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Boletín Martiano

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Editor: Denis Rey, Ph.D.

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Message from the Editor

By Denis Rey, Ph.D.

Before introducing the current issue, we would like to extend a heartfelt thank you to the scholars and community leaders who participated in our Preserving Voices Project. With the support of a 2023 Greater Good: Humanities in Academia Award from the Florida Humanities Council, the CJMSA was able to organize four public programs that highlighted the voices of the nineteenth-century Cuban émigré press of New York and Florida. The Preserving Voices Project strives to re-establish the tradition and showmanship of the *lector de tabaquería* , or cigar factory reader. Like those who once read to the cigar workers of Key West, Ybor City, West Tampa, New York and beyond, our distinguished guests performed key articles from the period, chosen for their historical import and their vivacious and riveting style and substance, conveying deep passion, strong social commitment, striking elegance and prescient insight. Those interested in hearing and reading the splendid words espoused by those Cuban revolutionaries can do so by clicking the following link: CJMSA Preserving Voices.

This current issue of the *Boletín Martiano* features essential reading for those who seek a greater understanding of the literary works, individuals, and places that proved significant in the effort for Cuban independence and identity. Our first contributor, Dr. Carmen Lamas, Associate Professor of English and American Studies at the University of Virginia, offers an excerpt from her acclaimed book, *The Latino Continuum and the Nineteenth-Century Americas: Literature, Translation and Historiography* (Oxford University Press, 2021), in which she examines the writings of Afro-Cuban author and activist, Martín

Morúa Delgado. Drawn from the fourth chapter, "The Black *Lector*: Forging a Radical Revolution," her piece analyzes his two important novels, *Sofía* (1891) and *La familia Unzúazu* (1901). Our second contributor, Dr. Daniel Pedreira, is a Visiting Assistant Teaching Professor of Political Science at Florida International University and alumni from our 2023 NEH Summer Institute. His article, "The Cuban Family Carbonell: Exile and Return of a Founding Family," focuses on the rich history of the Carbonell family, whose multi-generational dedication to Cuban independence and freedom is outlined in detail, including their role in bringing Martí to Tampa for the first time in 1891. Our third contributor, Dr. Adolfo Lagomasino, Assistant Teaching Professor of Communication at the University of Tampa, through his piece, "The Parque Amigos de José Martí – A Brief History of Patria in Exile," delivers an impressive accounting of the treatment given to Martí Park in Ybor City over the decades, as competing factions of the Cuban diaspora jockeyed for administrative control and upkeep of the plot of land where the famous Pedroso boarding house once stood. I hope you enjoy reading this issue of *Boletín Martiano* as much as we have.

The Latino Continuum and the Nineteenth-Century Americas: Literature, Translation and Historiography (Oxford University Press, 2021)

By Carmen E. Lamas, Ph.D.

Excerpt from Chapter 4 "The Black Lector*: Forging a Radical Revolution" Morúa's* Sofía *(1891) and* La familia Unzúazu *(1901)*

Sofía (1891) is the first installment of a proposed trilogy titled "Cosas de mi tierra" (*Aspects of my Homeland*) (Morúa Delgado 1891, xiii). This first novel is about a white ***criolla,*** the daughter of two Spaniards, who is mistaken for a slave. Repeatedly raped by her half-brother Federico Unzúazu, Sofía dies from a beating received from Acebaldo Nudoso, her owner and brother-in-law, after his discovery of her pregnancy. As she lies on her deathbed after losing her unborn son, her half-sister Magdalena Unzúazu tells Sofía she is an Unzúazu and not a slave. This news devastates Sofía, since she dies after she realizes that she had been a slave her entire life, and that Federico, her rapist, was her brother. While this series of events is the central narrative of the novel, when one takes into account Morúa's biography and US experience, the critique of white, Americanized Cuban characters such as Eladislao Gonzaga, Magdalena Unzúazu, and the Alminto family emerges parallel to Sofía's storyline.

América Alminto, her younger sister Albina (the name already alerts the reader to this family's racial genealogy), and her mother Amalia emigrate to New York at the outbreak of the Ten Years' War.[2]

[2] Choosing the name Amalia is also instructive because of José Mármol's *Amalia* (1851), a novel that allegorized the cultural and political challenges facing

América's father is killed in the fighting, and the Spanish government confiscates the family's landholdings. Albina marries a wealthy North American businessman, which leads to a sweeping change in the family's economic situation (Morúa Delgado 1891, 95). América marries Eladislao Gonzaga, whose patriotism is firmly associated with his wealth, as well: early in the novel, Morúa mentions that "Con la pérdida de su fortuna aumentábase su ardor patriótico" (Morúa Delgado 1891, 93) (*his political ardor increased with the loss of his fortune*). After he marries América, he accepts a position at the firm of Albina's North American father-in-law, signaling his ties to US business interests.[3] América and Eladislao subsequently return to the island to claim the Alminto fortune, at which point the reader realizes that Eladislao has learned a subtle and pernicious form of racism from his Northern experience. Sofía, who is wandering the streets of Belmiranda (the fictitious setting that mirrors the city of Matanzas) seeking a new owner, asks Eladislao and América for help after the Unzúazu family, discovering her pregnancy, has dismissed her, giving her a mere three days (the time sanctioned by law) to find a new owner or face being relegated to hard labor in their sugar mill. Eladislao appears to treat Sofía kindly but emphasizes the social and racial division between them by addressing her with the informal "tú." One might miss the social implications of this form of speech, but Morúa's narrator refuses to let the reader get away with such naivety when he comments condescendingly, "Estos modernos libre-pensadores no se dan cuenta de su contradicción, como no se la daba Eladislao al tutear a Sofía . . . ¿Habríala tuteado si ignorase su pobre estado social?" (Morúa Delgado

Argentina in the nineteenth century. Amalia may also intimate a reference to "Emilia" Casanovas, Villaverde's wife and political collaborator. In addition, the names Albina and América and their sibling status signal possible alterative but inextricably tied trajectories, because of the racialized dimensions of the name Albina and its link to América. As whiteness goes north (Albina), either it forgets its past and incorporates itself to the capitalist North Americans or it returns south (América), implying that there might be a true continental inheritor, but Morúa makes sure to show América's return occurs only to regain her goods from the Spanish authorities and not necessarily to forge a new nation. It is implied that, like Albina, she is there to get what was hers without seeking to change Cuban society and race relations in particular.

[3] Before joining his brother-in-law's firm, Gonzaga worked in a clothing store in New York City. Occupations related to fashion, such as tailors, were held by freedmen in Havana. In *Cecilia Valdés* the character Francisco de Paula Uribe is a tailor. He is described as being a mulatto with a dark complexion. Consequently, in *Sofía* this profession may be said to position Gonzaga as an inferior individual in the US social and racial hierarchy, thereby signaling Morúa's critique that Villaverde had chosen not to learn about race matters, even though he had lived in the US for close to thirty years.

1891, 155). (*These modern freethinkers are not aware of their contradiction, just as Eladislao did not notice when he used the informal tú with Sofia . . . Would he have used the informal tú if he ignored her poor social state?*) The "contradiction," the narrator indicates, lies with the fact that Eladislao's suffering under US racial prejudice should have led him to cultivate empathy. Instead, he embodies for Morúa the same racist attitude of Northerners in the United States: they appear to support racial equality but treat Blacks as inferiors. (Eladislao arrived penniless in New York City, having lost all of his wealth in Cuba and having been forced to work in a clothing store, which marked his economic and social decline and racialization as a Latin American immigrant in New York [Morúa Delgado 1891, 93].)

Morúa stresses the negative impact of the conciliatory, yet condescending nature of Northern rhetoric by further developing the two US-influenced characters whose destinies revolve around Eladislao, just as Cuba's destiny could potentially be one of dependence on the United States: América, his wife, and Magdalena, his mistress. For example, he stresses that spending five years in the United States changed Magdalena, since there she comes to believe that, although slaves need to be educated, they must be kept separate from whites, something we are told she learns from her time in a Quaker school in Philadelphia (Morúa Delgado 1891, 51). The narrator ironically explains this contradiction, as he tries to work through the many reasons a separate but equal ideology could be deemed acceptable in the post-Reconstruction society of the Northeast that Morúa had personally experienced:

> Pero, por una aberración de las costumbres, o por el hábito secular de las razas del norte, encerradas en sí mismas, y acaso también por un exquisitismo estético, tenido en cuenta su grado superior de civilización, y quizás por todas estas proposiciones reunidas, tenían *los amigos* [sic] de la hermandad neoanglicana una extremada aversión al cruzamiento de las razas humanas. Claro es,

> pues, que esta aversión había de crecer tratándose de individuos entre los cuales el contraste exterior es tan notable como el que ofrecen a la más simple vista el negro y el blanco. (Morúa Delgado 1891, 51)
>
> (*But, because of an aberration in customs, or because of the secular habit of the races of the north, trapped within themselves, and maybe also because of an exquisite aestheticism, considering their higher grade of civilization, and maybe because of all of these propositions put together, the Friends [sic] from the neo-Anglican brother- hood had an extreme aversion to the crossing of human races. It is clear, then, that this aversion would grow when dealing with individuals in whom the exterior contrast is so notable as what is offered to the simplest sight, the difference between Black and white.*)

By noting that Magdalena learned her US form of racism at a Friends school, Morúa records a significant histotextual marker that calls to mind not only the separate-but-equal approach of Quakerism toward race, but also the fact that Tomás Estrada Palma converted to Quakerism in the United States and founded and ran the Instituto Estrada Palma, a Friends school in Central Valley, New York.[4] Villaverde and his wife Emilia Casanovas likewise started and ran a school in New Jersey.

Not coincidentally, back in the United States, Morúa asked Estrada Palma, the president of the Partido Revolucionario Cubano after Martí's death in battle, for PRC funds in 1896 to support the publication of *Sofía*'s sequel, *La familia Unzúazu*. In his response, Estrada Palma conceded the importance of the work—he suggested it effectively and persuasively paints the political and social effects of

[4] I thank José B. Fernández for alerting me to the Quaker connection in a conversation at the Recovering the US Hispanic Literary Heritage Project Conference in Houston, Texas on October 19, 2012.

colonialism on Cuban society—but then rejected Morúa's request to publish the book, because, he said, the raging war on the island had depleted PRC funds (quoted in Mesa Rodríguez 1956, 29). This rejection may have been fueled by Estrada Palma's overt racism—when he was president of the Cuban Republic, he did not invite Morúa's wife and daughters to a state dinner because they were black (Fuente 2001, 62–63). It also signals the division between New York exiles and tobacco workers in Florida: after Martí's untimely death in 1895, Estrada Palma, who replaced him as the head of the PRC, subordinated efforts to address race issues and workers' rights, changing the socially transformative mission of the organization by replacing it with an effort to recruit US support for the war (Guerra 2005, 62–77).

