a aquellas viles ansias de Virgilio por Cebetes y de Horacio por Giges y Licisco.”

Martí's choice of an obscure example of ancient Greek homosexuality, characterized more by violence and exploitation ("the return to those vile lusts of Virgil for Cebes and of Horace for Gyges and Lysisicus"), and not of a reference to a familiar instance of love between men, demonstrates, according to some scholars, that Martí, perhaps, found more upsetting Whitman's work being identified with exploitation and predatory intentions, than with males voluntarily expressing affection for other males.¹⁸

Cuba's freedom was consistently in Martí's mind, and what this future nation would be and would represent preoccupied Martí enough to write extensively for and sacrifice much of his private life. So, if Martí's biographies transmit ideas that build a Cuban nation and that raise Latin American consciousness where men like Grant, as later explored, are held as models to either emulate or avoid, shouldn't men like Whitman also serve as examples? Particularly since the essay on Whitman is more complementary to the New England poet than the Grant essay is to the Union general? Whitman's sexual orientation, or at least how others perceived it, did not bother Martí nor did he consider it an issue –and surely as he did not wish others to make a cause in upsetting, criticizing, and persecuting individuals like Whitman, Martí would also not agree to criticize or persecute those like Whitman in a new Cuban republic. In the independent Cuban republic, individuals would be viewed in terms of their work (as Martí positively assessed Whitman's) and not judged by their sexual orientation.

¹⁸ According to Esther Allen, Martí's reference to the "lusts of Virgil for Cebes and of Horace for Gyges and Lyssicus" points to "Lysisicus, meaning 'little wolf,' engages in a predatory affair with the narrator of Horace's *Epodes*, who mentions Gyges in passing as a pretty little boy with flowing hair. Cebes was a male slave belonging to Virgil's patron, Maecenas, who gave him to Virgil when Virgil took a liking to him –an incident recounted by Servius, one of Virgil's commentators. Martí may have selected these rather obscure examples of homosexuality in ancient Greece because each as a predatory or exploitative aspect, and that, rather than the simple fact of homosexuality, is perhaps what he finds 'vile' about them." Allen in *José Martí: Selected Writings*, 430.

Martí transmits values by paraphrasing Whitman. Martí, as seen earlier in the Peter Cooper essay, admired the religion (creed) that did not separate individuals or divide them from others. Martí's vision for a new nation was a Cuban republic that would not exclude any types, and particularly those individuals like Whitman whose work may seem "strange," yet may be deemed valuable for their candor and originality. It is this freedom of thought, of being, and of action, that Martí wished for Cuba's citizens and for those living in the Spanish-American sister republics to enjoy and respect.

Martí's essay on Whitman also promotes his ideas on the role of literature in history. "Every social state [period] brings to literature its own form of expression, in such a way that through its diverse phases one can tell the history of peoples [nations] with greater truth [accuracy] than through [historical] decades and chronologies."¹⁹ Literature, according to Martí, is an expression of society, of a particular social period. Literature reveals more effectively than other sources the history of a society. Martí believed that primary source literature provided a more accurate account than secondary sources. Martí preferred literature over two other elements he mentions: over the "*cronicones* (a brief narrative describing a chronology or one of a chronological nature)" and over the "*décadas* (decades)." Martí implies with "*cronicones*" that secondary sources created by historians or others who study the past are not as accurate as the actual written word of the individuals of the era under study. Regarding "decades," Martí also believes that, unless the historical narrative was written by those living in the particular

¹⁹ Martí, 13:134. "Cada estado social trae su expresión a la literatura, de tal modo, que por las diversas fases de ella pudiera contarse la historia de los pueblos, con más verdad que por sus cronicones y sus décadas."

society and period (in which case becomes the literature of the period), they are ultimately subjective, as a product of others looking back in time.

Since Martí viewed literature as a highly accurate tool, a more truthful instrument in telling the history of *pueblos* (peoples, nations), one may safely assume that he considered his own literature as an accurate account of his own times for future generations. The subjects of his biographical sketches, such as Peter Cooper, Philip Henry Sheridan, Walt Whitman, Chester Allan Arthur, and Ulysses S. Grant, were products of Martí's time. When written, the Cuban leader's narratives had a contemporary concern, to inform his Latin American newspaper audiences of current events in the U.S., yet the above views on history underscore how these biographical narratives transcend that purpose. Martí mixed current events with history. For example, in the Grant essay he provides detailed accounts of the Civil War. He wrote narratives that combined different perspectives of periodization by employing his present-day subject to teach about the past (to leave a record for future readers). Importantly for this dissertation, he wrote biographies to impart lessons for the future and to influence history, specifically, Cuba's national development. Hence, Martí, as Chapter Two on world historical narratives for children corroborates, sought to explain history and to write histories of meaning and histories that would influence the course events. Historical writing, in diverse formats whether in short stories for children or in biographical essays for adults, facilitated Martí's nation building. History, to Martí, provided models (e.g., U.S. figures and events) to transmit the traits to either emulate or avoid. History also provided models that he could identify with, find relief in, and inspiration for his struggle to free Cuba.

Walt Whitman, a poet and literary figure, served Martí to promote his views on literature and its role in society. The Cuban leader viewed literature as both work of art and practical tool. To Martí, literature was significant for understanding and in writing history. Martí also demonstrates how literature is essential for the present and for the future of a society. Martí writes,

who is the ignorant [one] that believes poetry is not indispensable to nations [peoples]? There are people of such short mental vision that they take the peel for the whole fruit.²⁰ Poetry, which unifies or separates, that strengthens or distresses, that shores up or tears down [people's] spirits, that gives or takes away faith, [hope, and vigor], is more necessary to nations [peoples] than industry itself, for industry provides them with the means for living [sustenance], while poetry gives them the desire [to do so] and the force of life [or the strength for life itself].²¹

Poetry, and therefore literature, does have a useful function in a society. It renders history more accurately, and it provides the desire and the spiritual, emotional, and intellectual strength to pursue life's objectives. Martí believes that literature gives "*la fuerza de la vida*," also signifying the force [or energy] of life itself. Without poetry and literature, individuals will be merely beings who pursue material needs; the desire to pursue wealth and material objects (and the industry that requires these) would not be strengthened by the intellectual and spiritual power literature provides. Literature, according to Martí, supplies individuals and societies with the meaning, motivation, and drive to accomplish objectives and to succeed in a material world. Therefore, Martí employed literature and,

²⁰ Martí, 13:131. "que creen que toda la fruta se acaba en la cascara." I have employed Esther Allen's translation of this phrase as "that they take the peel for the whole fruit." Allen, 187.

²¹ Martí, 13:131. "¿Quién es el ignorante que mantiene que la poesía no es indispensable a los pueblos? Hay gentes de tan corta vista mental, que creen que toda la fruta se acaba en la cáscara. La poesía que congrega o disgrega, que fortifica o angustia, que apuntala o derriba las almas, que da o quita a los hombres la fe y el aliento, es más necesaria a los pueblos que la industria misma, pues ésta les proporciona el modo de subsistir, mientras que aquélla les da el deseo y la fuerza de la vida."

specifically, historical writing (world history narratives and biographies) as practical devices, means to further the values to edify society and to build nation.

Promoting other nation building values, Martí espouses his views on freedom and liberty in a society. To Martí, *patria* (nation, homeland) was sacred, as Chapter Five on the Hindu dimensions of Martí's nation building demonstrates. Liberty also had spiritual connotations to the Cuban leader. Liberty, as Martí writes in the Whitman essay, is the new religion. "You [all] believed that religion was lost [gone] because it was changing shape [right] over your heads. Stand up, because you are its ministers. Freedom is the [one, decisive, and] final religion. And the poetry of liberty the new form of worship. It soothes and beautifies the present, it infers and illuminates the future, and explains the inexpressible and seductive goodness of the Universe."²² In a preaching tone, Martí urges individuals to realize that the true modern religion is freedom. If freedom is a religion and *patria* is sacred, indeed, a divine entity, as Chapter Five shows, then both freedom and *patria* are intrinsically related. *Patria* and freedom have a mutually dependent relationship. The *patria* must be free from Spain and other external threats, as well as internally liberated. Poetry, indeed literature, has a significant relationship with the new religion of liberty and freedom. Poetry is a way of worshipping this new religion. Poetry and literature provide peace, wisdom, and explains [supplies] the reason for being, the purpose for and the motive of the Universe, according to Martí.

The role of poetry and literature in a society is also tied to his vision of wisdom and knowledge in a society. Regarding this role, Martí wrote in a separate essay on Amos

²² Martí, 13:135-6. "Creíais la religión perdida, porque estaba mudando de forma sobre vuestras cabezas. Levantaos, porque vosotros sois los sacerdotes. La libertad es la religión definitiva. Y la poesía de la libertad el culto nuevo. Ella aquietta y hermosea lo presente, deduce e ilumina lo futuro, y explica el propósito inefable y seductora bondad del Universo."

Bronson Alcott, “May the habit [and tradition] of investigating [scrutinizing, examining], of relating with individuals, and of the constant exercise of the word [speech, letters, literature], be imparted in the citizens of a republic, [it] will fall down when its children are missing these virtues.”²³ To Martí, a republic would be menaced, indeed, it would cease to exist when its citizens lacked the virtues of questioning others, the ruling systems, and society in general, a value he continually promoted, as Chapter Two on *The Golden Years* demonstrates. To Martí, all individuals should question and scrutinize the words and actions of others. A republic would also fall when its citizens cease to know how to relate to one another (Martí employs the word *roce*, signifying rapport, the “know-how” of relating to people), implying that tolerance should be inculcated in the citizens of republic. To show tolerance is the most effective way to deal with others, as the Cooper and Whitman essays reflect with their references to love and inclusion. Martí chastised religions that separated and divided people (Cooper) and he implied that since one may not fully comprehend an element or quality of a human being, one should not immediately judge it to its detriment or alienate those one may find “strange” (Whitman). Along with critical thinking and tolerance, Martí promoted how the “*ejercicio constante de la palabra*,” the constant and continual exercise of the word, meaning the use of free speech, was also critical in defending a republic.

Martí’s considers freedom and liberty as the ultimate religion; poetry and literature as tools serving to nurture and sustain freedom; and literature as providing meaningful and accurate accounts of the past, more so than secondary ones. Literature

²³ Martí, 13:189. “Eduquese en el hábito de la investigación, en el roce de los hombres y en el ejercicio constante de la palabra, a los ciudadanos de una república que vendrá a tierra cuando falten a sus hijos esas virtudes.”

and the humanities have a critical role to play in society, particularly in the new independent Cuba he seeks to equip. The new Cuba shall consider freedom and liberty as its ultimate religion, but should this love of freedom be fanatical? Should the love for country and nation be radical and dogmatic? In the biographical pieces surveyed, none of the individuals praised, nor do any of their admirable qualities, come across as fanatical, zealous, or dogmatic. In the Grant essay, Martí praised the former Union general for being a practical and resourceful man, an individual who rose to the challenges of his time. He praised Philip Sheridan in the essay on the military leader for his sense of duty and humility. He praised Peter Cooper for his generosity and an ingenuous, entrepreneurial spirit placed at the service of humanity and not of his person. He praised Whitman for being a loving man. Martí did not present Whitman as a radical individual – indeed, none of the biographies display praises of overzealousness or dogmatic fanaticism.

Describing Whitman, Martí writes, “he commemorates in a composition of ‘Calamus’ that he owes the most lively joys to Nature and to the *patria* [nation]; but only the waves of oceans does he [Whitman] find worthy of singing to, [and] the light of the moon, [and] his blessed fortune at seeing next to him lying asleep the friend he loves. He loves the humble ones, the fallen ones, the hurt and injured, even the wicked ones.”²⁴ Martí explains how Whitman writes poetry and literature that memorializes the love and joys of Nature and for his country, yet only simpler, more humble matters are the subjects of Whitman’s praise. By celebrating Whitman, Martí certainly agreed with this view. To

²⁴ Martí, 13:139. “Recuerda en una composición del ‘Calamus’ los goces más vivos que debe a la Naturaleza y a la patria; pero sólo a las olas del océano halla dignas de corear, a la luz de la luna, su dicha al ver dormido junto a sí al amigo que ama. El ama a los humildes, a los caídos, a los heridos, hasta a los malvados.”

Martí, the search for humility was more important than the desire for power. The above analysis of the Whitman essay therefore supports that the Cuban leader transmitted his values for national edification through biographical subjects.

Ulysses S. Grant

At first glance, a twelve-part biographical essay on Ulysses S. Grant may appear as one more traditional late nineteenth-century rendition of the “great man” narrative. Written upon Grant’s death, there are instances in the biographical essay when Grant appears as “great” and others when he is a highly flawed character. Martí was interested in writing an accurate and balanced portrayal of Grant, as both his praises and critiques demonstrate. Strengthening this chapter’s argument that Martí wrote biographies to describe an individual’s life and the history of his or her nation; and to employ the biographical subject as tool in nation-building, as instrument in teaching the values he believed citizens and leaders should share, Martí presents instances when Grant is “great,” a model for Martí’s readers to emulate, and depicts the ignoble traits of Grant’s character, as qualities to be avoided. In writing on Grant, Martí also depicts the environment surrounding the former Union general’s life, the individuals and events that made history during Grant’s time. In this sense, Martí substantially realizes what he wrote in a Chester Alan Arthur essay (to be surveyed in the next chapter) that “men in who the character and elements of nations culminate never die without leaving [valuable] teachings; therefore, properly understood, the biography of a prominent man is a history course.”²⁵ Martí’s essay on Ulysses S. Grant is a history lesson and much more. It was

²⁵ Although this chapter examines the Chester Alan Arthur essay before the one on Ulysses S. Grant, the former was written later, in 1886, and the latter in 1885.

sent to *La Nación* of Buenos Aires on August 12, 1885 and appeared in the September 27 issue.

Martí begins the Grant essay with a paragraph that describes the former American president's origins. In the first passage of the essay, Martí avoids mentioning him by name. He simply begins the piece with

he was born from poor people; as a child, he loved more horses than books and carried firewood; at the military academy he distinguished himself as a good rider; he reached the rank of captain in the Mexican war, and for not being sober, or since his dealings weren't too clear, they asked for his resignation; by forty he was managing saloons, tanning leather, and collecting debts; four years later, he was the lead general of an active army of two hundred thousand men who fought for the freedom of man; four years later he presided, disorderly, over his Republic.²⁶

Only the essay's title reveals the subject matter of the piece, a study on Grant's life. Martí consciously avoids naming the former Union general and, instead, concentrates on depicting the character qualities he seeks to transmit. Since the first passage's description is nameless, Martí could be writing about any other man. Only towards the end of the paragraph does the reader know that the character in question became a general and later president. Martí presents Grant as a man of many contrasts, humble beginnings and unremarkable profession in early years, to one who later leads an army of over two hundred thousand men that fought for the "freedom of man." Martí portrays the biographical subject as a highly flawed man; he presided "disorderly" over his Republic. The Cuban leader presents an individual who rises from humble beginnings to prominent

²⁶ Martí, 13:83. "Nació de pobres; de niño, gustó más de caballos que de libros y acarreo leña; en la Escuela Militar se distinguió por buen jinete; llegó a capitán en la guerra de México y, por no ser sobrio, o porque sus cuentas andaban oscuras, le pidieron su renuncia; le alcanzaron los cuarenta años poniendo billares, curtiendo cueros y cobrando recibos; cuatro años más tarde, era general en jefe de un ejército activo de doscientos cincuenta mil soldados que peleaba por la libertad del hombre; cuatro años después, presidía desordenadamente su República."

position, yet the figure is not extraordinary in the eyes of the reader. How does a man who wasn't sober, one who "tanned leather," and "carried wood" become the leading general of the largest army his nation had seen and later president of it? If inherent qualities do not appear to distinguish this man over others, what then allows him to rise above others? Is this man a product of events? A product of history?

In the essay's second paragraph, Martí describes how after his presidency, "[Grant] later traveled throughout the world, who made him citizen of its best cities, led by its presidents and its kings; he later fell into commercial deceits, due to a vulgar appetite for fortune, in the end, he has died, ennobled by his suffering."²⁷ Although he presided "disorderly" over his government and later was involved in "commercial deceits," to Martí, the suffering at the end of Grant's life purified and ennobled him. Suffering and sacrifice were, as we shall later see in Chapter Five, purifying agents that redeemed individual flaws.

After these first two paragraphs describing this figure (the Cuban writer still has not mentioned his name), Martí begins a discussion on post-Civil War U.S. society. He admires a society that is able, in his eyes, to reconstruct itself and to do so without any hatred and revenge for past wrongs. Although historical hindsight undermines Martí's idealistic assessment of post-Civil War society, Martí's belief that an honorable and admirable people could unite and leave grievances behind after such a devastating war is significant. "There are nations and people that are golden by the outside and that are a cave of sleep-deprived goblins by the inside. Only small-minded nations perpetuate civil

²⁷ Martí, 13:83. "Luego viajó por el mundo, que lo hizo miembro de sus mejores ciudades y lo salió a recibir, guiado por sus presidentes y sus reyes; luego cayó en trampas de comercio, por el apetito vulgar de la fortuna; al fin ha muerto, ennoblecido por sus dolores."

wars,”²⁸ Martí writes. Admiring post-Civil War society, he continues, “men of new [design and] composition, and radiant times are these who in twenty years learn how to love without deceit the ones who frustrated their hopes, killed their feudal estates and defeated them in war. These are [true] men, the ones who don’t pawn the lives of generations and [of] their nation’s peace to avenge losses and tarry over transgressions!”²⁹ These statements may be taken as indirect references to what he longed would happen when hostilities ceased between Spain and Cuba, and the island gained its sovereignty. These statements point at Martí’s desire, echoed throughout his literature, of men and women uniting and forgoing hatred and revenge against a former enemy.

In this early passage of the piece, the truly “great” individual is the one who forgets and forswears avenging past wrongs. Regarding attitudes individuals should have after a war, Martí writes

Grasping for air with that superior brotherhood that provide the memories of being exposed to [a close] contact with death, worthy men give themselves over to peace and to the daily challenges of life, ennobled by the national spirit that campaigns, where their sons’ virtues have been proven, give nations. The brave forget. One understands that after conflicts occur those who forget less are less brave, or [they] fought without justice and live within the fear of their victory.³⁰

²⁸ Martí, 13:84. “Pueblos hay y gentes, de oro por fuera, que son una cueva de duendes insomnes por dentro. Sólo los pueblos pequeños perpetúan sus guerras civiles.”

²⁹ Martí, 13:83. “Hombres de hechura nueva y de tiempos radiosos son estos que en veinte años aprenden a amar sin disimulo al que frustró sus esperanzas, diezmó sus feudos y los venció en guerra. ¡Estos son hombres, los que no empeñan la vida de generaciones y la paz de su pueblo en vengar derrotas y rumiar injurias!”

³⁰ Martí, 13:83-4. “Luego, sofocando con la superior fraternidad que da el contacto común con la muerte los recuerdos que expusieron a ella, se entregan en paz los hombres dignos de serlo a las faenas usuales de la vida, engrandecidos por aquel caudal nacional que dejan a los pueblos las campañas en que se han probado las virtudes de sus hijos. Los bravos, olvidan. Se nota, después de las guerras, que los que olvidan menos son los menos bravos, o los que pelearon sin justicia y viven en el miedo de su victoria.”

Concerned with the morality of war, to Martí, war is noble only when there is a just cause that supports it. A just, noble war allows its leaders to live in peace after it is concluded. He praises those who lay down their weapons after a conflict and love and embrace their former enemies. He continues, “one fights as long as there is reason to fight for, since Nature placed the need for justice in some [human] souls, and in others to not know [it] or to offend it.”³¹ This statement compares favorably to how he perceived his own condition, one who Nature had placed the need to rectify the wrongs the Spaniards committed in Cuba. Martí’s critiques of those who do not cease hostilities after the resolution of wars are also a chastisement of the long history of *caudillismo*³² in Latin America; for instance, Juan Manuel de Rosas (1793-1877), former dictator of Argentina who did not know when to lay down weapons and make peace with rivals.

Martí continues with his views on North American attitudes after wars by writing,

later, like Washington’s federal [troops] after having won, [and] like the Confederates at Appomattox after having been defeated, soldiers part from their generals, and without holding over their homeland their idle weapons nor seeking payment, like dishonorable mercenaries, with fixed stipends, the prize of having fulfilled their duty, they return rich with their own grandeur and with that of their adversaries, to the liberated daily tasks that keep men strong and majestic.”³³

The example of laying down the weapons, as Martí indicates, does not begin after the Civil War, instead from an earlier time, from the period of “Washington’s federal

³¹ Martí, 13:83. “Se pelea mientras hay por qué, ya que puso la Naturaleza la necesidad de justicia en unas almas, y en otras la de desconocerla y ofenderla.”

³² Strong-man rule.

³³ Martí, 13:84. “después, como los federales de Washington luego que acabaron de vencer, como los confederados en Appomattox luego de ser vencidos, los soldados se despiden de sus generales, y sin suspender sobre la patria las armas ociosas ni cobrar, como mercenarios impuros, con una soldada perenne, el premio de haber cumplido con su deber, vuelven, enriquecidos con la grandeza propia y la de sus adversarios, a los quehaceres libres que mantienen en toda su fuerza y majestad al hombre”

[troops].” Grant and Washington both knew when to quit fighting. The ceasing of hostilities and returning to daily tasks were not singular occurrences in the U.S. Did Martí imply that there was a certain North American national trait of putting down weapons after wars? To Martí, the daily tasks, in his words the “*quehaceres*” (literally “to-dos”) of making a living in a freed and honest manner are what “keep men strong and majestic,” not constant battle. The ability to lead a productive civilian life after the war is as noble as fulfilling a patriotic, military duty.

In the first three paragraphs of Martí’s biographical essay on Grant, what may be considered as an introduction, Grant is not mentioned, only this flawed figure emerges, one who rose from poverty to be army general and then later president and who afterwards stains himself with improper dealings and subsequently dies, ennobled by his suffering. The essay’s introduction also contains Martí’s views on war which is justified only by noble causes, yet once the military objective is achieved and the enemies vanquished, the task of building and supporting daily life is more ennobling than continued combat and militarism.

Martí’s choice of Grant as the subject of his most extensive biographical account signals the important role Martí considered a leader of such a protracted and significant conflict, as well as of a president of a republic, could have in teaching lessons to build nation. Martí’s descriptions of the Civil War throughout the essay most certainly reveals that he identified that “noble war” with Cuba’s own prolonged struggle for freedom and independence. The Grant essay is Martí’s most significant attempt at building nation through the use of biography.

In the fourth and final paragraph of the introduction, Martí writes, “Ulysses Grant was the one born from poor people.”³⁴ Not until the final paragraph of the introduction is Grant actually mentioned; not until the end of the introduction does he indicate who the subject of the narrative is. In the first three paragraphs, Martí could be writing about anyone, particularly so, to a Spanish American audience who would generally be unfamiliar with a former U.S. president. Not specifically stating what his essay is about in the first paragraphs may be a mechanism to allow the reader to more easily identify with the subject of the essay. He therefore facilitates the understanding of the notions he seeks to teach such as when war is justified and what makes soldiers and, in a wider sense, individuals noble (in not too distant ways he did this with children in *The Golden Years*).

Martí presents Ulysses S. Grant as the “one born from poor people” in “a shaggy house in some corner of Ohio” and he contrasts this presentation with how Grant left the world. Martí explains Grant’s departure from the world as one where “velvet and black cloth hung from marble houses and stone palaces” and one that “when all of the nation’s bells rang, his funeral was followed through the streets of New York by Johnson who was thrown out of Atlanta by [Grant’s] colonel Sherman; by Buckner from whom Grant took seventeen thousand prisoners at Fort Donelson; by Fitzburgh Lee, nephew and soldier of that brilliant and merciful man, that only to Grant, did he surrender.”³⁵ The former officers who follow Grant’s funeral procession, described in vivid detail, are also great

³⁴ Martí, 13:84. “Ulises Grant fue el que nació de pobres.”

³⁵ Martí 13:84. “de terciopelo y paño negro estaban colgadas las casas de mármol y los palacios de piedra cuando, al doblar de todas las campanas de la nación seguían su féretro por las calles de Nueva York, Johnson, a quien su teniente Sherman desalojó de Atlanta; Buckner, a quien Grant mismo tumbó diecisiete mil prisioneros en Fort Donelson; Fitzburgh Lee, sobrino y soldado de aquel hombre brillante y piadoso que, por Grant sólo, fue rendido.”

men –they are Grant’s former enemies who come to honor him. In this scene Grant is not the only “great man” to be buried, but the others are “great men” as well for their ability and willingness to put aside their wish for revenge, and honor the one who was once their enemy. While naming each of the former Confederate officers who follows Grant’s casket, he explains the history behind each man. Martí ends the fourth paragraph and concludes the introductory part of the biographical essay on Grant by stating that “mountains culminate in peaks, and nations in men. Let’s see how a great captain is made in a modern nation”³⁶ If the most impressive part of mountains are its peaks, then the most significant element of nations are its individuals, according to Martí, and to leave no doubt as to the true nature of this essay, a didactically-oriented narrative, he concludes with “let’s see how a great man is made in a modern nation.” Martí clearly implies that he wishes to teach the reader about this “great” man and to impart specific lessons.

The spiritual was never too distant in Martí’s mind as Chapter Five on the Hindu dimensions of Martí’s nation building will show in greater detail. Martí infuses notions of spirituality in describing Grant’s Scottish ancestors. “Grant came from eight American generations; generations of farmers and soldiers. Are qualities in parents refined when passed on to their children? [Are] men just mere representations of the spiritual forces that condense and intensify?”³⁷ To Martí, individuals are a product of their lineage and

³⁶ Martí, 13:84. “Culminan las montañas en picos y los pueblos en hombres. Veamos cómo se hace un gran capitán en un pueblo moderno”

³⁷ Martí, 13:84. “De ocho generaciones americanas vino Grant; generaciones de campesinos y soldados. ¿Se acendran las cualidades de los padres al pasar por los hijos? ¿Serán los hombres meras representaciones de fuerzas espirituales que se condensan y acentúan?”

upbringing, “an entire English regiment in India was made up of the Grants who were the bravest [of all].”³⁸

Martí describes Grant as a “lit-up mountain (*la montaña encendida*).” He employs a mountain motif to visually assist the reader in understanding what type of man Grant was, comparing human qualities to those found in nature. Great individuals, in this sense, are the highest peaks of nations. Providing facts to substantiate why Grant should be considered “great,” Martí writes,

at Chickahominy [the Battle of Gaine’s Mill], when he lost eleven thousand men in fifteen minutes, without moving from his seat, he ordered to renew the attack. At Vicksburg, to an old lady that gave him water: I’ll be here in Vicksburg, even if I’ve got to wait thirty years! In Chattanooga: forward! onward! through the mountain, and over the top of clouds; from below bands of fire and where flaming stampedes are heard; at the blaze of the artillery, the flag rises; at the highest points of peaks bullets roll after the Confederates, downhill; [that] lit-up mountain!³⁹

Martí does not merely relate events in a dry narrative. Instead, he expounds his views on society, spirituality, and ethics by writing like a playwright where writes in the voice of Grant. By speaking for Grant’s character in the narrative, Martí creates a more vivid figure and makes the lessons intended for his Spanish American readers, particularly the future citizens of Cuba, regarding the Union general’s virtues and flaws more convincing. In the above passage, Grant’s drive and determination are what stand out, elements that, according to Martí, make him that “lit-up mountain (*la montaña encendida*).”

³⁸ Martí, 13:84-5. “De Grant era todo un regimiento inglés en la India, que fue de los más bravos.”

³⁹ Martí, 13:85. “En Chickahominy, cuando en un cuarto de hora acaba de perder once mil hombres, sin moverse de la silla manda renovar el ataque. En Vicksburg, a una anciana que le da agua : ‘¡Aquí me estaré hasta tomar a Vicksburg, aunque tenga que esperar treinta años !’ En Chattanooga: ‘¡arriba, arriba!’ por la montaña, entre las nubes, por encima de las nubes; se ven de ahajo como cintas de fuego y se oyen estampidos graneados; al resplandor de la fusilería, la bandera sube; en lo más alto del pico ruedan las balas tras los confederados, monte abajo; ¡la montaña encendida!”

