VOLUME 4, ISSUE 1 • Spring 2024

Boletin Martiano

THE UNIVERSITY OF TAMPA

CENTER FOR JOSÉ MARTÍ STUDIES AFFILIATE

Boletín Martiano

Newsletter of the Center for José Martí Studies Affiliate
at The University of Tampa

Editor: Denis Rey, Ph.D.

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Message from the Editor

By Denis Rey, Ph.D.

Summer has ended as another academic year begins with the usual excitement, apprehension, and uncertainty about what it will bring. James and I were thrilled to see many of our friends and colleagues from both the 2019 and 2023 NEH Summer Institutes in Bogotá, Columbia, for the annual conference of the Latin American Studies Association. It was there that a handful of us participated in a roundtable discussion on teaching José Martí. The panel was an immense success. We look forward to opportunities to collaborate further with this talented group of educators and scholars, many of whom have come up with novel ways of teaching and studying Martí's life and work. In this issue of *Boletín Martiano,* we showcase some of the fine work we encountered at the conference in Bogotá. Our first article, "De silencios y mitificaciones: José Martí y Manuel García el «Rey de los campos de Cuba»" was written by Dr. Wladimir Márquez-Jiménez, Associate Professor and Chair of the Department of Modern and Classical Languages at Regis University. Professor Márquez writes a compelling account of the relationship between the bandit, Manuel García, who roamed the Cuban countryside creating discord, and José Martí, who viewed those nefarious activities as anathema to the noble goals of the revolution. The next article, "Teaching José Martí in Sociological Theory," by Dr. Louis Edgar Esparza, Professor of Sociology at California State University-Los Angeles, places Martí next to sociological notables such as Comte, Durkheim, and Mead, amongst others, in a fascinating analysis of Martí's work from a sociological vantage point. The final article, "Introducing a Latino Hero:

Teaching About José Martí at Western Oregon University," authored by Dr. Ricardo Pelegrin-Taboada, Assistant Professor of Latin American History and Ethnic Studies at Western Oregon University, shares how Martí fits within the History curriculum at this Western-Pacific institution. I hope you enjoy reading this issue of *Boletín Martiano* as much as we have.

De silencios y mitificaciones: José Martí y Manuel García, el «El Rey de los campos de Cuba»[1]

By Wladimir Márquez-Jiménez, Ph.D.

Desde 1889 se ha publicado una multitud de estudios que han procurado aprehender y explicar el fenómeno del bandidismo cubano. En cada uno de ellos se han consignado en forma copiosa los secuestros, robos y extorsiones perpetrados por los bandoleros. Habida cuenta del crecido número de ocurrencias, los agentes de la ley, las víctimas, los delincuentes, acaban siendo enajenados en el relato de las fechorías. La reiteración del *modus operandi* , la estacionalidad del fenómeno, el fracaso repetido de las autoridades, la tenaz y redundante opción por la huida antes que por el enfrentamiento de parte de los bandoleros, provoca, entonces, que se despoje de identidad a unos y a otros; las acciones de los malhechores percuten en la conciencia de la gente hasta borrar las huellas de todos los involucrados; al mismo tiempo, la terca recurrencia del fenómeno lo postula como una suerte de plaga natural, una especie de virus que se propaga merced al hecho de que utiliza el propio metabolismo de la economía de plantación, del régimen de producción azucarera cubano.

En la prensa de la época, las autoridades coloniales son fustigadas insistentemente; periódicos liberales tales como *La Lucha* y *La Discusión* ufncionan como arietes en contra de la administración del Gobernador Camilo Polavieja: poco importa el nombre del bandolero o de la víctima, lo significativo es el hecho mismo, toda vez que pone de relieve que la situación está absolutamente fuera de control. Es esta la

[1] Extracto del Capítulo II intitulado "Las biografías de Manuel García, el 'Rey de los campos de Cuba': del bandolero como instrumento de crítica al bandolero como instrumento aglutinador," el cual pertenece al libro *Forajidos del Caribe: Piratas y Bandoleros en la literatura del Caribe Hispánico*, de próxima aparición en Iberoamericana-Vervuert, Madrid-Frankfurt.