Morúa's critiques of Americanized Cubans such as Estrada Palma also must have stemmed from the latter's collaboration with John McCook, a New York corporate lawyer, and Samuel Janney, a partner at a Wall Street banking firm, to float bonds to purchase Cuba from Spain (Fletcher 1998, 334–35; Offner 2001, 63–64; Guerra 2005, 85–86). With the Quaker reference, then, Morúa can be understood yet again as associating Estrada Palma with the greedy, immoral, and racist Americanized Cubans of his novels. It is also likely that Estrada Palma identified himself in the character of Eladislao in the novel.

Depicted as indifferent to both the injustices of slavery and the larger question of its fundamental immorality, Magdalena, Eladislao's mistress, invariably ignores the plight of Sofia, her childhood playmate and personal slave, in particular in the face of Sofia's mistreatment by Magdalena's sister's husband, Acebaldo. She also ignores the cruelty Sofía experiences at the hands of her half-brother Federico, who, as already noted, rapes Sofía repeatedly. All of these instances of looking pointedly away reflect the studied distance she learned to cultivate when it came to matters of race while in the Friends school in the United States. This directly signals the contradiction at the heart of US race relations in the following manner:

> Imbuido, en fin, el cuáquero en sus severas doctrinas religiosas, no se considera con derecho para esclavizar al hombre porque éste sea negro o rojo, antes bien le conserva y le defiende su estado natural, libre—aunque por otras razones no le admite en el estrecho recogimiento de su comunión sino que se sacrifica por tenerle apartado, a la mayor distancia posible. (Morúa Delgado 1891, 51)
>
> (*Imbued, in the end, with his strict religious doctrines, the Quaker does not feel the right to enslave a man because he is black or red, in fact, he maintains and defends his natural state, free—even though for other reasons, he does not admit him into the strict seclusion of his communion, instead sacrificing himself to ensure him separate, at the greatest distance possible.*)

Morúa's novels intimate the dangers of placing Cuba under the leadership of Americanized Cubans most clearly in the narration of the events surrounding the life of América, Eladislao's wife. At first her name appears to symbolize a pan-Americanism that would bring together different elements of the hemisphere (perhaps along the lines of what Martí envisioned): in *Sofía*, she is compared to an Irish maid who sings "canciones vivarachas de las gentes del sur de la Unión" (Morúa Delgado 1891, 63) (*lively songs of the people from the American South*), intermingled with Cuban ones. In addition, when read in light of what was happening in the United States at the time of the composition of the novel, the irony of this amalgamation cannot escape the reader.

While one might imagine that Morúa wished to evoke the long history of oppression of Irish immigrants in the United States—the Know Nothing Party or American Party was organized to combat Irish Catholicism and to support US nativism in the 1840s and 1850s, for example—one must remember that many Irish people in the United States aligned themselves with the pro-slavery Democratic Party. Irish men also rioted in New York City in 1863 when conscripted into the Union army, a reflection of the fact that the

question of slavery was not among their greatest concerns (Rodgers 2007, 43). Most poignantly, the reference to Irish people speaks to the violence against black people by Irish rioters during those riots (Roediger 1991). Mention of Irish people further evokes their ambivalent position toward abolition in the United States. In addition, and as shown in Chapter 3, anti-Catholicism continued to exist in the 1880s and 1890s. Ultimately, América does not in any way associate herself with the particular historical realities of Afro-diasporic people in the hemisphere. Instead, she romanticizes the very real fight for freedom of African Americans in the Civil War and Afro-Cubans in both the Ten Years' War (1868–1878) and the Guerra Chiquita (1879–1880).

Morúa captures this dissociation and complete ignorance by highlighting the violence that feeds this romanticization in one poignant scene: as Sofía dies, Magdalena (who is Eladislao's mistress) whispers "es mía," or "she is mine," referring to Eladislao's soul or "alma," but América thinks she speaks of the dying Sofía (Morúa Delgado 1891, 253). Touched by this devotion between a master and her slave, she believes Magdalena mourns Sofía's passing, when, in fact, she weeps because she has finally met América and envies her marriage to Eladislao (Morúa Delgado 1891, 252–53). Any illusions about América's pan-American name are dispelled here by her total failure to understand the plight of enslaved people in Cuba, the United States, or the Americas: she idealizes the relationship between slave and master.

These female characters allow Morúa to stage his critique of Northern attitudes to race, and he does so, in part, to criticize the sentimental romance and the use of melodrama that was deployed by writers in the North during this time period; for he saw it as a genre that sidelined racism in the United States, disempowering black people in the process. As multiple critics have noted (Silber 1997; Gillman 2003; Luis-Brown 2008), abolitionist rhetoric in the North adopted a conciliatory tone following the Civil

War, one that produced the sentimental romances of the 1880s and 1890s. Such romances regularly featured the marriage of a Northern male to a Southern belle, offering a narrative thereby that was meant to heal the divide between North and South. In addition, as Nina Silber's study shows, the sentimental romance served to smooth over problems related to the labor unrest that ravaged the United States during that period, which in turn was caused, in particular, by the immigration of what were then considered ethnic minorities, such as the Irish, from Europe (Silber 1997, 128). For Silber, the focus on marriage and family in these texts parallels the abstraction of the economic situation of those who were previously enslaved throughout the South, as it also embodies the North's need to situate new ethnic groups, such as Irish people, in urban settings. Consequently, Silber argues, those who were previously enslaved were erased from the process of Reconstruction altogether, as was the violence suffered by them at the hands of Southern "gentlemen" (Silber 1997, 109, 156).

Sofía , which, as noted, was written in the United States, uses the same narrative structure as these Northern, post-Civil War melodramas, but Morúa deploys it not to replicate the genre, but rather to destabilize it. The Northern exile Eladislao eventually finds his way to the Cuban *criolla* Magdalena, so that the overall narrative frame is one of a Northern gentleman eventually winning his land-rich Southern lady. Their union leads them to ownership of the plantation, and the reader can easily recognize a concomitant erasure of the agency of the black characters of the novel, at least if one adopts the couple's point of view. The romance also solidifies the place for a Northern, Americanized view of race in Cuba, one to which both Magdalena (from her schooling) and Eladislao (from his exile) implicitly subscribe. This assimilation of Northern mores can perhaps be seen as a sort of analog to the assimilation of (Irish and other European) immigrants to the North that the sentimental romance was meant to accommodate, but the resulting

equilibrium in *Sofía* is decidedly dystopic: the violence of US racism, found in the very subtlety and insidiousness of its so-called separate but equal stance toward race relations, promises the creation of a permanent black underclass due to its distinctly hierarchical nature.

In other words, the national romance is an illicit affair that produces an illegitimate (bastard) child (Magdalena gives birth to a baby girl), with the characters purposefully forgetting the close associations of the ruling elite (Magdalena) and the black underclass (Sofía), because US attitudes toward race promise the rise of a new ownership class in Cuba—capitalist Northerners like Eladislao—who would further complicate the already damaging effects of Spanish colonialism on race relations, further inhibiting the racelessness for which Morúa advocated. In the end, then, the romance narrated in *Sofía* leaves its intended audience with little to be sentimental about; what remains is a decided foreboding regarding the impending invasion of US attitudes to race. While Silber examines the harmonizing project of these sentimental and melodramatic works on late nineteenth-century US culture, Morúa as a black writer inverts the entire marriage plot in *La familia Unzúazu*, Morúa's sequel to *Sofía*. He does so to critique the US concepts of race that, for Morúa, ultimately produced such politically inert literary products as the sentimental romance and melodrama itself. Consequently, *La familia Unzúazu* contains multiple histotextual references that were meant to be read by black *lectores*, such as the burning of sugar cane fields by enslaved workers as well as by black insurgents who wished to deprive the plantation owners of their profits. It also provides a different vision for Cuba, one founded on the model of black leadership and the black experience. The events surrounding one María de Jesús offer a histotextual reference of particular note, one meriting detailed attention because it illustrates precisely how Morúa encouraged black readers to forge a place for themselves in Cuba's future.

In *La familia Unzúazu*, Eladislao must recruit the help of Magdalena's personal slave, María de Jesús, in order to facilitate his affair with Magdalena. While Vera Kutzinski (1993, 133) read Morúa's female characters as epitomizing the author's patriarchal construction of black women, I argue that Morúa repeatedly shows his black readers that María de Jesús's interventions are proactive and shaped by her particular knowledge of the ground on which she operates.[5] Consider, first, that Eladislao is forced to pay for her freedom in order to hide his affair from his wife. Doing so, however, haunts him throughout the text, a narrative element that would have encouraged black readers to question the "benefactor role" of the Americanized Cubans.[6] For Morúa, such duplicitous individuals were also comparable to their counterparts in the North, since many ex-abolitionists did nothing to end racism once the Civil War ended.

Elsewhere, Eladislao tries to meet up with María de Jesús at the Parque de la Marina, a place where white Cuban men historically sought concubines and where Afro Cuban women hoped to win white lovers in order to better their legal and/or economic position—the very type of scene on which Villaverde's Cuban classic was structurally built. To a black *lector* familiar with such racialized and sexualized spaces, however, this scene would signal Eladislao's moral depravity and his desire to seduce María de Jesús. And a sexual tension indeed pervades their interactions in the text, at least from Eladislao's point of view (Morúa Delgado 1901, 144). María de Jesús, however, refuses to meet him at the Parque and, further,

[5] In *Las Novelas del Señor Villaverde* Morúa criticized the lack of intelligence and naivety with which Villaverde depicted the enslaved woman María de la Regla, who tells the daughter of her owner of her plight, insinuating that Cecilia was the daughter of el Señor Gamboa, Leonardo's father in the process: "María de Regla es inteligente, y siéndolo. . . no iba a referir . . . una historia tan peligrosa para ella que buscaba el cese de su prolongado castigo" (Morúa Delgado 1892, 47) (*María de Regla is intelligent, and being so . . . she was not going to reference . . . a story so dangerous for her who was looking for an end to her prolonged punishment.*) That Morúa titles his second novel *La familia Unzúazu* also signals the collective disavowal by Americanized-criollos of the potential political impact of Afro Cubans in the future life of the Republic. In addition, it signals their collective attempt at keeping Afro Cubans in subservient positions that kept them politically and economically disenfranchised.