Martí presents Grant as someone less interested in developing his intellect, yet resourceful. When describing Grant's childhood, Martí writes,

as a child he learned very little. Books made him upset, as they would always. They say that at two he heard a [pistol] shot without blinking: 'Again! Again!' [he said.] At eight, he got onto as many horses he could find. His body appeared fragile, but [was] actually strong. He was educated as all other poor children in the countryside of his time: during the winter, at school; in the summer, at work."⁴⁰

At seventeen, Grant was nominated to West Point by a State representative. Martí recounts Grant's experiences at the military academy,

[when] riding [horses], he rode very well; [when it came to studying]; he studied poorly. He was the best rider of his class; in a school group of thirty-nine, he earned the twenty-fifth spot. He had been quiet; [didn't enjoy] games [too much]; [was] obedient; and courteous; 'a good young man'. He didn't study mathematics with complete distaste. Regarding [his] military duties, tactics, organization, and ballistics, he learned more of these than of mineralogy, geology, chemistry, engineering, and mechanics. When he fell in love, he did so intensely which signifies [a good] personality. He married young which signifies goodness.⁴¹

One may speculate whether Martí implied in the passage that Grant was good at following his duty (*dharma*, as considered in the Chapter Five on the Hindu dimensions of José Martí's nation building); by being good at practical chores, in military manners, and in marrying his loved one? Thus far, the reader perceives Grant as an honest man,

⁴⁰ Martí, 13:85. "De niño, aprende muy poco. Los libros le enojan, como le han de enojar siempre. Dicen que a los dos años oyó un tiro sin pestañear: "¡Otra vez! ¡Otra vez!" A los ocho años, se sube en cuanto caballo halla a mano. Tiene el cuerpo endeble en apariencia; fuerte en realidad. Se educa como todos los niños pobres de campo de su tiempo: en invierno, a la escuela; en verano, al trabajo."

⁴¹ Martí, 13:85. "A los 17 años, por servicio de un representante del Estado, entra en la escuela Militar de West Point. Montar, monta muy bien; estudiar, estudia mal. Es el mejor jinete de su curso; pero al fin de la carrera, en una clase de treinta y nueve, obtiene el número veinticinco. Ha sido silencioso, poco amigo de juegos, obediente y cortés; "un buen muchacho". Las matemáticas no las estudió a disgusto. De deberes militares, táctica, ordenanza y balística aprendió más que de mineralogía, geología, química, ingeniería y mecánica. Se enamora intensamente, que es signo de personalidad. Se casa joven, que es signo de nobleza."

one who knows his limitations and one who was satisfied at not excelling academically. He failed to be first in his class, yet he was the best rider. The reader of Martí's passages may wonder, how is this individual a "great man"?

An instance when Martí presents the negative and positive aspects of U.S. politics to warn or praise appears in his description of the Mexican-American War. In describing Grant's actions in the conflict, Martí offers assessments against the U.S. for pursuing an unjust war, yet recognizes the positive aspects of those who within the U.S. government sought to thwart territorial ambitions. He relates how,

Ambitious men and slavers joined during those years in the United States to grab territory from Mexico. American colonists inundated Texas and rose with it, as a state belonging to the Union by the will of its inhabitants. Mexico cries. The Southern slavers who had worked since the beginning of the century to introduce slavery to the free states or to increase the number of slave states favored in this regard the annexation of Texas. Van Buren, as presidential candidate, censures the attempts at annexation, as a likely cause for an unjust war with Mexico; and his opponent Polk, who personifies the idea of annexation, is elected. American troops under the pretext of defending fellow citizens in Texas enter way beyond the far borders of the state. Arista's troops oppose them, and Polk takes this as an excuse to declare war. Taylor marches into Mexico and takes Grant among his own. They advance like injustice so often does.⁴²

⁴² Martí, 13:86. "Ambiciosos y esclavistas se juntaron por aquellos años, en los Estados Unidos, para arrebatar a México una porción de territorio. Los colonos americanos inundaron a Texas y se alzaron con él, como Estado perteneciente a la Unión del Norte por la voluntad de sus habitantes. México clama. Los esclavistas del Sur, que venían lidiando desde principios del siglo por introducir la esclavitud en los Estados libres, o aumentar el número de Estados esclavistas, favorecen en este concepto la anexión de Texas. Van Buren, candidato a la Presidencia, censura la tentativa de anexión, como motivo probable de una guerra injusta con México; y su contendiente Polk, que personifica la idea anexionista, es electo. Las tropas americanas, so pretexto de defender a sus conciudadanos de Texas, entran más allá del límite extremo del Estado. Las tropas de Arista se les oponen, de lo que toma Polk excusa para dar por declarada la guerra. Taylor marcha sobre México y lleva a Grant entre los suyos. Adelantan, como suele la injusticia."

In describing Grant's participation in the war, Martí promotes that it was an unjust war. He criticizes U.S. policy and actions, yet he presents Van Buren as the one who was against the ignoble actions of threatening Mexico.

Martí describes that in the Mexican-American war,

Grant fought with the other young cadets who in the shadows of the last remaining Mexican palace fell smiling, clinching each other, over the hills of lava of Chapultepec. In one instance, Grant was commended for his bravery. And in nothing else did he distinguish himself, even though he was twenty-five. He served well as an enlisted man, and he learned there [how] to take care of soldiers, stocks, and warehouses. The knowledge of small details is indispensable in preserving grandeur; one's drive needs to be supported by knowledge.⁴³

Grant, again, does not emerge as a "great man." An unremarkable performance in the Mexican-American war did not seem to assure a future rank of general, yet what stands out is the certain sense of humility that Grant displays at being receptive and willing to engage in and to master more menial tasks. With this passage, Martí concludes the first section of his twelve-part biographical essay on Grant. The main themes that Martí has inculcated thus far are humility, duty, and knowledge (Chapter Five explores these three elements in further detail). Humility (comparable to the concept of sacrifice discussed in Chapter Five) appears throughout this first section of the essay: Grant was born from poor folk and his meager upbringing, and undistinguished performance at West Point did not give reason to inflate his ego. Second, duty (a notion also explored in Chapter Five), Grant performed his duty as he perceived it, while working at the farm as a child, later at

⁴³ Martí, 13:86. "Grant peleó contra los cadetes imberbes que a la sombra del último pabellón mexicano cayeron sonriendo, apretados uno contra otro, sobre los cerros de lava de Chapultepec. En una parte fue citado Grant, por bravo. Y en nada más se distinguió, aunque tenía veinticinco años. Sirvió bien como habilitado, y allí aprendió a cuidar del soldado en campaña, y de bagajes y almacenes. El conocimiento de los detalles es indispensable para la preservación de la grandeza; el impulso necesita ser sostenido por el conocimiento."

West Point, during the Mexican-American war, and, last, by marrying the one he loved. Finally, knowledge, although Grant was not academically gifted, he was knowledgeable in the practical matters he needed to know; he learned the soldier's tasks. By ending the first section of the biographical sketch with how willingness and impulse are not enough to achieve greatness; rather greatness involves knowledge and understanding of details demonstrates that to Martí knowledge was a paramount concern in developing productive individuals –as Chapter Five reveals in the *Bhagavad-Gita* and as Chapter Two displays in the world historical narratives of *The Golden Years*.

Martí begins the second section of the essay with a description of Grant's life after the Mexican-American war, a time characterized by shame and poverty. Pointing to Grant's drinking problem, Martí writes "it doesn't seem that upon his return from Mexico, where he earned the rank of captain, he would've been as sober as respectability suggests."⁴⁴ Martí depicts Grant's post-Mexican war years as "he went from farm to town" and "in California he established a saloon, and failed. He later lived in his wife's farm; he chopped wood, he carried it throughout town, and he didn't sell it very well. He wasn't good at charging bills for he was giving and didn't know how to see [others in hardship]."⁴⁵ Martí indicates that Grant was a drinker, an alcoholic, perhaps. For his drinking, he was dismissed after the Mexican-American war and fell on hard times. The Grant that emerges in this section of the narrative is a flawed character. Unlike the first section where, by not disclosing Grant's name and describing him as average, many

⁴⁴ Martí, 13:86. "No parece que a su vuelta de México, donde llegó a capitán, fuera tan sobrio en el beber como el decoro aconseja."

⁴⁵ Martí, 13:86. "Anduvo Grant de hacienda en aldea. En California establecía un billar, y quebraba. Vivió luego en una hacienda de su mujer; él cortaba la madera, él la acarreaba por el pueblo y él la malvendía. Para cobrar no servía mucho, porque era dadivoso y no sabía ver lástimas."

would have identified with the character, in this section, fewer individuals may relate to Grant's deficiencies. Grant, according to Martí, was better known for his silence than for his speech. To those in town, Grant appeared a rough man. The future general ran for a position as public surveyor, and lost. "Grant took walks, kept silent, smoked. He didn't show any impatience,"⁴⁶ Martí narrates of Grant's life after the Mexican war.

According to Martí, Grant left the Mexican war with "the envy of those who, due to good fortune or the influence of powerful friends, reach prominent positions, without the merits that Grant felt he had within himself."⁴⁷ The Cuban leader continues, "but this envy was only visible in his effusiveness, rare ones, of course, as all should be, with a military friend who felt for Grant a certain sympathy bordering on veneration, with Sherman who took care of him like a child in arms and looked more after his fame than his own."⁴⁸ In these passages, Martí presents Grant as an unremarkable human character, one of imperfect qualities. Grant feels envy and is effusive, but not often, and feelings of envy are only revealed to close friends such as William Tecumseh Sherman (1820-1891). Martí introduces Sherman and against the rough, earthly, and often rejected man, the

⁴⁶ Martí, 13:87. "Más notado era por el callar que por el hablar. A todos parecía en el pueblo un hombre adocenado. Aspiró a una plaza de agrimensor y no la obtuvo. Se paseaba; callaba; fumaba. No mostraba impaciencia."

⁴⁷ Martí, 13:87. "De la guerra se había traído sus celos, celos profundos de los que, por capricho de la fortuna o influjo de amigos poderosos, alcanzaron puestos prominentes, sin los merecimientos, acaso, que él creía sentir en sí."

⁴⁸ Martí, 13:87. "Mas estos celos, apenas los entrevé un ojo avisado en las primeras efusiones tuyas, raras, por cierto, como deben ser siempre las efusiones, con un amigo militar a quien llevó hacia Grant una simpatía que a poco llegaba ya a veneración, con Sherman, que cuidaba de él como de una criatura de sus manos, y por su fama miraba más que por la propia."

Cuban leader presents Sherman as a contrasting figure. Sherman, is “tall, eloquent, radiant, impatient, inspirational, not calm, blunt, fiery, and brave.”⁴⁹

Grant’s ego grew, according to Martí, but in those times in Galena, Illinois (Grant’s hometown)

one didn’t notice in him, in the dark work of tanning leather, any marked qualities, be it for his dissatisfactory exit from the army and his lack of success in humble enterprises, that would have him be cynical and withdrawn, be it because of his being eaten up by an impatience that consumes real and driven individuals, that [he] would’ve been constant prey to the blind wrath that produces [the lack of] accommodating [one’s] trivial reality [with one’s] daring desire.⁵⁰

Although Grant suffered a difficult life after the Mexican-American war, Martí does not present him as a bitter individual, hardened, perhaps, but not a cynical one or one discouraged by life’s difficulties. Moreover, Grant did not appear upset that his reality did not match his wishes and desires.

Martí presenting his own views on life, on the merits of self-less actions by writing, “to be silent is a sign of honesty and modesty in a great character; to complain is to prostitute one’s character. He or she who is capable of achieving something [great] and dies without having had his or her time come, dies in peace for somewhere it will be realized. And if it isn’t, it’s [still] well done; he or she is great enough just by having been

⁴⁹ Martí, 13:87. “Sherman, alto, elocuente, centelleante, inquieto, inspirador, desasosogado, desbocado, fiero”

⁵⁰ Martí, 13:88. “Pero en aquellos duros tiempos de Galena no se notaba en él, oscurecido en la oficina de la curtiembre, cualidad marcada alguna, ya porque su mala salida del ejército y falta de éxito en sus humildes empresas lo tuvieran desconfiado y encogido, ya porque, comido de esa impaciencia que consume a los caracteres originales y pujantes, fuera presa constante de la sorda ira que produce la falta de acomodo entre la realidad trivial y el deseo osado.”

able to be so.”⁵¹ Having the capacity and the desire to do great things, according to Martí, is as noble as actually realizing notable deeds. Great characters, “great men and women” are not merely those who have the capacity, knowledge, and the ability to do so; rather a “great character” to Martí may also be someone whose “time and opportunity did not come” yet had the motivations and intentions. Martí implies in the statement that destiny and that even a greater design may affect whether a noble individual is able to accomplish noble needs. An individual may still be great for his or her willingness and intentions, even if destiny did not provide an opportunity. The reader therefore infers not to worry; one’s hopes of achieving good may come to pass elsewhere, as Martí states. If one considers this belief in light of Chapter Five’s discussion on the rule of Hinduism in Martí’s nation building (that Martí believed in reincarnation, for instance) then to know that your intentions may be realized somewhere else, in another life, provides comfort.

Martí’s nation building had significant spiritual dimensions. As demonstrated in his previous passage, Martí imbues his own views on spirituality in descriptions of Grant’s life. “To see how a great captain is made in a modern nation,” as he mentions in the introduction to the biographical sketch on Grant requires informing the reader of physical actions and events as well as transmitting philosophical and spiritual views. “Great men and women” are not merely great for their actions; rather, the “great man and woman” have the willingness, the intentions, the modesty, and the other qualities Martí seeks to teach his reader. In the case of Grant, destiny, or history, provided him with the opportunity to display the positive qualities. Grant was not an amiable character and “if

⁵¹ Martí, 13: 88. “El silencio es el pudor de los grandes caracteres; la queja es una prostitución del carácter. Aquel que es capaz de algo y muere sin que le haya llegado su hora, muere en calma, que en alguna parte le llegará. Y si no llega, bien está; ya es bastante grande el que es capaz de serlo.”

he didn't show disdain for the few praises and affections that he was the object of, he never courted or lobbied, not even during the most difficult trials, any [beneficial] friendships. [Grant] explored and lived within himself,"⁵² according to Martí.

Depictions of biographical subjects serve to decipher Martí's visions on nation and politics. Martí presents his views on voting through his descriptions of Grant's attitudes towards elections. Martí writes,

[Grant] didn't too often know the direction of politics; but in his country, the only way to rule is through politics. He was affiliated with the Democrats, for during that time the Democrats were the party that recognized more rights for each state in the Union and [the rights] of [each] citizen within a state, and Grant was always very careful with his [own]; yet in his forty years he only voted in one election; and in a Republic, the man who does not vote is like a soldier that deserts an army.⁵³

In Martí's depiction, Grant is not the shrewd politician. He appears as someone who defended his rights and those of others (by being affiliated with a party who claimed to do so?) According to Martí, he rarely voted and to not participate in elections, to not vote in a democracy, is equivalent to avoiding and neglecting one's responsibility. If a soldier sustains, defends, and fights for an army, then the voter does as well for a republic, in Martí's mind. Fighting for an independent, democratic Cuba, Martí's conception of the republic would be one where elections were held and individual citizens would feel compelled to participate in order to fulfill a sense of duty, like a soldier that serves his country by not deserting his regiment.

⁵² Martí, 13:88. "No era Grant de carácter amigable, y si no desdeñaba los escasos cariños de que pudiese ser objeto, jamás cortejó, ni en lo más recio de sus pruebas, amistad alguna. En sí exploraba y vivía."

⁵³ Martí, 13:88. "Por donde iba la política no lo distinguía él muy bien a veces; pero en su país, la política era la única forma del mando. A los demócratas estaba afiliado, porque era en aquel tiempo la democracia el partido que al Estado en la Unión, y al hombre en el Estado, reconocía más derechos, y Grant fue siempre muy celoso de los suyos; mas en sus cuarenta años sólo en una elección había dado su voto; y en una República, un hombre que no vota es como en un ejército un soldado que deserta."

Martí continues,

real and honest [human] souls attract an indisputable affection. With a closer look, one sees two types of men in perpetual battle: those who grasp from Nature, genuine and driven, alone and active, acclaimed and recognized only during great crises that need them; and those adapted to convention, who hide their beings like sins, who defend or contribute to what's established, who live comfortably and well-off, and in society's dealings, are only useful as a healthy force of resistance, and in these cases, an honest character, intoxicated with victories, dissipates, and disappears and over-affirms itself.⁵⁴

The character who in the end becomes “intoxicated with victories, dissipates,” and turns bumptious is Grant. Martí provides a contrasting figure to this character, that of another individual who also lived in Galena, Illinois, the attorney John Aaron Rawlins (1831-1869). Martí describes Rawlins as “a tree of virtue, all made of justice and courage.”⁵⁵ Rawlins was a self-made man, one who became a lawyer on his own and until age twenty-three worked in coal mining. “He became accustomed to thinking and acting alone. And he was able to think and act alone, for nothing else except a passion for justice dominated him,”⁵⁶ Martí asserts, in a tone suggesting the Cuban leader identified with Rawlins.

Separately, as Martí's writings on Emerson and Whitman show, the Cuban leader wrote his feelings into narratives, placing his own views and emotions into the written

⁵⁴ Martí, 13:89. “Acerca a los espíritus originales una incontestable simpatía. Mirando bien se observan dos especies de hombres en perpetua lucha: los que arrancan de la Naturaleza, pujantes y genuinos, activos y solitarios, reconocidos y aclamados sólo en las grandes crisis, que necesitan de ellos; y los hombres amoldados a la convención, que ocultan su espíritu como un pecado, que defienden y contribuyen a lo establecido, que viven acomodados y dichosos, y en el movimiento social sólo son útiles como fuerza saludable de resistencia, en los casos en que un carácter natural, embriagado con el triunfo, se desvanece y afirma en demasía.”

⁵⁵ Martí, 13: 89. “un árbol de virtud, todo hecho de valor y de justicia”

⁵⁶ Martí, 13:89. “sólo se hizo abogado...se habituó a pensar y a obrar solo. Y sólo podía pensar y obrar sin miedo, porque no le dominó más pasión que la de la justicia.”

work as a way to release his feelings. Instances when Martí wrote himself into the narrative demonstrate that nation building to Martí was deeply personal. It is difficult to know when the feelings expressed originate in the actual character (Rawlins, Emerson, and Whitman, for example) and when they are Martí's depictions of his own emotions. Since Martí portrayed his views on spirituality and life in his depictions of individuals, and since his overarching personal objective was the liberation of Cuba, biographical essays that serve to build nation have also significant spiritual and emotional elements, affirming that nation building to Martí was also a spiritual effort.

Martí presents his belief that honest "souls" are worthy of admiration. He believes that there are two types of individuals in this world, those who take from Nature and face challenges in an original and honest manner, and others who prefer to follow convention, subordinating any originality and singularity of character they may possess. Martí placed Grant in the former group, a man who recognized and lauded for rising to challenges in times of crisis. Nevertheless, with too many victories, Grant's character later became "intoxicated," according to the Cuban leader. His frankness and honesty began to dissipate and to over-affirm itself. Martí implies that Grant's later life as politician and president was characterized by the latter group's qualities. Martí affirms that Grant's character became one "intoxicated with victories, [that] dissipate[d], and disappear[d] and over-affirm[ed] itself" by introducing the contrasting figure of Rawlins, one whose character was not compromised by success.⁵⁷ Against the figure of Rawlins, Martí contrasts the Grant of ignoble qualities.

Relating his personal views on the qualities of true greatness, Martí describes Rawlins's character traits. Identifying with Rawlins, Martí projects how he conceived his

⁵⁷ Martí, 13:89.

attitude towards life and the Cuban independence effort. Martí explains that Rawlins also had,

that superior judgment, [worn] like a new [elegant] attire, fostered by the prolonged suffering of men of true strength; a fortunate quality that in the group of real and original characters distinguishes the unselfish from the selfish. There's more personality in a selfish individual, less visible, in the unselfish one; but only in the unselfish individual is there true greatness.⁵⁸

Rawlins, like Grant, was a self made man. A sense of justice, not an ambition for wealth and power, motivated Rawlins. Martí most certainly found commonalities between Rawlins's and his own pursuit of justice, in fighting for the cause of Cuba's freedom. Therefore, Martí's portrayal of Rawlins reveals how the Cuban leader wrote himself into the characters he depicted. The characters in the biographical essays promoted or criticized the traits Martí felt individuals in a new Cuban republic and those in the Latin America should have. Martí promoted the values for a future independent nation by integrating his person in descriptions of similarly motivated people (Emerson and Rawlins) and parallel situations (the U.S. Civil War and the Cuban Wars for Independence).

Martí portrays Rawlins as not being able to stand “nonsensical and unfair attacks, even if they were done to a bird. He wanted truth to prevail, even if no one knew that it did because of him.”⁵⁹ Befriending Rawlins while in Galena when working and selling leather goods, Martí narrates that “from Rawlins lips came out, polished and perfected,

⁵⁸ Martí, 13:90. “Pero tenía aquella superior prudencia que, como nueva gala, engendra el sufrimiento prolongado en los hombres de verdadera fortaleza; dichosa cualidad que en el grupo de caracteres naturales distingue al desinteresado del egoísta. En el egoísta hay más personalidad, visible a menos, que en el desinteresado; pero sólo en el desinteresado hay verdadera grandeza.”

⁵⁹ Martí, 13:90. “Una sinrazón o un agravio no podía soportar, aunque se hiciesen a una tórtola. La verdad quería él que triunfase, aunque nadie llegara a saber qu triunfaba por él.”

the ideas that, in their rudimentary [and] instinctual form bothered Grant's mind" and "together the lawyer and the leather salesman spoke how the dispute with the South, whose increasing audacity, like the rest of the Union, had the people in Galena all astonished."⁶⁰ If Grant is the flawed character in this passage, Rawlins is the noble one. Rawlins possessed the qualities that Martí found endearing such as honesty, resourcefulness, the need to fight for others less fortunate, and the search for justice, traits Martí surely identified in his own character. Grant was not completely devoid of these traits; they were only less polished, in a more coarse and underdeveloped form.

In the first two sections of the biographical essay on Grant, Martí focuses on descriptions of the former President's upbringing and his life prior to the Civil War in order to portray Grant's qualities. Apart from the humility, tenacity, and simplicity that Grant projects, the traits of a "great" man are missing. In these two first sections, compared with Grant, Rawlins is the more honest and perfect official and Sherman is the more vibrant and dynamic one.

To Martí, the Civil War was "the most noble crusade"⁶¹ for he considered it a just war, a battle to liberate fellow men and women and to end slavery. He found analogies between Cuba's independence movement, a protracted conflict that sought to end slavery and to liberate the island from tyrannical rule, and the American Civil War. The Civil War offered the events and characters that Martí could employ in promoting his views on nation building. Part three of the Grant essay is a description of how the Civil war

⁶⁰ Martí, 13:90. "de los labios de Rawlins salían, acabadas y perfectas, las ideas que, en su forma rudimentaria de instinto, fatigaban el cerebro a Grant. Y juntos hablaban el abogado y el curtidor de cómo se venía encima la querrela con el Sur, cuyo creciente atrevimiento, como a toda la Unión, tenía asombrada a la gente de Galena"

⁶¹ Martí, 13:90.

erupted. Martí describes how the Republican party grew and how the North reacted to Southern provocations. Martí presents the South as reactionary, the North as noble. Martí begins the third part with a dramatic statement “those were times of the most noble crusade ever seen by men. From one ocean to another, the states of the North flared: There shall be no more slaves.”⁶²

Martí’s high praises for the cause of the North against his negative view of the South’s motivations suggest that he viewed the causes for Cuba’s own independence struggle as resembling those of the U.S. Civil War. Martí writes, “[led] by an appetite for heaven and a love for adventure other crusaders battled in times of war; but these in America shook their homes, secured in a prosperous and peaceful age to liberate the most misfortunate people on Earth.”⁶³ The North’s cause was a just cause; it was not a fight for a “heaven” led by religious ideology nor was it one for love of adventure (as his reference to the Crusades). It was a noble endeavor. It was one to liberate, according to Martí, “the most misfortunate people on Earth.”

Martí chastises the South,

the South, made for ruling others, saw with anger the North’s resistance to its will and challenged [and confronted] the rough people of the free states. [They had] risen on the backs of their slaves. The North, slow like all who are strong, cautious like all [hard] workers, saw at first with fear and always with shame the danger of the rupture that the [South] provoked. There had been no peace since 1831, since ‘The Liberator.’ Through all means the South persecuted Garrison’s newspaper; through President

⁶² Martí, 13:90. “Los tiempos eran aquellos de la más noble cruzada que jamas vieron los hombres. De un mar a otro hervían los Estados del Norte: ‘No ha de haber más esclavos.’”

⁶³ Martí, 13:90. “Por el apetito del Cielo y el amor de la ventura batallaron en tiempos de guerra otros cruzados; pero estos de América conmovieron sus hogares, seguros, en una época próspera y pacífica, para libertar a la raza más desventurada de la tierra.”

Jackson's voice it asked Congress to prosecute all abolitionist propaganda.⁶⁴

Since the Civil War and the cause of the North could be likened to Cuba's own struggle for liberation, Martí's descriptions of the South's attitudes reflect his own perceptions of the Spanish colonial government he fought. As the North fought the South for a just cause, so did Cubans fight against the Spanish to end slavery (prior to its abolition in 1886) and to overthrow undemocratic rule. To Martí, the South, like the Spanish rule of Cuba, allowed for fellow humans to be slaves and were strong because of it ("they raised themselves on the backs of their slaves") and persecuted anyone against slavery. Martí understood that continued Spanish rule was assisted by the race question. His criticism of the South echoes his views on the Spanish colonial rule of Cuba.

By harassing and intimidating abolitionist propaganda, the South also persecuted the free press, like Spain who would only intermittently allow a free press in Cuba. Through Martí's account, the reader infers that a nation that holds slaves cannot be free, and that states that persecute a free press (the South's persecution of abolitionist newspapers) also cannot be free. Therefore, to Martí all freedoms were interdependent. One cannot have a state that claims to be free and yet holds individuals in bondage and represses free speech. Cuba would also never be free, in Martí's mind, under Spanish rule.

In the fourth part of the essay, Martí describes Grant's actions in the war and writes into the narrative his ideas on liberty and freedom.

⁶⁴ Martí, 13:90. "El Sur, hecho a mandar, veía con cólera la resistencia del Norte a sus voluntades, y desafiaba a la gente burda de los Estados libres, empujado sobre sus esclavos. El Norte, lento como todos los fuertes, cauto como todos los trabajadores, miraba al principio con temor, y siempre con pena, el peligro de la ruptura que el Sur provocaba. No había paz desde 1831, desde el 'Liberator'. Por todas maneras persiguió el Sur al periódico de Garrison; por la voz del Presidente Jackson pidió al Congreso la persecución de toda la propaganda abolicionista."

And when Grant advanced over Lee, powerful and impenetrable like a moving mountain, the federal troops were dying from May to June, a thousand per day, in a single camp of operations. Forward columns! The nation that all men have constructed, for all men shall remain free! President Lincoln has declared four million slaves free, [the one] who ‘promised God to give them their liberty if he allowed the Confederates to be expelled from Maryland’; and they shall surrender, broken forever, those who are against four million men being free!⁶⁵

Martí writes in the voice of Grant, of Lincoln, and of characters he describes to give a more dramatic and vivid effect to the history he writes. Martí informs his Latin American audience of the history of Lincoln’s Emancipation Proclamation, promoting his own views of freedom. He considers the U.S. a nation built, constructed, and created by “all men,” a democratic nation, and “for all men,” it shall be free. Freedom, in Martí’s view, should not be limited to one segment of the population. Those who oppose the noble cause of giving other humans their freedom shall for ever be broken and defeated, he writes. These words also show admiration for Lincoln and suggest that Martí indeed identified the North’s struggle to free African-Americans with his own to organize and realize Cuba’s final push towards independence from Spain and to set up a democratic republic on the island. The first Cuban republic declared in 1868 and the independence war that concluded in failure for Cubans in 1878 were intrinsically linked to an abolitionist struggle. Although by the time Martí and other revolutionaries launched the final push for independence in 1895 abolition was not a guiding principle, it was nevertheless a struggle to include all segments of Cuban society in a future free,

⁶⁵ Martí, 13:93. “Y cuando Grant avanzaba sobre Lee, poderoso e impenetrable como una montaña que se mueve, los federales estuvieron muriendo de un mayo a un junio, en un solo campo de operaciones, mil por día. ¡Adelante las columnas! ¡El pueblo, que han ayudado a fabricar todos los hombres, para todos los hombres ha de quedar libre! ¡Libres ha declarado a cuatro millones de esclavos el Presidente Lincoln, que ‘ofreció a Dios darles la libertad si permitía que los confederados fuesen expulsados de Marilandia’; y han de rendirse, quebrados para riempre, los que se oponen a que cuatro millones de hombres sean libres!”

independent, and democratic nation. Martí employs the accounts of the Civil War, of the North's noble causes, of Lincoln's and of Grant's leadership, and other actions relating to the fight for African-American freedom to portray his views on liberty and to facilitate the lessons he seeks to impart. Depicting the Civil War assisted Martí's nation building efforts.

Martí's nation building had significant spiritual dimensions. The immediate objective of Martí's nation building was to fight and win a war for independence against Spain. In order for the independence war to be successful, it would need to be guided by noble principles, spiritual ones that would give legitimacy to the struggle. He espouses his spiritually-infused beliefs when declaring, "wars should be seen [from up high], from [the distance of] clouds. It is [legitimate and] appropriate that a half million human beings die to keep secure Humanity's only free home in the Universe."⁶⁶ According to Martí, one should not remain fixed on the actual blood spilled or the wounded and maimed or on corpses stacking high. One should consider the Civil War, according to Martí, as a great movement, a glorious action that seeks to "keep Humanity" safe and secure. To Martí, humanity, or a people, can only be safe and secure if men and women are free from the command and ownership of others.