situación que existía hacia el final de la década de 1880, más o menos, cuando irrumpe en el escenario antillano el más famosos bandolero que habrá de asolar las provincias del Occidente de la Isla: Manuel García, *el Rey de los campos de Cuba.* Éste comienza a fraguar su leyenda tan pronto comienza a capitanear la partida de *Lengüe* Romero, otro bandolero muerto por las autoridades a principios de 1888 (de Paz, Vol 2, 218). Valga señalar que *Lengüe* Romero pertenece a una primera camada de forajidos cubanos entre los cuales se cuenta, también, a Carlos Agüero y a José Arteaga *Matagás* . Es Carlos Agüero el responsable de una expedición en 1884 que, patrocinada por separatistas radicados en Key West, desembarca en la isla, en el mes de abril, con discretos resultados (Schwartz, 105). Los cubanos mostraron poco interés en apoyar la expedición y por ello ignoraron las demandas de Agüero en nombre de la revolución independentista. De allí que Agüero resolviera recurrir a los secuestros de hacendados como estrategia para hacerse de los recursos necesarios para mantener agitada la manigua cubana. Por los próximos once meses, Agüero y sus secuaces mantendrán en vilo a las ricas familias terratenientes de la zona de Las Villas. Al cabo de un tiempo, las autoridades españolas apresan a Agüero y lo matan. La prensa de la época señalará, a propósito de ello, los vínculos entre los separatistas cubanos y los bandoleros. Schwartz, al respecto señala que la expedición marca un hito en la lucha separatista cubana: «Agüero's 1884 expedition and the maraudings and kidnapings attributed to his gang forge the first indisputable link between the insurrectionist's efforts (…) and the increased incidence of Cuban criminality during the 1880s» (106). Este vínculo entre los esfuerzos insurreccionales y la actividad bandolera en Cuba es consecuencia de una nueva estrategia implantada por la comunidad exiliada de Key West encabezada por José D. Poyo. Según expone Gerald E. Poyo en su libro *Exile and Revolution* (2014) la disminución de las contribuciones de trabajadores y fabricantes de tabaco a la causa nacionalista cubana llevó a este cambio controvertido en la estrategia revolucionaria a finales de la década de 1880. Al mismo tiempo, la crisis

económica generada en las zonas rurales, una vez acabada la Guerra Chiquita (1879-80), suscitó el surgimiento de una nueva generación de bandidos que se dedicaron al secuestro y al asalto, muchos de los cuales, tras llegar huyendo a Cayo Hueso se politizaron bajo el influjo de José D. Poyo, con lo cual regresaron a Cuba ya como insurgentes. Estos «bandidos-patriotas» colaboraron con la Convención Cubana, recaudaron fondos y crearon un clima propicio para la revolución. Aunque algunos líderes nacionalistas se opusieron a este enfoque, Poyo lo consideró la única opción viable hasta que los trabajadores recuperaran su entusiasmo y compromiso con la causa (119). Manuel García cosechará, pues, los frutos sembrados por las expediciones de bandidos-insurgentes patrocinadas por Poyo y el exilio cubano en Key West.

Es necesario someter a escrutinio el proceso de mitificación del bandolero Manuel García. Digo esto porque Martí, en una misiva escrita poco después del desembarco encabezado por Manuel Beribén en 1887, pone en entredicho la utilidad de la expedición: «¿Por qué estamos aquí? ¿Por qué desembarcó Biribén [sic]»? ¿Será que algún militar ambicioso, será que alguna reliquia temible de la guerra, será que tomemos por estado natural del país la alarma común, nos alucinen las acciones verbosas? (citado por de Paz, *Bandolerismo en Cuba* , Vol. 1, 217). Pese a los reparos expresados por Martí, la leyenda de Manuel García, que acompaña a Beribén en 1887, comienza, pues, a fraguarse. Empero me parece que se trata de una leyenda en la cual asoma la duda, sobre la cual se posa la sombra de la desconfianza, merced a esta colusión que no es aprobada unánimemente, especialmente por el sector más ilustrado del separatismo cubano del cual Martí y el PRC forman parte. Más aún, aquello que a Martí más le disgusta—«las acciones verbosas»—habrá de constituir el principal atributo del proceder de Manuel García, el elemento vertebral de la leyenda del Rey de los Campos de Cuba. De allí el escrúpulo y las aprensiones expresadas por Martí. Sin embargo, estas acciones de los bandoleros cubanos son celebradas por la comunidad cubana en Key West. ¿Por qué se celebra a los bandoleros? ¿Cuál es, en suma, el uso simbólico que se le da a los bandoleros