[6] Jorge Camacho (2015, 2018) demonstrates that Martí along with other revolutionaries at the time argued that black Cubans would never rise against white Cubans because they were grateful that white Cubans had died for them in the battlefields during the Ten Years' Wars. As I will show in Chapter 5, Morúa is skeptical of this rhetoric, instead claiming that because black Cubans were fighting to free Cuba from Spain, they would not rise up against their Cuban brothers either during the military campaign or once the country was freed from colonial rule, but it had nothing to do with a one-sided gratitude. Meehan and Miller (2006) frame the contradiction at the heart of Martí's writing regarding blackness.

while agreeing to deliver Eladislao's letters to Magdalena, she refuses to transport her letters to him. Instead, María de Jesús insists on writing the letters that will update Eladislao on Magdalena's well-being. Thus, María de Jesús not only circumvents his amorous advances but also uses her literacy and her own authorial powers to control the flow of information between the lovers. When Eladislao presses her as to why she will not serve as a direct intermediary between the two parties, she simply says her reason was her "secret" (Morúa Delgado 1901, 144). While the "secret" is never revealed, Michael Craton (1997, 229) highlights the link between secrecy and slave revolt. In the context of Morúa's novel and the post-slavery historical moment, the secret, therefore, may be taken to refer to black insurgents plotting revolution. Morúa explicitly says as much in the article "Ensayo político," (Morúa Delgado 1957, 3: 45-109) which I will discuss in Chapter 5. And in the novel itself, Fidelio, an Afro Cuban character introduced in *La familia Unzúazu*, is imprisoned for meeting with insurgents recently arrived from Key West who are recruiting for the Guerra Chiquita.

It is beyond the scope of this text to discuss in detail the potentially revolutionary roles of two Afro Cuban characters who appear in *Sofía* and *La familia Unzúazu*: Fidelio and Liberato. These characters would most likely have been the protagonists for the third installment of "Cosas de mi tierra," which was never written. Liberato, who is owned by the Unzúazu family, rapes Ana María while she is dreaming about making love to Eladislao. He flees and then is coerced by Federico into extracting monies from Ana María and Magdalena— Federico pretends he has been kidnapped by bandits. Liberato takes advantage of his *alzado* (escaped) status and with the help of Nicanor Moreno (a fellow, though white, *náñigo*) threatens to set fire to the sugar cane harvest if he is not paid a monthly ransom for not doing so. Morúa highlights that Liberato was taught this type of exploitation by his very owners. Yet this reference to monthly ransoms also

addresses the controversial practice by some insurrectionists of raising funds for the revolution through monthly ransoms. It further references a longtime practice of slave insurrections in which fire was set to sugar plantations as a form of protest. Conversely, Fidelio is taken into their confidence by Eladislao and Alvarado. After listening to their ambivalent discussions regarding race relations on the island—they fear black Cubans—he decides to start a newspaper because "En él se concentraban las dos razas opuestas: la negra y la blanca, la oprimida y la opresora. ¿Quién con más legítimos títulos ni más autorizada ejecutoría podría constituirse en paladín de la equidad proclamando la ley de amor y de concordia?" (Morúa Delgado 1901, 305–306). *(In him were concentrated the two opposing races: black and white, the oppressed and the oppressor. Who with more legitimate titles or more just authority could be the defender of equality proclaiming the law of love and harmony?)*

Provocatively, Morúa's biography is closely aligned with Fidelio's. That the third installment was never written speaks directly to the impossibility or at best the necessary deferment of being able to imagine Cuba's future as based on the black experience after US intervention on the island. Further, Eladislao's surprise that María de Jesús could write (Morúa Delgado 1901, 178–79) serves as notice to Black Cubans regarding his limited perception of their abilities and capabilities. More conspicuously still the narrator tells the reader: "María de Jesús escribía en agresivas letras como puñetazos" (Morúa Delgado 1901, 179) *(María de Jesús wrote in aggressive letters, like stabbings)*. These stabbings are significant, since Acebaldo (Magdalena's sister's sadistic husband) is stabbed and murdered as he leaves the house of his mulatta mistress, Domitilia, and Federico (Magdalena's brother) suffers the same fate in the arms of his mulatta paramour, Clarissa. (These stabbings also invoke the violence of slave insurrections and suggest that María's writing and the machete are tied together, making a place for female agency, both written and

military, in a revolutionary uprising.) While associating Eladislao with "un libertino que había arruinado a su esposa arrebatándole a montones el dinero. . . para libertar a una mulata y mantenerla como objeto de lujo y de placer" (Morúa Delgado 1901, 183) *(a libertine who had ruined his wife, taking large amounts of her money . . . to free a mulatta in order to maintain her as an object of luxury and pleasure)*, the narrator emphasizes that the similarity Eladislao regrets sharing with the libertine is not his infidelity, but rather being forced to pay for a loyal slave's freedom.[7]

As such, when Eladislao's best friend and confidant, the family physician *doctor* Alvarado, finds Eladislao deep in thought and apparently troubled, he asks him what is wrong, speculating it could not involve money. He knows that his wife América had been given an advance of 10,000 pesos on her confiscated properties (Morúa Delgado 1901, 185), which not incidentally is the same amount Sofía would have inherited from Acebaldo, her brother-in-law, if she had survived (Morúa Delgado 1891, 87). Yet Eladislao, who was indeed stewing over having to pay the manumission, deceives Alvarado by saying that he worries for Magdalena, who is sick and needs help. Publicly, then, he identifies Magdalena's well-being as what bothers him. Privately, he mourns the financial cost of the manumission in total indifference to the fact that a human being was freed by his purchase. The plot is reduced to a question of money, and Morúa thus warns his black *lectores* of the true motives behind the supposed benevolence of powerful Americanized Cubans like Eladislao toward Afro Cubans.

Since América dies in the next and final chapter of the novel, and the unborn male heir of the Alminto family perishes with her, Morúa suggests that Eladislao will likewise "pocket" some of the monies,

[7] It is important to highlight here the narrative link with *libertino* and Liberato. As Liberato had raped Ana María, Gonzaga is positioned as economically raping América and Magdalena. Although he is said to love Magdalena, his lack of moral character, since he is having an affair with her and is exploiting his own wife América in order hide his moral depravity, haunts the novel. In this way, Gonzaga and Liberato are not so subtly linked in the novel.

just as he was forced to use the 10,000 pesos previously returned to América in order to reluctantly pay for María de Jesús's freedom (Morúa Delgado 1901, 182–83). Furthermore, Eladislao had temporarily managed the Unzúazu estate after the death of Acebaldo, an estate that included sugar mills and slaves. That he profited from helping the slave-owning Unzúazus and that now he is marrying Magdalena and will manage the Unzúazu landholdings once again make Eladislao the new head of the slave-owning and previously slave-trafficking dynasty (Kutzinski 1993, 133).

Morúa's narrative ultimately suggests that Americanized Cubans like Eladislao would herald US control of the Cuban sugar industry by US companies through their complicity, echoing what Dr. Alvarado fears would happen to Cuba if a plan originally concocted by Acebaldo to convert the Unzúazu sugar mills to a *colono* system were put into effect: small farmers would be forced to sell their sugar cane to a powerful central processor (Morúa Delgado 1901, 299). Alvarado fears that Cuba would move from African to white slavery under such a system, a system that became the status quo after US political intervention and subsequent economic control of the island as of 1898. This simultaneously signals the pernicious nature of Alvarado's racial self-interest—he is afraid of white slavery but has no problem with the real enslavement of the black Cubans around him. And while his fears regarding the US proved prescient, it was still black Cubans who suffered most under both colonial and US imperial formations. When presented with Acebaldo's plan, Alvarado exclaims:

> Pues todo su plan viene á reducirse á un nuevo jénero de servidumbre que podría llamarse la esclavitud blanca; porque esos colonos que usted dice enriquecer con su sistema, no serían otra cosa que forzosos patrocinados, sujetos al capricho de aquellos centros de explotación arbitraria, según el caracter más o menos desconsiderado de los propietarios. Ahora, como gran negocio, ¡no

> digo yo si lo es! Y si después de fomentar en la isla media centena de "molinos en grande escala", como usted dice, se uniesen los propietarios y organizasen una asociación que les constituyera en Liga Azucarera, se completaría el monopolio de la producción y la industria más rica del país, y . . . ya tendrían con ello dignos sucesores los esclavistas de los buenos tiempos coloniales! [sic] (Morúa Delgado 1901, 299)
>
> *(Well, all of your plan is reduced to a new type of servitude that could be called white slavery; because those tenants farmers who you say will be enriched by your system would be nothing else but forced* patrocinados*, tied to the whim of those centers of arbitrary enrichment, according to the more or less inconsiderate character of the proprietors. Now, as a great business, I say it certainly is! And if after they promote on the island half a hundred "large-scale mills," as you say, the owners get together and organize an association that would constitute them into a Sugar League, the monopoly of the production and the richest industry of the country would be completed, and . . . you would have with it the dignified successors to the slavers of the good old colonial times!)*

In marrying Magdalena and eliminating América, Morúa indicates that as the new Acebaldo—as noted, Acebaldo had concocted the*colono* plan to begin with—Eladislao is the very embodiment of a neocolonial relationship that would be established by Americanized Cubans with the United States, which would ultimately doom the new Cuban Republic. As such, he represents merely another manifestation in the chain of oppression and exploitation, fueled by the greed that perpetuated African slavery in Cuba and the United States and would now recreate economic slavery for all on the island. As a black *lector* and labor activist, Morúa beckons Afro Cubans on both sides of the Florida Straits to become aware of the pernicious role of Americanized Cubans and to act in order to influence the nation- building project, which was developing

without them. In the end, then, Morúa incites his black *lectores* to "read" the situation on the ground as it really is, and then take matters into their own hands, whether with pen or machete.

* * *

Taking into account Morúa's experience in the post-Reconstruction US and his experience as a black *lector* in cigar factories on both sides of the Florida Straits, it becomes evident that trans-American concerns pervade his novels. Indeed, they provide the key that reveals the revolutionary dimensions of his fiction. For careful attention to the three levels of readers and reading that a close examination of Morúa's novels demands reveals the inextricable ties of his fiction both to contemporaneous political and social concerns and to the fortunes of the mostly working-class and/or black *lectores* who read or heard his novels in Cuba and the United States. That this is so forecloses on the possibility of understanding Morúa's novels as simply exposing the racist colonial attitudes of a white readership, as Jackson (1979) has argued with respect to *Cecilia Valdés*. For, through his novels, Morúa examines black characters such as María de Jesús, showing them to be active agents, intimating thereby that the black writer or the black reader/listener/*lector* is himself or herself an actor in history, not a mere prop for teaching a white audience of the need to overcome their own overt and implicit forms of racism.

Morúa's histotextual mode of writing also opens a new perspective for American and Latinx studies, because his concerns are not only for the future of Cuba but for the Cubans who had emigrated to the United States at the time of his writing, and the impact they would have on the post-Reconstruction era. For while we may not have written testimony of the lives and political activities of these *lectores*, we have distinct traces of their concerns in these writings. This is so because Morúa's work recognizes and presupposes the very agency of his black readership, both in Cuba and in the United States. The proactive,

black characters of his novels are themselves histotextual markers, not imagined possibilities. That many among Morúa's readership never returned to Cuba but stayed in the United States further suggests that he and authors like him who have traditionally been classified as Latin American writers should now be recovered and incorporated into the canon of American and Latinx studies, even if they ultimately returned to their home countries or wrote predominantly in Spanish. These authors can offer an expanded view of the lived experience and the particular views and modes of knowledge production of Latina/os in the United States in the nineteenth century, begging us thereby to cross, recross, and ultimately renegotiate the still existent boundaries between Latin American, Latinx, and American studies.