Martí conceives the Civil War as a grandiose orchestration that sought to preserve and secure the freedom of humanity in "its only free home in the Universe." Martí implies that the U.S. is the only free home in the universe for humanity. One should consider these words written after Martí having suffered under Spanish tyranny in Cuba and during Mexico's dictatorial despotism and Guatemala's strong man rule. Martí had

⁶⁶ Martí, 13:93. "Las guerras deben verse desde las nubes. Bien está que medio, millón de seres humanos muera para mantener seguro a la Humanidad su único hogar libre sobre el Universo."

ample experience allowing him to gauge where he could feel more free. Therefore, Martí's view of the U.S. in the Grant essay complicates notions of Martí disliking, fearing, or hating his North American home, and readjusts the view of Martí promoted by some scholars as loving the poets, but disliking the politics.

One must not lose sight that Martí wrote this essay for a Latin American audience, and for those who would participate in Cuba's freedom struggle. By writing his own ideas into a narrative of Grant's life and of U.S. history at the time, Martí indirectly counsels Cubans and Spanish-Americans to emulate the best elements of the United States and to avoid the worst ones. As Chapter Five explores, the political was never too distant from the spiritual, in Martí's mind. They were often linked, particularly his notions of *patria* (fatherland, motherland, homeland) and how it had sacred and divine connotations. Chapter Five delves deeper into how Martí conceived *patria* as a sacred and divine entity.

Demonstrating how nation building efforts to Martí had significant spiritual dimensions and how he used the Civil War, a conflict with parallels in Cuba's own against Spain, the Cuban leader promotes his spiritual views in the following passage,

Up there, from high above, men must appear— streaming, building [creating], embracing [each other] body to body, even while battling, —like living flower bulbs, swollen with unnoticeable worms, that in large waves struggle, with constant and awkward movements, to break free from the roots of trees that they indeed themselves [later] become in a more liberated and animated form of life. They are like closed fists that push forward to come out from the deepest within the earth. Who can envision, among the magnitude of woes that this rudimentary state of the human species shoulders, the blessed clarity that awaits, after his or her purification and painful steps through [different] worlds? What peace to balance this beginning! It's captivating to contemplate [its] supreme fortune [and providence]; to how few it's given the

ability to glimpse at it, satisfied in their small [human] machines,
from their [egg]shells of bone!⁶⁷

The war seen from high up is an instrument where men are purified and are elevated from their earthly conditions (again, the theme of noble suffering redeeming individuals as seen in Martí's depiction of Grant's last painful years appears) Martí's imagery of worms, of men as vessels driven by a life force that metaphorically becomes like trees, in a "more liberated and animated form of life" echoes other similar expressions on spirituality, further explored in the Chapter Five. Martí would not fear, as he so often wrote, to give his life for his country and for a noble cause since those who fight for noble causes like the worms, in this passage, will become part of a tree, a higher expression of life. Without mentioning outright reincarnation, the "purification" and "the painful steps through [different] worlds]" in this passage, relate under an Eastern-inspired perspective to the human soul's journey through many lifetimes, always progressing upwards. As the above passage indicates, Martí viewed the war, as fought by the North, as that purifying mechanism. The Cuban freedom struggle also provided that door to immortality. Struggles for noble causes hasten the human soul's union with the divine, as Chapter Five will explore in detail.

A biographical sketch that details the former President's life and the causes and development of the conflict between North and South (since many of his Spanish-

⁶⁷ Martí, 13:93. "Allá, desde arriba, los hombres deben parecer- ondulando, fabricando, abrazándose cuerpo a cuerpo, hasta para guerrear, -como esos bulbos vivos, henchidos de gusanos invisibles, que en grande masas pugnan, con movimientos incesantes y torpes, por romper las raíces de los árboles que acaso en ellos mismos se convierten en una forma más libre y animada de la vida. Son como un puño cerrado que viene pujando por salir de lo hondo de la tierra. ¿Quién entrevé, en la magnitud de los pesares que acarrea el estado rudimentario de la especie humana, la claridad dichosa que la aguarda, después de su acendramiento y paso doloroso por los mundos? ¡Qué paz para equilibrar este comienzo! Arrebata el pensar en esa suprema dicha; ¡a cuán pocos es dado vislumbrarla, satisfechos de su pequeña máquina, desde su cáscara de huesos!"

American readers would not have a thorough understanding of the conflict) also allows Martí to teach which qualities made Grant “a great captain in a modern nation.” The essay serves as a vast pedagogical exercise in teaching about government, war, civics, and even spirituality. A detailed description of the battles, troop positions, and strategies forms the fourth part of the biographical essay.

Vicksburg defends the Mississippi from the federal troops; Fort Henry defends the Tennessee, Fort Donelson defends the Cumberland. On the east, Charleston protects the coast; and New Orleans in the south. It's not necessary in this war to occupy all points, just the main ones. In the interior, the Potomac and the James, the river banks are saturated with tents, defending Richmond. The war, after all, consists, from the start, in the fighting over and taking of rivers; the cities on the coast are less important. The armies will take their names from rivers.⁶⁸

The fourth section is strung with details of the war, clearly evidencing Martí's efforts at teaching the history of facts and events, along with the geography of the historical places.

In the fifth section of the essay, Martí employs detailed descriptions of events to illustrate Grant's qualities. Martí writes,

fifteen thousand prisoners turn themselves in with Buckner, and the Cumberland is Grant's, the first major victory of the war is also Grant's. One idea or another Grant could take from others, and even an entire battle plan, if he deemed it good, like the one for Chattanooga, from General Thomas; like the one for the siege at Vicksburg, from his assistant Rawlins; but an impetuous action, an unexpected movement, the deflecting of disaster, the original play of his troops, the instantaneous perception of a great opportunity, from no one else, but from himself did Grant need them.⁶⁹

⁶⁸ Martí, 13:94. “Vicksburg defiende de los federales al Mississippi; Fort Henry defiende al Tennessee; Fort Donelson defiende al Cumberland. Por el este, Charleston ampara la costa; y New Orleans por el sur. En la guerra no es necesario ocupar todos los puntos, sino los principales. En el interior el Potomac y el James, cuajadas las orillas de tiendas de campaña, defienden a Richmond. La guerra, pues, consistirá desde el principio en la disputa y toma de los ríos; las ciudades del mar importan menos. Los ejércitos tomarán su nombre de los ríos.”

⁶⁹ Martí, 13:96. “15,000 prisioneros se entregan con Buckner, y el Cumberland es de Grant, de Grant la primera gran victoria de la guerra. Una u otra idea podía Grant tomar de los demás, y acaso el plan entero de una batalla, si lo creía bueno, como el de Chattanooga, del general Thomas; como el de la toma de

Martí continues, “To hesitate? The rocks over which he waged war could hesitate; him, no. It wasn’t [necessarily] his courage, rather it was an ‘insensitivity in the face of danger’. He never thought he could be defeated. Delayed, yes; but never defeated. His push shreds the first enemy files to pieces; but tenacity wins the battle. Where any other general would have retreated, Grant would resist and would win.”⁷⁰ Martí admires Grant’s tenacity, his persistence in achieving objectives. Grant’s victories fuel envy in Washington, D.C., Martí describes,

Envy and jealousy disguise themselves as patriotism. Their country [their homeland] what does it hurt them? What [does] hurt them is that someone else takes advantage over them. The men who find it more important; the men who arrive by their wants where they can’t get to with their merit, or with ambition where they aren’t moved by patriotism. They care more to be the first than to save their country.⁷¹

In expressing how Washington intrigues affected Grant’s promotions, Martí further reveals Grant’s character traits. Martí informs,

and so then, with the resentment and envy that [Grant] brought from the Mexican war, these wrongs [to Grant] were added to his spirit so as to loathe, in accordance with justice, the partisanship and favoritism that paralyzed the war and deprived it of its best soldiers; in this way [Grant] accumulated that hatred, caused by fear and scorn towards Washington that Lincoln later moderated [and abated] with his prudence and stature; but he couldn’t nor did Grant wish to strip from himself [the hatred] which explains, if nothing else, his ways of a *conquistador* in that his personal desires

Vicksburg, de su ayudante Rawlins; pero el acometimiento, el movimiento inesperado, el quite de un desastre, el juego original de sus tropas, la percepción instantánea de la oportunidad feliz, de nadie más que de sí las necesitó Grant nunca.”

⁷⁰ Martí, 13:96. “¿Vacilar? las rocas sobre que libraba la batalla vacilarían; él no. No era valor el suyo, sino ‘insensibilidad ante el peligro’. Jamás le ocurrió que podía ser vencido. Detenido, sí; pero jamás vencido. El empuje despedaza las primeras filas enemigas; pero la tenacidad gana la batalla. Donde todo general se hubiese retirado Grant resistía y vencía.”

⁷¹ Martí, 13:97. “Se disfrazan de patriotismo los celos. Los incapaces se coligan, para cerrar el paso a los afortunados. La patria ¿qué les duele? Lo que les duele es que les saque alguien ventaja. A los hombres les importa más, a los hombres que llegan con el deseo a donde no llegan con el mérito, o con la ambición a donde no les llega el patriotismo, les importa más quedar primero que salvar la patria.”

were mingled with a certain unrefined instinct of honesty [and integrity], until with the pleasure of an excessive authority that little did his own people held badly against him, he endeared himself to Washington, D.C. in such a way that no one else with such [high] rank as his were personified its dangers and its vices.⁷²

Grant earned the respect and admiration from the Washington military establishment, “the friend that made him Brigadier was able to return to him, after Shiloh, his troops. His grey eyes occasionally became moist during those times, when he saw himself uncared for and left out, perhaps for ever, from that path to victory. They suffer a lot, these men who concentrate it all within themselves,” narrates the Cuban leader.⁷³ Why would Martí interject in these descriptions that men who hold it all within and who concentrate it all within themselves suffer a significant amount? –unless he felt so as well. These statements corroborate that Martí often wrote his own spiritual and emotional outlook and feelings into his narratives. Martí ends this fifth section with an account of Grant and his troops’ actions at the Southern defeat of Vicksburg.

Martí describes in part six of the twelve-part biographical essay on Grant that after the fall of Vicksburg and after the Union troops won over the Mississippi,

a commission of ‘Christian gentlemen’ approached Lincoln to inquire if it were true that Grant –oh, the immaturity of fanatics! [Martí writes] –gave himself to drinking. ‘I don’t truly know,’ Lincoln responded, grooming his beard; ‘but if he does, I would well like to know where he buys his brandy, to send a barrel of it to

⁷² Martí, 13:97. “Así, con aquellos celos que se trajo de la guerra de México, se unieron en el ánimo de Grant estos reveses para abominar, conforme a justicia, los nombramientos de compadrazgo que paralizaban la guerra y la privaban de sus soldados mejores; así fue acumulando en él aquel odio, hecho de dmdén y miedo, a Washington, que atenuó Lincoln con su grandeza y su prudencia luego; más no pudo ni quiso Grant sacar de sí, lo cual explica acaso aquella manera de conquistador, en que sus deseos personales iban mezclados a ciertos instintos rudos de honradez, hasta que con los goces de una autoridad excesiva que apenas su propio pueblo le tenía a mal, llegó a encariñarse con Washington de modo que en nadie en tanto grado como en él se personificaron sus pelígricos y sus vicios.”

⁷³ Martí, 13:97. “Pero el amigo que le hizo brigadier logró devolverle, después de Shiloh, sus tropas. Los ojos grises se le humedecían a veces en aquel tiempo, cuando se veía desatendido y fuera, acaso para siempre, del camino de la victoria. Sufren mucho esos hombres que lo concentran todo en sí.”

each one of his generals.’ And the Christian gentlemen left sad [and offended], while Grant soared, already made a general of the entire region, to rescue the besieged federal troops in Chattanooga.”⁷⁴

There are two major points that Martí seeks to impart –first, the “Christian gentlemen” are immature and childish (the actual word Martí employs is “*puerilidad* [puerilism]) since they are fanatical. Little did it matter that Grant had been successful and had significantly advanced the cause of the North. The Christian gentlemen were more concerned with Grant’s drinking than the success of his mission. These Christian gentlemen remind the reader of the second type of people that Martí mentioned earlier, the ones who are molded by convention. The second point Martí conveys is that Lincoln does not accept the Christian gentlemen’s behavior and pursue their line of thinking. In a humoristic tone, Lincoln tells the Christian gentlemen what they did not expect to hear from the President. The President offers to send all of Grant’s generals the same alcohol that strikes concern in the Christian gentlemen. Martí writes this scene of Lincoln and the Christian gentlemen to show his Spanish-American readers that fanaticism, be it religious or of any other type, signifies a lack of sophistication and maturity. They are “puerile,” a word free of the positive connotations of “childlike,” and one even harsher than “infantile.”

Martí’s efforts at nation building include poetry and art. Martí wrote his Spanish narratives in artistic, poetic, and rhythmic ways in order for his reader to more easily absorb his views and prescriptions. For example, Martí continues the sixth section of the

⁷⁴ Martí, 13:98-9. “se acercó a Lincoln una comisión de “caballeros cristianos” a inquirir si era cierto -¡oh puerilidad de los fanáticos! -que Grant era dado a la bebida. ‘No lo sé yo en verdad’, les respondió Lincoln, peinándose la barba; ‘pero si lo es, bien quisiera yo saber dónde compra su *brandy*, para mandar un barril de él a cada uno de sus generales.’ Y se fueron mohínos los caballeros cristianos, en tanto que Grant volaba, hecho ya general de toda aquella comarca, a salvar a la tropa federal sitiada en Chattanooga.”

biographical essay with a description of Chattanooga and narrates the history of the battle with a certain type of lyricism normally attributed to fiction: “Chattanooga, the desired eminence on the banks of the Tennessee, that like a fist, clasps all the railways that move the Southern forces”⁷⁵ and later, “Lookout Mountain and Missionary Ridge oversee Chattanooga from their peaks, like two giants watching a child,”⁷⁶ followed by “Grant arrives by night, under massive rain. He limps, carried in the arms of his soldiers, because he is crippled from a fall from his horse.”⁷⁷ Martí imbues his narrative with imagery and metaphors that are uncommon in traditional historical narratives; yet he provides actual facts and figures (such as the numbers of dead in battle), underscoring the serious matter and the credible presentation of the narrative. Although Martí employs artistic devices in his narrative, he downplays notions of concentrating on it at the expense of internalizing the lessons taught.

Martí continues in the eighth section of the Grant essay with spiritual, philosophical views of war. Martí’s descriptions of the Civil War allow the reader to understand how Martí conceived the Cuban struggle for independence. Martí’s depictions of the Civil War are efforts in nation building, particularly the way he presents the conflict with spiritual connotations. To Martí the Civil War was “one of the more spontaneous and complete of human expressions; the most complete and artistic, perhaps, with that great artistry of universally [globally] common elements, of all that to this day

⁷⁵ Martí, 13:99. “Chattanooga, eminencia apetecida en las orillas del Tennessee, que, como en un puño, recoge todos los ferrocarriles que meuyen las fuerzas del Sur”

⁷⁶ Martí, 13:99. “Lookout Mountain y Missionary Ridge miran desde sus topes a Chattanooga, como dos gigantes que miran a un niño.”

⁷⁷ Martí, 13:99. “Grant llega de noche, bajo lluvia tremenda. A trechos va en brazos de sus soldados, porque está cojo de una caída de caballo.”

man knows; for in it were in perfect analogy the elements of the event with [all] its actors and methods, determinedly developing towards the warmth of an unlimited liberty.”⁷⁸

According to the narrative, Martí believed the war to represent more than just a physical struggle between opposing parties. It was more than a contest between North and South, more than a conflict of good against evil.

In describing the Civil War, Martí also presents his views on the biography as a means to understand history. Martí relates that Grant was not only a man of his times, but one that personified the spirit of the war. Martí writes, “legitimate historical events reflect more than just all of human nature; [they] especially reflect the characters [and personalities] of the time and the nation in which they [emerge]; and [they] cease [to create], and [to be] even grandiose, in as much as they diverge from their nation and their time.”⁷⁹ Martí held a nationalistic view of historical events. He considered the Civil War a product of North American events and shaped by the North American character. Martí explains his views on history, “neither men [nor women] nor facts derive their permanent greatness if not by being incorporated to their time and their nation.”⁸⁰ Historical figures and events may only remain “great” through time only as they are understood and are incorporated, assimilated, or absorbed into their time and nation. Martí employs the word nation, a spiritual essence that unites all those who identify with a father/motherland. To

⁷⁸ Martí, 13: 103-4. “sino una de las expresiones más espontáneas y completas; la más completa y artística, acaeo con el gran arte de las cosas universales, de cuantas hasta hoy conoce el hombre; por cuanto estuvieron en ella en perfecta analogía, desenvueltos pujantemente al calor de una libertad ilimitada, los elementos del acto con sus agentes y sus métodos.”

⁷⁹ Martí, 13:104. “Los hechos legítimamente históricos son tales, que cada uno en sí, a más de reflejar en todo la naturaleza humana, refleja especialmente los caracteres de la época y la nación en que se produce; y dejan de ser fecundos, y aun grandiosos, en cuanto se apartan de su nación y de su época.”

⁸⁰ Martí, 13: 104. “Ni hombres ni hechos derivan grandeza permanente sino de su asimilación con una época o con una nación.”

Martí the spirit of how the North led the war was the spirit of the entire war itself and how it should be understood. In this passage of the eighth section of the essay, Martí intermixes descriptions of the leader of the Northern army (Grant) with the North's way of fighting and with the larger Civil War to the point, as the statements below demonstrate, that the reader is unable to exactly determine when Martí refers to Grant, the North, or the entire war. Martí describes the war as,

in its cautious and prudent determination; in the rapid and shocking creation of its armies; in the real [and actual] character that distinguishes those who are marked by it, as much as for it, as in its lack of scientific character; in the way, at first disorganized, and hardly scientific and blind and brutal later, of forwarding war; in the very magnanimity of its leader during the most blistering of the fight and at the hour of its most bloody victory, not one aspect ceased having absolute analogy, [not one] darkened all the attempts and exotic or unnatural elements, between the manner of creating, the spirit and methods of the North, and the way of creating, the spirit and methods of the War.⁸¹

To Martí no aspect differentiated the spirit of how the North led the war from the spirit of the Civil War itself. If Martí identified the U.S. Civil War with Cuba's own wars for independence and if the leaders of the North (the ones who promoted the noble cause), represented the spirit of the war, then Martí most certainly considered the leaders of the first Cuban War for Independence (1868-1878) as representing the spirit of the Cuban cause.

Describing the American Civil War as a product of the American nation, Martí writes,

⁸¹ Martí, 13: 104. "En su determinación cauta y prudente; en la súbita y pasmosa creación de sus ejércitos; en el carácter de hecho que distingue a los que en ellos llegaron a señalarse, tanto por él como por su falta de carácter de ciencia; en la manera, desordenada primero, como científica apenas y ciega y brutal luego, de mover la guerra; en la magnanimidad misma de su caudillo durante lo más ardiente de la pelea y en la hora de la más cruenta victoria, ni un punto cesó de haber analogía absoluta, que oscureció todas las tentativas y elementos exóticos o innaturales, entre la manera de formación, el espíritu y los métodos del Norte, y la manera de formación, el espíritu y los métodos de la guerra."

a fast country, with traditions of commerce and tolerance and of colossal size, caused naturally a fast war in which the conflict, created more by humanitarian purposes than the unflattering internal politics that influenced it, turned into and finished as a mere issue of public interest, [a country that] launched itself with the enormous resources commensurate to the magnitude of the endeavor and the agents [of the endeavor], yet without that cruelty, still frequent in those more literary and artistic nations, that have not yet given themselves to the benefit of the ordered and constant practice of free will, that heightens and strengthens characters.⁸²

Martí refers to the United States in an idealistic tone. In the above passage, he refers to the U.S. as a fast-paced country, one of enormous size, led by business, but also by tolerance.

According to Martí, the U.S. ultimately transformed the humanitarian causes for the war into an issue of public interest. Martí implies that nations should make humanitarian issues national matters. Martí informs his reader that the North (the Union) launched an enormous war, but without the cruelty experienced “even in more literate and artistic countries” –does he refer to Europe? to Latin America? Martí believes these countries are not yet accustomed to and neither enjoys the benefits of the ordered (referring to organized, institutionalized) and constant practice of free will. Although Martí does not directly mention democracy in this passage (it may be considered a twentieth century term), no other system of modern government, apart from the U.S., allowed for the “ordered and constant” practice of free will, in his eyes. Free will, the right to choose, according to Martí, “*agrandando*” (makes great, elevates, heightens) and

⁸² Martí, 13:104. “País súbito, de costumbres mercantiles y tolerantes y de colosal tamaño, produjo, naturalmente, una guerra súbita, en que el conflicto, creado más por un propósito humanitario que por el desagrado de política interior que influyó en él, vino a verse y terminarse como una mera cuestión de interés público, y atacarse con los recursos enormes consiguientes a la magnitud de la empresa y de sus mantenedores, mas sin aquella crueldad, frecuente todavía en los pueblos más literarios y artísticos, que no se deben aún al beneficio de la práctica ordenada y constante del libre albedrío, que agranda y fortifica los caracteres.”

strengthens characters. In this passage, Martí transmits an admiration for the positive qualities of the United States's system of government. By doing so, he sets, in this context, the U.S. as an example to emulate and not to avoid.

Martí illustrates how there is little in Grant to separate him from the great event (the Civil War). Grant is great to the extent that he reflects the sentiments of the time and his nation, as Martí expressed earlier. Referring to Grant as product of the Civil War and his nation, Martí writes,

enormous, improvised, unrefined, original and generous was the North's war, like the people who made it at the time; and the [military] leader that gave it its natural, naïve [and honest] character, and expelled from it an exotic, academic spirit, [he] was born like his people from poverty and deprivations; [he] took like his [nation] more time and interest in fertile and [practical] tasks than the weak and secondary ones of books; he substituted, conventional, and imported ideas with new ones that Nature in pristine fields and local conditions suggested; and always, like his [nation], [he] bolted with all [the strength] of his size, firm and indistinguishable like mountains, over the object of his will."⁸³

Employing metaphors describing both Grant and his nation, Martí praises a worthy military leader who broke with convention and freed his battles from “an exotic and academic spirit.” Martí implies that individuals whose work has a more practical, direct utility can succeed and are valuable to the nation, more so than those who are merely intellectual. As explored in Chapter Two on Martí's world historical narratives for children, the Cuban leader reaffirms his belief in employing American (in the broader

⁸³ Martí, 13:104. “Enorme, improvisada, inculta, original y generosa fue la guerra del Norte, como era por entonces el pueblo que la hizo; y el caudillo que le dio su espíritu natural, ingenuo, y expelió de ella el espíritu académico exótico, nació, como su pueblo, de la pobreza y de las privaciones; dio, como su pueblo, más tiempo y afición al trabajo fecundo y directo que al débil y secundario trabajo de los libros; sustituyó, a las ideas convencionales e importadas, las ideas nuevas que le iba sugiriendo, en campo virgen y condiciones locales, la Naturaleza; y siempre, como su pueblo, arremetió con todo su tamaño, firme e incontrastable como los montes, sobre el objeto de su deseo.”

sense of the word; i.e., from the Americas or Western Hemispheric) or local solutions to local problems. Martí chastises the wholesale import and uncritical imitation of European culture and attitudes to American circumstances. Grant did not conduct the “textbook war”; he was a product of his nation and of his time. That is what Martí admired of Grant.

Martí continues promoting his views on the qualities required of a leader and of governing officials in the tenth part of the essay. He also develops general ideas regarding individuals and their intentions and actions, frequently philosophizing throughout the essay. His narrative about Grant’s life is a biographical and historical piece and also a philosophical tract that allows him to disclose his personal notions of humanity, and of his own experience. The Cuban leader writes,

to think of one’s self is normal to men [and women]; [their] inevitable and incarnate existence imposes it; but for some [the emphasis on] one’s self develops, so little as to justify [wealth and] fortune to his or her own person, with [an] odious bounty and tenacity, that in the sphere of normal life engenders the egotists, and in the sphere of government produces despots; and [there are] others who look within themselves like a word that needs to be uttered [and transmitted] or an advice [or prescription] they need to fulfill, or [a sense of] charity [they need to act upon], and lead their lives with the secondary thought in themselves and the primary and dominant one for human benefit for which they came for, suffering [coarsely and] roughly –like [when having experienced a] transgression [or a crime]– when they haven’t [poured forth all of their] eloquence, their tenderness or their energy outwards.⁸⁴

In the above passage, Martí informs his reader that there are two types of people, on the one hand, those who think of themselves primarily to the extent that they become selfish

⁸⁴ Martí, 13:108-9. “Pensar en sí es propio del hombre; su existencia inevitable y encarnizadamente se lo impone; mas en unos se desenvuelve el pensamiento en sí, a poco que justifique su persona la fortuna, con tenacidad y plenitud odiosas, que en la esfera de la vida común engendra los egoístas, y en la esfera del gobierno produce los déspotas; y otros se miran en sí como una palabra que tienen que comunicar o una indicación que tienen que cumplir, o una caridad que tienen que hacer, y dirigen su vida con el segundo pensamiento en sí y el primero y dominante en el beneficio humano a que han venido, padeciendo ásperamente –como de un delito– mientras no han sacado su elocuencia, su ternura o su energía afuera.”

and egotistical in daily life. If governing, these types easily become despots. Grant clearly fits this type of description. Grant became a despot in Martí's view. On the other hand, the people who think or "look within themselves like a word that needs to be uttered" are driven, unlike the former, not by their egos and not like those who fulfill their egotistical needs in government by placing a nation's resources at the disposal of themselves and their associates. Instead, the second type of individuals, which Martí clearly identifies with, thinks only in him or herself in terms of how he or she can serve others for the "human benefit" that they were born for, according to the Cuban leader.⁸⁵ Martí considers these people providentially placed and strengthened, not necessarily by an outward God, but by a divine entity that pervades the universe, embodied in the most inner space of every human being.⁸⁶

In a world that appears as if those in the second group do not have the upper hand, those who come for the "human benefit" suffer roughly, as when someone transgresses or commits a crime. To Martí the suffering someone experiences for fear of being caught or for having transgressed against the law is comparable to what those individuals feel when they wish to help, heal, and improve others' conditions and are unable to do so. While writing this biographical essay, Martí prepared to launch the war to free Cuba from Spanish colonial despotism. Surely, he felt like those in the second group he describes. Martí communicated his ideas concerning government and civic life and philosophized, pouring his innermost feelings into his writings, what I term writing himself into the narrative. Martí's narratives were primarily created to inform and also to release his

⁸⁵ Chapter Five of this dissertation further explores how he viewed his life as one of constant sacrifice for others.

⁸⁶ Chapter Five examines this view in further detail.

distress. For example, he found relief in writing stories for children (*The Golden Years*) from the pain of being in New York, far from his beloved young son in Cuba. The agony of not being able to achieve Cuba's freedom and independence found reprieve in writing for the defense of freedom, democracy, and human rights (and it was a blessing when he could do this and simultaneously earn an income at writing for newspapers and publishers).

In this section of the Grant essay, Martí continues to promote his views of the U.S. to his Latin American audience,

and what a country Grant began governing, one with disdain for others, [with] its own way of being and [capricious way of thinking] that it became accustomed to by the simple and crude acts of war! A country, certainly, in danger, where its awareness of its strength and its appetite for wealth have its national decency [and respectability] at risk, as well as the independence of its neighboring nations and, perhaps, even the very independence of the human spirit; but [what a] magnificent country, in spite of [all] that, where men [and women] create and employ themselves without greater contact or limit than those naturally imposed by their neighbors; [with] the sublime [and magnificent] sight of a peaceful nation aroused to a great war because of its consciousness of human [decency and] respectability”⁸⁷

Although Martí begins with a realistic, even negative assessment of the U.S., he ends the passage with praises for the United States. The above words reveal that Martí wished his Latin American audience, especially the Cubans who fought for a new republic, to acknowledge, and even emulate, the positive qualities of the North American nation. Martí continues,

⁸⁷ Martí, 13:109-10. “Y ¡qué país entraba Grant a gobernar con aquel desdén de los de más, costumbre de sí y pensamiento voluntarioso a que se había habituado en los hechos simples y rudos de la guerra! Un país en peligro, ciertamente, donde la conciencia de la fuerza y el apetito de la fortuna tienen en riesgo el decoro nacional, la independencia de los pueblos vecinos y la independencia del mismo espíritu humano acaso; pero grandioso país, a pesar de eso, donde el hombre se elabora y ejercita sin más trato ni límite que los naturales que le impone la vecindad de los demás hombres; donde acababa de darse el espectáculo sublime de una nación pacífica exaltada hasta la guerra tremenda por su conciencia del decoro humano.”