como Manuel García? ¿Y en Nueva York, por qué el exilio cubano en general y Martí en particular muestran tanta desconfianza hacia los bandoleros? La respuesta puede ser muy simple: porque ellos están al margen de la ley. No obstante, me parece que los bandoleros convocan otro tipo de miedos y ansiedades en la élite cubana, los cuales quedan representados en la etiqueta «acciones verbosas». ¿Cómo entender estas «acciones verbosas»? ¿Qué valores e ideas encarnan? ¿Por qué son celebrados por unos y denostados por otros? Este trabajo, en suma, se encargará de responder a todas estas preguntas alrededor del asunto de la percepción acerca de los bandoleros cubanos y sus acciones. Para mí está claro que Manuel García es una manifestación de la encarnación de la violencia como fuerza colectiva estructurante; está claro, también, que José Martí está de acuerdo con esta proposición, en tanto y en cuanto, la revolución es precisamente eso; sin embargo, Martí traza ciertas líneas rojas, establece delimitaciones a esta violencia estructurante, la pregunta es, otra vez, ¿a qué obedecen estas delimitaciones?

En torno a Manuel García se ha tejido una densa trama de leyenda, una fábula de identidad que hace posible una conexión orgánica entre un sector de la élite letrada comprometida con la independencia de la Isla y los guajiros de la manigua cubana. No pocos bandoleros cubanos recibieron en su momento el reconocimiento de las comunidades de exiliados en los Estados Unidos; Filomeno Sarduy, Carlos Agüero, Ramón Bonachea, y Limbano Sánchez, por solo mencionar algunos, fueron celebrados y apoyados por el exilio cubano en Key West (de Paz, *Bandolerismo social*, 20). Sin embargo, es en Manuel García en quien queda cifrada la fábula del héroe popular independentista, del guajiro revolucionario. Tal como señala Manuel de Paz, en Manuel García se «exaltan los valores innatos y la rebeldía del guajiro» cubano (de Paz, *Bandolerismo en Cuba* … 206). En él se halla encarnada la resistencia contra el poder colonial, la misma que cristaliza en el Partido Revolucionario Cubano encabezado por José Martí. De allí, pues, que su imagen se haya idealizado, porque él representa la condición de posibilidad, en términos simbólicos, de una alianza

amplia en favor de la independencia en Cuba. Por esta razón, Manuel García hace el tránsito de bandolero a *mambí* , vale decir, de sujeto al margen de la ley a insurrecto; dicho en palabras de Michel Maffesoli: "Manuel García deviene, ultimadamente, en la encarnación de la violencia como fuerza colectiva estructurante" (14). De allí que varios historiadores afirmen, plenamente convencidos, que «El Rey de los campos de Cuba» fue un bandolero-insurrecto, un bandido patriota, un libertador al margen de la ley, (de Paz 207, Balboa Navarro 62, Schwartz 3). Si alguien pensare lo contrario es porque forma parte de la «interesada opinión de los representantes de la metrópoli y sus colaboradores» (de Paz 207).

De acuerdo con un documento consignado por Rafael Gutiérrez Fernández en su libro *Los Héroes del 24 de febrero* , el cual es citado por Manuel de Paz Sánchez, y cuyo autor es Manuel Patricio Delgado –para la época Secretario del Club Patriótico Cubano de Cayo Hueso–, la expedición encabezada por otro bandolero de la época, Beribén, y de la cual formaba parte Manuel García, tenía como objetivo agitar las cosas en Cuba: «fomentar la Revolución y recabar fondos para organizarla en todo el país» (de Paz, Vol. 1, 216). Valga señalar que la expedición contaba con la venia de otras agrupaciones insurreccionales cubanas en Estados Unidos, entre las cuales se contaba la de Cayo Hueso. Es precisamente esta expedición la que parece dar inicio a la fábula del bandolero insurrecto. Sin embargo, Martí, en una carta escrita hacia octubre de 1887 y dirigida al general Fernández Ruz, cuestiona la utilidad de las acciones de los bandidos cubanos. Se refiere a los bandoleros como «valientes mal aconsejados (...) ambiciosos culpables» (Martí, Volumen 27, 169). En suma, Martí cuestiona la posibilidad de considerar a los bandidos como una de las fuerzas estructurantes, aunque simbólicas, del futuro Estado-Nación.