In addition, when we pair Morúa's novels with his 1883 translation of James Redpath's (1863) *Toussaint L'Ouverture: A Biography and Autobiography* , we begin to decipher his vision for an independent Cuba and the place of black Cubans within it, those who were previously enslaved incorporated as an integral part of the hemisphere, just as Martí had done with indigenous people in Latin America in his translation of *Ramona*. To frame this link I turn to Daut's (2015)*Tropics of Haiti. Race and the Literary History of the Haitian Revolution in the Atlantic World, 1789–1865* , in which she argues that:

> Reading together for the first time several of the many passages from *The Life of Toussaint L'Ouverture* that Brown adapted to an antebellum U.S. context in the 1853 version of *Clotel*, as well as his mingling of *Clotel* with "St. Domingo," suggest that ideas about Haiti and ideas about "race" were often *one and the same thing* in his literary imagination. That is to say that to talk about Haiti in the antebellum U.S. was, for Brown, to talk about "race," and in many ways to talk about "race" for him was to talk about Haiti. It is the twinning of these ideas that ultimately reveals the way in which the material practices of power that led to the development and institutionalization of what

> we are calling the trope of the "colored historian." (Italics mine) (Daut 2015, 494)[8]

This twinning also happens in Morúa, but in his case through his translation he seeks a new way of thinking about leadership in particular, since he does not see Afro Cubans, Afro Latina/os, and Afro Latin Americans as simply part of the nation, and by extension the hemisphere, but locates them at its very foundation. And doing so implicitly but unequivocally, he emended Martí's vision for the hemisphere, which for Morúa shamefully excluded any deep sensitivity to race. For, through his translation and journalism, in which he addresses the figure of Toussaint L'Ouverture repeatedly, he expounds a foundational blackness for the nation and the hemisphere, not as a fiction, but as historical reality. That the final part of the trilogy "Cosas de mi tierra" was never written, in which the figure of Fidelio, a black budding journalist, would have been used to present Morúa's vision for the future of the Cuban nation and the place of Afro Cubans and Afro Latina/os in it speaks to the impossibility of writing a novel in which blackness was at the very heart of political independence in Cuba and one in which freedom from US imperial rule in the Americas could occur. This impossibility rested not only upon the colonial Cuban production of race but also the pernicious race relations learned in the US by Americanized Cubans who would come to rule the island. He further feared, and not unfoundedly, that this US-based vision for race relations would be brought to Cuba through legislative means if annexation were to occur.

[8] William Wells Brown's (1853) *Clotel; or, the President's Daughter: A Narrative of Slave Life in the United States* is considered the first novel by an African American author. The work details the plight of enslaved women under US slavery. Specifically, it narrates the perilous life of a mistress of Thomas Jefferson, her two daughters, and his granddaughter, thereby condemning the duplicity of the Founding Fathers in their claiming equal rights for all, while enslaving others. It pages are immersed in the history of Haiti and the Haitian Revolution, since Brown transcribes multiple phrases from Beard's *Life of Toussaint L'Ouverture* in the novel.

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The Cuban Family Carbonell: Exile and Return of a Founding Family

By Daniel I. Pedreira, Ph.D.

Abstract

Much of the support for Cuba's independence movement came from Cuban exiled communities in Key West, Tampa, and New York. After independence, many of these families returned to Cuba, playing important roles in the country's political and cultural development. One of them, the Carbonell family, was central to inviting Cuban independence leader José Martí to Tampa. The following generations served as statesmen, elected officials, and intellectuals. This study traces the story of the exile and return of the first two generations of the Carbonell family and their involvement in promoting Cuban independence and identity. In doing so, the study analyzes the understudied effects of reverse migration to Cuba at the end of the 19th century and its impacts on Cuban history, politics, and culture across several generations.

Introduction

Exile is the inevitable constant of Cuban history. Throughout Cuban history, and particularly since the 19th century, generations have been shaped by periods of exile. Much of the study of Cuba's exile experience focuses on the role that this community played in different cities in the U.S. and around the world. Yet, the story of Cuban exiles and their return to Cuba is just as compelling. It demonstrates what Cubans achieved once their dream of *Cuba Libre* was achieved, and when their dream of returning to their homeland became a reality.

Of the many Cuban families marked by the exile experience, the Carbonell family stands out. Their story of exile, return, and back to exile can be traced beginning in the late-19th century. Since then, their contributions to government, diplomacy, arts, letters, and business have been noteworthy. Among their distinguished members are noted ambassadors, authors, and elected officials, including one of the first

women ever elected to Congress in Cuba. At the same time, they contributed significantly to the development of the concept of *cubanidad*, or Cubanness, helping to forge a new brand of Cuban nationhood that continues to this day.

This study primarily explores the exile experience of the first and second generations of Carbonells who went into exile in the United States at the end of the 19th century. Tracing their activities in the U.S., including their relationship with José Martí, and their work in Cuba following their return provides valuable insights into the work of Cuban exiles across time and space.

Cuba and the Ten Years' War

The turbulence of Spanish politics during the 19th century and the development of a Cuban national identity came to a head on October 10, 1868. At La Demajagua, his plantation in Oriente, in what became known as *el Grito de Yara*, Carlos Manuel de Céspedes y del Castillo freed his slaves and called for Cubans to take up arms against Spain.[1] For the next decade, Cubans would fight for independence in what became known as the Ten Years' War.

While some Cubans were fighting in the battlefields of the Cuban *manigua*, or countryside, others followed the path towards exile abroad. As Carlos Ripoll indicated, "Many wealthy Cubans – businessmen, industrialists and landowners – were also forced to seek refuge in the United States because of their activities against Spain."[2] Cuban exiles may not have been at the heart of the military action for Cuban independence, but they played a significant role in actively supporting the struggle for independence.

Cuban exiles arriving in the United States originally settled in two key cities. In the north, Cubans found plenty of economic opportunity in New York City, benefitting from commercial contacts and networks established prior to their arrival.

[1] Estenger, Rafael. 1974. *Sincera historia de Cuba: Desde Colón hasta nuestros días. Medellín: Ed*itorial Bedout S.A., 180. [2] Ripoll, Carlos. 1987. *Cubans in the United States*. New York: Eliseo Torres & Sons – Las Americas Publishing Co., 18.

At the time, Key West was Florida's largest city and enjoyed the fruits of a bountiful and robust tobacco industry. This provided many Cubans, experienced in their own tobacco industry, with employment opportunities in their new home. Prosperity for Cuban exiles meant economic aid to the Cuban war effort, and soon the leaders of Cuba's independence movement mobilized the Key West community to lend a helping hand. Soon, newspapers owned by Cubans began to share updates on the war in Cuba, establishing another important link between the exiles and their homeland.

After ten years of fighting, Cuba's independence war came to an end with the Pact of Zanjon, a peace treaty between Spain and the Cuban independence fighters. Under an amnesty granted to Cubans actively involved in the War, many Cuban exiles returned to Cuba. Yet many remained in the United States, keeping their jobs in a prosperous tobacco industry. In Cuba, Generals Antonio Maceo Grajales, Calixto García Íñiguez, and other military officers staged the Protest of Baraguá in opposition to the terms of the Pact of Zanjón.[3] In 1879, a second, yet short-lived, war for independence erupted. Known as *La Guerra Chiquita* (The Little War), this effort ended in defeat for the Cubans in 1880.

The Cuban independence movement was not over. In the next few years, new leaders like José Martí would emerge to take the reigns of the struggle for Cuban independence. New locations would also emerge as the backdrops for Cuban freedom. A fire in 1886 ravaged most of Key West's tobacco industry, forcing businessmen and workers to move north to Tampa.[4] The previous year, Spanish tobacco magnates Serafín Sánchez, Ignacio Haya, and Vicente Martínez Ybor set plans into motion to build factories in Tampa.[5][6] Soon, other factory owners followed suit, and Tampa became the new epicenter of Cuban activity in Florida.

[3] Suchlicki, Jaime. 2002. *Cuba: From Columbus to Castro and Beyond. Dulles: Br*assey's, Inc., 63.
[4] Bretos, Miguel A. 1991. *Cuba & Florida: Exploration of an Historic Connection, 1539-1991*. Miami: Historical Association of Southern Florida, 73.
[5] Rivero Muñiz, José. 1976. *The Ybor City Story: 1885-1954*. Translated by Eustasio Fernández and Henry Beltrán. Tampa: n.p., 10.
[6] Tambuzzo Barbie, Rose and Rosalie Guarino Simms. 2004. *Ybor City…A quick peel into its history*. Tampa: n.p., 2.

Néstor Leonelo Carbonell y Figueroa and the Ten Years War

The story of the Carbonell family and its role in shaping Cuban politics and culture begins with Néstor Leonelo Carbonell y Figueroa. Born in Sancti Spíritus in 1846, Carbonell joined the struggle for independence during the Ten Years' War. In 1868, Carbonell heeded Cespedes' call for independence and himself rebelled at his plantation, Los Melones. During the War, he witnessed the 1869 burning of Bayamo and saw combat at the battles of Santa Teresa, Atollaosa, San José, Guasimal, Santa Elena, Paso de Catano, San Agustin, Los Hondones, Tunas, El Malangal, San Antonio Abad del Jíbaro, and Meloncito, where he was injured.[7]

The War took a heavy toll on Carbonell and his family. He lost his wife, Bonifacia Malta Cuellar, and four of his children, Ana, Carlos Leonelo, Blanca Isabel, and Gaspar, in the same week, the victims of smallpox.[8] At the 1870 Battle of Atollaosa when, required to retrieve the dead and wounded, Carbonell came across his mortally wounded brother, Captain Gaspar Carbonell y Figueroa, who was fighting for the Spanish.[9]

During the War, Carbonell was known as "La Imprenta Ambulante" (*The Roaming Press*) for his ability to recite from memory and later print the speeches and rallying cries that he heard from Céspedes himself, saving them for future generations of Cubans. He was also known as an exceptional orator, reciting some of the period's most significant speeches, articles, and other works, to the admiration and applause of audiences. The love for the arts and letters and their preservation for future generations would become a defining characteristic of this talented family.

[7] Gómez Carbonell, María. 1988. *Mis generales y mis doctores*. Miami: Laurenty Publishing, Inc., 2. [8] Ibid., 4.
[9] Ibid., 5.