[a country] where, in front of Grant's [very] own eyes, two hundred fifty thousand men en masse paraded, on their way homes, in the streets of Washington, D.C., with their flags ripped, their uniforms battered and their limbs broken, [yet] radiant still in their victory; [and what] a country of questions and answers, where every man [and woman] can be [delaminated and stripped], examined from the inside out, and their acts seen at their deepest root, and if it isn't pure, it's shattered

And, Martí adds,

a country of "prayer meeting", where in church halls men and women learn to speak [out loud] revealing their sins, denouncing [and accusing] his [or her] neighbor's and asking the pastor to explain to them their doubts over dogma; a nation of live newspaper, where each issue, [even if it] hasn't yet well emerged, already has its daily newspaper, and through it, all those who hold an interest or common concern have access; therefore there is no injury [or injustice] nor suspicion without a voice, and a press that publishes it, and a court willing to censure it; a nation attracted to, yes, that [type of] martial, [tough], tenacious and impetuous man just like it, who has weakened his rivals and opened paths to the greatest prosperity that written history remembers in centuries; but a country that, above everything else, to whoever deprives it or threatens its rights, denounces him and knocks him over.⁸⁸

In the above passage Martí praises and criticizes the U.S., but the overall impression left on the reader is one of a certain type of unavoidable admiration for the U.S. The United States is a free country, according to Martí, ("where men and women create and employ themselves without greater contact or limit than those naturally imposed by their neighbors"). Inherent in the above passage, Martí indirectly promotes his appreciation for

⁸⁸ Martí, 13:109-10. "a los mismos ojos de Grant, habían desfilado, camino de sus hogares, en las calles de Washington, con las banderas desgarradas, los vestidos maltrechos y los miembros rotos, doscientos cincuenta mil hombres en masa, resplandecientes aún de la victoria; un país de pregunta y de respuesta, donde a todo hombre se pone desnudo y se le mira del revés, y a cada acto se lo ve en la entraña, y si no sale puro, se le quiebra; un país de 'junta de oraciones', de *prayer meeting*, donde a las salas de las iglesias aprenden hombres y mujeres a usar de su palabra revelando en voz alta sus pecados, denunciando los del vecino y pidiendo al pastor que les explique sus dudas sobre el dogma; un país de periódico vivo, donde cada interés, no bien asoma, ya tiene su diario, y en él acceso todos los interesados en común, de modo que no hay injuria ni sospecha sin voz, y prensa que la publique, y tribunal dispuesto a censurarla; un país prendado, sí, de aquel hombre marcial, terco y arremetedor como él, que había quebrantado a sus rivales y abierto vías a la prosperidad mayor que la historia escrita recuerda en los siglos; pero un país que, por encima de todo, al que le escatima o amenaza su derecho, lo denuncia y lo vuelca."

the different types of freedoms that North Americans enjoy: for instance, freedom of religion (“a country of ‘prayer meeting,’ where in church halls, men and women learn to speak out loud revealing their sins, denouncing and accusing his or her neighbor’s and asking the pastor to explain to them their doubts over dogma”); freedom of speech, (“and what a country of questions and answers, where every man and woman can be delaminated and stripped, examined from the inside out, and their acts seen at their deepest root, and if it isn’t pure, it’s shattered”); freedom of the press (“a nation of live newspaper, where each issue, even if it hasn’t yet well emerged, already has its daily newspaper, and through it, all those who hold an interest or common concern have access, therefore there is no injury or injustice nor suspicion without a voice, and a press that publishes it, and a court willing to censure it”); and also, the freedom to defend one’s self and one’s interest (related to the right to bear arms, “a country that, above everything else, to whoever deprives it or threatens its rights, denounces him and knocks him over”). Martí’s positive and even laudatory tone suggests he admired and respected the above qualities.

Nevertheless, Martí censures the U.S. (“a country with disdain for others, with its own way of being and capricious way of thinking that it had become accustomed to by the simple and crude acts of war!”). Its own freedom is threatened by its hubris (“its awareness of its strength”) and its greed (“its appetite for wealth”). Due to its actions, the U.S. has risked freedom within its own land and those of its neighbors (“the independence of its neighboring nations and perhaps even the very independence of the human spirit”). It is also a nation attracted to –or could it be that those who are martial, tough, tenacious, and impetuous find success in the U.S.– the rough and obstinate (“a

nation attracted to, yes, that [type of] martial, [tough], tenacious and impetuous man just like it”). According to Martí, the U.S. has weakened its neighbors, but brought the “greatest” prosperity to the region “that written history remembers in centuries” (a reference to the Mexican-American war, and the annexation of the West by the U.S.). The U.S. is a land of rights, one that particularly defends its own (“a peaceful nation aroused to a great war because of its consciousness of human [decency and] respectability”). Where other scholars find in Martí’s work material to portray the Cuban revolutionary leader as anti-American, focusing on the instances when Martí is critical of the U.S., the above passage rebalances these notions. Martí employed the U.S., certainly, at times as a model to avoid and to be wary of, but significantly for his nation-building project he also portrayed the U.S. as an example for demonstrating Latin Americans, and particularly Cubans, what they lacked in their own societies and what they should strive for, create, and defend. His praises for the enshrined and protected freedoms and rights, as he considered the U.S. enjoyed, allow the reader to believe that he yearned for a similar democratic, pluralistic, civilian republic that would also enshrine, guard, and protect a system of rights and freedoms for its population.

Apart from Grant’s negatively depicted qualities, Grant redeems himself before dying, in Martí’s eyes. Martí expresses that later came a disease to end “in luminous and singular fashion, that life, [whether] brilliant, [at times and at others] guilty, that was of self [strength and action], and [in light of] the magnitude of his services, undeniably and definitely illustrious.”⁸⁹ Martí imbues positive sentiments regarding the United States in describing Grant’s funeral procession. In the funeral description, Martí expresses how

⁸⁹ Martí, 13:114. “Pero vino a la postre su enfermedad a cerrar, de luminosa y singular manera, aquella vida, ora brillante, culpable ora, que fue de propia fuerza, y por la magnitud de sus servicios, innegable y definitivamente ilustre.”

former enemies can make amends for the sake of a nation and to honor its President, in contrast to the histories of how former enemies in Spanish-American republics related to one another. His depiction of Grant's funeral procession is another instance of Martí seeking to teach Latin Americans, particularly Cubans, to embrace peace after a war and indirectly presents his views on building a peaceful Cuban republic after the projected war against the Spanish. Martí illustrates how thousands of people on the sidewalks and streets crowded to see Grant's casket go by, and behind the procession followed former Confederate officers and battalions.

According to Martí, Grant's final years of pain and suffering from an illness (throat cancer), and his writing of Civil war memoirs allowed for his life to be "closed luminously." Martí concludes the biographical essay on Ulysses S. Grant with

from his deep eyes, [that were] tender in gratitude to the good nation that forgave his [steely character] and looked at him at the hour of his death, [and] contemplated [him] with the high and dignified affection for the mistaken [and misguided] heroes who one day were made to fight without repose and to subdue without wrath; and [Grant's] hand of no longer flesh, extending towards the South from the rim of his tomb in good will, has been taken with loving admiration like a national treasure by his brave enemies. The nation of men has begun and this dead person in spite of his great mistakes helped pave its path.⁹⁰

At first glance, Martí's biography on Ulysses S. Grant may appear as another attempt at "the great man" narrative so common during the late nineteenth-century. During this time, historians wrote biographies to explain the history of a nation and its times through depictions of a prominent, mostly male, individual's life. Martí also

⁹⁰ Martí, 13:115. "Desde sus ojos profundos, enternecidos por el agradecimiento al pueblo bueno que le perdonaba sus yerros y lo miraba en su hora de morir, contemplaba con un digno y elevado cariño a los héroes equivocados a quienes le fue dado un día combatir sin reposo y someter sin ira; y su mano descarnada, extendida al Sur desde la orilla de su tumba con buena voluntad, ha sido recogida por amorosa admiración, como tesoro nacional, por sus gallardos enemigos. La nación de los hombres ha empezado, y este muerto, a pesar de sus grandes errores, ayudó a abrir camino para ella."

believed that through the lives of individuals, one may understand the life of a nation and its epoch. Yet, in this biographical essay on Grant, Martí takes the traditional great man historical model and creates a narrative that portrays Grant in a balanced light. Martí's biographical essay extols Grant's virtues and condemns his flaws. In Martí's narrative, the reader does not receive a lesson of individuals making history; rather, how a simple and practical man made General by historical forces, later made corrupt while President by the same qualities that had made him a great military commander is ultimately redeemed at the end of his life by suffering and by writing history for future generations. Grant is redeemed by his suffering from a disease and since he lived to suffer at witnessing the public unmasking of those around him who used Grant to gain fortune, according to Martí. Grant survived the public humiliation of his former associates, though not for long. Due to his magnanimous acts during such an enormous and critical war in the life of the nation, in the overall portrait of his life, Grant emerges as a noble, but flawed character in Martí's descriptions.

Ultimately, Martí's "great man" narrative is an innovative one, particularly new in its approach for introducing U.S. characters, daily life, and history to Latin America. Martí's narrative is also remarkable for it introduces, presents, and teaches aspects of Grant's life and of the history of his nation leading, during, and after the Civil War in a lyrical fashion through a narrative that reads as a work of fiction or theater with characters that speak to each other, coming alive with vivid depictions of scenes and images. The narrative is also extraordinary for two other reasons: first, it provides Martí the opportunity to write himself into the story, to reveal his innermost feelings and beliefs such as when he describes the different types of human conditions, those who suffer for

humanitarian ideals and those who do not. Second, the biography allows Martí to prescribe remedies and present examples to Latin American readers living in unstable republics, and especially, to write his visions for a new Cuba, advancing his nation-building efforts. The Grant essay demonstrates that Martí employed U.S. subjects and events through biographical pieces to promote his nation building ideas.

Martí employs the subject of the United States for different objectives: to caution and inform Latin Americans what the U.S. was capable of, such as imperialist, expansionist, and annexationist drives. Moreover, since positive aspects of the U.S. as a model have not gained proper attention in Martí studies, one must register that Martí also employed the U.S. as an instrument and place that allowed the Cuban leader to warn his own countrymen (the Cubans) and other Spanish Americans of the internal dangers that threaten democratic republics such as militarism and *caudillismo*. In this aspect of Martí's portrayals of the U.S., North American positive qualities are to be understood, emulated, and reproduced. Martí's favorable views –an unavoidable admiration– on the role of U.S. institutions, its enshrined and its “useful” and effective freedoms and rights, underscore that Martí also employed the U.S. as a positive model to inform and impart civic values for a new Cuba.

In seeking to build a new nation, an independent and democratic republic in Cuba, Martí wrote about the U.S. for it was the society whose daily life and politics he was most intimately familiar with, apart from Cuba's. Martí spent most of his adult life in the United States and wherever he journeyed, he returned to the United States, and wherever he traveled in the United States, he returned to New York City. There is never a sign of hatred towards the North American nation in Martí's criticisms of the United States and

its policy. Instead, he writes as if the United States itself should take heed of the sectarian interests and groups that threaten to corrode and undermine its own democratic character. By pointing to internal menaces within democracies and by warning others of external threats to their own democracies, Martí shows that his preeminent concern is democracy itself.

In the end, is this a “great man” narrative? It definitely is one where the great man is great in terms of his service to his nation; in the case of Grant, in how he served his country by bringing the Southern cause asunder. Martí’s “great man” is also great to the extent of his service to history. The Cuban leader finds Grant’s writing his memoirs and a history of the war ennobling. How he concludes this extensive and detailed essay reveals how Martí wished his reader to consider Grant in the end. He is a “*muerto*,” a dead person, a corpse, a deceased being, just like anyone else and in spite of his grave errors, he is forgiven. Martí weaves in two themes in the final scene of the biographical sketch: reconciliation and forgiveness. Martí writes, “Grant’s hand of no longer flesh, extending towards the South from the rim of his tomb in good will” and the former Union general’s hand was “taken with loving admiration, like a national treasure, by his brave enemies.” Grant’s extending his hand in good will is a gesture of reconciliation and the enemies taking it is an expression of forgiveness (yet forgiveness is made masculine to fit traditional Western gender stereotypes; the enemies are still “brave”). Martí’s last words in this essay are that this “*muerto*” assisted and facilitated the “*nación de hombres* (nation of men),” not one of kings, princes, warriors, or merchants, but “*hombres*.” Understood in the widest form of the Spanish usage, it includes all types of individuals (*hombres* in the most general context also includes females). Since this nation is of “*hombres*,” by

definition it is democratic. Its path has been opened. The nation has a trajectory. It has a future life, thanks to the efforts, the actions, and the role that Grant played. This is the role of the truly “great man” in Martí’s view; not one whose person and ego is raised so that he or she becomes larger than the nation in history or his or her figure comes to embody the nation’s history. Instead, Martí’s “great man” is a figure who serves the progression of democratic freedom, as Grant served to pave its path. This is the ultimate lesson of José Martí’s use of the biography in nation building.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESCRIPTIONS FOR CUBA'S FUTURE LEADERS THROUGH BIOGRAPHIES OF U.S. SUBJECTS

This chapter demonstrates that biographies on U.S. subjects serve as a means to decipher Martí's visions on how an independent Cuba should be ruled. This chapter specifically examines Martí's biographical essays on former U.S. military and government leaders such as Philip Henry Sheridan (1831-1888), Chester Alan Arthur (1829-1886), and Ulysses S. Grant (1822-1885) that both visibly and less conspicuously reveal Martí's ideas on government and society.

Philip Henry Sheridan

Not surprisingly, Martí's ideas on nation building are most visible in his essays on military officers and political individuals. Martí experienced confrontations with the Cuban military establishment, particularly those revolutionaries who had fought, led, and survived the Ten Years' War (1868-1878) and had not surrendered to the Spanish. These individuals, such as Antonio Maceo (1845-1896) and others, saw in Martí someone different from them, an intellectual and master orator who did not appear to fit the traditional masculinist profile of a military combatant. For being only in the second decade of his life during the first Cuban War of Independence, Martí did not fight in the struggle. The veteran generals of the first independence struggle considered their vision of the Cuban independence movement to be the appropriate one. Martí disagreed with these military leaders' unwillingness to accept civilian command of the movement. Martí also disagreed with the *caudillo*-type¹ structure of the revolutionary movement's

¹ Spanish for strongman leader.

organizational structure. In a letter to General Máximo Gómez, Martí criticized the militaristic nature of the Cuban independence movement and emphasized his preference for a civilian government.² To Martí, the military that would lead the struggle on the ground for Cuban independence should be subordinate to a civilian government. U.S. historical events, generals, and military officers offered Martí the subjects to write biographies that allowed for critiques of militarism and *caudillismo*³ without directly injuring the sensibilities of the Cuban military leaders. In Martí's biographical essays, the U.S. emerges as a model for criticism, to warn the Cubans and the Spanish-Americans of external threats to peace, sovereignty, and democracy (imperialism), yet also as a paradigm against internal threats to democratic rule by strong men (dictatorships). Martí's essay on former Union General Philip Henry Sheridan published in *La Nación* of Buenos Aires on October 3, 1888 vividly depicts military lives that impart lessons on how the future independent nation should be ruled.

Martí praises how Sheridan who had a military rank preceded only by Grant and Washington won fame as a hero during the Civil War and “with his respect for the Republic” later knew how to preserve the peace.⁴ Sheridan proved himself to be an extraordinary soldier by earning the highest rank, yet, according to Martí's essay, he also preserved it in times of peace for the general “respected” the republic. Martí presses throughout his writings on military leaders a concern for the military “preserving the peace” by respecting civilian governments. Martí also praises the manner in which

² Letter to General Máximo Gómez, October 20, 1884. Martí, 1:177.

³ The rule by a military strongman.

⁴ Martí, 13:120. “Ayer aún regía el ejército, con el grado sumo de general, que sólo Washington, Grant y Sherman han tenido antes, aquel hombre de cuerpo singular, coloso del cinto arriba y del cinto abajo enano, que en la guerra ganó fama de héroe por el ímpetu y brillo de sus ataques, y con su respeto a la República supo luego, en la paz conservarla.”

Sheridan perceived the republic. To Martí, those who rule the military should uphold civilian prerogatives.

Martí's depiction of Sheridan contains notions of humility. Martí recounts that Sheridan while participating in the centennial celebration of U.S. independence rode his horse in a way that the General's head "didn't incline to give thanks, nor did the horse curl [before the audiences], nor did he swoop down his sword, only when passing by the podium of the President of the Republic." Martí continues

traitor is he [or she] who receives praises in front of whose person the nation [fatherland, motherland] is embodied! I defended you, oh motherland! –in the hour of need; but I will not disrupt [you] at the time of peace with my ambition, for you gave me a life to defend you with and an opportunity to gain glory; will I make from my courage, oh motherland! a bullwhip, and of you, my horse? Sheridan did not [exactly] speak like that, he wasn't a man for fine words; but he did act [like that] which is [so] much better than words.⁵

The above excerpt affirms how Martí employed historical subjects to promote his ideas on nation building, particularly on the qualities leaders should have. By writing in the Union general's voice and by stating that Sheridan, in fact, never said the above words regarding humility, deference, gratitude, love, and respect for the republic and nation, Martí implies that he agreed with Sheridan's position ("Sheridan did not speak like that...but he did act [like that], which is [so] much better than words"). By speaking for Sheridan, Martí underscores the values he seeks to teach regarding how military leaders should defer to republican institutions.

⁵ Martí, 13:120. "Pero aquella cabeza no se inclinó para dar gracias, ni el caballo caracoleó, ni abatió la espada, sino al pasar junto al estrado del Presidente de la República; ¡traidor es el que recibe homenajes para sí frente al que en su persona lleva encarnada la patria! Te defendí ¡oh patria! en la hora de la necesidad; pero no te perturbaré en la hora de la paz con mi ambición, porque me diste vida para defenderte y ocasión para ganar gloria; ¿haré yo de mi valor ¡oh patria! un látigo, y de ti haré mi caballo? Así no habló Sheridan, que no era hombre de palabras finas; pero obró así, que es mucho mejor que hablar."

The *patria* (the nation, the mother/fatherland) was sacred to Martí (as Chapter Five explores in detail) and this sacred conception was embodied in the person of the president, according to the Cuban leader. The president must act with sacred respect towards his position (Martí also develops this notion in the Grant essay). The nation allowed itself to be embodied in the office of the president, and others must respect the person who embodies the nation's spirit. Martí does not teach that common men and women should blindly and uncritically follow a president for he or she embodies a nation. In the previous chapter on *The Golden Years* and in the essay on Chester Allan Arthur, Martí instructs that one should follow no one blindly. Rather, those who have the power to threaten a republic, like a highly popular and distinguished military general, of the ranks of Grant and Washington before him, one who Martí calls “the true victor over Lee,”⁶ should not threaten the a democratic, civilian presidency. Martí depicts Sherman as someone who avoids taking advantage of a grandiose public display such as the centennial celebration of U.S. independence to concentrate attention upon his self. Instead, Sherman defers to the President whose office embodies the nation. Therefore, Martí implies, through the example of Sheridan, that the military should be subordinate to civilian leaders and institutions. The civilian and democratic rulers of a republic should be respected by the military.

In the essay, Martí expands his views on the relationship between the military and civilian governments. “To fight is one thing, to govern another! Military employment, which is the agent of the law, must be subordinated to the civilian government which is the law, Sheridan said. War does not incapacitate those who seek to govern; but it is also

⁶ Martí, 13:120. “el verdadero vencedor de Lee”

not the right school to learn the art of governing” and Martí continues in the voice of Sheridan,

I know how to terrorize a squadron, and in one gallop to rally an army; but of national matters, of the subtle and slow combining of races [groups, people], of the desires and ambitions that motivate the rivals of new nations [–rivals are not only external and foreign, but internal as well–], of the laws of the Treasury and of social development, and of the problems of industry and the ways of business, what do I know? I have not read any of that in my saber! ‘Boys, with my arm [held] up high, I say that whoever wishes to take me out of my glorious peace and quiet to [make me go] do acrobatic summersaults in the Presidency of the Republic wishes me harm. [May] peace and the law [rule], boys!’⁷

Martí presents a character who realizes his limits, acknowledging that his role is to serve the nation as a military officer. Sheridan realizes that he does not have the adequate preparation to govern. To Martí, one must have the right knowledge, derived from learning and experience, to effectively govern.

Martí continues promoting his views on the role of the military in a civil society in the Sheridan essay. Martí describes Sheridan’s attitude as less magnanimous than Grant’s upon the South’s defeat at Appomattox. Martí describes how Sheridan did not treat the defeated troops of Louisiana in a peaceful manner, “at war the ways of peace are ill learned.” Instead Sheridan led the defeated troops, according to Martí, by yelling orders at them. “What is of virtue in men of the military, in men of government is a moral fault. A nation is not a battleground. At war, to command is to bring down; at peace, it is

⁷ Martí, 13:120. “¡Pelear es una cosa y gobernar otra! Subordínese, decía Sheridan, el empleo militar, que es el agente de la ley, al gobierno civil, que es la ley. La guerra no inhabilita para el gobierno; pero tampoco es la escuela propia del arte de gobernar. Yo sé aterrar de un temo a un escuadrón, y de una galopada entusiasmar a un ejército; pero de los elementos nacionales, de la mezcla sutil y lenta de las razas, de los celos y arterías que suscitan a los pueblos nuevos sus rivales, de las leyes de hacienda y de la gestación social, de los problemas de la industria y los caminos del comercio, ¿qué sé yo? ¡Yo no he leído nada de eso en mi sable! “Muchachos, con el brazo alzado digo que desea mi mal el que me quiere sacar de mi gloria tranquila para llevarme a dar tumbos de acróbata en la Presidencia de la República. ¡Por la ley y por la paz, muchachos!”

to rise up. Structures are not erected over bayonets.”⁸ Martí teaches his reader that wars are meant to destroy and to defeat enemies. The lessons of war serve little in peacetime, particularly during a time of reconstruction and of renovating political, social, and economic structures. The military, according to Martí, should not lead the post-conflict construction and management of a civilian republic.

Martí ends his essay on Sheridan with humility as the overriding quality that makes the General a “great man.” Martí writes,

he was as circumspect in preparing his plans, as fast as he was in achieving them; and he always found the best way to be loved by his soldiers which is not to sacrifice them needlessly, but to fight at the head [of his troops]. Without any fear? Asked Dana, the editor of the *Sun*, after Cedar Creek. ‘He lies whoever says he’s not afraid! As for me, it scares me to hell, and if I could, I would make a run for it; that thing of courage is nothing more to me than the power of the will over the mind.’⁹

By admitting his fear, Sheridan presents himself as human as anyone else. Martí does not depict Sheridan as a godlike, heroic figure. Martí promotes the qualities of humility and humanity in the General’s character. Sheridan felt fear like any other soldier, as anyone else in a similar position. He would have run away, if he were not a soldier and a general who sought to fulfill his duty. Ultimately, Martí sought his readers to internalize the values represented by Sheridan’s commitment to duty and his sense of humility. Martí concludes the piece on the Union general,

⁸ Martí, 13:123. “Sheridan deslució su triunfo maltratando a los vencidos de Luisiana, no con el arte de paz, que en la guerra mal se aprende, sino a ordenanzas y a gritos. Lo que en el militar es virtud, en el gobernante es defecto. Un pueblo no es un campo de batalla. En la guerra, mandar es echar abajo; en la paz, echar arriba. No se sabe de ningún edificio construido sobre bayonetas.”

⁹ Martí, 13:128. “Era tan mirado en preparar sus planes como veloz en acometerlos; y encontró el mejor modo de hacerse adorar por los soldados, que es no sacrificarlos sin necesidad y pelear a su cabeza. “¿Sin miedo?” le preguntó Dana, el director del *Sun*, después de Cedar Creek “¡Miente el que diga que no tiene miedo! Lo que es a mí me da un miedo del diablo, y si pudiera, me echaría a correr; eso del valor no es más que el poder de la voluntad sobre la mente.”

but it was enough to look into those eyes, already bull-like because of the [unexpected, long] last years of his life, to know that in that chest, wide [and deep] like a cavern, never did that flame burn out! Shamelessness, said more than one Spaniard. He was brutal at one time or another. But when he reprimanded, without reason, a brave officer in his ranks, it was he, the Major General, who went to the ranks, with hat in hand, to ask for forgiveness.¹⁰

Forgiveness and humility are the marks of a noble warrior, according to Martí, a lesson for his all his readers. Under the scope of his nation-building program, the biographical piece on Sheridan is a moral story for the soon to be independent Cuban and for the sister Spanish-American republics to avoid the *caudillismo* that plagued the post-independence histories of Latin American nations. The Sheridan essay, therefore, provides explicit examples of qualities that should guide Cuba's future leaders such as humility, a sense of humanity, and deference to civilian authority.

Chester Alan Arthur

In a December 15, 1886 letter written from New York City as a newspaper article to *La Nación* of Buenos Aires, Martí describes all the major happenings of the day, how “Hindu philosophers come to convert a Protestant country to the teachings of the Buddha”; how a government official went to jail for taking money in exchange for providing a concession to a streetcar company; how a young country lady crossed Niagara Falls in a wooden barrel; and how a new history on Lincoln had been published, but, according to Martí, “the most significant event is the death of Chester Alan

¹⁰ Martí, 13:128. “¡Pero bastaba mirar a aquellos ojos, ya bovinos por la vida regalada de sus últimos años, para saber que en aquel pecho, vasto como una caverna, no se apagó jamás la llama! Desvergüenzas, decía más que un español. Era brutal una vez que otra. Pero cuando ofendía en las filas, sin razón, a un oficial valiente, él, el mayor general, en las filas le iba a pedir perdón, sombrero en mano.”

Arthur.”¹¹ The Arthur essay is further example of Martí employing U.S. figures and events for nation building.

Since Arthur was a former U.S. president, his character as a biographical subject facilitated prescriptions for nation building. In the Arthur essay, Martí again demonstrates his views on history as educational, as a tool imparting lessons for the future. Promoting how biographies are highly effective in teaching history, Martí writes “men in who the character and elements of nations culminate never die without leaving [valuable] teachings; therefore, properly understood, the biography of a prominent man is a history course.”¹² Martí thus implies that the story that follows on Arthur is a pedagogically-oriented one, important in understanding U.S. history. He also points at the biographical essay teaching valuable historical lessons for his readers, the future Cuban citizens, and others of the existing Spanish-American republics. Martí believed that prominent men reflect the history of a society and time. To Martí, an individual reflected a nation’s history, but the whole nation’s history and spirit were not embodied in one person. Hence, a nation’s history should not be solely represented by an individual life (as Martí separately affirms in the Grant essay). The biography is an important format for teaching history and the history lessons conveyed in the Arthur essay are valuable in national and governmental terms.

The Arthur piece promotes, as did the others surveyed, Martí’s views on government and nation. In the essay, Martí does not present Arthur as an admirable

¹¹ Martí, 13:155. “Llegan doctores hindús a convertir a Buda a este pais protestante.” “Pero el suceso de más significación ha sido la muerte de Chester Alan Arthur, que no hace todavía dos años era Presidente de los Estados Unidos.”

¹² Martí, 13:156. “No mueren nunca sin dejar enseñanza los hombres en quienes culminan los elementos y caracteres de los pueblos; por lo que, bien entendida, viene a ser un curso histórico la biografía de un hombre prominente.”

figure. In the beginning of the biographical sketch, Martí expresses that Arthur benefited and exploited his successes in previous legal work. In a court case regarding a poor African-American woman who was ejected from a New York City streetcar, Arthur achieved that all African-Americans could enter public places in New York City with the same right of access as European-Americans. According to Martí, it was that “superior and generous action” that kept Arthur in spite of his partisanship and favoritisms, as a dignified public person in the minds of other.¹³ Martí, however, chastises those who take a good deed, an act where the public interest and social justice are advanced, to benefit their own person. “That victory gave him wings; and a velvet touch, which is very scarce here, and his arrogant and neat [and tidy] way of being, opened doors for him with extraordinary ease,”¹⁴ Martí describes Arthur.

Martí depicts former the former president’s arrogance to underscore his belief in the importance of humility in leadership. Regarding Arthur, the Cuban leader writes “since his nature lacked that blind generosity and heroic drive that raise the higher [more developed] souls over the ordinary level, he understood in time that men who appear to serve [others] dominate, and he [or she] has his [or her] rule more secured when he [or she] appears to not desire it, nor hurts [or damages] the ambition, pride or decency of [his or her] emulators [challengers] with pride and presumption.” Martí continues, “and this man of such mild and gentle appearance has died of ambition, even if nobody could tell

¹³ Martí, 13:158. “Echaron de un “tramway” a una pobre negra, y Arthur obtuvo, entre grandes celebraciones, la decisión que por primera vez autorizó a los negros, en Nueva York, a entrar en todas partes por derecho propio a nivel de los blancos. Y ésa fue la acción superior y generosa que mantuvo a Arthur, a pesar de sus compadrazgos y cábalas, en la dignidad de persona pública.”