No obstante lo anterior, las acciones de los bandidos cubanos en general, y de Manuel García en particular, seguían siendo celebradas y alentadas por la comunidad cubana en Cayo Hueso. Por ejemplo, Gerardo Castellanos en su libro *Misión a Cuba* ... (1944) señalaba que los exiliados de Cayo Hueso veían en

los bandoleros una forma de cumplir un imperativo: hacer daño a España en todo momento y por todos los medios posibles. En ese sentido, abunda Gerald E. Poyo quien señala que los bandoleros cubanos estaban politizados. Según Poyo, no pocos bandidos se convirtieron en patriotas que justificaron sus actividades con una retórica nacionalista y con copiosas donaciones en metálico a la causa independentista. Cabe señalar, por ejemplo, que, nada más en 1885 y 1886, los secuestros perpetrados por los bandoleros arrojaron un rédito de 70.000 pesos. Merced a esto, José Dolores Poyo se abocó a alentar a los bandoleros e insistir en la legitimidad política de sus actividades. Poyo era el gran valedor de los bandoleros en Cayo Hueso y ante la comunidad de exiliados en los Estados Unidos (Poyo, 120). Camilo Polavieja parece confirmar la especie alrededor del uso de los bandoleros con fines políticos. En una carta dirigida al Marqués de las Cuevas del Becerro el gobernador señala: «En los Estados Unidos no les llaman bandidos, sino guerrilleros cubanos. Aquí el bandido es un personaje político que impone contribución a las fincas, quema, roba, secuestra y mata con un despacho de Oficial, Jefe o General en el bolsillo» (Polavieja, 86). Ahora bien, la uniformidad que parece proyectar Polavieja en cuanto a la mejor forma de llamar a los bandoleros cubanos, en cuanto a su inserción en los rangos revolucionarios no es, ni mucho, cierta o indisputable. En su *Anecdotario Martiano*, Gonzalo de Quesada y Miranda consigna que Juan Gualberto Gómez contaba que en 1887 recibió un despacho de parte de José Martí en cuyo texto el poeta rechazaba la contribución hecha por Manuel García, la cual fue producto de un secuestro: «…con nada de lo que él hace, colocado como está fuera de toda ley y sanción moral, nosotros podemos tener relación alguna. Devuélvale el dinero. Los árboles han de ser sanos desde la raíz. Así quería a la Revolución, sana desde la raíz». Martí no sucumbe a las acciones espectaculares de Manuel García, a su «aura» de heroísmo patriótico y revolucionario. Las aprehensiones de José Martí obedecen al hecho de que no pocas veces la gente se apresura a disculpar las acciones de los bandoleros, obnubilados como están por la bravura y el arrojo que ellas ponen de

manifiesto. Según Martí, a los ojos fantásticos del vulgo, los bandoleros han sido embellecidos con la hermosura del atrevimiento. Ese atrevimiento que no poseen muchos cubanos. Los bandoleros actúan como una especie de sustituto del fracaso de las masas para salir de su impotencia y mansedumbre. Esta idea se hace evidente en una nota periodística publicada por Martí en el diario *La Opinión Nacional* de Caracas en 1882. La nota lleva por nombre «Jesse James, gran bandido. Sus proezas, su fama y su muerte». La nota parece, al principio, una suerte de elegía, para después transformarse en una crítica abierta a las masas que celebran las peripecias del bandido de Misuri. «Mas, ¿dónde hallan, como quieren hallar diarios y cronistas, hazañas de caballero manchego en ese ensangrentador de los caminos?». Entendemos, entonces, que el tono elegiaco inicial del artículo reproduce la fábula construida por las masas de individuos que admiran a Jesse James. Martí ve todo claro: las masas están enceguecidas «por ese resplandor que tras de sí deja la bravura, veían en el ladrón osado a un caballero del robo, y dejaban latir los corazones conmovidos, cual se conmueven siempre, cuando la buena doctrina del alma no los purifica, ante todo acto extraordinario, aunque sea vil» (Martí, Volumen 13, 241). Se puede apreciar, entonces, de dónde vienen las aprehensiones de José Martí con respecto a Manuel García. Para él, sus actos son viles, ante todo viles, nunca proezas o hazañas, y en modo alguno pueden ser purificados por la «buena doctrina» de grupos interesados en Cayo Hueso.