Following the end of the War in 1878, Carbonell moved to Havana with his three remaining children, Eligio de Jesús, María de la Natalidad, and Natalia. In Cuba's capital, Carbonell married Eloísa Rivero y Brito. The couple gave birth to ten children: Candelaria Eloísa, José Manuel, Rosa María, Néstor Leonelo, Blanca Rosa, María de la Encarnación, Carmela, Gaspar, Juan Bautista, and Miguel Ángel. Their diverse places of birth – Key West, Tampa, and Cuba – are a testament to Cuba's tumultuous history at the end of the 19th century.[10] In 1879, he went to Jacmel, Haiti, to support Cuban revolutionary clubs that continued the fight for independence while maintaining communication with General Maceo, also in Haiti. Upon his return to Cuba in 1880, Carbonell and his family settled in Alquízar.[11]

The Carbonells in Exile

In 1888, Carbonell and his family left Cuba and settled in Key West. While there, Carbonell founded a school and wrote for several Havana newspapers and Mexico's *El Continente Americano*.[12] It was in Key West that, much to the chagrin of other pro-independence Cubans in the city, he rejected the offer of assistance of Manuel García, the self-proclaimed "King of the Cuban Countryside", due to his reputation as a bandit. The backlash against his opposition to Garcia's aid led him to decide to leave Key West in 1889. Originally intending to settle in New York City, he eventually chose Tampa as his new home and would serve as a conduit for key chapters in Cuba's independence movement.

While in Tampa, Carbonell founded and operated a bookstore, called Galería Literaria, where readers could obtain pro-independence newspapers. Joining the anti-clerical voices of the period that were prevalent in Tampa, he declared that the Catholic Church "stands as the enemy of scientific truth, justice, and liberty."[13] He also founded a patriotic club, the Club Ignacio Agramonte, and served as its president by

[10] Ibid., 6.
[11] Ferrer, Carbonell, Oscar. 2005. *Néstor Leonelo Carbonell: Como el grito del águila*. Havana: Editorial de Ciencias Sociales, 39.
[12] Ibid., 46.
[13] Mormino, Gary R. and George E. Pozzetta. 1998. *The Immigrant World of Ybor City: Italians and Their Latin Neighbors in Tampa, 1885-1985*. Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 212.

1891. His eldest son, Eligio de Jesús, served as the Club's Secretary, while José Fernando Gómez Santoyo, the elder Carbonell's future son-in-law, served as its Treasurer.

Eligio de Jesús Carbonell Malta

Born in Sancti Spíritus on September 9, 1867, Eligio de Jesús Carbonell Malta grew up close to his father. The first-born son of the family, he endured personal hardships, having witnessed the death of his mother and four of his siblings within a week. Raised in the *manigua* while his father fought in the Ten Years War, the patriotic cause was part of his character from an early age.

Eligio was in his early twenties when he arrived in Tampa with his father, stepmother, and remaining siblings. There, he founded the newspapers *El Mosquito* and *La Contienda*. He also maintained correspondence with Cuban poet and independence leader José Martí, then based in New York City. He also assisted his father with running the Club Ignacio Agramonte and served as his most trusted advisor. It was Eligio who suggested that his father invite Martí to travel to Tampa to commemorate the 20th anniversary of the execution of Cuban medical students by Spanish forces on November 27, 1871.[14] While Martí's visit to Tampa was sure to be memorable and important in boosting morale for the independence movement, the Carbonells could not have been aware of the visit's significance in the annals of Cuban history.

Martí Visits Tampa

Martí took the Carbonells up on their offer and visited them in Tampa to deliver an address before the Club Ignacio Agramonte on November 26, 1891. At Ybor City's Liceo Cubano, Martí delivered what would become one of his most famous speeches, known as "*Con todos y para el bien de todos*" ("With all and for the good of all"). The following day, he followed the speech with one that holds an equally revered

[14] Costa, Octavio R. 2003. *Cubanos de acción y pensamiento*. Miami: Ediciones Universal, 238.

place in Cuban history, "*Los pinos nuevos*" ("The New Pines"). Martí's Tampa visit "engendered such enthusiasm that a *Liga de instrucción*, like La Liga in New York, was formed."[15] Between his first visit in November of 1891 and his death in May of 1895, Martí visited Tampa at least twenty times.[16]

In his memoirs, Orestes Ferrara Marino, the Italian native who joined Cuba in its War of Independence, recalled the Ybor City home of his future father-in-law, Federico Sánchez, serving as a meeting place for the many illustrious Cubans who passed through Tampa. "There," Ferrara remembered, "Martí dictated to the eldest of the Carbonells, Eligio, articles and manifestos."[17]

Writing about the elder Carbonell, Martí noted: "he dreamed of congregating all the Cubans in the world, and he called them, the first one to congregate in a single home."[18] Martí also noted the patriotic virtues of even the youngest Carbonells, dubbing Candelaria Carbonell as "*La Virgencita de Ibor*" ("The Little Virgin of Ibor").

Another one of Carbonell's young sons, José Manuel, was deeply moved by Martí's presence. Born in Alquízar on July 3, 1880, he was a child when his parents left Cuba to settle in Key West and later in Tampa.[19] At 11, he met Martí during his first visit to Tampa, an event that had a profound impact on his life. As Octavio R. Costa pointed out, José Manuel's admiration for Martí would grow over the next few years, and he would never forget Martí's last visit to Tampa: "The Cubans bid farewell to the Apostle. The adolescent, who had not yet turned fourteen, because that was on May 26, 1894, threw himself into his arms to tell him goodbye. The great Cuban embraced him with paternal care and left a kiss on his

[15] Fountain, Anne. 2014. *José Martí, the United States, and Race.* Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 40. [16] Salcines, Emiliano J. *José Martí in Tampa: 20 Documented Visits (1891-1894).* Tampa: n.p., 1.
[17] Ferrara, Orestes. 1975. *Memorias: Una mirada sobre tres siglos*. Madrid: Playor, S.A., 55.
[18] Carbonell Cortina. Néstor. 2004. *La Cuba eterna: Ayer, hoy y mañana*. Miami: Ediciones Universal, 125. [19] Gómez Carbonell, María. 1988. *Mis generales y mis doctores*. Miami: Laurenty Publishing, Inc., 112tte.

forehead."[20] Following in the footsteps of his father and brother, José Manuel founded a newspaper, *El Expedicionario*.

The Necessary War and Independence

After years of hard work, conditions were once again ripe for a new war of independence. On February 24, 1895, pro-independence forces throughout Cuba led by Martí rose up in arms in what became known as the *Grito de Baire*. This "Necessary War" would set Cuba on the course for independence, but at a price. Martí himself was killed on May 19th of the same year, followed by Maceo on December 7, 1896.

Following Martí's death in combat at Dos Ríos on May 19, 1895, José Manuel, aged fifteen, joined the War in early 1896.[21] Achieving the rank of lieutenant in the war, he witnessed the U.S. occupation, the debates of the Assembly at El Cerro, the end of Spanish colonial rule, the deliberations of the Constitutional Assembly, the development of the Platt Amendment, the country's first general elections, and the birth of the Cuban Republic.[22] Indeed, José Manuel was poised to play a role as one of the new Republic's leading public figures.

In 1898, the United States invaded Cuba following the explosion of the U.S.S. Maine in Havana Harbor. The Spanish forces were defeated a few months later, and their loss of Cuba, along with Puerto Rico and The Philippines, represented the end of Spain's imperial era. The United States oversaw Cuba's political, economic, and social reconstruction as it prepared itself to become an independent republic. Cuban independence came on May 20, 1902, when U.S. troops handed power over to the country's first president, Tomás Estrada Palma, thus establishing the Republic of Cuba.

Founding a Republic

[20] Costa, Octavio R. 2003. *Cubanos de acción y pensamiento*. Miami: Ediciones Universal, 238-239. [21] Ibid., 239.
[22] Ibid., 239.

The establishment of an independent Cuban republic was bittersweet for Néstor Leonelo Carbonell. Having returned to Cuba, Eligio continued writing articles for publications like *Cuba Libre*. He died soon after, on August 5, 1899.

Despite the personal tragedies that accentuated his life, Néstor Leonelo was able to contribute to the fledgling Cuban republic. In 1902, he founded the Ateneo de La Habana, a social, cultural, and literary society, and served as its first president.[23] Having dedicated his life to Cuba's freedom and having seen his dream realized, the patriarch of the Carbonell clan passed away in Havana on November 8, 1923. His descendants would continue to play a significant role in shaping Cuba's politics, culture, and ideas on nationalism and *cubanidad*.

Conclusions

The Carbonell family's significant impact in the public sphere of the Cuban republic can be traced back to its involvement in the struggle for Cuban independence of the 19th century. The story of Néstor Leonelo Carbonell and his sons Eligio and José Manuel offers valuable insights into the early part of this story.

Through the establishment of newspapers, promotion of patriotic and political events, and offering of spaces for civic and intellectual discourse, the Carbonells helped establish the foundations for the future Cuban republic. What stands out is their ability to carry out this activity in exile and then transplant it back in their homeland.

These first two generations of Carbonells shed light into the activities of Cuban exiles in the U.S. at the end of the 19th century while providing insights into the development of cities like Key West and Tampa. At the same time, these generations stand out because of their relationship with José Martí at the

[23] Costa, Octavio R. 2003. *Imagen y trayectoria del cubano en la historia 2: La República (1902-19959)*. Miami: Ediciones Universal, 467.

crossroads of Cuban independence. The family's succeeding generations would share in their ancestor's reverence for Martí and would contribute to the development of Cuban nationalism throughout the 20th century.

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The *Parque Amigos de José Martí* –A Brief History of *Patria* in Exile

By Adolfo Lagomasino, Ph.D.

If you've ever missed it, you know what it feels like. The feeling of home, belonging, and a sense of place. While José Martí expressed his longing for family and home throughout his exile, the boarding house on the corner of 13th Street and East Eighth Avenue in Ybor City was a home away from home.

On December 16, 1893, José Martí arrived in Tampa for his eighth visit since 1891 to continue his campaign supporting Cuban independence. That night, two Spanish men visited Martí and attempted to kill him. They poured poison into his wine, and upon tasting it, he quickly spit it out (Salcinas). Martí fell ill soon after and was moved that night to the Pedroso house (Casa Pedroso). Paulina and Ruberto Pedroso were two immigrants from Cuba who supported the cause for Cuban independence. Martí had befriended the Pedrosos during previous visits. Over the next three days, Paulina Pedroso and her husband, Ruberto, nursed Martí back to health. Without the care of the Pedrosos, Martí may have died that fateful night in December, and the dream of an independent Cuba might have died with him. For this reason, the Pedrosos are considered the saviors of the "apostle of freedom." The failed assassination attempt on Martí catapulted the cause for Cuba's freedom from Spain and established Tampa as "the cradle of Cuban independence."