¹⁴ Martí, 13:158. “Aquella victoria le puso alas para la vida; y la seda del trato, que es aquí muy escasa, y lo arrogante y pulcro de su persona, le abrian las puertas con facilidad extraordinaria.”

he died of it!”¹⁵ Martí acknowledges that those who may appear “*suave* (smooth, gentle, mild)” may conceal ignoble aspirations and be motivated by self-serving ambition. According to Martí, a blind generosity, a sense of altruism and “heroic drive” can elevate individual souls to levels beyond the ordinary, and Arthur lacked these traits. Arthur learned in time that men who appear to serve others are the ones who more readily maintain power. Martí was aware that rulers feign, conceal, and dissemble in order to keep power. Those that appear to serve others can engender positive feelings from the general public, yet in reality are motivated by loyalty to themselves, according to the Cuban revolutionary.¹⁶ Martí’s personal beliefs regarding Arthur’s character may also be applied to his views on the behavior of a republic’s president. By criticizing Arthur, Martí seeks to warn his readers, including the Cuban ones, of the traits that citizens should be wary of in government leaders.

In the Arthur essay, Martí teaches that those who think only or primarily of themselves are small minded. Describing Arthur, the Cuban revolutionary writes

and his own small [mindedness] helped him along for no matter how much he yearned to he didn’t dare raise his sight [objectives] to what lay beyond that which he believed he [rightfully] deserved, and he was satisfied with prevailing with his gentle manners and his renowned cunning in the intrigues and influences of the politics of his city and state; his handsome figure was of great assistance, the caution with which he hid his aims, that brave abandonment with which he spread among friends his winnings, as well as that

¹⁵ Martí, 13:159. “Privada su naturaleza de aquella ciega generosidad e ímpetu heroico que levantan sobre el nivel común a las almas mayores, comprendió a tiempo que domina a los hombres el que aparenta servirlos, y tiene más seguro el mando aquel que no deja ver que lo desea, ni lastima la ambición, orgullo o decoro de sus émulo con el espectáculo de su presunción y soberbia. ¡Y de ambición ha muerto ese hombre de apariencia tan suave que nadie hubiese dicho que de eso muriera!”

¹⁶ Martí, 13:159.

formidable indifference that tends to appear like a virtue, when in reality it was nothing more than the refinement of selfishness.¹⁷

In his descriptions of Arthur, Martí instructs that those who deceive for selfish aims ignore the impact of their actions on others. “Virtue does not tie men as tightly as these dark partisanships and favoritisms. Two [individuals] who have sinned [or transgressed] together, are eternal friends,” Martí writes. “One may notice, furthermore, [that] he [or she] may even be capable of a loving friendship, and he [or she] clings to it, as if to prove to him [or her-]self that he [or she] is not entirely vile.”¹⁸ Martí believes that virtuous and noble acts do not unite individuals to the same degree as those who have transgressed together. He also recognizes that those who are evil or who perpetuate evil are capable of “*la pasión de amigo*” (a loving friendship, the passion of a friend) and these malevolent and corrupt individuals may cling to these relationships to show and prove to themselves that they are not entirely despicable and that their actions towards others are not entirely disgraceful.

If there is something sacred under the sun, it is [the national, the people’s] interest. It is [only] natural and human that men [and women] think constantly in themselves, even in acts of self-denial and of not caring for their own selves, and that they seek to reconcile their personal advancement with the public good, and to serve the latter in a way in which the former emerges favored, or [at least] not too harmed. But there are no greater vile [and despicable] individuals than those who look exclusively to the

¹⁷ Martí, 13:159. “Le iba ayudando su misma pequeñez, porque, por mucho que él desease, no se atrevía a alzar la mira a más allá de aquello de que en sí se creía merecedor, y se contentaba con predominar por su gentil manera y reconocida astucia en las intrigas e influjo de la política de su ciudad y Estado; siéndole de gran auxilio su figura hermosa, la cautela con que escondía sus fines, el gallardo abandono con que esparcía entre amigos sus ganancias, y esa indiferencia formidable que suele llegar a parecer una virtud, cuando en verdad no es más que el refinamiento del egoísmo.”

¹⁸ Martí, 13:161. “La virtud no liga a los hombres tan estrechamente como estos compadrazgos y camareos oscuros. Dos que han pecado juntos, son eternos amigos. Obsérvase, además, que cuando todas las noblezas se han oscurecido en el hombre, aún es capaz de la pasión de amigo, y se encarniza en ella, como para probarse que no es enteramente vil.”

interests of the *patria* [nation, homeland] as means to satisfy their vanity or to raise their fortune.¹⁹

Regarding these types of self-serving people that emerge as leaders, Martí continues,

but wings, [as we well know], do not make for much of man's composition, who seems to have more of tooth and nail; and if it is sane [and sensible] to always keep the stove will lit and the branding iron ready to label those traffickers in such a way that they would be seen, and to impede them from corrupting and enslaving the Republic, it is also sane [and sensible] to recognize impure and deceitful ambitions as inevitable elements in human operations, and to serve one's self from [them], since they can not be [entirely] suppressed, in order to best pursue virtue.²⁰

Martí realizes that blind, ambitious, cunning, self-interested, and deceitful individuals cannot be entirely eliminated from the human realm. Nevertheless, individuals should be wary of these sorts of people in order to defend and to avoid allowing them to enslave a Republic. To Martí Chester Alan Arthur was this type of conniving and egotistical individual, yet fortunately for the U.S., a four year election cycle would have a different leader at the helm. Looking to his own country, enslaved under Spanish despotism and victim to the dictates of a Spanish-appointed captain general, Martí knew well that the future republic he sought to establish would be threatened not only from abroad, but from within –since in all humanity (including Cubans) these vile aspects of men and women “who look exclusively to the interests of

¹⁹ Martí, 13:161. ‘Si hay algo sagrado en cuanto alumbrado el Sol, son los intereses patrios. Es natural y humano que el hombre piense constantemente en sí, aun en sus actos de mayor abnegación y descuido de sí propio, y procure conciliar su adelanto personal y la utilidad pública, y servir a ésta de modo que resulte aquél favorecido, o no muy dañado. Pero no hay viles mayores que los que miran exclusivamente los intereses de la patria como medios de satisfacer su vanidad o levantar su fortuna.’

²⁰ Martí, 13:161. “Pero el ala, como se sabe, no entra por mucho en la composición del hombre, que parece tener más de uña y de diente; y si bien es cuerdo conservar siempre la hornilla encendida y los hierros en blanco para marcar a esos traficantes de modo que se vea, e impedir que corrompan y esclavicen la República, cuerdo es también reconocer la ambición impura y disfrazada como factor inevitable de las funciones humanas, y valerse de ella, ya que no puede suprimírsela, para mejor servir a la virtud.”

the *patria* [nation, homeland] as means to satisfy their vanity or to raise their fortune” are present and unavoidable.

Martí sought to minimize the damage the destructive attitudes of selfish people could cause by acknowledging these evil intentions and actions, and promoting the transformation of them for the ultimate public good. One is not to cause evil or to perpetuate it, but if a certain evil exists one must appropriate it, to “serve one’s self from it” in order for the evil to have an ultimate beneficial effect for society. Even though Martí concludes the Arthur essay as someone who redeems himself, the reader is ultimately left with admonitions for citizens of democratic societies to be wary of the traits described in Arthur. Further supporting that the Arthur essay transmits Martí’s ideas on government, the Cuban leader writes, “never should [good and] honest people abandon [or set themselves aside from] managing public matters, not even in moments of great peace. To retain [to keep and to protect] is easier than to evict [or get rid of]. One should never abandon by neglect what to regain will come at great cost. Nor, once they begin to rot, do social bodies completely heal”²¹ –indeed, lessons in Martí’s nation-building.

Ulysses S. Grant

In Martí’s 1885 Grant biographical essay, he introduces views on the qualities of a successful leader should have. In the Grant essay, Martí describes the North’s successes against the South during the U.S. Civil War. He also illustrates the North’s confrontations

²¹ Martí, 13:162. “Jamás debe apartarse de los cuidados públicos, ni en los momentos de mayor paz, la gente honrada. Retener cuestn menos que desalojar. No debe abandonarse por descuido lo que habrá de reconquistarse luego a gran costa. Ni, una vez comenzados a podrir, sanan completamente los cuerpos sociales.”

with Southern troops, and particularly Grant in comparison with Robert E. Lee. As he describes Lee, Martí juxtaposes the positive and negative qualities of Grant, with the ultimate objective of the reader internalizing the positive and avoiding the negative. Martí explains, “Grant does not fight against Lee like a general who launches from afar, but rather as a mammoth that advances”²² and later “whatever Grant sets out to do, he does. Once, ten times, Lee’s brave and motivated forces impede it; but he twists his horse’s bridle, and a little further down the river, he tries again without turning his eyes [back] towards the fifty thousand dead [men] than in less than a month he has left behind and in the end ‘he set himself to do it; and he does it.’”²³ Martí affirms Grant’s resolve, steadfastness, and tenacity in the narrative. He admires these qualities in Grant, the strength of purpose and the drive to persist and prevail. To Martí Grant is successful for the Union general’s belief in the noble cause of his mission and for his steadfastness of principle.

Martí’s descriptions of how the Civil War came to a close with the surrender at Appomattox also serve to promote ideas on leadership. Illustrating the scene at Appomattox to disclose Grant’s character traits, Martí writes “and days later, on April 9, Lee went sadly leading his generals to leave, in Grant’s hands who treated him as a friend, the saber of so many victories, the one which Grant did not wish to place his

²² Martí, 13:101. “Grant no pelea contra Lee como general que proyecta, sino como mole que avanza.”

²³ Martí, 13:102. “Lo que se propone Grant hacer, lo hace. Una vez, diez veces, las fuerzas entusiastas y valientes de Lee se lo impiden; pero él tuerce la brida a su caballo, y un poco más abajo del río tienta otra vez, sin volver los ojos sobre los cincuenta mil muertos que en poco más de un mes deja tras sí; y, al fin, “lo que quiso hacer, lo hace”.

hands on.”²⁴ According to Martí, Grant treated Lee as a friend at Appomattox. Although Lee was his most prominent adversary, the commander of the enemy troops, Grant treated Lee as a friend and not a foe. Martí teaches that although one may have an enemy, and if one believes one’s cause to be noble, then there is no need for hatred of the enemy. One should seek the defeat of the enemy without hatred. To treat someone like a friend is to treat them more than with respect; it is to treat them with admiration. Martí emphasizes that Grant respected Lee and did not humiliate him nor savored the victory over the Confederate general nor did Grant praise himself or aggrandize himself from the event. Grant did not wish to place his hands on Lee’s sword, the one that had led Confederate forces to many victories over the North and the Southern victories were results of Northern defeats and Northern dead. Therefore, the image of Grant not wishing to handle Lee’s sword is a powerful one. The leading general of the Union army not seeking to possess the sword of Lee is truly a sign of respect, also indicative of what type of person Grant was and what type of behavior Martí admired in military victors.

In further describing Grant, Martí informs his Latin American audience that,

artistry of war Grant didn’t [find appealing] nor does it truly seem that in assaults that required spectacle and design he had many; but he wasn’t going ‘to make the textbook war,’ rather [he sought] to save lives; to finish fast; to exterminate the South’s military power. They called him a butcher, because he saw tens of thousands of soldiers die without retreating his positions; to which he claimed that to prolong the campaign [in the name of] circumspection would only result in losing more men in the end.²⁵

²⁴ Martí, 13:102. “Y días después, el 9 de abril, iba Lee, tristemente, a la cabeza de sus generales, a dejar en manos de Grant, que lo trató como un amigo, la espada, victoriosa tantas veces, en que no quiso Grant poner las manos.”

²⁵ Martí, 13:102-3. “Artes de guerra no quiso Grant ni parece en verdad que en ataques que requerían concepción y brillo tuviese muchos; pero no iba él a ‘hacer la guerra de libro’, sino a ahorrar gente; a acabar pronto; a exterminar el poder militar del Sur. Carnicero le decían, porque veía morir decenas de miles de soldados sin retirarse de sus posiciones; a lo que él alegaba que con prolongar la campaña por esos miramientos se perderían al fin más hombres.”

Martí continues describing Grant,

he realized that [by] allowing his immense force to fall over [a debilitated] enemy, he could extinguish it; and he let it fall. Is the object of war to fight brilliantly or [is it] to defeat the enemy? He had a poor education, he was short on ingenuity, and slow in conceiving things, but he saw the larger scheme, the large lines of masses, the reasons for the enemy's strength, the modern elements that were required in a war as had never [before] been seen, and he exterminated them in accordance with them, without larger objective than to turn in the rebel to the Union forever beaten, without his triumph ever being stained by inclemency or injustice.²⁶

Grant's lack of education and refinement did not impede him from gaining victories. Martí considers that the manner in which Grant fought the war made his victory all the more laudable. He may have been called a butcher, yet he had a larger objective in mind which was to turn in the rebels completely defeated. Grant achieved these objectives without being inclement or unjust to his own troops. In this passage, Martí admires Grant for how he fought the war and how he concluded it. He was not the man of the Washington establishment, as Martí also describes in the essay. Grant was not one to be distracted by insignificant intrigues. Grant was, according to Martí, tenacious and magnanimous when victorious. He was also resourceful. He knew how to act in a new type of war. He employed modern strategies for a modern war. In this sense, Grant was unconventional –he was not going to make that “textbook war.” Martí's praises of Grant stand in contrast to other instances when Martí depicts Grant as not possessing the

²⁶ Martí, 13:102-3. “Vio que, dejando caer su fuerza enorme sobre el enemigo, debilitado, podía extinguirlo; y la dejó caer. ¿El objeto de la guerra es pelear brillantemente, o vencer al enemigo? El era de instrucción pobre, escaso en la inventiva, en la concepción lento: pero vio el gran hecho, las grandes líneas de la masa, las causas de la fuerza del enemigo, las novedades que exigía una guerra nunca vista, y la exterminó conforme a ellas, sin más objeto que entregar a la Unión al rebelde para siempre abatido, sin que jamás manchase su triunfo un acto de inclemencia o injusticia.”

qualities of a great leader. Martí clearly respects and admires Grant the general; Grant, the president, however, receives less favorable treatment in the biographical essay. In the essay on General Philip Sheridan, Martí praises Sheridan's abstaining from pursuing a political career. By contrast, Martí criticizes Grant's presidency. Martí's depictions of Grant and Sheridan suggest he would not have approved of the future Cuban republic's government being led in a militaristic manner.

Martí concludes the scene of Lee's surrender at the end of the U.S. Civil War with "it seemed, at Appomattox, that it was he and not Lee who was defeated because of his modest dress and posture and for his humble speak and expressions. He arranged the peace as he had conducted the war: without enthusiasm and wrath. He envisioned what he had done; but in his arrogance, not yet developed, he only saw then that 'he did what he had set out to do.'"²⁷

Martí later deconstructs in the biographical essay Grant's characterization as a magnanimous leader with his descriptions of the former Union general's corrupt rise to the presidency. Martí informs that politics for Grant became no longer unpleasant, "since he had no need to go towards it, since it wasn't part of his nature; rather, politics came to summon him at his door."²⁸ Martí illustrates how Grant served President Andrew Johnson after the death of "the one whose name will always be uttered with reverent worship" (Lincoln) and until Johnson showed "a sign of respect for that governing body [by] subject[ing] himself to the expression of public will under its legitimate institution."

²⁷ Martí, 13:103. "Parecía él, en Appomattox, -y no Lee, el vencido, por lo modesto del traje y la apostura, y por lo humilde del habla y la expresión. Ajustó la paz como había conducido la guerra: sin entusiasmo y sin ira. El entreveía lo que había hecho; pero en su arrogancia, no desenvuelta todavía, sólo vio entonces que 'hizo lo que se había propuesto hacer'".

²⁸ Martí, 13:105-6. "Ya la política no le era desagradable, puesto que él no tenía que ir a ella, lo cual no estaba en su naturaleza, sino que ella venía a solicitarle a su puerta."

By Johnson answering to Congress, he, according to Martí, “beautified his glory [legacy].”²⁹ Apart from Grant, other figures in the essay such as John Aaron Rawlins, Abraham Lincoln, and, in the above example, President Andrew Johnson serve to promote Martí’s notions of proper government. Even though Johnson was the chief executive of the government, he showed respect for the legitimate governing body by submitting himself to the public will. Concerned with the public will, Johnson did not attempt a coup d’état or to undermine democratic processes; neither did Johnson impose his will over the public nor did he flee from his position which were all different options that Martí may have witnessed while living in Latin America and that were available to a leader under threat of losing authority. Instead, Johnson subjected himself to impeachment and by doing so, endeared himself to historical memory, according to Martí. Johnson “*hermoseó su gloria*,” made his legacy more beautiful. Believing leaders who submit themselves to the public will as honorable, Martí also implies in the Grant essay that Johnson’s subjection was to an “*órgano legítimo*” (a legitimate organ/institution). By legitimate, Martí meant an openly elected body, not one driven by a frenzied mob who sought to vacate Johnson from the presidency; rather, a body representing an electorate prosecuted the president.

In the concluding sections of the Grant essay, Martí depicts the former president as an opportunist and, even more so, those surrounding him. Martí describes that Grant voted for the Democratic candidate in the elections preceding the Civil War. After the war, he would have accepted the Democratic nomination for president if he would have

²⁹ Martí, 13:106. “Sirvió a Johnson de ministro luego de asesinado aquel cuyo nombre se dice siempre con reverente alabanza, hasta que el Senado desprobó la opinion de Johnson sobre su facultad de proveer empleos; y como con esta muestra de respeto al cuerpo gobernante, hermoseó su gloria, sometiéndose a la expresión de la voluntad pública por su órgano legítimo.”

been offered it; however, in a lunch meeting, the leader of the Republicans offered Grant the nomination. Grant does not emerge as a president driven by an urge to serve the public good; rather, he is invited. Forces around him connive, according to Martí, to put an individual in power who they believe could exterminate any further secessionist movements from the South, particularly since Grant was “the one who saved the Union with his sword.”³⁰ Grant emerges as an individual who comes to power led by the greed of others who seek to profit from his position.

Martí displays Grant’s flaws by illustrating his rise and service as president. Grant directly condones actions that benefit only a few, and at other times, his character allows conditions to emerge where others pursue self-serving objectives. Martí’s critiques of Grant’s character and his use of the presidency facilitate the Cuban leader’s prescriptions regarding government officials. Through the figure of Grant, Martí teaches Latin Americans, and especially the Cubans, how a chief executive of a nation should behave, of paramount concern in his nation-building project. Martí writes

Who is this strange man, unjust, [and] ignorant of the most fundamental laws of the Republic and [the] manners and graces of government; absolutely unaware of the limits drawn between the personal rights of a leader and his public authority in the presidency of a country; incapable of understanding the indispensable relationship [between] national [positions of] employment and the individuals named to execute them; [who is this] adventurous and excessive person who places in the administration of a country, [who guards] jealously its freedom [and self-]respect, all the mean spirited displacements and fashions

³⁰ Martí, 13:106. “Fue incontrastable su candidatura, cuando ganando la mano a los demócratas, de quienes no se duda la hubiese aceptado, se la propuso el agudo político Thurlow Weed, de primera noticia en un almuerzo, para capitanear a los republicanos, porque muerto Lincoln, ‘el único modo de exterminar definitivamente el espíritu de secesion era poner en el gobierno de la Unión al que acaba de salvarla con su espada.’ Y Presidente fue, como candidato de los republicanos, el que en la elección anterior a que provocó la guerra había votado por el más conspicuo de los demócratas: por Buchanan.”

that are allowed and that are even demanded by the special character and purpose [of] the handling of wars?³¹

Martí then answers,

Grant is that [man], [the one] who has brought his [battle]field boots to the White House, and brands [with an iron]. There is no more complicated and subtle task than that of governing, or element that requires the [greatest] exercise in this world of submission [humility] and science [and knowledge]. Mere instinct does not suffice, rather knowledge, or genius of details; [brilliance] is [the accumulation of] knowledge. To go through all [sorts of] conditions drawn by fate is useful in order to be benign and just, in different ways, with men [and women] of [all] condition[s].³²

Martí is candid in the above passage regarding his ideas on leaders and governments. The humble Grant, the Grant from the countryside who emerged to fulfill a heroic duty, the natural man who did not import ideas (who did not lead the “textbook war”), but rather improvised his own battle plans according to local conditions and necessities, is quite a different man from the one who later emerged as a politician. Martí describes Grant as strange, “*extraño*,” which also has connotations of being foreign and distant, surely not wishing to lose the full meaning of the word in his reader’s mind. Grant was indeed strange and foreign to politics, but he was also ignorant of the basic and fundamental laws of his Republic. Shouldn’t a good leader know the laws and rules of a republic? More importantly, shouldn’t a good leader abide by them? As Johnson did by submitting

³¹ Martí, 13:106. “¿Quién es ese hombre extraño, desigual, ignorante de las más elementales leyes de la República y cortesías y agradecimientos de gobierno; desconocedor absoluto de los límites que señalan en la presidencia de un país los derechos personales del gobernante y su autoridad pública; incapaz de entender la relación indispensable en que han de estar los empleos nacionales y los individuos nombrados para desempeñarlos; persona desafiadora y excesiva que pone en la administración de un país, celoso de su libertad y respeto, todo el garbo y desembarazo malhumorado que permiten y aun exigen, en su objeto y constitución especial las prácticas de la guerra?”

³² Martí, 13:106. “Grant es ése, que se ha traído las botas de campaña a la Casa Blanca, y yerra. No hay faena más complicada y sutil que la del gobierno, ni cosa que requiera más práctica del mundo, sumisión y ciencia. No basta el mero instinto, sino el conocimiento, o el genio, del detalle; el genio es conocimiento acumulado. Por toda suerte con los hombres de todas condiciones.”

himself to Congress for impeachment? Martí expressed how Grant ignored the limits between his own personal rights as a leader and his public mandate. Grant was someone who clearly abused his power by promoting and securing the fulfillment of his personal needs and wishes, Martí explains. Grant was a “*desconocedor*” (an unaware individual) of the limits drawn between the personal rights of a leader and his public authority. “*Desconocedor*” is also a word connoting someone who is unaware not merely by an unintended ignorance, but rather due to some sort of willful blindness. Grant did not care to learn or understand the presidential limits between private and public interests, according to Martí.

To Martí, a president must be educated in matters of governance and must be fully aware of the limits of his office. Since Grant was incapable or incompetent in understanding “the relationship” of public positions and those nominated to fulfill them, Martí implies that presidents and leaders should appoint only those fully qualified for public positions and not those who benefit from close relationships or ties with the president. Martí also asks in the previous excerpt, “who is this excessive [overly daring] person that places in the administration of government the same elements of carrying out war?” Martí has clear and distinct visions of how a president, a leader of a republic, should behave and how a general or battle captain should act. To Martí running a civilian, democratic government requires a fundamentally different approach, particularly for a country like the United States that “guards jealously” its freedoms and self-respect. In fact, war requires and demands the “mean spirited” and even evil behavior that Martí describes, but the administration of a peacetime government, managing a republic, requires knowledge and practice. Nevertheless, one must not assume that Martí condoned

any type of “mean spirited” behavior in war. In Martí’s descriptions of Grant at war, the Cuban leader admired him for being equitable and for respecting his subordinates.

At the end of the passage, Martí informs his disapproval of military or war-like approaches to running a nation. Grant is the one who brought his military boots to the White House; the one who brought his militaristic ways to civilian institutions and even worse, Grant “*yerra* [marks, brands] like a rancher does to his or her cattle. The image of Grant branding cattle leads the reader to believe that those who surround and depend on Grant are marked by him, and those he marks, he protects and owns. Grant’s administration appears as a government where partisanship and favoritism rule. Individuals in Grant’s administration are supported by mutual interests. Those who promoted Grant’s candidacy to the presidency expect benefits from his office and Grant favors those who support and do not contradict him.

Contrasting his presentations of how a president or government ruler should not behave, Martí firmly expresses how a government should be led. There is no more complicated, more difficult task than to govern and it requires, significantly, knowledge. To Martí knowledge is supremely important. Knowledge is not merely a product of innate intelligence or intellectual talent; rather, it is wisdom derived from “an accumulation of knowledge” –the knowledge that comes from experience in the exercise of government. Importantly, Martí teaches in this passage that knowledge must not serve to aggrandize an individual or leader, placing him or her above others. Knowledge and *sumisión* (submission, humility) are necessary to govern for the benefit of a country. The Cuban revolutionary ends the passage declaring that all types of conditions drawn by fate serve in being kind, just, and benevolent, in different ways to different people regardless

of an individual's condition. Therefore, the government leader who has experienced suffering and joy ("all sorts of conditions drawn by fate") is better placed to know how to be just and charitable to others regardless of economic, political, and racial conditions, indeed "*con los hombres de todas condiciones* (with men of any condition)."³³

Martí continues presenting in the Grant biographical essay his views on governing. As a reflection of studying Grant's life and actions as president, and surely inspired by his own experiences in Cuba, Mexico, and Guatemala, Martí writes, "one must place one's personal rights with those of others in the highest [and] equal levels of awareness; and for the [rights of others] one must have a more enlivened and delicate feeling than for [one's personal rights], for with [the neglect of one's personal rights] comes only weakness, and from the [the neglect of the rights of others] one falls into despotism."³⁴ Martí does not state that the government leader should subdue his personal rights to those of the people. To be humble and to submit to the rule of the law does not signify to relinquish personal authority. Instead, both concerns should be balanced at "the highest and equal levels of awareness," but the leader should be more delicate towards one than the other. The president or any other leader should be more tactful when considering the rights of others to avoid becoming a despot; however, the leader should not concern himself with others' to the level of compromising his or her own rights, lest he or she becomes weak.

³³ Martí, 13: 106.

³⁴ Martí, 13:106. "Han de tenerse en grado igual sumo la conciencia del derecho propio y el respeto al derecho ajeno; y de éste se ha de tener un sentimiento más delicado y vivo que de aquél, porque de su abuso sólo puede venir debilidad, y del de aquél puede caerse al despotismo."

Further indicating how a country should be run and how a president should act, Martí writes,

It is unthinkable that a leading figure [should come] to the Presidency to create, with national moneys [and funds], benefits for those associated with him or [for] his clients, nor to give his nation the form [or character] that pleases him, or to put laws [into disuse] by not employing them or [applying] the wrong [and mistaken] spirit of the laws; instead, [he or she should] govern by virtue through the means of the laws that his [or her] nation has made without taking for him- or [her]self or for his [or hers] what the nation grants in [trust] and in custody. To obey is to govern.³⁵

Martí conceives the presidency, and one may safely assume the future Cuban one as well, as an office to be free of despotic rule. The individual governing would have the utmost concern for the rights of others, as much as for his or her rights. The individual who becomes president should submit in a humble, yet strong and respectful, manner to the laws made by the people and enacted by legitimate institutions. Martí promotes a vision of a president or leader who actively engages the laws drafted by the people and one who does not dictate laws that benefit him or her, or his or her associates. According to Martí, a president does not possess anything that belongs to the office and nation. He or she should merely hold in “custody” what the people have granted.

More importantly, Martí indicates that to govern effectively, one must know how to obey. A leader does not rise to the stage of the nation to give it the character and constitution he or she deems appropriate nor should the leader run the nation according to his or her vision. A leader imposing his or her vision over the nation and not respecting

³⁵ Martí, 13:106-7. “Fuera de pensamiento está que el gobernante no viene a la Presidencia para crear, con los dineros de la nación, beneficio a sus relacionados y clientes, ni para dar a su pueblo la forma que a él le place, o adormecer con el desuso o la aplicación equivocada el espíritu de sus leyes; sino para gobernar conforme a virtud, por medio de las leyes que le da su pueblo hechas, sin tomar para sí y los suyos lo que la nación le entrega en custodia y depósito. Obediencia es el gobierno.”

and applying existing laws or misguidedly executing them erodes democratic institutions and corrupts a republic. Martí envisions a U.S. president, and surely one for Cuba, who is a humble, yet strong public servant who is not above the law and is tactful with the rights of others. Martí conceives of a president that respects and guards the nation's resources for the benefit of all and not merely to favor interest groups.

In the final sections of the Grant biography, Martí assesses Grant's behavior as president, further revealing his views on the administration of a republic. Inserting these political views within a biography of Ulysses S. Grant to be published in major Latin American newspapers allowed Martí to promote them in print for many throughout Latin America to read. Without specifically stating to others what he felt they should learn regarding government, he integrated his views through depictions of Grant's character and behavior, teaching by example.

Martí declares in the tenth part of Grant's biographical essay that "while at war, [Grant] ordered without accepting disagreements. He had to have loved a lot to tolerate the one who contradicted him."³⁶ These passages develop the growth of Grant's ego. What contributes to Grant's hubris is what Martí describes as "with the peace settled, he doesn't stop hearing, with an [attitude] of those who deserve it, more praises than any other human ever heard, given without rest by the most [noble] nation while at peace and the most generous when at war that inhabits in its time the Universe."³⁷ Grant believes himself worthy of the applause and praise he earns. The constant praises contribute to the

³⁶ Martí, 13:107. "En la guerra, manda sin soportar contradicción. Mucho ha de querer a quien le contradiga para soportárselo."