La temeridad de Jesse James/Manuel García y la admiración que provocan pone de manifiesto otro asunto que Martí expone a Manuel Mercado, a Juan Dolores Poyo y a Fernández Ruz en sendas misivas: son pueblos inquietos los que hacen presa fácil de las acciones de atrevidos y aventureros. Martí señala a Fernández Ruz que hay «hombres hostiles de naturaleza que por falta de conocimiento político o de verdadera virtud patriótica comprometen con la violencia inútil de su lenguaje y el aparato imprudente de sus actos el éxito de una gran lucha» (Martí, Volumen 27, 169). Son pueblos inquietos, sus hombres, que no

piensan o prevén, los que se dejan deslumbrar por actos verbosos, bravíos y, por ello, tal como afirma en misiva dirigida a Poyo: «no puede[n] echar sobre sí la responsabilidad de traer a un pueblo tan quebrantado como el nuestro a una lucha que ha de ser desesperada y larga» (Martí, *Epistolario*, 501). El atributo del pueblo cubano de bien ha de ser, según lo expresado en misiva a Fernández Ruz, la paciencia, la prudencia: «El esperar, que es en política, cuando no se le debilita por la exageración, el mayor de los talentos» (Martí, Volumen 27, 170). En esencia, Martí quiere dejar claro que la espera es algo estratégico, que se debe saber aguardar el momento propicio para actuar, la constricción es, pues, aquello que hará posible lograr los objetivos políticos.

Veo, en suma, que Martí y Manuel García son dos creaciones colectivas que pueden ubicarse en extremos opuestos de una polaridad: reflexión vs acción; maduración vs prisa, prudencia vs temeridad. Esta dicotomía se manifiesta en dos espacios distintos: Nueva York, hogar de la élite intelectual cubana, y Key West, refugio de la clase trabajadora liderada por José D. Poyo, y que ve en Manuel García a su campeón. Así, la maduración y la prudencia se asocian a la ciudad letrada, mientras que la temeridad y la acción decidida se convierten en divisa de la ciudad proletaria.

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Wladimir Márquez-Jiménez was born in Maracay, Venezuela. He studied Literature at the Universidad Católica Andrés Bello (1987-1992) and earned his Ph.D. in Spanish at the University of Colorado at Boulder in 2014. He currently teaches in the Department of Classical and Modern Languages and Literatures at Regis University. His research interests focus on the cultural representations of pirates, bandits, and criminals in Latin America and Spain. His work has been published in several journals, including *Revista de Estudios Hispánicos* from the University of Puerto Rico, Río Piedras; *Confluencia*, the journal of the Department of Spanish and Portuguese at the University of Northern Colorado; and *Cuaderno Internacional de Estudios Humanísticos y Literatura* from the Universidad de Puerto Rico at Humacao. His work has also appeared in several books, including *Entre el humo y la niebla: guerra y cultura en América Latina* (University of Pittsburgh Press, 2016) and *Netflix's Spain: Critical Perspectives* (Routledge, 2023). His book *Forajidos del Caribe: Pirates and Bandits in Caribbean Literature* will be published in Spain by Iberoamericana-Vervuert at the end of this year.

Teaching Jose Martí in Sociological Theory[1]

By Louis Edgar Esparza, Ph.D.

"Martí's versatile contributions as a poet, abolitionist, etcetera, were cool… if you like poets." That seemed to be the initial consensus in one class. But with a little unpacking of Martí's metaphor and symbolism, students ultimately found "Nuestra America" to be unforgettable. Sociology students do not typically encounter José Martí. One lucky student wrote, "I think I read about him in high school once. Briefly."

I arranged encounters with Martí in two sections of a Masters-level course on Classical Sociological Theory and one section of an undergraduate course. These courses in sociological theory are required to obtain a degree in the program. These courses traditionally teach social scientific ideas emerging in Europe and the United States, roughly from the end of the Enlightenment period to the end of WWII. These often include the French theorists Auguste Comte and Emile Durkheim, the British thinker Herbert Spencer, the Germans Karl Marx and Max Weber, and the American George Herbert Mead. More recently, the movement to diversify and decolonialize the cannon has led to the canonization of W.E.B. DuBois. Increasingly, theory syllabi also include female theorists from this period, including Jane Adams, Charlotte Perkins Gilman, and Simone de Beauvoir.