Parque Amigos de Jose Marti

The history of the Cuban diaspora and how Cuban culture is practiced by exiles and immigrants in Tampa can be understood through the Parque Amigos de José Martí. The chronology of the park offers insight into how the Tampa-Cuban community created a space to connect with their Cuban identity. The

park symbolizes Cuban identity in Tampa and the relationship between Tampa and Cuba, and it serves as a place where one can express one's Cubanness by stepping onto Cuban soil.

According to the Hillsborough County Tax Collector's records, the park is owned by "Estado Cubano" (The Cuban State), and from this anomaly stem numerous rhetorical constructs of what the park means. The park is a symbol of the relationship between Tampa and Cuba. Whether through ownership or the importation of soil from Cuba, the park is understood as Cuban property, which allows for the possibility of visiting Cuba by stepping into the park. Albeit a satellite territory, the park's historical significance, cultural symbolism, and weekly occupation present a unique lens to understand how Cubanness is felt, construed, and performed by visiting it.

Preserving the Ideal

In 1945, during a meeting at the Círculo Cubano, with mutual aid society representatives and members of the Tampa Cuban community, Victoriano Mantiega, editor of *La Gaceta* newspaper, proposed erecting a bust or statue of José Martí (Villamia). Four years later, the first commemorative symbol to José Martí was built in Ybor City; a bust outside the Circulo Cubano was unveiled August 7, 1949. Just around the corner, a historical marker was added to the steps of the V.M. Ybor Cigar factory where Martí delivered his famous speech, "With All, and For The Good of All," a year later. Afterward, Martí needed only to walk west to the next corner to enter his room at the Pedroso house. This and other influential events shaped the park's design, meaning, and use. The park is an optic for viewing how Cubanness is experienced. Since the park is a memorial to José Martí and the Tampa/Cuba connection, it encapsulates and symbolizes what the Cuban community wants to remember about Cuba. Through archival research, I provide a chronology of the park to illustrate how it has been populated with other artifacts of Cubaness, how it has been occupied and

used by Tampa Cubans, and how it has been deployed as sacred land in an ongoing struggle for Cuba's future. The chronology of the park is offered as a narrative of how Cubaness has been performed within it and how it has impacted notions of Cubaness within the diasporic condition of exile.

Memorial and Oblivion

After Paulina Pedroso's death, the property changed ownership several times, but few renovations were made to the building (Sellers). A bill introduced in the Florida Congress sought to establish the park as a memorial to José Martí. Included in the bill were plans to renovate the boarding house and other historical sites within the Latin Quarter of Ybor City (Ybor Restoration Plans To Be Further Discussed Today). In 1951, the property was purchased by Mercedes Carillo la Guardia and Manuel Quevedo Jaureguizar. Quevedo ran the Cuban airline Aerovias Q, making Cuba a premier tourist destination. The Quevedos were Cuban citizens living in Havana with the intent of bestowing the land to the Cuban state to establish a memorial to José Martí. In addition to selling his airline company to General Julio Iglesias de la Torre, who in turn claimed Batista as the principal owner of the company, the property was transferred to the Cuban state "for and in consideration of their love and affection for their native country" (Sellers 35). The couple stipulated that the boarding house be preserved, and in a personal conveyance wrote, "On the same lot is builded [sic] a wooden-walled and roof-tiled house at which, during his stay at the above-mentioned City of Tampa, resided the Apostle José Martí" (Sellers 35). Batista accepted the property, and on September 10, 1956, the American consul in Havana approved the transfer (Sellers).

The previous November, in 1955, a twenty-nine-year-old mustachioed Fidel Castro was in Tampa gathering up support against the tyranny of the Batista regime (O'Conner, "Anti-Batista Cuban Comes Here to Seek Revolt Funds"). Castro was banned from speaking at the Italian Club, stating, "the dictator's

agents have done their best to destroy this meeting," but managed to convene with three hundred fellow Cuban exiles seeking change (O'Conner, "Cubans Here Give Funds to Aid Revolt Against Batista"). While in Tampa, Castro visited the boarding house during a tour of Ybor City with Raul Villamia and Victoriano Mantiega. Following in the footsteps of Martí, coming to Tampa to raise support for another revolution from the historically radical Cuban community, Fidel wrote the next chapter in Cuba's struggle for freedom and independence.

A year after Fidel Castro's visit, the Pan American Commission, along with Batista as an honorary board member, proposed a commemorative statue of José Martí be built on the site and established the property as the "Parque Amigos de José Martí." The boarding house was in severe disrepair, infested with mold, termites, and dry rot, and "leaning crazily to one side" (O'Conner, "Cuban Patriot José Martí's House in Ybor City Begins to Fall as Mayor Swings Axe"). On October 27, 1956, Ybor Latin Quarter native and Tampa Mayor Nick Nuccio swung an ax into the front door of the building. The same door Martí passed through during his many visits to Tampa was ceremonially split apart, sending the house "on its way to oblivion… to make for a monument and park to be dedicated to the memory of Cuba's apostle of freedom" ("Cuban Patriot José Martí's House in Ybor City Begins to Fall as Mayor Swings Axe"). The ax was sent to Cuba as a gift to Batista, and the house was demolished the following Monday.

Designing the Parque Amigos de José Martí

The memorial park project began with a declaration. Where once the walls of the building separated Cuba from Tampa/U.S., a wrought iron fence was erected with a central front gate under a stone archway bearing the name of the park and a solid back wall. The boundary was established in 1957, but the park was barely tended to, except for an occasional mowing of weeds. "It had become an enclosed vacant

lot, with an absentee landlord, unkempt and an eyesore" (Villamia). In response to city officials wondering what would be done with the overgrown lot, Ruben Fabelo, Chair member of the José Martí Memorial Foundation, revealed alternate plans for what the park is today. The interior of the park was to have "walks, gardens and a replica of the house which formerly occupied that very corner…. [with] a caretaker, exclusively for the park" (Fabelo). Most importantly, Fabelo expressed that the park was being visited, cared for, and attended, even if it didn't always look that way. An open lot, but never empty, just incomplete.

On New Year's Eve in 1958, the 26th of July Movement, led by Fidel Castro, invaded Havana, and Batista fled the country for the Dominican Republic. The newly established M267 government took over the consul offices in Tampa along with control of the park. Throughout 1959, several ceremonies, speeches, and fundraisers were held at the park. Although the park was more in order, the political upheaval in Cuba resonated in Tampa. Just as some Tampa Cubans found themselves siding with or against Martí half a century earlier, Castro also galvanized some and was despised by others. Up to this point, it is unclear if the groups responsible for brokering the establishment of the José Martí Park with Batista outright supported his presidency. Still, those who supported Castro were now in charge of the park.

The Tampa branch of M267 consisted of several members of the José Martí Memorial Foundation, making for a sound partnership and smooth transition of partial funding for the proposed statue of José Martí in the park. Alberto Sabas, a Cuban-born sculptor living in Tampa who had previously created the Columbus statue on Tampa's Bayshore Drive, was contacted by M267 to commission the statue (Villamia). Through meetings at the Círculo Cubano, the two groups continued the plans for the park, but the statue's story began long before this alliance.

The Statue of José Martí

In 1951, Dr. Jorge Trelles and Dr. A.A. Fernandez, members of the José Martí Memorial Foundation with the support of then Cuban president Carlos Prío Socarrás, commissioned Cuban sculpture José Manuel Fidalgo to create the likeness of José Martí. Soon after, Batista launched a coup, ousting Socarrás. Fidalgo created a six-foot-tall wax figure to be cast in bronze for the park and made miniature versions as well. The small sculptures, with the inscription "Para Cuba que sufre" (*for Cuba who suffers*), were circulated and sold throughout the island, symbolizing the anti-Batista uprising and raising funds for the 26th of July movement. Proving rather profitable, Cuba's *Bohemia* magazine ran a picture of the statues, infuriating Batista and leading him to order a raid on and wreck of the sculpture's studio. Fidalgo was exiled to Mexico. Tony Pizzo of the José Martí Memorial Foundation inquired about the whereabouts of the sculpture and wax statue, which was found to have been destroyed in the studio. Although Batista agreed to honor the partnership between the Socarrás government and the Foundation, members were uneasy about accepting funds from the regime that exiled the sculptor. Additionally, although Batista stated that promised funds for the park would still be delivered, most of it was used for the perimeter fencing and wall. The 26th of July Movement (M267) raised funds for the statue through community donations ("After Rift Cuban Consul Removed").

For a proposed cost of $400 and the labor of a few masons from M-267, the statue of Marti was installed on a pedestal with a slight bass relief plaque depicting the Cuban people yearning for freedom and the engraved watchword for Cubans seeking liberty, "para Cuba que sufre" (Villamia). This was the second physical feature created within the boundary of the Parque Amigos de José Martí, the first being the planting of white rose bushes. The fencing and wall used to separate the Cuban space from surrounding

Ybor were funded by the Cuban government of Fulgencio Batista, but the park's interior was furnished by the Tampa chapter of M267 and supported by Tampa Martianos (those who followed the principles of José Martí). From its humble beginnings, the park was Cuban space, cared for by Tampa Cubans.

The unveiling of the statue was initially planned for February 24, 1960, to coincide with the anniversary of "El Grito de Baire" (*the Shout of Baire*), which was the beginning of Cuba's second war for independence in 1895, the war Martí inspired and died in. However, for reasons that seem more nefarious than simply trying to schedule the ceremony on the weekend, Renee Dechard, the then Cuban consul in Tampa, moved the unveiling to the 28th and demanded M267 surrender the keys to the park ("After Rift Cuban Consul Removed"). M267 decided to perform the ceremony on February 24th, only to find the gates closed with a new lock installed. They laid wreaths of white roses on the gates with a placard saying, "This wreath is here because of the Cuban Consul's refusal to open the park's gates to the 26th of July Movement" (Villamia).

M267 returned to the park on February 28th and were again denied entrance. Standing outside the wrought iron fence, they witnessed Rene Dechard speaking in front of the statue; the white rose bushes in the park had been removed along with the wreath and sign they'd left days before. Dechard called the M267 traitors, criticizing them for becoming American citizens and claiming they had not contributed to constructing the statue. Reports of the incident traveled back to Cuba, Dechard was removed from his post, and the keys to the park were returned to M267. While the statue and park were now established, what it meant to the Cuban community was different. The park would endure decades more of conflicts regarding ownership and use (" After Rift Cuban Consul Removed").