³⁷ Martí, 13:108. "Impuesta la paz, no cesa de oír, con la conciencia de que las merece, alabanzas mayores que las que oyó jamás hombre alguno, tributadas sin descanso por el pueblo más grande en la paz y generoso en la guerra que habita en su tiempo el Universo."

growth of his ego, praise that according to Martí came from the nation that is the most noble while at peace and the most generous when at war; indeed, highly complementary views of the United States. As the previous chapter demonstrated, Martí's depicts both positive and negative aspects of U.S. subjects to promote his ideas on nation building. The positive views of the United States are not often highlighted for they contradict the image of Martí as a mouthpiece of anti-Americanism. To view Martí as anti-American is to misidentify and to oversimplify his views regarding the U.S.

In the tenth section of the essay, Martí demonstrates how Grant entered

the ultimate political position [the presidency] with these elements: a loathing for politics and an agglomerated remorse against those who represent it; an excessive pleasure with his own manners and personality, and a wish for expansion, [aggrandizement], conquest and [continued] march; [with] a flattering way of absolute control and a complete lack in the ways of obedience; a scorn for all highly detailed and progressive laws and a career [of rapid rise] made beyond the natural and organized practice of laws [and rights]; [with] a habit of considering that everything emerged from with him, and [believing] that he realized [it all] because of his will and according to it.³⁸

In the ninth section of the Grant essay, Martí describes which types of people should not govern and which qualities should be avoided in a president. In the tenth section of the biographical essay, Grant emerges as fulfilling the negative traits. By describing in the ninth part of the essay the negative qualities in a leader and later personifying them in Grant in the tenth section, Martí provides a vivid example of that fulfills his previously stated concerns, reaffirming his views on governance. Martí's descriptions of Grant's

³⁸ Martí, 13:108. "Entra, pues, en la Presidencia de la República, el sumo puesto político con estos elementos: abominación de la política y rencor acumulado contra los que la representan; complacencia excesiva en su personalidad y hábito y deseo de expansión, conquista y marcha; costumbre lisonjeada de mando absoluto y carencia completa del hábito de obedecer; desdén de toda ley minuciosa y progresiva y carrera súbita hecha fuera de la práctica natural y ordenada de las leyes; hábito de verlo todo partir de sí y realizarse por su voluntad y conforme a ella."

attitude and behavior as president underscore that the former Union general was not an effective and benevolent leader as chief executive.

In the final sections of the essay, Martí describes Grant's corrupt approach to the presidency and how his term developed for the benefit of sectarian interests. Martí reaffirms that Grant never attempted to learn about and loathed politics. Grant, according to Martí, wished to surround himself with advisers who were not traditional politicians. In Martí's words, the new President named "a great businessman" as Secretary of the Treasury; Secretary of State, "the loyal friend who had him named brigadier general and had returned the command of his troops to [him]"; Secretary of the Navy, a corrupt businessman; and Secretary of Justice "[someone named] Williams, who by dark means rose from town judge to Senator." Important cabinet positions were given to individuals who came from shadowy backgrounds and who lacked noble intentions for public service. Nevertheless, among these ignoble men was one, as Martí describes, that was honest and trustworthy, John Aaron Rawlins. Regarding Rawlins who Grant named as Secretary of War, a member of the Presidential Cabinet, Martí informs that, "thieves and ill advisors [were] kept [at bay]; [with an eye to get in], yes, [but were kept] even farther away." After Rawlins' death, "how shall one govern in such complicated matters he who scorns them on purpose and knows nothing of them?" Martí asks his reader. The Cuban leader describes Grant without Rawlins's counsel as "he goes, like a ship adrift, wherever the winds take him. Whoever gives him advice, he frowns at and rejects; but he searches for, despite himself, an opinion in what he [doesn't know] and needs to know; [Grant], therefore, becomes, without knowing it, a slave to those who give quick advice, and not

like someone who gives, but rather who takes ideas.”³⁹ Explaining how President Grant became a detrimental leader to his nation, Martí, once again, communicates his views on the qualities a leader of a nation should possess. Those working for Cuban independence, as well as who live in the Spanish-American republics could find valuable lessons in Martí’s example of Grant. Martí writes,

vanity has a delicate liver; flattery [is incredibly artistic]. Whoever praises him, has him. He does not worry over those who do not praise him. He gives all to the ones that appear to believe in him, and from his instinctive wisdom he gives it all, with singular loyalty, even at the peril of his own honor. What shall a man ignorant in government do, but be the natural prey to those who know and adulate his faults?⁴⁰

In the eleventh section of the biographical essay, Martí presents Grant as a weak figure who becomes the object of commercial and political interests who use him for their benefit. Martí believes Grant handled the presidency as a general still at war. Martí writes, “stimulated by his need for expansion and [constant] march and in agreement with his unawareness of the spirit and of the way of law,” Grant sent a private secretary, under

³⁹ Martí, 13:110. “Desde el principio obra, creyendo que hace muy bien, conforme a su abominación de la política y su rencor contra los que la representan; y da, en el modo en que lo hace, prueba pueril de su desconocimiento de las leyes y del sentido de decoro que las inspira. Quiere rodearse de consejeros que no sean políticos de hábito, y nombra a un gran comerciante en ejercicio Secretario del Tesoro; al amigo fiel que le hizo nombrar brigadier y devolver el mando de sus tropas, Secretario de Estado; a un negociante oscuro, Secretario de Marina; a un Williams, que por medios tenebrosos subió de juez de aldea a senador, Secretario de Justicia; pero en aquella soledad terrible y desconocida del poder supremo, en que se sentía tan ignorante como vigilado, volvió los ojos al amigo fiel de consejo siempre entero, a Rawlins, a quien el estar cerca de la muerte, que le llegó poco después, no estorbó para asesorar bravamente a su jefe, mientras vivió cerca de él como Secretario de la Guerra. Y mientras Rawlins está en el Gabinete, ladrones y malos consejeros se tienen a la puerta; acechando, sí, más lejos. Luego que Rawlins desaparece, ¿cómo ha de gobernar en tan complicados asuntos quien los desdeña de propósito y nada sabe de ellos? Va, como barco perdido, donde los vientos lo llevan. Al que le da consejo, le frunce el ceño y lo rechaza; pero él busca, a pesar suyo, opinión en lo que ignora y necesita saber; por lo que viene a ser, sin sentirlo, esclavo de los que le aconsejan de soslayo, y no como quien da, sino como quien recibe ideas.”

⁴⁰ Martí, 13:111. “La vanidad tiene al hígado sensible; tiene artes increíbles la lisonja. El que le adula, le sujeta. No sufre al que no le adula. Todo lo da al que aparenta creer en él, y en su instintiva sabiduría todo lo da, con singular lealtad; hasta el peligro de su propio honor. ¿Qué ha de ser un hombre ignorante en el gobierno, sino la presa natural de los que conocen y halagan sus defectos?”

the pretext of surveying the bay of Samaná (in today's Dominican Republic) to commemorate without [involving] the legitimate diplomatic authorities a treaty of annexation with the government of Santo Domingo. Against which, Charles Sumner (1811-1874), according to Martí, “protested with indignation, for the violent way in which in it appears subordinated a weak nation to the will of a powerful [ambitious entity], and for the danger that republican institutions run with a leader who usurps a nation's legitimate capacities.”⁴¹ Martí continues his chastisement of Grant and those around him,

and in order to gain the recognition of his usurpation in the Senate and in the House of Representatives, [Grant] entered in humiliating agreements with the members of one house and the other, and promised [behind closed doors] his support to reprehensible bills in exchange for the votes of his accomplices who favored the project and his manner of dealing with the annexation; and the most miserable aspect of this case was not only that the nation that keeps [alive] the usefulness of freedom on earth wished to violate, as it indeed violated, another's freedom, [that] of a brave nation, although small; with great reason [people] suspected that in a clique of speculators, serving themselves of the spirit of attack, assault, and conquest that his relatives knew in Grant, they had inspired [in] him the idea of annexation to later distribute among themselves and without him its spoils.⁴²

⁴¹ Martí, 13:111. “Estimulado en su necesidad de expansión y marcha, y en acuerdo con su desconocimiento del espíritu y, forma de las leyes, manda a su secretario privado, so pretexto de reconocer la bahía de Samaná, a celebrar, sin intervención de la autoridad diplomática legítima, un tratado de anexión con el gobierno de Santo Domingo, contra el que Sumner, en el Senado, protesta con indignación, tanto por la violenta manera con que en él aparece sometido a la voluntad de un deseador poderoso un pueblo débil, como por el peligro que corren las instituciones republicanas con un gobernante que usurpa a la nación sus facultades legítimas.”

⁴² Martí, 13:111-2. “y para obtener el reconocimiento de su usurpación en el Senado y en la Casa de Representantes, entra en tratos bochornosos con miembros de uno y otra, y promete en la sombra su apoyo a proyectos reprobables a cambio del voto de sus cómplices en favor del proyecto de anexión y la manera de tratarla; y era lo mísero de este caso, no sólo que el pueblo que mantiene sobre la tierra la eficacia de la libertad quisiese violar, como en realidad violaba, la ajena en un pueblo gallardo, aunque pequeño, sino que con gran razón se sospechaba que una camarilla de especuladores, valiéndose del espíritu de acometimiento y conquista que conocían en Grant sus familiares, le había inspirado la idea de la anexión, para repartirse luego entre sí, y fuera de él, sus provechos.”

Martí censures the intentions and the actions of the U.S., although the reader realizes that it was not a condemnation of the entire U.S. government, since Grant acted without the consent of Congress. Martí condemns Grant's lack of respect and knowledge for the legal processes that allowed parties who benefited from the annexation of Santo Domingo to move him. Martí implies that the people of Santo Domingo did not wish to be annexed to the U.S. They are a "small" nation, but one that is "brave," nonetheless. Martí was equally concerned with the threat people like Grant and his ambitious associates presented to a Latin American nation and also the menace that these individuals posed to the U.S.'s system of government and democratic process. Since Martí mentioned that the U.S. is one of the few places where freedom is effective ("usefulness of freedom"), then any threat to it would be of great concern to him, someone who fought for Cuba's freedom and its right to separate from Spain and to establish a republic. Someone who fled Mexico and Guatemala for not being able to live freely and openly would surely be concerned of assaults directed at Santo Domingo's freedom and independence, as well as back-room deals that domestically threatened U.S. democracy.

Criticizing Grant's deception in sending envoys to seal a deal annexing the eastern part of Hispaniola (Santo Domingo), Martí also condemns the way Grant and U.S. legislators mutually assisted their attempts for greater political power by ensuring sectarian legislation to pass. In the eleventh part of the biographical essay, Martí displays Grant's weakness as president and the detrimental effects of policies driven by greed that were facilitated by his ignorance of the law and a disrespect for democratic institutions.

The twelfth and final section of Grant's essay covers the former president's final years in office as well as his life after the presidency that eventually led to his death.

Martí describes Grant's government as having had no direction in both first and second terms. According to Martí, public opinion forgave him often for the high esteem that his efforts during the Civil War garnered and for seeing in him the one responsible for keeping the Union in tact. The good will towards Grant even allowed for his constituents to overlook the theft and embezzlement by his closest advisors who included his brother and other close relatives. Martí describes how a third term for Grant would not be secured, not even by Grant's reputation as a hero who had "lost his majesty for having compromised the law's." To Martí the law was supreme and leaders compromised their "majesty" by not respecting the sets of rules established by legitimate democratic institutions. A nation's highest leader is not above the law and, ultimately, in a democracy like the U.S., a leader suffers, like Grant, for not honoring the law.⁴³

Throughout the Grant essay and in the Sheridan and Arthur ones as well, Martí reaffirms several elements or qualities that a leader must have: first, regarding knowledge, a leader must be knowledgeable, aware, prepared, and respectful when governing. Intellectual genius is not sufficient; indeed, "genius" to Martí is accumulated knowledge. To govern one must be wise, but wise from the experience of government. Second, notions of humility and sacrifice, a leader must be willing to act humbly and must avoid political positions that aggrandize his or her power and stature or of those around him or her. Regarding the notion of humility, obedience is a recurrent theme, since one must be obedient in order to effectively govern, according to Martí. To be obedient and to be respectful of the laws of the nation, to realize that the leader does not

⁴³ Martí, 13:112-3 "ni todo el brillo de su viaje ostentoso alrededor del mundo, en que la grandeza de su pueblo fue reconocida y festejada en su persona, pudo mover a su pueblo a elegirlo por tercera vez a la Presidencia de la República. Perdió su majestad, por haber comprometido la de las leyes."

come to the nation to give it its laws or its character, but rather to fulfill an entrusted mandate are critical to understanding Martí's views on how nations should be governed. Martí's use of U.S. biographical subjects, particularly the essays surveyed on Philip Henry Sheridan, Chester Alan Arthur, and Ulysses S. Grant, ultimately offer a valuable means to decipher his vision on how Cuba should be ruled.

CHAPTER FIVE

THE EASTERN DIMENSIONS OF NATION BUILDING: JOSÉ MARTÍ AND THE *BHAGAVAD-GITA*

This chapter delves into the role Eastern ideas played in José Martí's formulation for independence and nation-building. Spanish-language scholars have considered how different philosophical systems, mostly Western, related to his world outlook.¹ This chapter, however, studies for the first time how ideas from South Asia, a distant world region for a Cuban, appear and support Martí's work for Cuban independence. It complements previous chapter discussions by examining how Martí's efforts at nation building found inspiration and echo in the East. An Eastern, particularly Hindu perspective, provides a richer meaning of Martí's pronouncements regarding his views on how a free Cuba should be run. This chapter also expands this dissertation's study of the global dimensions of nation-building by analyzing the connections between Martí's theories and Indian philosophy as presented in the *Bhagavad-Gita*,² demonstrating that to Martí the political and the spiritual were intrinsically linked.

As seen previously, Martí often wrote himself into his narratives. Apart from his political views, Martí's spiritual concepts are conspicuous throughout the essays

¹ Roberto D. Agramonte, *Martí y su concepción del mundo* (San Juan: Editorial Universitaria de Puerto Rico, 1971). Agramonte's is the most extensive attempt to date that systematizes Martí's views on politics, economy, society, technology, philosophy, and the arts.

² *The Bhagavad-Gita: Krishna's Counsel in Time of War*, trans. Barbara Stoler Miller (New York: Bantam Books, 1986). The *Bhagavad-Gita* is the seven hundred verses from the great Hindu epic, the *Mahabharata*. Considered as Hindu sacred scripture, many believe the work to have been written between the fifth and second centuries, BCE by the poet Vyasha. In the long epic *Mahabharata*, prior to going to war at Kurukshetra (scene of the *Bhagavad-Gita*), the Kauravas are given a choice to fight the Pandavas with the assistance of a large army or of the avatar Krishna alone. The Kauravas select the formidable army presented, while Arjuna (the Pandavas) prefers the guidance of Krishna. In dialogue format, Krishna instructs Arjuna on the true nature of the soul, on the need to follow one's duty, to renounce the fruits of one's actions, and how to attain eternal union with the Divine. The *Bhagavad-Gita* is also referred to as the *Gita*.

surveyed in this dissertation. He conveyed his personal feelings, by identifying with the character qualities or the circumstances of his subject or by directly promoting his views on life. This chapter analyzes Martí's views found in his private annotations and published pieces by comparing them to Hindu philosophy, either directly with the *Bhagavad-Gita's* text or indirectly through his writings on the New England Transcendentalists such as Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803-1882) and others who were also inspired by Eastern thought such as Walt Whitman.³ This chapter's analysis therefore discloses the global and spiritual dimensions of Martí's nation building, particularly in his attempts to liberate *patria*, a concept with divine connotations.⁴

This chapter presents three major unifying themes: (1) sacrifice, related to humility, love, and selflessness; (2) duty, related to virtue; and (3) knowledge, related to the correct awareness on the true nature of the human soul. Regarding the third theme, this chapter pays particular attention to the role of reincarnation in reaching ultimate union with the supreme Godhead, as present in Hindu thought, and also the knowledge that empowers an individual to succeed in the physical world, in Martí's conceptions. These three themes are critical in understanding José Martí's views on nation building. They also compose the three fundamental tenets of the *Bhagavad-Gita*, *yayna* (sacrifice), *dharma* (duty), and *prakriti* (right knowledge).

³ Agramonte, 56.

⁴ *Patria* may be literally understood as one's native country. Nevertheless, Martí's *patria* is an abstract notion, considered as fatherland, motherland, or homeland and particularly as a mystical entity that is in the hearts of all those who identify Cuba as their home. *Patria* may also be viewed as an idealistic-type love for the source or bond that nurtures and unites a people. In Martí's view, *patria* required the most selfless type of service.

Although a direct, substantiated influence of the *Bhagavad-Gita* on Martí cannot be established;⁵ there is no precise way of knowing if and when Martí actually read the Hindu sacred poem.⁶ Nevertheless, Martí did have an understanding of Hindu notions, as demonstrated by evidence that does remain: accounts of his experiences in Spain, Mexico, and New York City; his literary production; and his hand-written illustrations. Martí's literary works, particularly while in New York City, were based on "thorough knowledge and informed reading"⁷; he would not write about individuals who read and were inspired by the *Gita* without approaching the Hindu sacred text. Moreover, according to one Martí scholar, the effort to incorporate Hindu philosophy in nineteenth-century philosophical reflections of America was a common element of (both) José Martí and his much admired Ralph Waldo Emerson.⁸

Martí was knowledgeable in Eastern-derived spiritual ideas. After having been deported from Cuba to Spain, José Martí arrived in Mexico in early 1875. He found work as a writer for *La Revista Universal*, a newspaper identified with Mexican president Lerdo de Tejada. In March of 1875, Martí became a member of the *Liceo Hidalgo*, an intellectual and literary society where he participated in political discussions led by prominent Mexican intellectuals.⁹ One particular moment at the *Liceo*, while in Mexico, reveals Martí's spiritual views. On April 15, 1875, the *Liceo Hidalgo* organized a debate

⁵ Rojas, 75-6. Even though Rojas implies that Martí read the *Bhagavad-Gita* without explaining how or citing when the Cuban leader would have read the Hindu sacred text.

⁶ I have not found any direct citation of the *Bhagavad-Gita* by Martí or declarations of when he read it.

⁷ Fountain, preface, xiv.

⁸ José Ballón Aguirre, *Lecturas norteamericanas de José Martí: Emerson y el socialismo contemporáneo (1880-1887)* (Mexico City: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 1995), 86.

⁹ José de J. Núñez y Domínguez, *Martí en México* (Mexico City: Imprenta de la Secretaría de Relaciones Exteriores, 1933), 5.

among three debate groups: one, defended Spiritism; the other, Spiritualism; and the third, supported the Positivist school. In this debate, Martí defended the spiritualist stance. When faced with questions from the Positivists, he responded that the spirit or soul provided convincing proof of human immortality; it revealed, according to Martí, the pre- and post-existence of the human soul.¹⁰ He declared at the *Liceo Hidalgo*, “I have learned my spiritualism in the books of comparative anatomy and in the physical books by Luis Buchner.”¹¹ According to Martí, spiritualism may be acquired through scientific books and scientific knowledge can serve as inspiration and confirmation of spirituality. The debate on spirituality at the *Liceo Hidalgo* supports the view that Martí, prior to his New York stay where his admiration for Eastern-inspired philosophy would grow, already had spiritualist inclinations, even identifying as one. In Mexico City, Martí associated with the liberal elements that envisioned democratic government for Mexico, particularly those who identified as *krausistas* or who were also spiritually-minded. When Porfirio Díaz seized power, Martí left for Guatemala and ultimately for the United States, never to reside in Mexico again.

Martí’s pursuit of a better society in Cuba, for a sovereign democratic republic, also coincided with a broader late nineteenth-century search for new identities (the Cuban leader also sought to strengthen Cuban national consciousness). Other spiritually-motivated political and social activists sought philosophies that would strengthen the human spirit, and in a larger sense, the democratic values of a society and a nation. The late nineteenth-century search in the West was not limited, for example, to Germans

¹⁰ Núñez y Domínguez, 164.

¹¹ Núñez y Domínguez, 166.

studying Sanskrit language and culture for a separate intellectual and cultural identity *vis-à-vis* the French,¹² nor to the U.S., where Transcendentalists also sought alternative sources of inspiration beyond Anglo-cultural traditions. The late nineteenth-century search for alternative cultural sources for strengthening national identities also included Spanish-Americans and Brazilians who looked towards French positivism to turn their backs on a legacy of Iberian Catholicism. Within Spain itself, intellectuals questioned the value of conservative Spanish Catholic traditions as they realized Spain's relative economic and political underdevelopment next to France, Britain, and Germany. In this context, Martí's search for alternative sources of political and philosophical inspiration is not too distant from others who also sought alternative discourses from traditional Western outlooks during the late nineteenth-century.

In Spain, Julián Sanz del Río taught a generation of lawyers at the University of Madrid (where Martí would later study in the early 1870s) transplanted in the late 1850s ideas from Karl Christian Friedrich Krause (1781-1832) who promoted a type of "harmonious rationalism," a rational projection of mysticism that sought to overcome the limitations of the positivist vision of history.¹³ Followers of Krause, the *krausistas*, emerged from the University of Madrid and from there, *krausismo* spread to law schools throughout Spanish-America. The predominance of legal studies in Spanish-America allowed for *krausismo* to develop as a kind of legal philosophy of social action, widely

¹² Douglas T. McGetchin, "The Sanskrit Reich: Translating Ancient India for Modern Germans, 1790-1914" (PhD diss., University of California, San Diego, 2002), 4-6. An extensive examination of the relationship between Sanskrit literature and German philosophers, pedagogues and linguists.

¹³ Juan López Morillas, *El krausismo español: perfil de una aventura intelectual* (Mexico City: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1956), 15, 19.

read and discussed by students, lawyers, and jurists.¹⁴ Martí was exposed to it during his exile in Spain (1871-1874) and identified with *krausismo*.¹⁵

Martí also searched for ideas that went beyond the rational positivism of late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century society.¹⁶ Martí believed in the importance of material development, but nonetheless sought and adopted spiritually-based notions that allowed him to create national visions, new formulations for Cuban nation building.

Since Martí dedicated his entire adult life to the liberation of Cuba, his personal feelings were linked to his political views and activities. Apart from writing extensively for the public, Martí also kept private diaries. These personal notebooks reveal Martí's innermost feelings and concerns. During his early New York years (1880-1882), Martí wrote the following thoughts in a personal diary, revealing his existential doubts—

Human life, by way of the moral constraints to which it's condemned, is losing each day in my eyes, its grandeur and significance. What existence is this where unique abilities to do good, and the determined willingness to do so, do not suffice? - Where chance conditions of coloring and environment decide the transcendence and the utility of the most noble human strengths? - Where absence of all vices, and the fervent love and strict practice of all virtues, are insufficient to achieve peace of the soul, nor enough to leave in one's wake, -for the immense pleasure of doing good- not for the soiled vanity of attaining glory- a visible and everlasting impression?¹⁷

¹⁴ William D. Ratt, "Ideas and Society in Don Porfirio's Mexico," *The Americas* 30 (July 1973-April 1974): 50. Ratt provides an enlightening discussion on the different philosophical currents in Mexico during Porfirio Díaz's rule.

¹⁵ Roberto D. Agramonte, *Martí y su concepción del mundo* (San Juan: Editorial Universitaria de Puerto Rico, 1971), 216.

¹⁶ Other Latin American leaders such as Francisco Madero in Mexico also engaged Eastern notions to improve their respective societies.

¹⁷ José Martí, *Obras Completas*, 2d ed., 27 vols. (Havana: Editorial Ciencias Sociales, 1975), 21:246. "La vida humana en fuerza de las estrecheces morales a que condena, va perdiendo cada día a mis ojos grandeza y significación. ¿Qué existencia es ésta, donde singulares dotes para hacer el bien, y decidida voluntad de hacerlo, no bastan a hacerlo? - ¿donde condiciones casuales de coloración y atmósfera deciden de la trascendencia y utilidad de las más nobles fuerzas humanas?- ¿donde la ausencia de todos los vicios, y

Martí's annotations regarding how "human life lost grandeur and significance in his eyes" reveal the notion that even with self-imposed moral constraints, even when leading a life driven by duty and characterized by sacrifice for the cause of a free Cuba, he felt his life losing "grandeza y significación [its grandeur and significance]." Martí questioned the value of life, even though his literary work and oratory had been praised by many for their talent and artistic merit. His artistic and literary productions, as seen in previous chapters, had significant practical dimensions: they were either largely intended to define, promote, and defend Cuban independence and nationhood or they were created to earn a living while laboring for the cause of a free Cuba. Regardless of the praise or the utility of his writings and speeches, his life did not appear to convey an "everlasting impression"; neither did it seem a worthy model for the betterment of future generations nor did it provide him a sense of inner peace. Martí wished, as inferred by this passage, to serve as a positive role model to others, supporting how he sought to teach others through his writings. In the above personal annotation, Martí emerges as an idealistic figure, concerned not only with Cuba's freedom, but also in serving humanity and wishing to impact its development for the better.

The Hindu sacred poem, the *Bhagavad-Gita*, in its gospel of selflessness, of the call to duty and to action, and in its revelation of the true nature of the human soul, provides direction to Arjuna, a warrior confronting battle who also undergoes similar existential doubts. In the *Gita*, Krishna, as avatar, instructs Arjuna,

el amor ferviente y práctica austera de todas las virtudes, no bastan a lograr la paz del alma, ni a dejar tras de sí- por el placer inmenso de hacer bien- no por la pueril vanidad de alcanzar fama- una huella visible y duradera?" All subsequent references to Martí's original texts are to this edition of his complete works, unless otherwise noted. All translations from Martí's Spanish are original ones, except where noted.

Nothing of nonbeing comes to be,
 nor does being cease to exist;
 the boundary between these two
 is seen by men who see reality.¹⁸

Do not be afraid of death, Krishna tells Arjuna; the human soul is immortal. Krishna continues,

No effort in this world
 is lost or wasted;
 a fragment of sacred duty
 saves you from great fear.¹⁹

Do not agonize over leaving “una huella visible y duradera [a visible and everlasting impression],” as “no effort in this world is lost or wasted.” “A fragment of sacred duty,” indeed, the “ausencia de todos los vicios, y el amor ferviente y práctica austera de todas las virtudes [absence of all vices, and the fervent love and strict practice of all virtues]” will save “you from great fear,” particularly when one’s life “va perdiendo cada día...grandeza y significación [loses each day...its grandeur and its significance].”

Krishna further counsels the warrior Arjuna that,

When he renounces all desires
 and acts without craving,
 possessiveness,
 or individuality he finds peace.

This is the place of the infinite spirit;
 achieving it, one is freed from delusion;
 abiding in it even at the time of death,
 one finds the pure calm of infinity.²⁰

¹⁸ *Bhagavad-Gita*, 2.15-6.

¹⁹ *Bhagavad-Gita*, 2.39-40.

²⁰ *Bhagavad-Gita*, 2.71-2.

That no effort is ever lost when desires are renounced and when actions are selfless; that one ultimately achieves peace “even at the time of death”; and that “the pure calm of infinity” is attainable are words that clarify and strengthen Arjuna’s mind as well as justifies his battle against his enemies. Krishna’s advice to Arjuna would have also resonated favorably in Martí’s mind, (as it did to the New England Transcendentalists), since he too perceived himself a warrior fighting for Cuba’s freedom and independence who doubted the utility of his efforts to liberate Cuba, and on a larger scale, “to leave a visible and everlasting impression.”

Martí, in the actual, and Arjuna, in the allegorical sense, were both leaders of military campaigns who experienced existential doubts; comparisons may therefore be easily drawn by analyzing how Martí’s writings reflect spiritual views in line with those of the *Bhagavad-Gita*. As mentioned, a direct, substantiated influence of the *Bhagavad-Gita* on Martí cannot be established; there is no way of precisely knowing if and when Martí actually read the Hindu sacred poem. Nevertheless, Martí did have an understanding of Hindu notions, as demonstrated by the evidence that remains. For instance, Martí wrote, while in New York City, essays on individuals who translated and engaged the *Gita*.

Appreciating American Transcendentalism and its Eastern aspects, Martí particularly admired Emerson who owned rare copies of Hindu sacred texts; Henry David Thoreau who had an edition of the *Bhagavad-Gita* at Walden Pond; Annie Besant who worked on a translation of the *Bhagavad-Gita* at the time; as well as Amos Bronson Alcott and Walt Whitman who also found inspiration in Indian works. Martí reveals his admiration for these “Boston Brahmins” and for Sir Edwin Arnold, among the first to

translate the *Bhagavad-Gita* from Sanskrit to English, in his various adaptations of their work.²¹ In a letter written to his disciple Gonzalo de Quesada, a month before being killed in battle at Dos Ríos, Cuba in May 1895, Martí instructed, in this literary testament of sorts, that his prose works should be collected and published into six principal volumes, three on North America, and two, specifically to be labeled as “North Americans.” In the latter volumes, Martí charged de Quesada to include his article on Emerson. By specifically mentioning the Emerson piece, among his many essays and narratives on American life, Martí signaled his admiration for the literary piece and for the individual who inspired it, Ralph Waldo Emerson.