Teaching Marti in this intellectual context requires a kind of unpacking that is usually not necessary for European and US theorists. Students in sociology are often familiar with the ideas of European Enlightenment thinkers. They bring this familiarity with them to the required courses in sociological theory,

[1] I would like to thank the National Endowment for the Humanities and the Center for José Martí Studies affiliate at the University of Tampa in 2023 for their support. Thanks also to Marilyn Miller for constructive comments on an earlier draft, presented at the Latin American Studies Association conference in Bogotá in 2024.

which they often loathe to take, putting it off until their senior year. Even in methods courses, it is the European ideas that are often operationalized and tested using linear regression and other techniques. A vast literature in sociology derives from the same.

Martí, in contrast, inspires head-scratching and furrowed brows. This is the case, even though most of my students at Cal State LA are Latino. Cal State LA is a Hispanic-Serving and Minority-Serving Institution situated in the Los Angeles basin, drawing students from chronically under-funded high schools. In sociology, Latino students are up to 80% of the majors. While their families have origins in Latin America — mostly from Mexico and El Salvador – students have little knowledge of Latin America as an historical-political entity.

In past years, I have rotated other Latin American thinkers. One of my other favorites is the Colombian Orlando Fals Borda, known for popularizing Participatory Action Research. I have also discussed the Brazilian Fernando Henrique Cardoso, the Argentine-Mexican Enrique Dussel, and may in the future turn to the Cuban Samuel Farber. Fals Borda was popular, having a more direct communication style that social science students appreciate.

My students read "Nuestra America," as it appears in Ester Allen's book. But unlike Fals Borda, Martí's ornate style took students by surprise. Consider:

> It is the hour of reckoning and of marching in unison, and we must move in lines as compact as the veins of silver that lie at the roots of the Andes.[2]

Martí's prose hits like lightning after having just read Jacques Lacan. I provided students with some necessary historical context before they picked up Martí. Even so, we spent most of our time together

[2] Martí, José. 2002[1891]. "Our America." Esther Allen (tr.) p. 289.

discussing the text itself. It is difficult to provide enough context in the short time that we have in class. Translating Martí into sociological precepts is a book waiting to happen. Absent such a tool, teaching Martí alongside sociological theorists requires elaborate unpacking.

But students turned out to be resourceful in this regard. Many turned to W.E.B. DuBois' "Souls of Black Folk" as a way of accessing Martí's counter-colonial ambition and humanist aesthetics. Students found a similarity between Martí's and DuBois' rhetorical styles, the themes and questions that they raised, their political ambitions, and their positionality *vis-à-vis* the realities they each confronted. One student noted that they found reading Martí to be a "refreshing" experience after having read German and French sociology.

Students were particularly attracted to Martí's idea of identity. One student wrote,

> There's something about his fire, his fight for freedom, that sparks something in me. He says the real America isn't about copying some fancy European model, it's about building something new, something true to ourselves. Maybe that's what I'm doing, raising these boys strong, proud of their heritage, and their bloodlines of melanin-filled skin. Maybe that's our fight for America too, building something better, brick by brick, for ourselves and for them.

It is common in contemporary sociology to imbue identity with explanatory significance. But Martí's thinking here is distinct from the intersectional lens which prevails. "There is no racial hatred, because there are no races"[3] seems opposed to the politics which has won out among contemporary anti-racists. In the context

[3] Ibid. p. 295.

of anti-racist and de-colonial theory, however, Martí's perspective drove a productive in-class discussion. Martí's question, "What are we like?,"[4] provoked one student into "really thinking about my roots."

Another matter for debate was Martí's skepticism about the United States government. While contemporary critics might be motivated by ideology, one student pointed out that Martí seemed instead to be motivated by pragmatic and geopolitical interests. While the reality is more complicated than this, Martí helped to introduce the idea of political calculation even in the formation of ideas.

In the end, with a little unpacking of Martí's metaphor and symbolism, students found Martí to be unforgettable. They described "Nuestra America" as "expressive," "passionate," "raw," "unapologetic," and "entertaining." If you do plan to teach Martí to sociology majors in the US, I recommend reading him together with W.E.B. DuBois in discussions around anti-racist politics.

[4] Ibid. p. 294.