War of the Roses

The dedication of the statue on February 28, 1960, days after the anniversary of El Grito de Baire, began another war that would come to be known as the War of the Roses (Bayle). On October 9, 1960, Felipe Jimenez, president of the Patriot Movement of Tampa for Aid to the Cuban Farmer, noted that six carloads of "Batista Gangsters" had tried to break up a rally at the park. On November 26, roughly 1,500 new Cuban refugees traveled from Miami to Tampa to march in an anti-Castro protest that ended at the José Martí Park. With news of the pending demonstration, two men, one wearing an M267 armband, placed a wreath of red roses at the foot of the Martí statue and then locked the gates to the park. When the anti-Castro protestors arrived, they broke through the barrier and entered the park. According to the police report, a group member delivered a speech, placed a floral cross of white roses next to the statue, then left peacefully. The lock and chain had disappeared; later that day, someone removed the Anti-Castro arrangement. Although concerns were raised, the patrolmen reporting on the incident did not interfere as there was no legal precedent regarding who owned the park. Two months later, a group of Anti-Castro Cubans celebrated the anniversary of Martí's birth ("Mass March for Martí – Anti-Castro Cubans Defy Lock to Place Wreath").

The War of the Roses continued, and in early 1968, anti-Castro and anti-communist groups joined forces in protest of Cubans fighting in Vietnam. The groups were demonstrating for the U.S. to invade Cuba once again and topple the Castro Regime (Alarcon, "Cuban Protest Group Marches"). The group returned to the park a week later to celebrate the anniversary of the birth of José Martí, again laying white rose wreaths at the statue (Alarcon, "Ybor Pays Honor to José Martí"). The anniversary of the Bay of Pigs invasion and two Cuban exiles who were captured, imprisoned, and later released were honored in the park

("Exiles in Tampa Mark Anniversary"). White rose wreaths were laid at the statue. In October, the 100th anniversary of El Grito de Yara (beginning of the first war for Cuban independence) was celebrated ("Exiles Mark Cuba's 100th Anniversary"). White rose wreaths were laid at the statue. For the anniversary of Martí's birth in 1969, white rose wreaths were laid at the statue. In 1970, 71, 72, 73, 74… white rose wreaths were laid at the statue.

José Martí's Dream for Cuba

The park was the focus of the territorial battle between Tampa Cubans, but the ideological war spread beyond the park. The 26th of July offices at 9th Avenue and 14th Street and the headquarters for the *La Gaceta* newspaper were attacked, in addition to locations in Miami and New York, all of which echoed the demonstrations and violence in Havana and across Cuba. The park was a metaphorical flag for the opposing sides to capture. A claim on the park meant a claim to Cuba's future. In 1961, after a negative review in a tourism article about Ybor City in the *New York Times*, the Latin Quarter again proposed a clean-up effort. The park was overgrown with weeds, surrounding the statue of Martí in a field of tall, wavering grass. Three weeks after the negative review, the lawn was mowed, and a plaque indicating the park was the site of the Pedroso house was later added. Although not the initially planned restoration of the house, it was the first indication of the historical significance of the site and the friendship between Pedroso and Martí. Regardless of political affiliation, Cubans around Tampa appreciated the park improvements, and tensions subsided, but peace was fleeting. Three months later, the CIA attempted a foreign coup at Playa Giron, known in the U.S. as the Bay of Pigs Invasion. A group of Cuban exiles, Brigade 2506, along with U.S. military personnel, attempted to overthrow the Castro regime but failed.

On Sunday, November 26, 1961, roughly 300 Cuban exiles from Tampa and Miami marched to the

park carrying signs stating Cuba is a "Danger only 90 miles from the USA!" Police patrolled the streets anticipating the political fervor within the group, knowing the historical precedent of socialist labor unions and mutual aid societies within Ybor. Although peaceful, three men claimed to have been attacked at the park by some in the group. The men said they could identify their assailants, and the police escorted them into the park. Once there, they rushed the stage and attempted to unplug the microphones and take down the American flag. "A fistfight broke out, and several of the men received bloody noses and Black eyes" ("Anti-Castro Rally Erupts into Fight at Martí Park"). Twelve people were arrested, including the pro-Castro men who disrupted the event. By Monday evening another 300 demonstrators assembled in the park. The fence was lined with police officers. A makeshift podium was fashioned from the posters used the day before, where a seventeen-year-old Cuban refugee channeled the passion of Martí in exhorting the principle of unity against the Castro regime in Cuba (O'Conner, "Cubans Hail Martyred Youth In Emotion-Packed Gathering").

The Cuban struggle continued through iterations of rebellions against regimes, only to somehow end up under a different form of oppression. Martí warned of American imperialism, yet the Cuban Constitution of 1901 included the Platt amendment, which, along with other provisions, ensured America could intervene in Cuban affairs if deemed necessary for its own interests. Although Cuba was established with a democratic system of elections, Batista's U.S.-sanctioned coup and Castro's revolution ensured that democratic elections would never return to the island. The park became a site for demonstrations and protests on Cuban territory with the protected rights of speech granted by the surrounding U.S. laws. In the closing months of 1961, anti-Castro Cubans held another rally in the park. Two hundred people gathered on Sunday, December 17, but before Dr. José Miró Cardona could speak, the audience was removed from the

site after a bomb threat was called in. After inspection and finding no evidence of a bomb, the demonstrators returned to hear Dr. Cardona's speech calling for war to liberate Cuba ("Cuba Freedom Seen Soon").

On the anniversary of Martí's birth, January 28th, 1962, three hundred people came to the park to lay wreaths and praise the Cuban hero. Again, this group comprised anti-Castro Cubans, who appeared to be the majority in Ybor ("Cubans Here Pay Tribute to José Martí"). Favor with Castro was on a steady decline as more and more refugees came to Tampa, sharing tales of the dire conditions back home, and the park was in an ill-kept state as well. Cuba received no additional maintenance funding, and the steep decline in Cuban-American relations seemed to ensure the park would suffer. In response to Cuba's nationalization of foreign business holdings in Cuba in 1960, and with justification from the recent full implementation of the embargo to include all exports to Cuba, including newly imposed strict travel restrictions, a petition was formed for the city of Tampa to seize the Parque Amigos de José Martí ("City Seizure of Martí Park Opposed by Leaders Here"). The Ybor City Rotary Club, consisting of several members of the original Pan-American Commission that worked with Batista to establish the park, offered to care for the property. A deal was struck with then Mayor of Tampa Julian Lane and Parks Superintendent Frank Neff for several renovations to the park ("Martí Park Getting Face Lifting"). Two beds of white roses from the Lowry Park Nursery were planted, and spare piping was used to install a sprinkler system ("Martí Park Gets Face Lifting").

The José Martí Park was initially planned to be a tribute to the relationship between Tampa and Cuba that led to Cuba's independence. Tampa was hailed the "Cradle of Cuban Liberty," and a sign depicting this historical tale was erected in 1962 outside the Liceo Cubano's original location on 7th Avenue and 13th Street, one block south of the park. This relationship was again called upon on October

10, 1963, when demonstrators distributed over ten thousand leaflets around Tampa pleading for U.S. assistance in overthrowing Fidel Castro (Aguayo). The date was the ninety-fifth anniversary of the beginning of the first war of independence led by Carlos Manuel de Cespedes, and demonstrators left wreaths of white roses at José Martí Park. The park became a symbol of the ideal of Cuba, a place where Tampa Cubans could be "in Cuba" without being in Cuba. In a sense, the park was an alternate Cuba, honoring what could have been in the past, were it not for Martí's untimely death and American intervention, and what could be in the future once Castro's regime is toppled. The ideological potential of the park was more than a marker of the past; it was a portal into a future vision of Cuba.

Government in Exile

In 1965, Tampa Cubans decided to create a Government in Exile, holding a referendum for a representative community body. Although primarily symbolic and with little influence on Cuba, the proposal for a government in exile was unanimously affirmed ("Government-in-Exile Local Cubans to Hold Plebiscite"). However, years passed, and no mention was made of the exiled government until another announcement was published on February 2, 1995. Along with the publication of the election, the Cuban exiles explained the group would "represent the exile community in local and national gatherings, and in Cuba should Castro fall from power" (Cabrera). Orlando Cardoso was in the list of candidates and is said to have been the park's caretaker for the last 3 years (Cabrera and Rodriguez). Cardoso was the latest in a long line of caretakers over the previous thirty years. Although the park's fence was paid for by Cuba, and the statue was paid for by M267, the park was predominantly operated by anti-Castro Cuban exiles. The Government in Exile found a legal precedent for its existence in 1995, when Dr. José Mijares, one of the exiles responsible for its establishment, discovered that the successor to Castro, according to the 1940 Cuban Constitution, was

living in Tallahassee. Former Justice José Morrell Romero was sworn in as President-in Exile in front of two hundred people at the José Martí Park on February 24, 1995. During the ceremony, Dr. Mijares stated, "From this day forward, we will begin establishing contact with Cuba to create in the minds of the Cuban people the sentiment of the nationality and show them what a nation of liberty really is" (Cabrera). The Government and President in Exile were the representatives of a lost Cuba, one that existed in Key West, Tampa, Miami, and New York, Cuban exiles who yearned to fulfill Martí's promises and, in the face of being separated from their home (both real and ideal), sought to unify those fragments within and through the José Martí Park. The park was the nexus of Cuban nationalism, patriotism, and cultural identity. However, this identity is contested continuously from within.

Cuban Property

The celebration of Martí's birth has been the most enduring gathering at the park, but records show another story about the park as Cuban property. Again, territory matters; who claims it, occupies it, and who is denied access to it. For two decades, as the saplings in the park grew to cover its back walls, the landscape of Ybor changed as well. What was once a sister city to Havana, with migration and movement between the two towns as steady as the tide, the recent waves of Cuban refugees represented a new relationship with Cuba. The Cuban enclaves of West Tampa and Pinecrest were established by Castro exiles. Although Ybor City was changing, there remained some who sought to maintain a connection to Cuba, and most likely their family and friends, that was beyond politics. In 1961, Martín Bracker, the New York Times correspondent who wrote the unflattering review of Martí Park, was tasked with finding out if Castro supporters were in Tampa. The assignment was to discover how the Tampa and Miami Cuban communities differed. However, the question only focused on impressions of Fidel, not opinions on the

blockade (Wilder). Few supported Castro, if any, as they were cautious of declaring allegiance considering the political climate and the numbers of anti-Castro Cuban exiles in Tampa. However, there were Tampa Cubans who opposed the embargo, and this is echoed to this day. A vote for normalized relations is not the same thing as supporting or even contributing to the Castro government. A primary concern with anti-embargo Cuban Americans is their desire not to be impacted by the political and economic measures of the U.S. and the exiles who support them.