Martí’s essay on Emerson displays several literal adaptations from the New England scholar and many ideas in the essay reflect the philosophy of the *Bhagavad-Gita*. The ideas in Martí’s Emerson essay demonstrate that India’s sacred wisdom surfaces in the literary production and philosophical outlook of the Cuban nation-builder, and in turn in the formulation of the 1895 Cuban revolution. Martí understood and adopted Hindu notions as his descriptions of and his high regard for those who disseminated Indian-derived ideas and as his actual Hindu annotations of lecture notes for a philosophy course given in Guatemala in 1877 corroborate.²² In light of these seldom explored Eastern dimensions in Martí’s works, this chapter seeks to remedy the scant attention paid to Eastern elements in Martí’s legacy by examining instances when the

²¹ Martí, 18:325. A poetic piece in *The Golden Years*, “Cada uno a su oficio (To each one at his/her task)” is an adaptation from a story by Ralph Waldo Emerson, reminiscent of the concept of *dharma*, to pursue one’s duty or task.

²² José Martí, illustrations nos. 8 and 18 in Roberto D. Agramonte, *Martí y su concepción del mundo* (San Juan: Editorial Universitaria de Puerto Rico, 1971).

Cuban leader draws from sources beyond the West for personal inspiration and for Cuban nation building.

Duty (Dharma)

The Cuban leader's concept of duty is a recurrent theme that appears throughout his work; duty is also of paramount concern in the teachings of the *Gita*. Regarding the performance of one's duty the *Gita* is quite clear,

The actions of priests, warriors,
commoners, and servants
are apportioned by qualities
born of their intrinsic being.

.....
Each one achieves success
by focusing on his own action;
hear how one finds success
by focusing on his own action.

By his own action a man finds success,
worshipping the source
of all creatures' activity,
the presence pervading all that is.

Better to do one's duty imperfectly
than to do another man's well,
doing action intrinsic to his being,
a man avoids guilt.²³

For the human soul to ultimately unite with the Divine, the *Gita* teaches that all actions must be based on pursuing a sense of duty and inner calling. In a separate passage of the *Gita*, Krishna warns, "attraction and hatred are poised in the object of every sense experience; a man must not fall prey to these two brigands lurking on his path! Your own duty done imperfectly is better than another man's done well. It is better to die in one's

²³ *Bhagavad-Gita*, 18.41-7.

own duty; another man's duty is perilous.”²⁴ In an October 1884 letter to General Máximo Gómez, commander of Cuban troops in the struggle for independence, Martí wrote, “I serve nothing but a sense of duty, and with it, I will always be powerful”²⁵ – powerful, perhaps, as the force of the Universe itself, if we understand Martí's statement in the context of the *Gita's* teachings. In a latter instance, Martí expressed, in an undated essay on Amos Bronson Alcott who Martí referred to as the “Platonian”; “the idealist without taint”; “the one who never placed meat on his table”; “the friend of the Hermit Thoreau and the August Emerson” that “the call of duty brings happiness, even if it may not seem so, and to purely fulfill it elevates one's soul to a perennial state of sweetness.”²⁶

Throughout his life, Martí developed a strong sense of duty, sacrificing the fame he earned and his salary to pursue the cause of Cuban independence. Through these and other humanitarian efforts, Martí may be viewed as someone whose ultimate objective was the fulfillment of duty. To resist the Spanish empire and to build nation were his principal duties in life. Writing in a personal notebook in 1881, Martí reveals, “I am not – may God free me of it! – an obdurate revolutionary. I do not attach myself to stormy situations. [Martí is not attracted to dramatic conflicts], but I do not care if fulfilling a duty is unpopular: I will fulfill it even though it may be unpopular.”²⁷ Martí led his life

²⁴ *Bhagavad-Gita*, 3.34-35.

²⁵ Martí, 1:180. “yo no sirvo más que al deber, y con éste seré siempre poderoso.”

²⁶ Martí, 13:187. “el deber es feliz, aunque no lo parezca, y el cumplirlo puramente eleva el alma a un estado perenne de dulzura.”

²⁷ Martí, 21:146. “no soy- líbreme Dios de serlo! – un revolucionario empedernido. No ligo mi vida a los tumultos. Pero no me importa que sea impopular el cumplimiento de un deber: lo cumplo, aunque sea impopular.”

according to a sense of inner calling. He considered freeing his homeland from an immoral and despotic Spanish colonial government his foremost responsibility. In the biographical essay on Philip Sheridan (surveyed in Chapter Four), Martí praises his sense of duty and the fulfillment of a calling. The Union general, unlike Ulysses S. Grant, follows his duty by avoiding politics and remaining a military general.

Martí considered Cuba's independence struggle a war with sacred connotations; the guiding spirit of Cuba's war for political freedom would be pure, selfless, and, in a passionate sense to the Cuban leader, sacred. In one of the first meetings of the Cuban Revolutionary Committee, founded by Martí to integrate and direct all Cuban independence forces outside the island, Martí declared in 1880,

A people lay dying and need new life. Who will guide them? Instinct. Who will rescue them? Their own anguish. With which strengths will they struggle? With those of despair. The war for Cuba is not a problem of classes, nor of parties, nor groups; it is a war for life itself, where there can only be two outcomes; either to endure a dark existence, ingrained with the approaching evils or to create a free existence that paves the way to our healing of these ills.²⁸

What on the surface may appear as propaganda for the cause of Cuban independence, a deeper reading reveals that Martí indicated “instinct” as guiding the struggle for independence, a concept reminiscent of the inner voice of duty that Arjuna would heed at Kurukshetra in the *Gita*.²⁹ In this sense, Martí may be viewed as acting more like Krishna, the counselor, advising fellow Cubans to respond instinctually. The inner voice,

²⁸ Martí, 1:154. “Un pueblo muere y necesita vida: ¿Quién lo guía? El instinto. ¿Quién los salva? Su propia angustia. ¿Con qué fuerzas lucha? Con las de la desesperación. No es la Guerra de Cuba un problema de clases, ni de comareas, ni de grupos; es una guerra por la vida, donde no hay más que dos términos; o mancillar una existencia oscura, preñada de males venideros, o recabar una existencia libre, que abra camino para curarnos de estos males.”

²⁹ Emphasis is mine.

according to Krishna, directs men and women in their courses of action. Martí integrates views of following instinct and duty throughout his writings in order to inspire and energize, in a literal sense, his audience and, ideologically, to legitimize the struggle against Spain.

The Cuban people, Martí declared in the above excerpt, would be rescued by their own suffering and agony, and more importantly by their sense of duty. Cubans, enduring a despotic and immoral colonial government required political emancipation and moral redemption in the form of a war for freedom and autonomy. In Martí's eyes, the Cuban people's suffering would rescue and redeem them and would legitimize the uprising against the Spanish empire. The Cuban independence struggle was, therefore, fueled and strengthened by the despair and the hopelessness caused by life under Spanish despotism. Denying or avoiding the fight for freedom and for self-government would only lead to more agony, according to Martí.³⁰ Alternatives to self-rule offered neither optimism nor a promising future. To not fight for Cuban democratic self-rule would be to deny one's, and in a larger sense, a people's inner call of duty and to allow one's *patria* to languish in a metaphorical deathbed. *Patria* is therefore nurtured by the dutiful response to an instinctual call for pursuing the perceived moral course of action, the liberation of Cuba.³¹

Martí did not regard the Cuban revolution as a class war or one in any traditional sense. Instead, he formulated it as a struggle representing a people's ethical right to self-determination. The *patria*, the national community, required liberation just as an individual deserves to think and act freely and independently (Chapter Two shows how

³⁰ Martí, 1:154.

³¹ Martí, 1:154.

he urged children to do so). The *patria* is an overarching, spiritual extension of each individual citizen, as well as of the national community. This struggle, according to the Cuban patriot, would have only two possible outcomes: a dark existence with inherent evils for government and society such as corruption, oppression, and stagnation or a liberated economic and political life that, in Martí's view, would clear the path to healing and repairing the damages and injuries caused by a decadent, reactionary ruling system. Cuba's war was therefore not merely a political or military campaign to divorce from the Spanish empire, but a logical, moral, and evolutionary fulfillment that would regenerate the island economically, politically, and spiritually.

Martí's writings and political messages, however, may be viewed as rhetorical devices designed to depict war as the only heroic choice to a Cuban audience. He sought practical, utilitarian dimensions to his literary work and oratory, and appealed to basic senses of responsibility in a direct manner. He was conscious of addressing his words to broad audiences of individuals from diverse social, economic, and racial backgrounds, yet careful, as mentioned in the introductory chapter of this dissertation, to promote African subjects to avoid fueling racist notions that undermined the independence effort. His personal notebooks reveal an intimate and deep concern with the spiritual, if not the philosophical merits and implications of leading the type of life he chose, one of sustained humanitarian action for the cause of Cuban independence.

To further understand how Martí considered the war for Cuban independence, the following words indicate how he conceived the underlying spirit of the war:

if a war is possible, it's only because there exists a spirit that demands it and that makes it necessary; and we must serve that spirit, and to that spirit we must show, in every public and private display, the most profound respect –as admirable is one who gives

his or her life for a great cause, it's abominable to serve oneself of a great cause to further personal expectations of power and glory, even if these endanger one's life. -To give one's life is a prerogative only when given selflessly.³²

Martí explained in an 1884 letter to General Máximo Gómez, veteran of the frustrated Cuban war against the Spanish empire (1868-1878), that war for its own sake was not the Cuban revolutionary movement's objective nor was the revolution's goal to serve the personal ambitions of fame and glory of its leaders. The selflessness of sacrificing for the Cuban cause also involved humility (as also echoed in the Grant essay surveyed in Chapter Four). The war for independence was legitimate as long as certain principles were upheld; the guiding spirit, a pure and selfless one, supported it. Martí believed that a leader of the revolutionary movement must remain ever faithful to the ideals of the Cuban revolution, notions based on altruisms and on a disregard for any self-elevating plans. By honoring and respecting, both in public and in private, the ideals of the Cuban revolution, the leaders would set a proper example for others. A moral assertion of the Cuban people (duty) motivated the war, yet the behavior of Cuban revolutionary leaders reflected and affected the ethical development of the independence movement (notions of selfless sacrifice). To be respected and to receive admiration for sacrificing one's life in the war for Cuba's independence was legitimate only when done altruistically –the major striking point in Martí's letter to General Gómez.

³² Martí, 1:178. "Si la guerra es posible es porque antes existe el espíritu que la reclama y hace necesaria; y a ese espíritu hay que atender, y a ese espíritu hay que mostrar, en todo acto público y privado, el más profundo respeto-porque tal como es admirable él que da su vida por servir a una gran idea, es abominable el que se vale de una gran idea para servir a sus esperanzas personales de gloria o de poder, aunque por ellas exponga la vida.- El dar la vida sólo constituye un derecho cuando se la da desinteresadamente."

Sacrifice (Humility, Love, and Selflessness)

The *Gita* displays views on sacrifice and selflessness when Krishna advises Arjuna to “always perform with detachment any action you must do; performing action with detachment one achieves supreme good.”³³ To renounce the fruits of one’s actions is a principle tenet of the *Gita*. Ultimate salvation, *moksha* (union with the Divine), requires the individual to perform all actions without regard to personal ambitions, according to the *Gita*. Martí’s *amor de patria* [love of homeland, patriotism] reflects much of the *Gita*’s sentiment of performing actions without personal attachments. Martí viewed dying for Cuba, as displayed in his letter to General Gómez, a sacrifice, the ultimate selfless effort that facilitated union with the Divine –indeed, he died confronting Spanish colonial troops at the inception of the 1895 Cuban independence war.

Regarding *amor de patria*, the love of homeland, Martí wrote in the following personal annotation of 1885,

this love of homeland must be wholly pure, without any mixture of personal interest, [it should be] active, active to the point of ecstasy, to the point of sacrifice, to even the waving of the [Cuban] flag, but with the workings of a priest, without ever staining [this love] with the least guise of ambition or jealousy.³⁴

Krishna’s instructions in the *Gita* that actions should be undertaken selflessly are in agreement with Martí’s. The path to salvation lies in sacrificial acts and in behavior dedicated to the well being of others, according to the Hindu sacred poem. In an 1894

³³ *Bhagavad-Gita*, 3.19.

³⁴ Martí, 21:284. “pero este amor de patria ha de ser enteramente puro, sin mezcla de interés personal, activo, activo hasta el frenesí, hasta el sacrificio, hasta la bandera pero con una actividad de sacerdote, sin que ella se manche nunca con el menor viso de ambición o celo.”

speech honoring his late friend, Fermín Valdés Domínguez, Martí expresses similar views,

Selfishness is the blot of the world, selflessness its sun. In this world there isn't but one inferior race of people: those who consider above all, their own personal interest, be it their vanity or their arrogance –nor is there but one superior race: those who consider above all, the human interest.³⁵

According to Martí scholar, Manuel Pedro González, the Cuban patriot's life was one of perpetual renunciation of worldly goods and material benefits. In 1892 Martí resigned his post as Consul General of Argentina, Uruguay, and Paraguay in New York City since he considered his consular duties incompatible with those of a leader of the Cuban Revolutionary Party and founder of a republic. During the same year, he also sacrificed his fame as a writer by relinquishing his position and salary as a correspondent for several of the most influential Latin American newspapers of the time, such as *La Nación* of Buenos Aires and *El Partido Liberal* of Mexico City. He also ceased contributing to the *New York Sun* in order to dedicate his labor entirely to the liberation of Cuba. He wrote and gave speeches, organized fund raising groups of modest tobacco workers exiled in Florida, as well as of wealthy Cuban exiles in the Northeast. Along with a hectic campaign schedule, coordinating various exile Cuban groups throughout the Eastern seaboard, he also found time to volunteer and teach English at *La Liga*, an organization dedicated to helping mostly African-Cuban, African-Puerto Rican, and other underprivileged Latin American inhabitants of New York City. Martí also missed his beloved son and wife who, without Martí's knowledge or consent, left New York City

³⁵ Martí, 4:325. “El egoísmo es la mancha del mundo, y el desinterés su sol. En este mundo no hay más que una raza inferior: la de los que consultan antes de todo, su propio interés, bien sea el de su vanidad o el de su soberbia- ni hay más que una raza superior: la de los que consultan, antes de todo, el interés humano.”

abruptly for Cuba, never to return again for “she refused to share his idealism and spirit of sacrifice.”³⁶ Martí sacrificed personal fame and glory as well as love of family for noble ideals. He indeed lived a life patterned by his rhetoric of sacrifice and altruism.

The above words honoring his close friend Fermín Domínguez illustrate that he valued those who considered human or humanitarian interests over personal concerns. The words in the above annotation indicate the importance Martí gave to thinking and acting selflessly. They also reveal the importance of gauging individuals by the degree in which they think and act selflessly, and not skin color or national origin as guiding principles.³⁷ Thinking and acting selflessly are important in the physical and material world of humans, but altruism is a means to facilitate union with the divine, in Martí’s mind. In Hindu philosophy, it is also a way to realize outwardly the inward *Atman*.³⁸ Martí also adopted and conveyed (New England) Transcendental views of how humankind holds a divine spark within each individual, the Hindu *Atman*. Martí reiterated notions of the divine spark of humanity throughout his writings. He did not directly refer to it as *Atman* since it would have been considered alien, unintelligible even to ordinary Cubans. Nevertheless, as Chapter Two of this dissertation demonstrates, Martí teaches Buddhist and Eastern principles for his nation building efforts through children’s stories such as “A Journey through the Land of the Annamese” by informing his reader, for

³⁶ Manuel Pedro González, *José Martí: Epic Chronicler of the U.S. in the Eighties* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina, 1953), 73.

³⁷ Chapter Three’s analysis of Martí’s Walt Whitman essay explores how the Cuban leader indicates that an individual’s character should be measured by his or her work and not by his or her sexual orientation.

³⁸ *Atman* is the human soul linked to the greater universal soul pervading living beings, according to Hindu conceptions.

example, that “women and men do not come from Heaven but with Heaven within them” –a concept reminiscent of the Hindu *Atman*.

In a separate 1880 personal diary entry, Martí reveals his conceptions of salvation and redemption as linked to sacrifice. In the *Gita*, Krishna also teaches notions of sacrifice. Martí writes in his diary,

on this earth, there is only one means to salvation: –sacrifice– there is no other assured good deed than that of sacrificing one’s self: –peace of the soul– all misfortunes begin the instant when, disguised as human reason, desire forces men to deviate, –even if the departure is imperceptible, –from fulfilling a heroic duty. Sacrificing one’s self: here lies [my] peace.³⁹

To fulfill a heroic duty and to sacrifice one’s self are essential in redeeming the human soul from human suffering. The *Gita* promotes these views as well. Peace comes to Martí by fulfilling a sense of duty and sacrificing personal desires for the welfare of others.⁴⁰

According to Martí, all misfortunes emerge when an individual identifies with personal desires. These desires may appear real as the *prakriti* of Hindu cosmology, the Indian term for the lower aspect of the universal Brahman (the Supreme Being) and the world of nature or visible reality that informs the *Gita*. Desires may disguise themselves as human logic and reasoning, leading men to believe in an illusory separation from others and also from the divine essence of the Universe. This separation is also illusory to Krishna in the *Gita*, “when he perceives the unity existing in separate creatures and how

³⁹ Martí, 21:138. “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- Todas las desventuras comienzan en el instante en que, - disfrazado de razón humana, - el deseo obliga al hombre a separarse, - siquiera sea la desviación imperceptible, - del cumplimiento heroico del deber. El martirio: he aquí la calma.”Martirio may be literally translated as martyrdom; the word, however, has connotations of suffering, agony, and torture caused by constant sacrificing one’s self.

⁴⁰ Chapter Three presents how Martí viewed Grant’s life as ultimately redeemed by the former president’s final years of suffering from disease and by the public unmasking and humiliation of Grant’s former associates.

they expand from unity, he attains the infinite spirit.”⁴¹ Martí emphasizes that personal ambitions distract women and men from their sense of inner peace and from their journey to ultimate redemption. Martí’s views echo the *Gita*’s: “as the mountainous depths of the ocean are unmoved when waters rush into it, so the man unmoved when desires enter him attains a peace that eludes the man of many desires.”⁴²

Knowledge: The Awareness of the True Nature of the Human Soul

Other personal annotations display Martí’s belief that all humans are inherently linked by a divine essence. Illusions are products of desires disguising themselves as reason and logic, separating and alienating individuals from each other. In an early, yet seminal political tract, the “Presidio Político en Cuba [Political Prison in Cuba],” published in a Madrid newspaper in 1871 during his first deportation to Spain, Martí chastises only those Spaniards who supported and perpetuated the Spanish government’s tyranny over the island. In this tract, Martí also reveals his idea of *patria* (homeland) as a divine conception. He also views *patria* as an element unifying all individuals who love and respect the freedom of others, particularly a free Cuba, including Cuban-born as well as Spanish-born individuals, even while Cuba suffered from Spanish colonial government.

In a separate personal annotation, Martí wrote

God Consciousness, the child of the God of creation which is the only unanimously worshiped visible link that unites a driven human race with the divine driving force. –Worshipped, and let this not appear as reminiscent of a Catholic education. –This God

⁴¹ *Bhagavad-Gita*, 13.30.

⁴² *Bhagavad-Gita*, 2.70.

and God *patria* are in our society and in our lives the only things worthy of reverence.⁴³

To Martí only two forces are worthy of worship, God Consciousness and the God *patria*. Martí writes in the above excerpt, “let this not be reminiscent of a Roman Catholic education.” If not Roman Catholic, then which doctrine underlies these notions? Martí’s criticisms of the Roman Catholic Church and his own spiritual views may be considered more in line with nineteenth-century Spanish-American liberalism than antithetical to it. (He did after all quit an extended residency in Mexico because he identified with the deposed liberal government of Lerdo de Tejada). Martí’s critiques of Catholicism, in a practical sense, were informed by his experiences in Spain and particularly by personal exposure to ultra-Catholic reactionaries such as the Spanish *Carlistas* who wished to revive the Inquisition, for instance. Notwithstanding his critiques of the Roman Catholic Church, the Cuban patriot had no objections to marrying in it and baptizing his son while he engaged in freemasonry.

Martí’s words, notably in articles praising Annie Besant, Ralph Waldo Emerson, Henry David Thoreau, and Walt Whitman, also reveal how the Cuban patriot’s concepts of *patria* (homeland) and *naturaleza* (nature) were consonant. No single doctrine informed Martí’s views on *patria* –this chapter seeks only to reveal the largely ignored Eastern ones, particularly the Hindu, as they relate to his exposure to Transcendental thought while in the U.S. Martí’s views on nationhood also parallel the influential nineteenth-century French scholar Ernest Renan’s (1823-1892) conception that “a nation

⁴³ Martí, 21:29. “El Dios Conciencia, que es el hijo del Dios que creó, que es el único lazo visible unánimemente adorado, que une a la humanidad impulsada con la divinidad impulsadora.- Adorado, y no parezca esto reminiscencia de educación católica.- Este Dios, y el Dios patria, son en nuestra sociedad y en nuestra vida las únicas cosas adorables.”

is a soul, a spiritual principle.” Renan considered the nation (comparable to Martí’s *patria*) as

two things, which in truth are but one, [that] constitute this soul or spiritual principle. One lies in the past, one in the present. One is the possession in common of a rich legacy of memories; the other is present-day consent, the desire to live together, the will to perpetuate the value of the heritage that one has received in an undivided form.⁴⁴

Both Martí and Renan considered *patria* (nation) a spiritual principle. Yet, to the Cuban leader it had divine connotations that Renan’s configurations of nationhood did not share. Martí, indeed, indicated that the “God patria” is in “our life [one of the] only elements worthy of reverence.” The *patria*, to Martí, is a “hybrid construction of universal reach,” and a spiritually-infused conception, connoting the divine.⁴⁵

In the earlier excerpt where he states that “God [Consciousness], and God *patria*, are in our society and in our lives the only things worthy of reverence,” Martí suggests that human consciousness is divine and it is also the child of the God of creation (“el hijo del Dios que creó”). “El Dios Conciencia (the God Consciousness)” is also a bond that links a human race driven by a divine guiding force, the “Dios que creó (the God of creation).” The *Gita* offers a comparable view of these beliefs. “Know that my brilliance, flaming in the sun, in the moon, and in fire, illumines this whole universe. I am the universal fire within the body of living beings; I dwell deep in the heart of everyone.”

⁴⁴ Ernest Renan, “What is a Nation?” in *Becoming National: a Reader*, eds. Geoff Eley and Ronald Grigor Suny (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), 52.

⁴⁵ Ivan Schulman, “José Martí: Migraciones, viajes y la creación de la nación cubana” *Revista Iberoamericana* 69, no. 205 (October-December 2003): 927-33. Schulman expresses how it was “una construcción híbrida y de alcance universal.”

Krishna's message reminds the reader of the *divinidad impulsadora* (the divine driving force) of Martí's conception.⁴⁶ Krishna in the *Gita* continues advising Arjuna,

Nothing is higher than I am
 Arjuna, all that exists
 is woven on me,
 like a web of pearls on thread

 Know me, Arjuna,
 as every creature's timeless seed,
 the understanding of intelligent men,
 the brilliance of fiery heroes

 All this universe, deluded
 by the qualities inherent in nature,
 fails to know that I am
 beyond them and unchanging.⁴⁷

A universe deluded and, by deduction, humans as well easily succumb to personal desires according to both Martí's and Krishna's messages. Individuals fail to recognize the true reality, the true nature of the human soul, as Krishna expresses in the *Bhagavad-Gita*. Krishna continues,

Deluded men despise me
 in the human form I have assumed,
 ignorant of my higher existence
 as the great lord of creatures.

Reason warped, hope, action,
 and knowledge wasted,
 they fall prey to a seductive
 fiendish, demonic nature.

In single-minded dedication, great souls
 devote themselves to my divine nature,
 knowing me as unchanging,
 the origin of creatures.⁴⁸

⁴⁶ Martí, 15.12-5.

⁴⁷ *Bhagavad-Gita*, 7.7-13.

Martí's annotation of *El Dios que creó* (the God of creation), the Supreme Being that created the God Consciousness, shares the similar spirit of Arjuna's response to Krishna,

Original Creator,

 Boundless Lord of Gods,
 Shelter of All That Is,
 you are eternity,
 being, nonbeing, and beyond.

You are the original god,
 the primordial spirit of man,
 the deepest treasure of all that is,
 knower and what is to be known,
 the supreme abode;
 you pervade the universe,
 Lord of Boundless Form.⁴⁹

The Supreme Being or the Great Soul of the Universe (to the Transcendentalists), according to the *Gita* and in Martí's conception, *El Dios que creó* (the God of creation) or the *divinidad impulsadora* (the divine driving force), are omnipresent and unchanging. Both the *Gita*'s Supreme Being and Martí's *El Dios que creó* (the God of creation) infiltrate and motivate *la humanidad impulsada* (the driven human race), as well as *El Dios Conciencia* (God Consciousness). "The original god" according to the *Gita* "pervades the universe"; it is a "Lord of Boundless Form." Both Martí and the *Gita* hold in common these notions of an ultimate divine essence that equally and thoroughly permeates the universe, and its individual inhabitants.

According to Martí "El Dios que creó (the God of creation)," the ultimate, supreme deity, created "El Dios Conciencia," God Consciousness. "El Dios Conciencia (God Consciousness)" unites the essence ["la divinidad impulsadora (the divine driving

⁴⁸ *Bhagavad-Gita*, 9.11-3.

⁴⁹ *Bhagavad-Gita*, 11.37-8.

force)"] with the body or form ["la humanidad impulsada (the driven human race)"]. *La humanidad*, humanity, and, in a specific sense, humans, are divinely driven and inherently divine, a view shared with the Transcendentalists, but originating in Hindu thought as displayed in the above excerpts of the *Gita*. These views on spirituality appear in Martí's personal diary entries and even in children's narratives such as "A Journey through the Land of the Annamese," as Chapter Two on *The Golden Years* illustrates.

To Martí, "lo común es la síntesis de lo vario, y a lo Uno han de ir las síntesis de todo lo común; todo se simplifica al ascender [what's common is the synthesis of diversities, and to the ultimate One are to go the syntheses of all commonalities, everything simplifies as it ascends]."⁵⁰ These comments provide further proof that Martí viewed humanity and *patria* as inherently divine and also reveal that humanity, according to the Cuban writer, is on an ascending journey leading to an ultimate union with the Divine. Significantly, everything simplifies as it rises, therefore, a complex material world sheds its outward self and the underlying spirit emerges on the road to union with the ultimate divinity. This image is also reflected in Martí's description in his Grant essay of soldiers during the U.S. Civil war who

like living flower bulbs, swollen with unnoticeable worms, that in large waves struggle, with constant and awkward movements, to break free from the roots of trees that they indeed themselves [later] become in a more liberated and animated form of life. They are like closed fists that push forward to come out from the deepest within the earth. Who can envision, among the magnitude of woes that this rudimentary state of the human species shoulders, the blessed clarity that awaits after his or her purification and painful steps through [different] worlds?⁵¹

⁵⁰ Martí, 21: 47.

⁵¹ Martí, 13:93. "como esos bulbos vivos, henchidos de gusanos invisibles, que en grande masas pugnan, con movimientos incesantes y torpes, por romper las raices de los árboles que acaso en ellos mismos se convierten en una forma más libre y animada de la vida. Son como un puño cerrado que viene pujando por

The *Gita* also presents these conceptions, “when he perceives the unity existing in separate creatures and how they expand from unity, he attains the infinite spirit.”⁵² In the 1887 biographical piece on Walt Whitman addressed as an editorial letter to *El Partido Liberal* newspaper of Mexico City, Martí writes, “basic human elements can never be suppressed. Stars travel along their orbits, and among stars travels humanity. Just as eclipses are measured, so life itself may be gauged.”⁵³ To the Cuban leader, the human spirit is part of the greater spirit of the universe; human life follows, metaphorically, the same dynamics as stars. The trajectory of humans and the stars, in this sense, are comparable. *Patria*, as the spiritual nation, the community of individual citizens, is also related to the spirit of the universe.

Martí perceived a oneness, an interconnectedness of all, a unity that corresponded to the everlasting true nature of the human soul and its relationship with the divine. Life on earth, being just one incarnation of many, is a mere sojourn in the long journey of the soul to its ultimate home, the union with the Supreme Being. Martí writes

There cannot be any contradictions in Nature; the human hope of finding in love, during this existence, and in what’s commonly ignored after death, that perfect type of grace and beauty, reveals that, in the totality of life, we must joyfully reconcile, in this present segment of life we travel through, the elements that are seemingly hostile and separated.⁵⁴

salir de lo hondo de la tierra. ¿Quién entrevé, en la magnitud de los pesares que acarrea el estado rudimentario de la especie humana, la claridad dichosa que la aguarda, después de su acendramiento y paso doloroso por los mundos?”

⁵² *Bhagavad-Gita*, 13.30.

⁵³ Martí, 21:47. “no puede suprimirse ningún factor humano. Por su orbita andan los astros, y por su órbita anda el hombre. Como se calcula un eclipse, se puede calcular la vida”

⁵⁴ Martí, 11:134. “No puede haber contradicciones en la Naturaleza; la misma aspiración humana a hallar en el amor, durante la existencia, y en lo ignorado después de la muerte, un tipo perfecto de gracia y hermosura, demuestra que en la vida total han de ajustarse con gozo los elementos que en la porción actual de vida que atravesamos parecen desunidos y hostiles.”