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Introducing a Latino Hero: Teaching about Jose Marti at Western Oregon University

By Ricardo Pelegrin Taboada, Ph.D

When college students in Oregon hear about Jose Martí for the first time, the Cuban national hero is usually unknown to them. During their elementary and secondary education, Oregonians receive very little information about Latin America, and this reduces their opportunity to learn about historical figures and intellectuals from this region. The location and demography of Western Oregon University (WOU) also creates context for students not learning previously about Martí. WOU is located in the Willamette Valley, about 20 minutes east of the state capital of Salem and, while WOU currently enrolls about 4,000 students and approximately 25% of them identify as Latinx, this group is predominantly of Mexican origin. By contrast, the population from the Hispanic Caribbean in Oregon is a smaller demographic, and the Cuban José Martí, therefore, is not as familiar as Mexican historical figures such as Benito Juárez or Lázaro Cárdenas. As a result, Martí should be introduced to WOU students as an incredibly multifaceted and influential person that would expand their knowledge and understanding of the whole of Latin America and immigrant populations in the United States.

José Martí engaged in multiple activities that established him as an inevitable topic of discussion in several undergraduate seminars in college. His diverse roles as writer, politician, activist and journalist, among others, make his name a constant presence when analyzing late nineteenth century Latin America. In addition, the incorporation of Martí into the courses provides the context to study his person, writing and influence from several perspectives. His numerous writings, for example, are essential primary sources in some undergraduate seminars about the history and culture of Latin America and the Caribbean.

Moreover, Cuban history is particularly attractive to the students at WOU because of the references to the Socialist Revolution after 1959 and the long history of relations between the United States and Cuba. José Martí, therefore, has a presence in all of these debates, mainly when learning about the modern history of Latin America.

José Martí is an essential topic in History Seminar 455 Modern Latin America. This course examines the last 200 years of Latin American history since the independence movements from Spain and Portugal until today, with attention to its political, social, economic and cultural transformations. Martí, thus, becomes a necessary reference when analyzing the last decades of the nineteenth century in both his role as organizer of the Cuban war for the independence from Spain, and also as one of the examples of modernism in the regional literature. A prolific writer, Martí left a vast legacy of writings including letters, poems, speeches and journal articles, among many others, that have become a required reference for the study of this literary movement. The late nineteenth century, however, is given limited time in the syllabus, where Martí shares space with other contemporaneous issues taking place in Latin America such as the oligarchical regimes and a growing North American presence. For that reason, the study of Martí even in this course is limited, but there is an opportunity to focus more on his writing and works in other seminars with more specific focus.

A course at WOU that has addressed José Martí since its inception is HST457 The Cuban Revolution. To understand the origins of the Cuban Revolution, students read about the island's crises during the nineteenth century, and Martí was a main figure in that period. Among other activities, he was in charge of organizing and coordinating the war for independence that began in 1895. In addition, Martí became a symbol of the Cuban Republic after 1902, and a historical reference in the national discourse thereafter. As a result, his image became associated with all posterior political movements in search of

popular support and legitimation. Consequently, there are at least two images that are presented in class as primary sources demonstrating how contrasting political positions claimed Marti as their ideological inspiration. The first image shows Fulgencio Batista, strongman and authoritarian leader of Cuba between the 1930s and the 1950s, surrounded by his soldiers during the coup d'etat, with the picture of Martí visible on the back wall. Another image, by contrast, portrays Fidel Castro in police custody in the 1950s, while standing also in front of a picture of Martí during his prosecution for attacking Batista's military barracks. Ultimately, Fidel Castro used Martí to justify the revolutionary process that he led against Batista's regime in 1953. Moreover, Fidel identified his insurrection with "the Centenary Generation," because it began 100 years after the birth of José Martí. Considering the socialist turn of Castro's Revolution, however, this course requires an analysis of Martí's political ideology as a progressive liberal of the nineteenth century. For that reason, the class includes the collective reading and discussion of the speech that Martí delivered at the Cuban Lyceum in Tampa on November 26th, 1891. This speech includes many key issues of his ideology, but it focuses on equality and solidarity among Cubans, and how they should work together for a common and just republic that he expected to be "with all and for the good of all." In class, we further analyze this speech as students learn that Castro's regime adopted this phrase to fit its concept of the socialist agenda, although it was initially conceived as a call for unity among Cubans during the organization of the separatist movement from Spain.