Demonstrations were not only held at the park because it honored José Martí. Anti-Castro Cubans such as Alpha-66 disagreed with Fidel's invocations of his principles; thus, an aspect of the significance of holding a rally in the park was for their sense of purifying Martí's memory. Of course, this is only partially accurate since Martí's warnings of American interference for economic gain were precisely why the Castro revolution was successful. In addition to pitting Martí against Castro, rallies were held in the park because it is Cuban property. The demonstrators could defy all the regimes' attempts to squash oppositional speech. According to the protestors, anyone trying to speak truth to power in Cuba was arrested, tortured, or murdered. Still, those rules were unenforceable in the park, and the consequences were non-existent. This is where they felt strongest and closest to Cuba. From here in the park, an estimated 650 Cuban exiles protested President Carter's attempts at normalizing relations in 1977 as part of a nationwide effort. "We are doing this so the American government will know that we oppose 100% any relations with Cuba." They proclaimed that their war must continue from Cuban property (Dietz).

The Cuban exiles who held rallies at the park claimed it as a place of protest against Fidel Castro. In 1978, a group of protestors gathered wearing Black armbands, which they claimed were to "mourn the death of the 'old' Cuba when Castro took power two decades ago" ("Anti-Castro Rally"). Even with the

current additions in the park, it feels arrested in time. The park signifies a different place in being Cuban property and a different time – that of "old" Cuba. The anti-Castro exiles demonstrating in the park claimed ownership and shaped what the park represents. In another attempt at purification, the park signifies a pre-Castro Cuba. As if to have diverted from the main timeline, the park symbolizes that divergence. By deploying the symbols of that era, Martí, and the boarding house, it harkens back to that time to create an alternate present. But by 1982, the park was in disrepair again. Another unflattering article in the Miami Herald prompted local Cubans to coordinate another clean-up effort ("Tampa Latins Spruce Up Martí Park").

Burned Bridge

1986 marked the centennial anniversary of Ybor's establishment. Tampa Tribune columnist Steve Otto detailed the events of the celebration. Of note was the recreation of Martí's speech at the steps of Ybor Square and the traditional placing of white roses at the statue in the park. The audience sang the American and Cuban national anthems, and Aurelio Pinan delivered Martí's speech in Spanish. After the speech, the audience marched to the José Martí park, but the gates to the park were padlocked moments before the ceremony. No one in the mayor's party had a key, so police arrived with bolt cutters and broke into Cuba (Otto). The new image of Ybor rejected its relationship with Cuba and used the park repeatedly to voice this position. The protestors in the park claimed themselves separate from Cuba by exiling the island, just as its new leader had exiled them. Who locked the gates is unknown, but perhaps they saw the park monopolized by the side that passionately advocated to stop all trade and aid to the island where their relatives and friends remained. Later that year, another rally was held, this time no longer asking for assistance from the U.S. government but rather to drum up local support for volunteer fighters (Seegal). It is illegal to wage war against a foreign country from U.S. soil, so the protestors did so from within the park.

They denounced the Castro regime and burned a Soviet flag at the foot of the statue. The group would also demonstrate in New Orleans and Houston looking for support to fight for their ability to return to Cuba with dignity (Seegal).

Pro and anti-Castro groups are Cubans' most controversial political divisions, but the desire to return is a shared element with different conditions and meanings. Where the anti-embargo sentiment is made up of the desire for freedom to go to Cuba, the pro-embargo side desires for Cuba to be free before they can return. Those seeking to cripple Castro's Cuba economically or to invade Cuba under the auspices of Martí's revolutionary principles, want to return, not to a Cuba they remember but to a Cuba they want to create. In a sense, this is the Cuba they have made in the park. While the park is a space reflecting an ideal Cuba, it was deployed by protestors to show how much they will sacrifice to realize the same for Cuba. In 1988, seven Cuban exiles held a three-day hunger strike in the park to expose the atrocities they saw occurring in Cuba. The strike was coordinated with similar protests in "Miami, Orlando, New York City, and Washington" ("Hunger Strike for Human Rights)". Reports of poverty and starvation in Cuba were amplified over the healthcare and education reforms. Protests in the park sought to make present the current conditions in Cuba; and to bring the situation to the U.S. as a means of exposing, for those here, the atrocities there. It was a matter of the difference in perspective in Cuba versus Tampa that gave the protestors an audience. The political climate in Ybor had changed, with more refugees arriving every year. According to reports, the demonstrations in the park were predominantly held by exiles with extreme views against Castro, and those who disagreed with them were either still in Cuba or dared not demonstrate their dissent for fear of retribution (Melone). The end of the three-day hunger strike was celebrated with a candlelight vigil attended by over 500 protestors in the park (Lavelle). The war of the roses waged on, but

only one side seemed to be fighting.

For the next decade (1988-1998), the park hosted many rallies (Sokol), (Rosen), (Koehn), (Ripley). Most notable was the slew of demonstrations in 1994 in protest of President Clinton's use of Guantánamo Bay to house intercepted Cuban refugees on their way north to the United States ("Message on Ybor's Streets"), (Woitas), (Otto, "Common Soul Ties Tampa to Cuban Fight"), ("Pact with Martí"), (Fredrick), (Lammers). During the 'Special Period' in Cuba, the loss of economic support and trade due to the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 caused severe financial hardship. Tales of poverty and destitution felt by the Cuban people further warranted the Cuban exiles' stance on the American embargo. Exiles continued to support the economic measure and stayed dedicated to their request for U.S. support to invade Cuba and topple Castro. Rallies held at the park were publicized as a symbol of Cuban freedom for all Cubans, invoking the unity extolled by Martí (Charney). Yet the persistent pressure for U.S. intervention from anti-Castro groups, recalling the interventionism Martí warned against, increased tensions to a breaking point.

The park was vandalized in 1998, the day after the park was renovated with new landscaping, and a second plaque was installed on the Martí statue. From Sunday to Monday, Cubans tended the park, only to have the American flag stolen and the flagpole it waved from damaged ("Vandals Strike José Martí Park"). Perhaps this wasn't politically motivated. Maybe it was just random, but the vandalism made the papers, so it was significant. The vandalism brought about questions regarding who "owns" the park, but this issue has centered chiefly on access. As demonstrated, the majority of protests were anti-Castro and pro-embargo. Although few, if any, in Tampa supported Castro, certain Tampa Cubans disagreed with the U.S. embargo policies (Rupert). Regardless of the reason behind the vandalism, the gates were locked more often afterward. In June of that year, the organization Pastors for Peace held a meeting at the park to

collect donations to be sent to Cuba. Several buses were parked on 8th Ave waiting to be loaded with medical supplies and other necessities. Several anti-Castro Cubans showed up with bullhorns, decrying the Pastor's support for Castro, "All of these supplies will go right into the hands of Castro! He runs the country. There is no Red Cross in Cuba. Everything that goes to Cuba goes to Castro" (Schweitzer). After more than an hour of confrontation, the crowd dispersed, and the bus pulled away loaded with supplies.

Broken Arm

Other than the roses that were occasionally changed from red to white or vice versa, with all the demonstrations, protests, and rallies that took place, the park was mostly preserved. Both sides battled for what the park symbolized and represented for themselves and others. They cared deeply about the park, and in attempting to shape its meaning, the actions and demonstrations became part of its composition. However, whether through malice or a random and unaffiliated case of vandalism, the war of the roses took a dark turn the week after the Pastors for Peace demonstration. On June 10, 1999, the outstretched arm of José Martí was broken off. Visitors to the park were greeted by a mangled limb, barely connected save for the rebar structure protruding from the granite statue (Cabrera). Martí's right forearm dangled from plaster fibers in the thick Tampa air.

Again, headlines politicized Martí and the park. "The Price of Freedom," an interview in the *Tampa Bay Times* with Orlando Rodríguez, president of the Centro Histórico y Cultural Cubano, the organization that tended to the park, claimed the park as "the only free Cuban land in the World" (Cabrera). What underlies Rodríguez's claim is the unverified statement that the park "contains dirt from Cuba's six provinces," an attempt to link the two islands materially (Cabrera). The importation of soil and the elevation of Cuban-owned property to the status of territory created the condition of the park being understood as such.

Demonstrations continued, linking the two places through mutual sacrifice. As Cubans mulled over who should and how to fix the park, demonstrators gathered for a forty-day hunger strike in solidarity with government opponents in Havana. In stark contrast to the invocations by Rodríguez throughout the interview, forty days after the arm was broken off, a small bulletin buried on page 82 in the *Tampa Tribune* announced the statue had been repaired in one hour for $75. Although the park was restored, the vandalism pronounced the political divides in the Tampa Cuban Community ("Statue Reborn").

War of the Keys

The tussle for what the park symbolized and for whom transitioned the war of the roses into the war of keys. The Cuban Historical and Cultural Club maintained the park and held the keys, but other Cubans denounced that they should also not have keys. This conflict centered around the freedom to visit and demonstrate within the park. The Cubans vying for keys stated that the park's custodians "would lock it up if anyone that doesn't agree with their position tried to use it" (Zayas 2002). Although labeled as "commies and pinkos" by anti-Castro Cubans, those demanding keys to the park were anti-embargo. They sought a connection with the park to counter the politically mandated disconnection with Cuba. In stating that pro-Castro or anti-embargo speeches were not allowed in the park by its custodians, the group of Cubans vying for keys challenged the statement that the park was "the last free patch of Cuban soil." This was the material manifestation of the ideological differences within the Cuban community, and the dispute for access to the park became part of the practice of *Cubanidad*. Although already symbolic for Cubans as a physical site to practice *Cubanidad*, the clash over the park keys symbolized the intricate, complex, and contested aspects of Cuban identity. In other words, what was "allowed" in the park reflected what was "Cuban." Access was a statement of what freedom meant to Cubans and how the specific notions of

freedom reflected what kind of Cuban was allowed in the park.

Conclusion

The Parque Amigos de José Martí is a culturally relevant and historically significant site for the Cuban population in Tampa and Cubans in Cuba. For some Cubans who visit, or for those who live in Tampa, visiting the Parque Amigos de José Martí is a ceremonial duty. However, the park is not public land, and throughout its history, access has been controlled in ways that reflect the broader political relations between the U.S. and Cuba. Those who created the park, the organizations responsible for its establishment, and the ceremonies and plaques commemorating the special occasions that led to the park becoming what it is today do not wholly articulate its meaning. Instead, these are indications of the intent of the persons or organizations involved with the park's establishment. However, as detailed through the park's history, its meaning is generated through interactions. Case in point, the statue being paid for by pro-Castro revolutionaries, but the park is a sight of many anti-Castro protests. The park's meaning is ephemeral and fluid, founded by those who created it and regenerated by those who visit. The mythos of José Martí presents admirable qualities for Cubans, and his iconic status guides the cultural notions of identity. Martí wrote the origin story of Cuba, rooted in the sense of home and belonging. Sitting in the park, under the shade of trees, I look up towards the statue of Martí, feeling hailed to follow, united with others, and guided towards a promise. When I exit the park, I step back into Ybor City, leaving Martí behind, sequestered on Cuban property, surrounded by a fence and gate that will soon be locked.

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