To Martí nature held no contradictions. By “porción de la vida que atravesamos [this present segment of life we travel through],” does Martí imply a segment of an earthly lifespan or of a greater, eternal life? Does “lo ignorado después de la muerte [what is commonly ignored after death]” indicate that what happens after death is merely ignored or not consciously acknowledged by humans? Martí provides evidence revealing his beliefs on the true nature of the soul during and after earthly existence in his personal diary entries and in essays on Walt Whitman, Ralph Waldo Emerson, and Henry Ward Beecher. Although Martí shared many of Emerson’s spiritual views,⁵⁵ these did not originate in Emerson. They may be viewed as Emersonian adaptations of Hindu thought, as Emerson most likely would have taken them from the *Gita* or other Hindu texts. In turn, these concepts were appropriated by Martí, reformulated, and diffused by the Cuban leader to promote the cause of Cuban independence, as well as to find intellectual and emotional comfort.

Martí’s essay on Emerson displays much of the philosophy of the *Gita*, crafted in Martí’s own Spanish adaptation of Emerson’s language. Referring to Emerson, Martí writes in an article eulogizing the New England thinker, “men placed before him all those hurdles accumulated by centuries, [that were] inhabited by presumptuous men, at the front of the cradle of new men.”⁵⁶ Emerson, in Martí’s view, strove to overcome the hurdles produced by centuries of presumptuous men, blemishes impeding and lengthening the human soul’s journey to the ultimate divinity. Martí continues in the

⁵⁵ For a detailed discussion on Emerson and Martí see José Ballón Aguirre, *Lecturas norteamericanas de José Martí: Emerson y el socialismo contemporáneo (1880-1887)* (Mexico City: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 1995).

⁵⁶ Martí, 12:23. “Los hombres le pusieron delante al nacer todas esas trabas que han acumulado los siglos, habitados por hombres presuntuosos, ante la cuna de los hombres nuevos”

essay, “to die is to return the finite to the infinite.”⁵⁷ Not in a traditional Roman Catholic sense of life after death, but rather to “return the finite to the infinite” is understood as

Man when facing nature that changes and passes, feels within him or her self something stable. S/he feels both eternally young and forgetfully old. S/he knows that what s/he knows well was not learned here: which reveals previous life, in which s/he acquired the wisdom brought to this one.⁵⁸

“man facing, involved, and part of nature, (if we employ a Hindu reading *prakriti* is considered as the world of nature or visible reality, a lower aspect of the Supreme Being) feels within him/her self something stable” is comparable to the *Gita*’s views that men deluded by *prakriti* fail to understand the “unmovable, unchanging” nature of the human soul. The true nature of the human soul is “algo estable [something stable]” for, as the *Gita* indicates, “all that exists is woven on me [the Supreme Being], like a web of pearls on thread. Know me, Arjuna, as every creature’s timeless seed.”

The concept of reincarnation therefore emerges as a key, yet largely ignored element, in Martí’s conception of heroism and nation building as well as in his personal spiritual notions. Believing that an earthly life is one of many, humans must undergo many incarnations to purify the spirit and become one with the Great Soul of the Universe, in Martí’s mind. A Hindu reading of the Cuban leader’s writings, particularly the ones on the Transcendentalists, with the *Gita* as an accessible and synthetic elaboration of major Indian philosophical points, reveals frequent references to reincarnation. An essay on Walt Whitman expresses how “no longer do willow trees

⁵⁷ Martí, 12:24. “Morir es volver lo finito a lo infinito.”

⁵⁸ Martí, 12:26. “El hombre, frente a la naturaleza que cambia y pasa, siente en sí algo estable. Se siente a la par eternamente joven e inmemorablemente viejo. Conoce que sabe lo que sabe bien que no aprendió aquí: lo cual le revela vida anterior, en que adquirió esa ciencia que a ésta trajo.”

keen over tombs: death is the harvest, the opener and usher to the heavenly mansion, the great revealer; *what is, was, and shall be once more*. All apparent oppositions and griefs are commingled in a grave and celestial spring [season]; a bone is a flower.”⁵⁹

In the Emerson essay, Martí is explicit, “s/he or he who gave all of her or himself and did well for others will repose. S/he who wrongly did her or his task in this life will work again.”⁶⁰ Another inscription in his personal diary further corroborates how the Cuban leader believed in reincarnation, “the soul post-exists. And if it post-exists, and we are not born as equals, then it pre-exists, the soul has gone through various forms.—over here or there? It’s useless, but it has happened.”⁶¹ Since Martí’s overriding objective of freeing Cuba from Spanish colonialism motivated his political, literary, social, and military projects, his repeated references to reincarnation may be viewed in a literal sense as a promise of eternal life to warriors that assuages fears of losing one’s earthly life in a battle for Cuba—even though he avoided direct mention of reincarnation in his speeches since it would have been perceived as too foreign by many Cubans.

In the article on Emerson, Martí presents his views on reincarnation in an artistic, yet deeply philosophical manner, reinforcing how art, to the Cuban leader, had utilitarian dimensions; it served to expound political and philosophical views on life and on nation building. In the piece on Emerson, Martí writes on the role of reincarnation in the soul’s

⁵⁹ Emphasis is mine. Martí, 11:134 and José Martí, *Selected Writings*, ed. & trans. Esther Allen (New York: Penguin Books, 2002), 186. “ya sobre las tumbas no grimen los sauces; la muerte es la cosecha, la que abre la puerta, la gran reveladora”; lo que está siendo, fue y volverá a ser; en una grave y celeste primavera se confunden las oposiciones y penas aparentes; un hueso es una flor.”

⁶⁰ Martí, 12:17-8. “va a reposar, el que lo dio todo de sí, e hizo bien a los otros. Va a trabajar de nuevo, el que hizo mal su trabajo en esta vida.”

⁶¹ Martí, 21:43. “El alma post-existe. Y si post-existe, y no nacemos iguales, pre-existe, ha pasado por distintas formas.- Aquí o allá?- Es inútil, pero ha pasado.”

journey to its final destination of union with the Divine. In it he adopts and transmits many of Emerson's ideas on the nature of the human soul and the universe.⁶² Regarding Emerson Martí writes,

and he asks himself whether nature is not [just] fantasy, and man the one who fantasizes, and all the Universe an idea, and God the pure one, and the human being the aspiring idea, that will finalize like a pearl in its shell, and an arrow on the trunk of a tree, at the core of God.⁶³

Each life is either purified or further polluted by man's actions on earth –presumptuous, unvirtuous men had placed hurdles accumulated through centuries at the cradle (birth) of Emerson, as an earlier excerpt affirmed. To Martí virtue redeemed the soul, as an 1881 notebook annotation affirms, “mi corazón no tiene fuerza más que para la virtud [my heart has no strength but for virtue].⁶⁴

In the Emerson essay the Cuban leader presents virtue as a means of purifying and of attaining peace of the soul, “virtue, with which all nature conspires, leaves men and women in peace, as if they've finished their task or like a curve that reenters into its own self and needs no longer to move on and completes the circle.”⁶⁵ “El círculo [the circle]” that Martí refers to is the unity of all beings. To the Cuban patriot, virtue, specifically in actions, refines individuals and accelerates ultimate union with the one great soul of the Universe.

⁶² Ballón Aguirre, *Lecturas Norteamericanas*, 80.

⁶³ Martí, 12:27. “Y se pregunta entonces si no es fantasmagoría la naturaleza, y el hombre fantaseador, y todo el Universo una idea, y Dios la idea pura, y el ser humano la idea aspiradora, que irá a parar al cabo, como perla en su concha, y flecha en tronco de árbol, en el seno de Dios.”

⁶⁴ Martí, 21:144.

⁶⁵ Martí, 12:26. “La virtud, a la que todo conspira en la naturaleza, deja al hombre en paz, como si hubiese acabado su tarea, o como curva que reentra en sí, y ya no tiene más que andar y remata el círculo.”

Martí further comments, “[my] idealism is not, in itself, a vague death wish, but conviction in an after-life that is rewarded with the serene practice of virtue in this one.”⁶⁶ His idealism is not frivolous, particularly when they relate to liberating and serving the *patria*. Martí’s idealism has spiritual connotations; engaging in virtuous actions and living selflessly will provide just rewards in the next life. Martí admits faith in an after-life measured by the merits of this one; however, not in the traditional Christian sense of earning a post-life in heaven or hell.

Midway into two hectic political fundraising trips, Martí arrived in New York City on November 30, 1891 from Tampa and departed on December 22 to Key West. A December 7, 1891 letter to *El Partido Liberal* of Mexico City, relating recent happenings, prominently displays Annie Besant’s visit to New York City. His article to the Mexican newspaper describes and defends Annie Besant’s views on poverty, population control, and religion and he indirectly conveys his own views on virtue and duty by adulating Bessant’s own. Martí writes “everything crystallizes through the exercise of goodness, and transforms itself into a spiritual essence, present, albeit invisible.”⁶⁷ He further expresses “may the highest in individuals be cultivated, in order that with eyes of greater light, s/he could join in the comfort (peace), could progress in the mystery, and explore the highest within the spiritual sphere.”⁶⁸ The value of education in Hindu philosophy (the right knowledge of spiritual matters, for instance)

⁶⁶ Martí, 12:29. “El idealismo no es, en él, deseo vago de muerte, sino convicción de vida posterior que ha de merecerse con la práctica serena de la virtud en esta vida.”

⁶⁷ Martí, 12:504. “todo va acrisolándose por el ejercicio del bien, y convirtiéndose en esencia espiritual, presente aunque invisible.”

⁶⁸ Martí, 12:504. “edúquese lo superior del hombre, para que pueda con ojos de más luz, entrar en el Consuelo, adelantar en el misterio, explorar en la excelsitud del orbe espiritual.”

leads humanity to a more elevated and peaceful level of existence. Martí's attitudes regarding the value of education and the cultivation of the spirit compares favorably with a fundamental principle of the *Gita*, the significance of knowing the true, everlasting nature of the human soul in order to avoid fear, doubt, and in gaining ultimate inner peace.⁶⁹

Martí continues in his December 7, 1891 letter to *El Partido Liberal*, "this is why Annie Besant came from England: to pour over our hearts her sparkling and merciful word, to feel her way in good faith with her sensible, yet mystical oratory, the paths of the future (upcoming) religion."⁷⁰ By praising Besant, and Sir Edwin Arnold in a separate article, the Cuban leader reiterates the critical roles of virtue, of education, and of spreading knowledge in purifying the human soul. Besant, according to Martí, advances knowledge in a logical yet "mystical" form. Knowledge is essential in elevating one's material condition. Moreover, knowledge is also required in elevating one's spiritual condition. Besant, Martí claims, explores and feels her way through the path of a new, ("*venidera*") forthcoming religion. Martí states that Besant promotes the "new, upcoming religion," a modern one, unlike Roman Catholicism or traditional western Christianity. This new religion may have echoes in a mystical form of Christianity, but it is clearly an elaboration of Hindu-inspired themes, since Besant lived in India for a prolonged period and adopted Hindu ideas to formulate her own *weltanschauung*. Martí's December 7, 1891 letter to the Mexican newspaper visibly conveys the above mentioned themes of

⁶⁹ Chapter Four presents Martí's affirming of the importance of knowledge as essential to the practice of government.

⁷⁰ Martí, 12:503-4. "A eso viene Annie Besant de Inglaterra: a echar sobre los corazones su palabra piadosa y encendida, a tantear de buena fe, con oratoria a la vez sensata y mística, por los caminos de la religión venidera."

virtue and purification. In describing Annie Besant and Sir Edwin Arnold in the editorial pieces, Martí relates his personal views on spirituality. Martí, indeed, often “rewrote current events, transforming the grinding work of the journalist into a medium for recasting himself.”⁷¹

To understand Martí’s words on Emerson illuminates the Cuban leader’s views on the nature of the soul, as well as facilitate a Hindu, if not more global, reading of Martí’s efforts –particularly, if we consider the large extent Emerson, Thoreau, and others employed Hinduism, and specifically, the *Bhagavad-Gita* in their thought and writings. Nowhere else among Martí’s surviving essays are his views regarding spiritual beliefs as conspicuous as in his piece on Emerson, ideas diverging from traditional Roman Catholic canon.

Among his final letters, specifically in a literary testament addressed to his secretary, Gonzalo de Quesada, Martí expressed his high regard for the Emerson essay, providing specific instructions for its publication, if he were not to return from Cuba’s war of independence. Separately, Martí indicated in an 1894 personal diary that one of his most glorious moments was “the afternoon of Emerson,” referring to when he wrote the composition.⁷² Regarding Emerson, Martí writes, “I’ve already gone through much of life, and tried its delights. But the greatest pleasure, the only pure and absolute pleasure I’ve enjoyed till now, was that afternoon, when semi-nude in my room, I saw a prostrated city,

⁷¹ Oscar Montero, “Review of *The American Chronicles of José Martí. Journalism and Modernity in Spanish America*, by Susana Rotker. Trans. Jennifer French and Katherine Semler,” *Hispanic Review* 70, no. 3 (Summer 2002): 473.

⁷² Martí, *Selected Writings*, 116.

and I glimpsed into the future thinking of Emerson.”⁷³ Martí continues his adulation of Emerson in a separate journal entry, "Emerson. The afternoon of Emerson: when one loses his or her sense of self and transfuses with the world.”⁷⁴ Martí identifies with Emerson; “his intellectual encounter with Emerson, upon arriving in the U.S. in 1880, is indelible and permanent, and forms an essential part of his view of the universe (world outlook).”⁷⁵ His essay on Emerson is therefore revelatory, significant, and essential to our understanding of Martí’s spiritual ideas and his concept of the world and of his place in it.

According to more recent literary criticisms of Martí’s works, the piece on Emerson echoes much of the Cuban leader’s own views. In turn, Emerson significantly incorporated Hindu thought in his works. The effort to incorporate Hindu philosophy in nineteenth-century philosophical reflections in America is a common attribute of [both] Emerson and Martí, according to Martí scholar José Ballón Aguirre. Ballón Aguirre believes that in their literary production, “it does not function as a mere artistic motif, but rather as an epistemological framework and [it also] emerges as the mystical base for their esthetics. [They truly established] a syncretic vision of East and West.”⁷⁶ This chapter therefore expands Martí studies beyond recent literary critiques by revealing that the East

⁷³ Martí, 22:323. “ya he andado bastante por la vida, y probado sus varios manjares. Pues el placer más grande, el único placer absolutamente puro que hasta hoy he gozado fue el de aquella tarde en que desde mi cuarto medio desnudo vi a la ciudad postrada, y entreví lo futuro pensando en Emerson.”

⁷⁴ Martí, 21:387. “Emerson. La tarde de Emerson: Cuando pierde el hombre el sentido de sí y se transfunde en el mundo.”

⁷⁵ José Ballón Aguirre, *Martí y Blaine en la dialéctica de la Guerra del Pacífico (1879-1883)* (Mexico City: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 2003), 420. “el encuentro intelectual de Martí con Emerson, ocurrido a su llegada a Estados Unidos en 1880, es indeleble y permanente, y forma parte esencial de su cosmovisión.”

⁷⁶ Ballón Aguirre, *Lecturas Norteamericanas*, 86. “El esfuerzo por incorporar la filosofía hindú, en la reflexión filosófica occidental del siglo XIX, en América, es aporte común de Emerson y Martí. En la creación literaria de ambos no funciona como mero motivo artístico, sino como encuadre epistemológico, y resulta base mística de su estética. Se trata, pues, de la instauración de una visión verdaderamente sincrética, Oriente/Occidente.”

served more than a literary or esthetic purpose. Martí's nation building contains significant Eastern dimensions.

In the essay on Emerson, Martí also writes about the role of virtue and of the essential unity of all living beings. He expresses how

[Emerson] holds that everything and everyone [are essentially similar], that everything has the same objective, that it all rests in humanity, which beautifies everything with the mind, that the currents of nature flow through each creature, that every creature has something of the Creator in itself, and that everyone will end at the source of the creative Spirit. That there is a central unity in all deeds, –in thoughts, and actions; that the human soul, in traveling through all of nature, finds itself within all of it; that the beauty of the Universe was created to inspire wishes and dreams, and to find comfort from the pains and sufferings of virtue, and to stimulate humanity to search and to find itself; that ‘within humanity is the soul of the whole united, of the wise silence, the universal beauty, that each part and particle is equally related to: the Eternal One’⁷⁷

In the piece on Emerson, Martí, in describing the New England Transcendentalist's views, portrays several of the *Gita's* basic tenets. “That there is a central unity in all deeds, –in thoughts, and in actions,” for instance, directly relates to the *Gita's* idea of the causal relationship between the intentions and consequences of actions.

How one must answer the call to duty; how action is to be performed unselfishly; how sacrifice for others is service to *patria* (homeland) and to the Supreme Being; how humans, *patria*, and the Universe are essentially linked, are all fundamental principles of Martí's personal philosophy and his views on nation building, as his writings

⁷⁷ Martí, 12:24. “Y mantiene que todo se parece a todo, que todo tiene el mismo objeto, que todo da en el hombre, que lo embellece con su mente todo, que a través de cada criatura pasan las corrientes de la naturaleza, que cada cosa creada tiene algo del Creador en sí, y todo irá a dar al cabo en el seno del Espíritu creador, que hay una unidad central en los hechos,- en los pensamientos, y en las acciones; que el alma humana, al viajar por toda la naturaleza, se halla a sí misma en toda ella; que la hermosura del Universo fue creada para inspirarse el deseo, y consolarse los Dolores de la virtud, y estimular al hombre a buscarse y hallarse; que ‘dentro del hombre está el alma del conjunto, la del sabio silencio, la hermosura universal a la que toda parte y particular está igualmente relacionada: el Uno Eterno.’”

demonstrate. Martí nurtured his ideas with Hindu thought, acquired directly from texts he read in order to develop, for instance, the drawings and annotations for his lectures while teaching Hindu philosophy in Guatemala or indirectly through his adoption of Emersonian ideals, as seen earlier. Martí's political notions were coupled to spiritual ones since he consistently interchanged these terms and identified one with the other throughout his writings. Martí's writings on Emerson reveal his admiration for Hindu sacred texts. Adaptations from Hindu philosophy significantly appear in Transcendental thought; indeed, Emerson held one of the few English translations in the U.S of the *Mahabharata* at the time. Martí praised how Emerson,

at times, in the blinding glow of those brilliant Hindu books, where human beings after purified by virtue, fly like butterflies from fire, from their earthly dregs to the core of Brahma, he sits himself to gauge, since he has found others' eyes as his own, and he sees starkly and tones down his own visions. And it's that Indian philosophy captivates, like a forest of blossoms, and like watching birds soar, it sparks the yearning to take flight.⁷⁸

Most certainly someone who had not admired for her or himself Hindu sacred works would not have described them so vibrantly. With such high admiration for Ralph Waldo Emerson, Henry David Thoreau, Walt Whitman, Annie Besant, and Sir Edwin Arnold among others, it would have been irresponsible to ignore the *Bhagavad-Gita*, a work that inspired these women and men, particularly since "he consciously sought to depict

⁷⁸ Martí, 12:25. "A veces deslumbrado por esos libros resplandecientes de los hindús, para los que la criatura humana, luego de purificada por la virtud, vuela, como mariposa de fuego, de su escoria terrenal al seno de Brahma, siéntase a hacer lo que censura, ya ver la naturaleza a través de ojos ajenos, porque ha hallado esos ojos conformes a los propios, y ve oscuramente y desluce sus propias visiones. Y es que aquella filosofía india embriaga, como un bosque de azahares, y acontece con ella como con ver volar aves, que enciende ansias de volar."

American literary life for his Spanish American readers, and did so based on *thorough* knowledge and informed reading.”⁷⁹

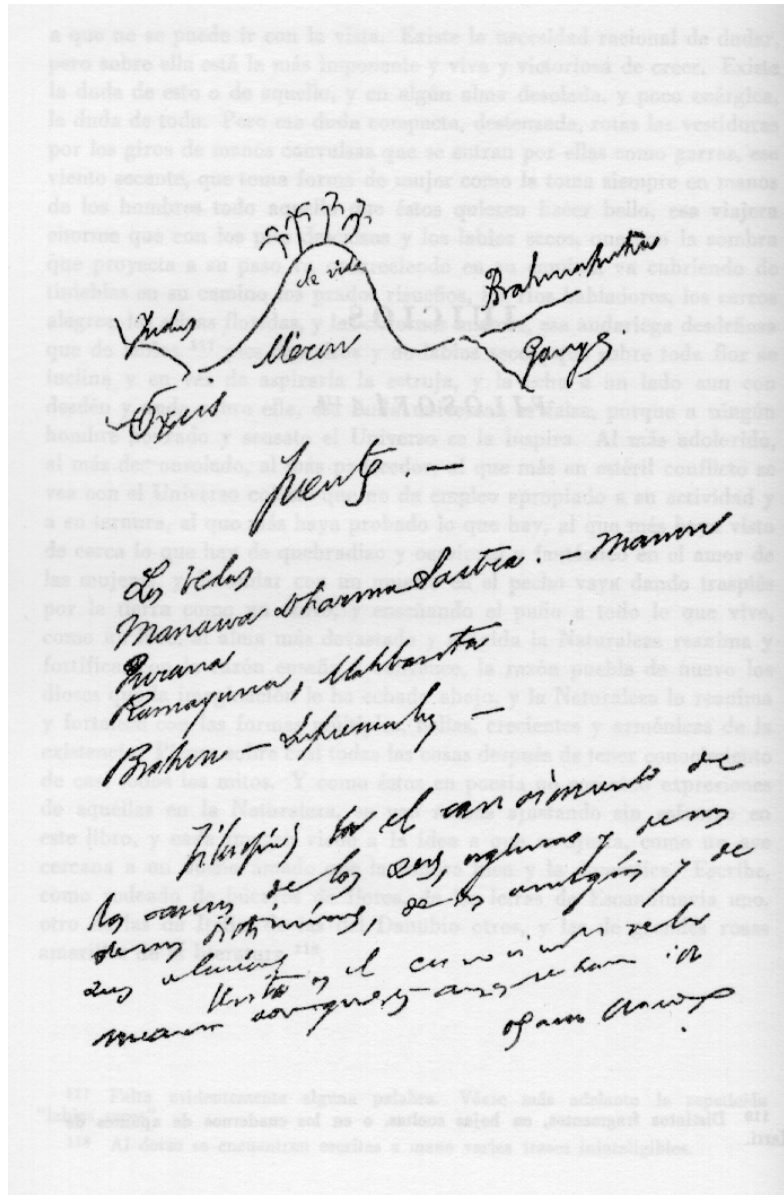


Fig. 11 José Martí's handwritten lecture notes on Hindu ideas, ca. 1877⁸⁰

⁷⁹ Fountain, xiii-xiv. Emphasis is mine.

To conclude this chapter and dissertation, our understanding of José Martí's efforts at nation building is enhanced by disclosing notions that guided his programs and that are not plainly visible. Modern Martí scholars have studied the Cuban patriot as a literary figure and political leader, yet approaches to his spiritual views have been limited to Judaeo-Christian outlooks. Those under the eye of the current Cuban regime have not explored nor have found institutional support in delving into Martí's spiritual dimensions beyond the framework of a Marxist, proto-Leninist thinker. As the ideological architect of the renewed 1895 Cuban independence effort, Martí's contribution to and his role throughout twentieth-century Cuban history are significant and substantial. Martí's ideas and actions are better understood if placed along the same sources that nurtured his personal outlook. Among these, Martí's distillations of Hindu beliefs are ever-present throughout his writings. Hindu notions appear in his formulations for Cuba's independence, as his correspondence to other leaders of the Cuban freedom movement and his personal diaries show. Only recently have scholars such as José Ballón Aguirre and Araceli Tinajero have suggested that Martí sought to syncretize Eastern and Western ideas in his literary production, expressing how

beyond a concern over artistic comparisons, Martí creates a gallery of transculturating ideas. This does not mean that the Cuban is only influenced by social or religious themes. In loose pages and in personal notebooks, he reveals his philosophical knowledge of the Far East and his desire to find connections among philosophical ideas that unite Eastern and Western thought. A detailed reading of

⁸⁰ Martí, 19:358. Roberto Agramonte also included the above illustration in his *Martí y su concepción del mundo* as illustration no. 18. Agramonte wrote "Esquema de Martí sobre cultura y filosofía hinduista, usado para sus clases en Guatemala (Arch. de Gónzalo de Quesada y Miranda) [Diagram by Martí on Hindu culture and philosophy, employed for courses in Guatemala]." These notes on Hindu notions pre-date his arrival in New York City (1880), when he became acquainted with Emersonian and Transcendental thought, and affirm that Martí knew about Eastern spiritual concepts, particularly Indian ones before his arrival in New York City. I believe he was first exposed to Hindu thought during his first stay in Spain (1871-1874).

Martí's drawings indicates his concern over the West's cultural penetration of India.⁸¹

Some Martí scholars have depicted that Martí integrated Eastern notions as a *modernista*, emphasizing his place as a writer within the late nineteenth-century Hispanic literary movement. This dissertation seeks to understand, however, Martí's impact beyond a poet, writer, and *modernista*. Rather, Martí emerges as a compelling world historical figure by transplanting geographically and culturally distant ideas for purposes of Cuban nation building and for raising Latin American consciousness in terms that ordinary Cubans and Spanish-Americans of diverse social, racial, economic, and, as Chapter Two on children narratives shows, even of different age levels could understand. This chapter presents his spiritual views, particularly Hindu-inspired ones, in order to reveal their relationship with his nation-building efforts. In this context, Hindu notions in Martí's works place him closer to the *modernistas*, and significantly, the use of Hindu-derived notions in Cuban nation building situates Martí in a world context, as critiques of his literary and political works have missed.

This chapter therefore displays that the Cuban leader's ideological formulation for revolution, independence, and nation building drew from the sacred wisdom of India, albeit mostly through indirect means. Martí's integration of Eastern notions substantiates how Hindu philosophy is manifest, for the first time, in an independence history of a

⁸¹ Araceli Tinajero, *Orientalismo en el modernismo hispanoamericano* (West Lafayette, Indiana: Purdue University Press, 2003), 16. "Más que ocuparse de una comparación artística, Martí elabora una galería de ideas transculturadoras. Esto no significa que el cubano solo se haya intercedo por temas de tipo social o religioso. En hojas sueltas y en cuadernos de apuntes revela su conocimiento filosófico sobre el Lejano Oriente y su deseo de encontrar puntos de conexión, de ideas filosóficas que unan el pensamiento oriental y occidental. Una lectura ecrástica de los dibujos de Martí en sus notas indica su preocupación por la penetración de la cultura occidental en la India." Tinajero blunders in quoting Martí as concerned with "la penetración de la cultura occidental en la India [the West's cultural penetration of India]." Martí may have agreed; however, the converse view properly reflects Martí's annotation which Tinajero refers to, appearing in José Martí, *Obras Completas*, 2d ed., 27 vols. (Havana: Editorial Ciencias Sociales, 1975), 19:359. Martí's annotation reads "El Oriente invade el Occidente [The East invades the West]."

Latin American nation and specifically in a Latin American revolutionary movement. Martí's adaptations from regions beyond the Atlantic for formulating revolution by transmitting nation building values place the 1895 Cuban revolution as the first globally-derived revolution in the history of Latin America.

Martí's ideas on spirituality are not original; his manner of synthesizing them and transmitting them to Cubans and Latin Americans is. Martí acquired and transplanted ideas from one world region (South Asia) to another (Cuba and Latin America). Indeed, Martí's adaptation of Eastern thought signals how significant the exchange of ideas is to the course of human history, as important as material and commodity exchanges. Was this exchange, then, strictly cultural? Did Martí attempt to appropriate Hindu culture to recraft a new sense of Cuban nationhood? The evidence suggests he would have been inclined to take from Hindu thought as much as from other world belief systems in order to find spiritual comfort and strength for his nation building project. This chapter's approach is to avoid focusing on Martí's acquisition of Eastern ideas as a simple cultural phenomenon; rather, to highlight Hinduism as a source for revolutionary inspiration since it has been largely overlooked by Martí scholars. The consequences of Martí's adaptation of Hindu views go beyond the cultural. It had social, economic, and political ramifications since the Cuban revolution of 1895 equally aimed to sever the ties with an imperial power as well as to create an independent, democratic republic for all Cubans.

Martí's use of Hindu notions in resisting European imperialism and for building an independent, democratic Cuban nation during the late 1800s is remarkably groundbreaking. To disclose and acknowledge a major source of Martí's spiritual and political outlook, Hindu philosophy as presented through the *Bhagavad-Gita's* teachings, and to

understand how these relate elevates the Cuban poet as a spiritually-grounded freedom fighter. Understanding the world sources of Martí's efforts also magnifies the Cuban freedom fighter's role in the histories of Western Hemispheric independence struggles and, on a more expansive and meaningful level, reveals the global significance of late nineteenth-century Cuban nation building.

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