Another course that requires the analysis of José Martí is HST485 Race and Ethnicity in Latin America. This seminar unveils the racial and ethnic issues that have marked the history of this region before the European arrival until today, and focuses on diverse topics such as colonialism, slavery, segregation and nationalism. In this course, Cuba becomes a significant reference as one of the countries that preserved slavery for the longest time. This issue is particularly important during the nineteenth

century, when Cubans developed a fear that Cuba could become the second Haiti, where a massive slave revolt could exterminate the European and creole population. Racial and ethnic relations, however, are different in Latin America than in the United States, which is the reference for the American students and who naturally transplant their understanding and values to this region. For that reason, it is important for students to read an article that Martí published in 1893 titled "My Race." In this document, he explains the complexities of race-based relations among Cubans and makes a call to eliminate racial tensions and confrontations among them. Furthermore, he wrote this piece in the United States, where the communities of exiled Cubans also experienced the issue of diversity and segregation in Jim Crow America.

A last course that necessarily includes José Martí's work is HST458 Inter American Relations. This seminar examines the international relations between the United States and Latin America, including treaties, foreign policy doctrines, migrations, commercial dependency, military interventions, wars and diplomatic covert actions. Once again, Martí and his work become necessary subjects of study. Martí lived in the United States for about 15 years, where he resided in New York but also traveled to other cities such as Tampa and Key West in Florida. In that capacity, he was a member of the Cuban diaspora in this country and his life portrays the experiences of the exiled community including political activism and lifestyle. At the same time, Martí denounced the foreign policy of the United States towards Latin America and advocated for the region to unite against the growing influence and threat of American expansionism. For that reason, his essay "Our America," published in 1891, is an essential reading for this class, as a call for Latin American unity against the growing influence of the United States. This seminar also includes a class about the late nineteenth century, which ends with the Spanish-American War and the military occupation of Cuba and Puerto Rico by the United States.

In addition to the above mentioned courses, there are other history seminars at WOU where Martí and his works should be mentioned. HST453 Colonial Latin America, for example, examines the history of the region from before the European arrival until the separatist movements in the 1820s. This course includes a class about the last Spanish territories in America during the nineteenth century, and it highlights Martí as the organizer of the last war for the Cuban independence. Similarly, HST454 History of the Caribbean studies the countries within this region, and Martí becomes again a reference as advocate for the Cuban separation from Spain and alerting his contemporaries about increasing American interventionism. His concerns proved to be true when the United States occupied most of the larger Antilles during the first decades of the twentieth century. Moreover, teaching Martí is not exclusive to History at WOU. The Department of Sociology also teaches Martí in their Latin American society courses, and Humanities includes some of his works in their courses about Latin American literature.

Besides the discussion of primary sources in class, students of Latin American history at WOU have assignments to develop a deeper understanding of Martí. Every course has a combination of short and long essays, and in each of them students must use primary sources. By providing students with Martí's speeches or essays for a class assignment, we invite students to develop familiarity with his work. In addition, these materials are always given to the students in advance, because their complexity makes it difficult to finish the whole analysis just in one class, and usually those debates should continue in discussion forums. These virtual spaces motivate the interaction among the students, as well as the collective learning process, in this case about Martí's works. A last assignment in upper division seminars is in-class quizzes, which force students to learn and identify key issues about Marti's life.

Despite the possibility to teach about José Martí in multiple courses of history at WOU, it might face some challenges. As previously mentioned, Martí is unknown to most students at WOU, and a course

solely about him would be difficult to offer and successfully enroll. Therefore, it would be always necessary to strategically include Martí in those courses where the opportunity arises, but within the larger narrative of Latin American history. Also, his works are complex and long, and they take a significant amount of time to collectively debate during the class. Finally, teaching Martí must still acknowledge his limitations as a man of the nineteenth century that Cuban politicians have historically re-interpreted to support their agendas. Finally, secondary sources, which are mostly textbooks about modern Latin American history, do not always include Martí, and sometimes just mention him in a limited fashion, which requires assigning supplemental articles and books to learn more about him.

There will be additional opportunities to teach about Martí in the future at WOU. As this university becomes a Hispanic Serving Institution, the number of Latinx students has surpassed the 25%, and the institution is advocating for expanded coursework on Latin America and its history. The multifaceted personality of Martí, therefore, makes it easy to include him in a diversity of courses about different topics to which he contributed with his speeches and writing. His publications, moreover, develop critical thinking and analytical skills when analyzed as primary sources because of their complexity, and this allows students to also learn more about the literature and writing style in Latin America during the late nineteenth century. Gradually, Martí should move from being a relatively unknown figure, to becoming a reference point for any student taking courses in Latin America at WOU, thereby enhancinge their historical and literary knowledge about this region.

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